

INSPECTION REPORT

**BLACKROD ANGLICAN AND METHODIST
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Blackrod, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105211

Headteacher: Mrs P A Richardson

Reporting inspector: Mr J Donnelly

23637

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th October 2001

Inspection number: 193624

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Vicarage Road West Blackrod Bolton Lancashire
Postcode:	BL6 5DE
Telephone number:	(01204 333520
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Jones
Date of previous inspection:	15 th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23637	J Donnelly	Registered inspector	Science History Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What the school should do to improve further
11439	J Moore	Lay inspector	Equality of opportunity	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
7418	K Rollisson	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
24254	T Shine	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Music	
11528	M F Wainwright	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Blackrod Anglican and Methodist Voluntary Controlled School caters for pupils aged three to eleven and currently there are 164 pupils on roll. In the nursery class there are 22 boys and 28 girls attending part-time.

All pupils are of a white United Kingdom origin. Attainment on entry to the school is in line with national expectations. Approximately 34 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is well above national averages. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need is well below the national average. Fourteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is below the national average. There is a significant number of summer born boys in the school population. The number of pupils entering and leaving the school between the ages of seven and eleven is high at 20 per cent. The school's locally agreed amalgamation with another school in 1999 was not upheld by the Department for Education and Skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Blackrod is an effective school and has made good progress since the appointment of many new teachers to the school just over 12 months ago. Attainment is in line with national expectations. Children in the nursery and reception classes make satisfactory progress. Pupils aged six to eleven make satisfactory progress over time. The teaching in the lessons observed was good. The school has an appropriately sharp focus on raising standards and evaluating its performance. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are rising and in most lessons observed, pupils achievements are good.
- Teaching overall is good in the lessons observed, for pupils aged six to eleven.
- Extra curricular provision is very good.
- Assessment procedures and the tracking of pupils' progress and attainment are good.
- Attendance and relationships with parents are good.
- Leadership by the recently appointed key stage managers is good.

What could be improved

- The standards achieved by higher attaining pupils.
- The behaviour of a few pupils, mostly boys, particularly in Year 5.
- The quality of teaching and planning of a personal, health and social education programme across the school.
- The role of senior managers and curriculum co-ordinators in evaluating and monitoring the work of the school.
- The prioritisation of the school development plan to ensure that progress is fully evaluated, especially in terms of improved standards for pupils.
- The role of the governing body in monitoring the work of the school and the subsequent action taken.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in April 1997 the school has built upon its strengths successfully, but for some pupils during this time, standards have not been high enough. However, with the appointment

of new teachers, including key staff over the last 12 months, progress has been good. Although the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed, some are more successful than others, for example, the roles of curriculum co-ordinators have not been fully established in all subjects, however the newly appointed co-ordinators are demonstrating appropriate leadership. The key issue with regard to teaching has been addressed successfully. Teaching is now good and this represents good progress since the last inspection. The high standards identified in the Foundation Stage, in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development for some pupils have not been maintained. Nevertheless, they are satisfactory overall. The capacity to improve further is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	E	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	D	D	E	
Science	C	D	C	C	

In comparison to similar schools nationally, pupils' attainment in Year 2 is below average overall in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison to similar schools in Year 6, attainment is in line in science but below in English and mathematics. Pupils' achievements in lessons are good as a result of good teaching overall. The recent trend is one of improvement after a dip in 1998-2000. Inspection findings show that, in Year 2, pupils are achieving at levels that compare to nationally expected standards and which broadly reflect the results of the most recent national tests. In Year 6, the majority of pupils are also achieving at nationally expected standards. Inspection findings suggest that standards are higher than in the previous year and reflect the generally good progress observed in most lessons, including that of pupils with special educational needs, as a result of good teaching and learning. All pupils in the school including the current Year 6 have also benefited from the school's decision to form single age classes in the mornings for numeracy and literacy. Higher attaining pupils do not make the progress they should and therefore do not attain the higher Level 5, particularly in mathematics. The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Pupils' achievements in the lessons observed are good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The schools target's are appropriate and have been broadly met. The results in the school have been adversely affected by the significant number of pupils leaving or entering between the ages of seven and eleven.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils' attitudes to school are good; they enjoy their work and respond with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of	Behaviour in most classes is satisfactory and, as a result of teacher

classrooms	challenge, good. However, some boys, in spite of the teachers' efforts, do not listen or attend to their work and therefore do not always make the progress they should. There is too much emphasis on over-robust play at breaktimes and lunchtimes in the playground. There are insufficient planned activities for pupils to learn to play constructively.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall.
Attendance	Good and above average nationally.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. On a few occasions opportunities are missed to extend pupils' own learning and challenge them further. Teaching is good overall in the lessons observed in English, mathematics and science; pupils are making good progress. The recently appointed teachers are having a very positive affect on raising standards. The discrete year group teaching for English, mathematics and science every morning is also helping to raise standards; teachers match the work to pupils' abilities well and they are challenged to try harder. The needs of pupils with special educational needs, some with severe emotional difficulties, are well met and they are effectively included in all aspects of the work of the school. Teachers have high expectations of effort, behaviour and achievement. In most classes the pupils respond well. However, some lessons are marred by the behaviour of a small minority. Although teachers have clear weekly learning objectives, sometimes they do not clarify what they want the pupils to learn in each particular lesson. Marking of work is inconsistent across the school. However in some classes, Year 6 for example, the teacher's thoughtful comments cause pupils to reflect on how to improve. This is very good marking. Teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Extra-curricular activities are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Multicultural development is under-developed. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to reflect on and appreciate the work of other pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are safe and appropriate procedures are in place. Assessment of pupils' strengths and weaknesses is good.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	There are strengths and weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school. Leadership and management by the newly appointed key stage managers are helping to raise standards further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Many are very active in listening to pupils' needs. However, there is insufficient rigour in evaluating the work of the school in relation to its impact on standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has the appropriate evidence to support its hypothesis of falling standards (1997-2000) and has clear action planned to reverse this trend.
The strategic use of	Satisfactory. The governing body obtains best value for money in its

resources	spending decisions. The staff make good use of the limited classroom accommodation.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils enjoy coming to school. • The appointment of new teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour monitored more effectively in the playground. • Arrangements for wet play time before school start at 09:00 hrs.

The inspection evidence supports the views of the majority of parents overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' achievements in lessons are good as a result of good teaching overall.
2. Although the standards have not improved since the last inspection in 1997, the recent trend is one of improvement after a dip in 1998-1999. There are some reasons for this:
 - Inspection findings show that in Year 2, pupils are achieving at levels that compare to nationally expected standards and which broadly reflect the results of the most recent national tests.
 - In Year 6, the majority of pupils are also achieving at nationally expected standards in the lessons observed. Standards are now higher than in the previous year and reflect the generally good progress observed in most lessons, including that of pupils with special educational needs.
 - Good teaching and learning.
 - All pupils in the school including the current Year 6 have also benefited from the school's decision to form single-age classes in the mornings (as opposed to teaching mixed-age classes together), so that English, mathematics and science can be taught separately to small groups of fifteen to twenty pupils.
3. Assessments of children aged four, undertaken shortly after they start school, indicate that their attainment is broadly in line with that found nationally for their age group in most areas of their learning. The majority of children make appropriate progress based on the sound teaching and support they receive by the time they are ready to leave the Foundation Stage of their education to begin the National Curriculum. Their attainment is that expected for their age and many have attained, and some exceeded, the early learning goals.
4. The results of the 2001 national tests for pupils aged seven were just below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison to similar schools the pattern is the same. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was below the national average in reading and well below the average in writing and mathematics. Overall the trend of improvement over time since 1997 is just below the national average.
5. The results of the 2001 national tests for pupils aged eleven overall were below the national averages in English and mathematics and in line for science. This is a drop in comparison to 1997, a result of a large number of pupils with special educational needs in that year group and a significant number of pupils leaving and others joining the class throughout the key stage. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 6 (2001-2002) is achieving in line with national expectations and that targets for the higher Level 5 are on course to be met successfully.
6. The headteacher and deputy headteacher undertake a thorough analysis of the assessment data they gain about their pupils from a wide range of sources. This information is used effectively to compare the performance of the school with all schools nationally and with similar schools to identify trends in the attainment and progress made by pupils. They respond to their findings by modifying what is subsequently taught in order to further improve standards. Although there are significant improvements taking place, not all pupils have benefited from the newly established monitoring, and therefore standards at age eleven do not reflect improvements taking place for younger junior pupils.

7. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national average for pupils' aged seven and for pupils aged eleven. Pupils aged six to seven listen carefully and respond to questions appropriately. Higher attaining pupils can sustain concentration and have started expressing their views. At the age of eleven, the majority of pupils demonstrate well developed speaking and listening skills.
8. The most recent national tests in mathematics show attainment by the time pupils are eleven to be below the national average. Inspection evidence shows attainment throughout the school to be average. Inspection findings indicate these high standards are likely to be maintained over the next few years. Literacy and numeracy is well planned for across the curriculum.
9. In science, pupils' achievement is good overall in the lessons observed. The results of national tests for the year 2001 are in line with the national average. Following an analysis of these results the school has set challenging targets for a greater proportion of more able pupils to gain Level 5 and to improve the quality of investigative work. Inspection evidence shows standards rising as a result of high quality teaching, including an emphasis on subject vocabulary and very good question and answer skills.
10. Attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education is in line with that expected for pupils' age.
11. In ICT, standards have risen recently due in part to the high quality of training undertaken by all staff and the high confidence this has generated. Attainment in physical education is close to that expected for pupils' ages.
12. The overall achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in relation to their prior learning and these pupils make good progress towards achieving the targets in their individual education programmes, which are regularly reviewed.
13. Support provided by class teachers, volunteers and assistants enables pupils learning English in booster sessions to make good progress over time. Pupils benefit from classroom strategies such as questioning and repeated explanations, and most pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning. This contributes to their progress. The school's coherent approach to meeting their needs is reflected in the commitment of class teachers and support staff. This enables them to integrate well in the school community. Whole school targets for English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 have been broadly achieved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall. Pupils' attitudes to learning in the classroom are good. Where teachers' classroom management is good, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. Behaviour within the school is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection and the school needs to develop a clear, concise and effective behaviour policy, to be implemented uniformly throughout the school both in and out of lessons. Some pupils are not aware of school procedures and routines and this is another reason for the poor behaviour seen around the school by a few pupils. Personal development for pupils needs to be linked with a good behaviour policy and with the school's delivery of personal, social and health education. Some poor behaviour and attitudes are not sufficiently challenged by all staff consistently, especially outside the classrooms and in the playground.
15. Relationships between the pupils and staff are satisfactory and in some classes are good. However, some children lack respect for others and do not get sufficient guidance on how to increase their social skills. The school council does provide an opportunity for this but only the older pupils are involved. Some teachers use time well for personal and social development, but there is inconsistency across the school.
16. Attendance is well above, and authorised absences are below, the national average. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their children attend school and the good attendance reflects

their co-operation in achieving this. The school uses the Education Welfare Officer and other agencies within the community when necessary to support attendance and the children's welfare.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good and this represents good progress since the last inspection.
18. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and children make sound progress. Although planning is good, on occasions opportunities are missed to build on and extend pupils' learning overall. Teachers and their assistants and helpers show appropriate knowledge and understanding of the foundation curriculum and the early learning goals. Clear targets are set for the attainment and progress children are expected to make.
19. In English, teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. Teachers are making good use of the literacy strategy to raise standards. Effective questioning rooted in good subject knowledge and careful planning enhances pupils' participation and understanding. This, together with imaginative use of resources, provides appropriate challenge for pupils, while giving the lesson a brisk pace. As a result, pupils are interested, take an active part and learn well. In one lesson in history in Year 4, the teacher made imaginative use of resources, challenged pupils throughout and the pace of the lesson was brisk. Most teachers generally use summary sessions to reinforce learning. Support staff, where available, make a good contribution to pupils' attainment and progress, especially those with special educational needs.
20. Teachers know their pupils well. They manage them so that all are busily engaged in tasks and discussions. Tasks set are matched well to the needs of the pupils. Teachers have high expectations of effort, behaviour and achievement. In most classes the pupils respond well. However, some lessons are marred by the behaviour of a small minority. Some boys in Year 5 showed a lack of respect for their teacher and for their classmates so that they achieved little and spoiled the lesson for the majority. Some very good teaching in Year 1 engaged the pupils very well. The teacher read the story expressively so that the pupils gave her their full attention. Although teachers have clear weekly learning objectives, sometimes they do not clarify what they want the pupils to achieve in each particular lesson. Marking of work is inconsistent across the school. However, in some classes, Year 6 for example, the teacher's thoughtful comments cause pupils to reflect on how to improve. This is very good marking.
21. Throughout the school the quality of teaching and learning is good in mathematics. Teachers are making very effective use of the techniques promoted by the numeracy strategy and this has helped to raise standards, particularly in pupils' oral and mental mathematical abilities.
22. In science, teaching and learning are consistently good. Teachers have high expectations, use appropriate subject vocabulary, and place an appropriate emphasis on investigative work. Tasks are set which meet the needs of the pupils. More able pupils are not always challenged in their learning and do not always make the progress they should.
23. Teachers' skilful questioning and imaginative use of resources encourage pupils to think about their work, although assessment is not always used to good advantage.
24. Strategies employed by most teachers enhance pupils' motivation whilst clarifying learning objectives and so pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching observed in the ICT suite was good. Teachers ensure a purposeful interaction whilst extending and consolidating pupils' use of subject vocabulary.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

25. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught, meeting statutory requirements. Throughout the school there is a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. These are relevant to and mostly meet the needs of the pupils. The school has moved successfully from planning for mixed-age classes to separate year groupings. All pupils are provided for equally and those with special educational needs are included fully. Each subject taught has a clear scheme of work and is planned so that the pupils will learn progressively. The strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been implemented satisfactorily. The impact is beginning to be seen in the improvement in standards.
26. There is very good provision for extra opportunities to enrich the curriculum, particularly in the wide range of clubs which pupils attend at lunchtimes and after school. All the teachers volunteer additional time to this. Pupils are seen, for example, enjoying singing in the choir or listening with rapt attention in the reading club. Many pupils appreciate these opportunities. Whilst the school provides sex education and an awareness of the dangers and misuse of drugs, there is insufficient attention given to the pupils' personal development. This is unsatisfactory. No structured programme is yet in place for pupils to share experiences, or appreciate the work and views of each other. As a result, on occasions some pupils show a lack of respect for each other and for teachers and other adults. They lack maturity.
27. The school has good links with the community. In addition to the Church links, pupils take part in the local carnival, sing carols in the village and participate in the Bolton music festival. A notably effective link involves parents and governors attending the school each week and hearing every pupil read. This provides a great support to the teachers and has had a positive effect on standards in reading. There are also good links with other schools, involving learning and sporting opportunities. Some of these are available also to parents. Teachers benefit from discussing curriculum matters with colleagues from other schools. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection
28. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Standards noted in the last inspection have been maintained, but not sufficiently built upon.
29. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education lessons are planned well and the pupils gain good insight into the beliefs and values of various faiths. Collective worship times are also planned well for the pupils to participate in prayer and share in thoughts and feelings. However, the response of some pupils, particularly junior pupils, on these occasions spoils the otherwise good atmosphere and lessens the sense of community.
30. The provision for moral development is satisfactory. The pupils are aware of how they should behave both in class and around the school, and most of them act accordingly. A number of pupils, mainly boys, do not reflect this in their behaviour and attitude. Teachers' expectations of them are high and in some lessons all the pupils are swept along by their interest and involvement. However, there are no clear guidelines as to the consequences of unacceptable behaviour. Sanctions are not effective. Some rules are displayed but not necessarily highlighted and referred to as necessary.
31. The provision for social development is good. The teachers provide very good role models and give a lot of additional time to the pupils. Most of them respond to this so that relations between adults and most pupils are good. Opportunities are provided for the pupils to share tasks in pairs and small groups, which they often do well. When lessons are reviewed at the end, pupils show and talk about their work. However insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to comment on and appreciate the efforts and talents of their peers. A positive feature is the link with another school on a residential visit.

32. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils make visits to the zoo and to the ballet. They reflect on their heritage in their history studies, such as the impact and consequences of World War II. Some knowledge of other cultures is gained through art when pupils studied folk tales from around the world. Good knowledge of other faiths is acquired in religious education lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The care that the school takes of the children is satisfactory. Child protection procedures are in place but the headteacher, as the designated person, has not had recent updated relevant training. There are a few health and safety issues that caused concern; these have been shared with the school and have been addressed already. The caretaker is trained in the new fire regulations.
34. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and for assessing their attainment are good. Those for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, eliminating oppressive behaviour and for supporting personal development are not satisfactory, for example there is no behaviour log in use in the school, and the behaviour policy is ambiguous and so hard to implement uniformly.
35. Class teachers keep clear and detailed records of the academic progress that pupils make throughout their time in the school. They use these records very well to monitor how pupils are doing and to support and guide the progress they make. They note when a pupil is doing well or needs extra help. The careful tracking ensures that the school is now aware of its strengths and areas for development and can readily focus resources to improve standards. The statutory procedures to assess the attainment and progress made by pupils by the ages of seven and eleven are met fully and annual reports for parents are thorough, providing an accurate picture of the abilities and achievements of each pupil.
36. The school uses a wide range of outside agencies to support the pupils' welfare; for example SNUFS, the support group for under-fives, which helps in the Nursery as soon as a need is identified and before formal help is available. The local headteachers meet and pool their knowledge of local resources, an example of good practice. The school also has constructive links with the secondary schools which help to ensure a smooth transition for older pupils. Induction for the Foundation Stage is good and children settle into school quickly. The school encourages the children to care for others by supporting a broad range of charities from a wide area.
37. Good use is made of helpers, parents, friends and governors in school and this has a positive effect on learning. Attendance is well above the national average.
38. The school is good at ensuring that parents have a lot of information about the curriculum via letters, newsletters, meetings and open days. There is an open door policy for parents, although the school prefers to know about a problem before a parent comes in, so that all the information is available and so issues can be resolved quickly and effectively. This has caused friction in the past but most parents understand and value the help that the school gives them and their children.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The majority of parents are satisfied with the school and feel that it is now improving; relationships with parents are good and this is strength of the school. Most parents are aware of some parental concerns but support the school's efforts to improve and to deal with issues quickly and effectively. Parents say that their children like going to school and that they make good progress. The information that the school provides through the prospectus, newsletters, letters home and the annual progress reports to parents is good. These cover all subjects and are clear and informative but lack suggested areas for parents to help children at home. Parents are well informed about the school and the curriculum. Meetings are well attended and there is

flexibility in seeing and informing parents who find attending school difficult. Parents also get the opportunity to see the school at work during the regular open days.

40. Parents are happy with the way pupils settle quickly into school and enjoy what the school has to offer. The role that parents are expected to play within the life of the school is clearly presented in the prospectus, the home-school agreement and the homework policy. This recognised partnership is good for the children's personal development. There is an active Parents and Friends Association, which offers valuable social events and financial support, and which is invaluable to and much appreciated by the school.
41. Parents are given many opportunities to discover more about the school curriculum and so are able to understand their role in their children's learning. Parents appreciate the Learning Towns Initiative after-school club, which is available to children from 15:30 – 17:30 hrs. Children are collected in a bus and taken to the centre where they meet children from all over the area. This helps them form friendships, which last into secondary school.
42. Parents also help with after-school clubs, of which there is a wide variety. Parents of children with special educational needs are fully involved in the provision for their children and the help given is seen by all as a valuable tool to enhance learning. The effect of parents, friends and governors helping both in the school and with trips and visits is good and positively impacts on learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. Leadership by the headteacher overall since the last inspection is satisfactory but there are weaknesses. However since the appointment of new teachers over the last five terms, morale is now high and teaching is good. Key stage managers are good and are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are clear about what action to take to raise standards further. Leadership and management are now secure and improving rapidly. The school now has higher expectations of its pupils and sets these out very clearly in its aims and values. These expectations are not always well-met in practice in one class. The headteacher has now been successful in building a good team of hardworking staff at most levels, who are clearly focused on ensuring all pupils reach their full potential.
44. The school has a satisfactory strategy for monitoring the quality of teaching across the school. Subject co-ordinators are not all empowered to make a contribution to the management of the school and this is a weakness. Target setting and the analysis of pupils' work to improve standards are effective. There is now in place a good policy for checking the quality and performance of teachers. This is well established at all levels and most staff contribute to an improving school. There is a good mix of staff expertise, experience and enthusiasm clearly focused on raising standards further.
45. Despite recent improvements in staff appointments, there has been insufficient delegation of whole school responsibilities to key stage managers and curriculum co-ordinators in order to raise standards further.
46. School development planning lacks clear priorities by not focusing all staff and governors on raising standards overall. There is insufficient emphasis on evaluating the work of the school with regard to measurable outcomes for pupils; this is a weakness. The governing body is therefore not effective in monitoring the work of the school. They have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, are committed, but do not always as a governing body, focus on the outcomes for pupils in the classroom.
47. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school is well maintained and cared for. The new ICT suite is making a positive contribution to the progress pupils are making.
48. The school makes good use of its allocated resources and careful financial planning and management support educational priorities appropriately. Governors and the headteacher apply

the principles of best value appropriately to the provision of resources and the use of allocated funds. Arrangements to monitor closely the progression of spending are well established. These include the provision of regular and detailed reports for the governing body. Day-to-day spending is also monitored closely. These procedures are suitably linked to the arrangements for monitoring the progress of the budget across the financial year and are effective. Day-to-day administration by the office staff is good.

49. The headteacher and governing body do everything within their powers to ensure the school is able to benefit from the wide range of available financial resources in order to enhance the quality of educational provision for their pupils' benefit. The specific grants allocated to the school, including those for the support of pupils with special educational needs, are used appropriately for their designated purpose.
50. The staffing level is appropriate and the staff are qualified. There is no induction training pack for new staff and no training to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils and no mention of child protection in the Staff Handbook. The newly qualified teacher does not have the statutory required free time.
51. The open-plan design does not suit the modern curriculum needs of the school and the noise levels can be very distracting in some classrooms. The use of the junior library as a classroom limits its accessibility and use.
52. The Key Stage 2 playground is small and has no permanent seating area. The children lack equipment to support positive play and some of the behaviour seen at lunchtime was inappropriate and went unchallenged. Children in the Foundation Stage have a separate, safe area for outdoor play which is well resourced with large play equipment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- (1) Improve the standards achieved by higher attaining pupils by:
 - Providing work that is matched to their ability across all Key Stage 2 classes, particularly in science and mathematics;
 - Evaluating the outcomes of whole school training by staff for these pupils;
(Paragraphs 80, 85, 89 and 93)
- (2) Develop the role of the senior and middle management more effectively by:
 - devolving more responsibilities from the headteacher to her senior management team and to subject co-ordinators with appropriate management time, within the school day.
(Paragraph: 45)
- (3) Evaluate the work of the school more regularly by:
 - Developing success criteria in the school development plan which relate to standards and learning for pupils;
 - Ensuring that governors are more involved in the monitoring process by focusing on outcomes for all pupils.
(Paragraph 46)
- (4) Improve the behaviour of a very small number of boys throughout the school by:
 - Implementing a whole school personal and social education curriculum;
 - Provide more purposeful options for pupils at break and lunchtime in the playground.
(Paragraphs (14, 15, 20)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	17	18	1	0	0
Percentage	0	12	42	44	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	143
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	11	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	16	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81	90	90
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84	92	92
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Where the number of boys or girls in the year group are ten or fewer the individual results are not reported

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	10	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	16	14	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75	65	90
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	17	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75	72	78
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Where the number of boys or girls in the year group are ten or fewer the individual results are not reported

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	118
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	20.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	26
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	376 514
Total expenditure	359 591
Expenditure per pupil	2 193
Balance brought forward from previous year	23 118
Balance carried forward to next year	40 041

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	214
Number of questionnaires returned	61

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	41	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	34	5	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	41	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	44	18	3	7
The teaching is good.	54	36	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	46	16	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	36	2	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	43	13	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	44	41	8	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	46	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	33	26	5	20

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. The school makes satisfactory provision for children in the Foundation Stage, that is the nursery and reception classes. Since the last inspection there has been staff absence, including periods when classes were taught by supply teachers. The resulting disruption affected the quality of the overall provision, which was good at the time of the last inspection. During the current inspection, however, a supply teacher and nursery assistant, both with considerable nursery experience, were making a significant contribution, both having been only five weeks in the nursery class. Careful planning in the reception class is ongoing and the staff of both classes have begun to work and plan together effectively. This is now having a positive impact on the overall provision. Staff in both classes are hard working and committed and have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the educational needs of young children. This contributes to the quality of teaching and learning. Children are educated in the recommended six areas of learning and are expected to reach standards known as early learning goals by the end of the reception class. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage promotes satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals through sound organisation and learning experiences that are balanced and relevant. Careful routines have been established and are beginning to focus on the development of children's independence. In the reception class, when activities are supported by adults, they are interesting and challenging, for example, when children were involved in identifying recorded sounds in a listening area. However, some activities lack challenge, for example, the use of inappropriate worksheets and unsupervised play activities with no clear purpose. These activities restrict some aspects of the progress children might otherwise make, particularly the higher attaining children.
54. The nursery and reception class teachers are beginning to work as a team with nursery assistants fully involved. Parent helpers are valued and enabled to make a good contribution to the work of the unit. The adults give the children a satisfactory foundation in basic skills and there is generally a smooth transition into Year 1 where pupils begin to follow the National Curriculum. All staff work hard to develop close and effective relationships with parents through, for example, good arrangements and communications at the start and end of each day. These links assist in promoting a positive transition from home to school and help children to settle happily and to feel positive about school.
55. A clear and manageable record system relates to all areas of learning and gives staff a well-informed base on which to plan. A good assessment of children's attainment on entry to the nursery concentrates on their early abilities in language, mathematics, social and physical skills. A useful system of target setting contributes to progress in the reception class. Both classes in the early year's unit are of open plan design. The accommodation is spacious with adequate indoor activity areas. The nursery class has a secure outdoor hard play area which is well used for outdoor play and also used by reception children on one half-day per week. Reception children share the infant playground and adequate resources for outdoor play are provided at lunch times when children are carefully supervised. Resources including books are of sufficient quality and quantity in both classes, particularly 'big' books, and contribute to children's learning. There are missed opportunities in the provision for all areas of learning to promote an awareness of the important multi-cultural dimension in society and its place in children's lives.
56. The children in the nursery and reception classes make satisfactory progress as a result of sound teaching and provision. The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average. By the time they leave the reception class, the majority of children are likely to meet the levels expected for their age in all the areas of learning. Children with special educational needs receive effective support from staff in both classes; they are alert to the demands and needs of the few children who present challenging behaviour or are hesitant and unsure. These children are included and catered for. Their learning is promoted through planned experiences which are interesting and achievable. As a result they make the progress which is appropriate for their stage of development.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Staff promote children's personal, social and emotional development effectively throughout the Foundation Stage. Teaching is at least sound and leads to satisfactory and sometimes good progress, so that nearly all children are in line to reach the expected level by the time they are due to start in Year 1. Adults are consistent in how they deal and relate with children. They provide good role models as they establish good relationships and treat children thoughtfully and with respect. Good routines enable children to settle quickly and happily in the nursery and to make progress in their personal and social skills. In both groups, adults promote children's personal development by ensuring that equipment and resources are accessible to them and help them to become independent. Very young children are encouraged to take responsibilities in small ways, for example, at snack time and at circle time. This good practice is continued in the reception class where children develop further self-confidence and self-esteem, for example, in responding and taking turns in question and answer sessions. Sometimes the development of independent learning is not as good as it should be because activities lack challenge and expectations are too low. In such situations, children become bored and restless and this results in disruptive behaviour.
58. Most children in both class groups develop good concentration when tasks are interesting and purposeful, for example, when looking through a kaleidoscope and using a hand lens to examine natural objects in the nursery or when reception children were acting out the role of the doctor at the Blackrod Clinic using 'medical instruments' during play. Reception children investigated similarities and differences during work on the five senses by tasting chocolate spread and flavoured crisps. During outdoor play and when choosing the work samples to be included in a wall display or a class book, children learned to co-operate with each other and adults, and to make decisions.
59. Children follow classroom routines and are beginning to understand the broader aspects of school life such as dinner times and assemblies. By the time they are due to leave the reception class, most children are likely to meet the expected levels in the development of their personal, social and emotional skills as a result of the effective teaching and experiences they have enjoyed with others in the early years unit.

Communication, language and literacy

60. The quality of teaching, children's learning and overall provision for the development of communication skills, language and literacy are satisfactory and in some lessons seen, teaching was good. Standards in language on entry to the nursery are about average. By the end of the reception class, children have made at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress, so that most attain the national expectation for their age. The nursery staff help children to enjoy stories and rhymes and to learn the conventions of holding and handling books. The books in the nursery and reception classes are suitable for the needs and interests of children, with a wide and easily accessible selection of 'big' books to capture children's interest and imagination. In both classes, adults are active listeners and provide good opportunities for children to talk about their ideas and experiences. For example, during discussion whilst making blue play dough using food colouring, one nursery child said that the white flour had changed the colour of the dough to light blue. In the reception class children talked readily about texture and colour as they completed a large class book about colour with a nursery assistant. During circle time they are ready to talk about the object they hold and provide its initial letter.
61. Children in both groups are encouraged to think of themselves as readers and writers. Their vocabulary and forms of speech reflect their experience of books. Reception children used and understood such words as 'flavour' when completing work on the five senses and 'title' when sharing a 'big' book with the teacher. In the nursery class there is a writing area where children are given opportunities to practise pencil control and a few children can form letters correctly and write their own name. In the reception class the teacher's emphasis on phonics promotes an understanding of how words are built and this helps them to begin to write. Children are able to write their own names and copy letters and words. The overuse of worksheets for colouring-in activities or repeating what children already know sometimes restricts the progress of higher

attaining children. Progress is better when children are encouraged to have a go at writing words for themselves. In an activity involving teddy bears, children wrote about the story of 'The Three Bears'. Many children were able to write at least the initial letter for themselves. When they were encouraged to listen carefully for sounds within words, they were able to write closer approximations, for example, 'rn awy' for 'ran away'. This develops confidence in early writing skills. The majority of children make satisfactory progress in their learning and are likely to meet the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 and a few may exceed this level.

Mathematical development

62. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children achieve at the level expected for their age. They acquire a range of skills such as counting and using number. Children's early mathematical understanding is similar to that of most three-and four-year-olds when they enter the nursery. They make satisfactory progress both in the nursery and reception classes, so that by the end of the Foundation Stage, they are likely to meet the early learning goals. In the nursery many of the day's activities include aspects of mathematics, such as water and sand play, measuring and recording children's heights on a wall chart, and counting the rabbits made out of play dough. The staff in the nursery and reception classes are skilled in developing children's early understanding through a programme of planned activities. This includes carefully directed activities as well as many activities that encourage the exploration of pattern and shape and spatial understanding, including making model figures using squares, triangles and circles, and making a pet shop out of building blocks. In a topic on pets, children in the nursery made different sets of animals, including those that they had as pets and other animals. They talked about size using appropriate vocabulary such as 'bigger' and 'smaller'.
63. In the reception class, children are given opportunities to count and record numbers and can find missing numbers in sequences 1-20. Emphasis is placed on the relationships between numbers, such as 'before', 'after', and 'between'. Children normally receive a session of number work each day which teaches the early stages of the National Numeracy Strategy. This reinforces counting skills and skills of ordering and sequence. Worksheets are often used to promote mathematical skills but are of variable quality and relevance. Sometimes these involve children in nothing more than colouring in balloons and are insufficiently challenging. In more demanding tasks, children make better progress, such as when they used the terms 'more' and 'less' to differentiate between and add and subtract from quantities when working with sets, or counting groups of children. There is good support for children with special educational needs who make the progress to be expected in developing their knowledge of number and shape.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. Careful attention is given to children's understanding of the world through clear planning and a thoughtful choice of activities that engage children's interests. The quality of teaching and learning is sound and children make satisfactory progress so that by the end of the reception year they reach the targets set for their age group. In the nursery, children explore the properties of water and sand, taking delight in filling and emptying containers with pink coloured water. They learn about the properties of many materials such as paint, paper, card, threads and fabrics. They designed and made box-work models of a pet shop or a home for a pet. The outdoor play area gives good experience of how large structures influence movement.
65. Within the reception class, the teacher extends the children's early experiences by encouraging observation and exploration around a theme. For example, children investigated the five senses when feeling the shape and texture of hidden objects, looking through a hand lens, listening to the recorded sounds of fireworks or thunder, smelling the difference between vinegar and coffee and tasting different flavoured potato crisps. Children have regular access to a computer and use the mouse and keyboard with reasonable skill for their age. They work carefully at finding and matching objects on screen, as in a programme entitled, "Dressing the Teddy".
66. Children develop a sense of time by taking an interest in events past and present. For example, in the nursery, using photographic evidence of change over time, children learned about how their pets live and grow, that they need food, exercise and sleep to be healthy. Reception children had looked at themselves and their families, observing and discussing changes over

time using photographs. Children understand that plants need water and light to grow. They planted crocus bulbs, placing them carefully and examining the pictures of how they would look when they develop into flowers. Children are beginning to be aware of the similarities and differences between people in different cultures, for example, in the story of Nini, an Indian girl. However, there is insufficient provision to promote an awareness of the multi-cultural dimension in society in this area of learning and across the curriculum. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world as a result of the effective planning and interaction of adults.

Physical development

67. The nursery and reception staff make sound provision for children's physical development so that they make satisfactory progress. By the time they leave the reception class, most attain the nationally expected standard. Children acquire a range of skills, such as how to control equipment. They use pencils, crayons, paint brushes, glue spreaders and scissors regularly and with increasing expertise. The range of daily activities promotes care and accuracy, for example, by shaping dough into shapes and fitting plastic and wooden construction parts together.
68. Children have opportunities to run, jump and use wheeled toys and are developing an awareness of space for themselves and others. There is a secure area for outdoor activities for nursery children and each day's activities are planned well to include an outdoor session for all. Nursery staff make effective provision during outdoor play sessions for children to use a range of equipment with imagination, safety and increasing confidence. Children wore hard hats and used a good range of building tools including wheelbarrows as they participated with the teacher in a building activity. Children develop control and co-ordination as they balance, climb and move around in wheeled cars.
69. Children in the reception class share a playground with the infant children but have suitable access to this area at specific times of the week for outdoor activities. They use the apparatus in the school hall regularly. Lessons for physical development are carefully planned. Children use smaller equipment to develop ball skills such as throwing and catching and hitting a target, such as a bucket. They learn to respond to music and language to express their feelings in movement using rhythm or when 'slithering', 'crawling' or 'shuffling'. They control their movements when moving with big/small/slow/fast/strong steps, and by moving in different directions, such as forwards, backwards and sideways. All adults interact appropriately with children to support and extend physical skills and children with special educational needs make sound progress.

Creative development

70. The quality of teaching for this area of learning is sound, resulting in satisfactory progress for children in both classes of the Foundation Stage. By the end of the reception year children are in line to meet the early learning goals for this aspect. Teachers plan a range of work to help children to explore a wide variety of media and materials, to use their imagination, to respond to experience and to express and communicate ideas.
71. In the nursery, children had made a large attractive collage picture entitled, 'Things we made with our hands'. This comprised the use of pattern, shape and different techniques with threads, fabrics, coloured sand, paint, crayon and pastel. In baking, children learn how to use food colouring in mixing to change the colour of the dough. They make models and paint pictures linked with the theme of pets, for example, pet shops and animal homes. With suitable encouragement and sensitive support from staff, children in the nursery make effective use of colour to produce good paintings and drawings such as a squirrel in a tree.
72. In the reception class, children had made an attractive class book on colour containing collage pictures and paintings of a good standard. This had been well presented by the teacher and children enjoyed sitting in the 'book corner' and turning the pages carefully to view their achievements. Music is included as part of children's experience. A music area included chime bars and other untuned percussion instruments which children used sensibly to produce

repeated sounds and sound patterns. Songs and number rhymes often feature in activities in both classes. Imaginative role-play was promoted in the 'Blackrod Clinic', which included a good range of materials and equipment. Reception children enjoyed taking on the roles of 'doctor' and 'patient' and using a variety of toy medical instruments. Provision for creative development in the reception class is satisfactory, but sometimes activities offered to children lack a clear purpose or are insufficiently challenging because they have been repeated too often. This occasionally causes children to lose concentration and sometimes restricts progress.

ENGLISH

73. Standards in English are similar to those expected of pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Whilst standards have fluctuated over the last four years the situation has now stabilised. Pupils are taught in separate year groups and the various changes in teaching staff have ceased. Appropriate attention is given by teachers to ensure that pupils make consistent progress each year. The quality of the teaching in Year 6 last year led to pupils making good progress and the results in recent national tests of attainment were much improved.

The strengths in English are:

- Weaknesses have been analysed and targets set
- The action taken which has raised standards in reading
- The quality of current teaching
- The use of displays to support learning
- Leadership of the subject

Areas for improvement are:

- Aspects of writing
- Better opportunities to improve pupils' listening skills
- Monitoring of standards in writing and marking
- Challenge for more able pupils'

74. Standards in speaking are similar to those expected of pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Some pupils are articulate and happily discuss their work and interests sensibly with adults. In the best lessons seen the teachers ensure full inclusion of all pupils in answering questions. This usually requires full sentences, and reluctant pupils are encouraged well. Most pupils listen carefully. In a Year 5 lesson when pupils were supposed to be working at their recording tasks many of them interrupted others or the teacher and did not make the progress they should. This was despite the fact that instructions were clear. In the best lessons teachers use strategies to check and ensure good listening. There are good displays throughout the school providing a wealth of support for the development of the pupils' vocabulary, as well as reading and writing skills. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher drew the pupils' attention to the extensive word bank and expected them to make use of it in their writing. Teachers use the correct terminology so that the pupils become familiar with and use it. From their art and design lessons Year 6 pupils know and use the word 'montage' appropriately.
75. Standards in reading have improved. Pupils in Year 3 work in small groups with a support teacher on a structured programme, which benefits both reading and writing skills. Volunteers visit the school regularly each week and hear all the pupils read individually. They record their progress and note any problems to report to the class teachers. Regular testing and checking of the pupils' progress takes place and appropriate targets set. Records show that over the last year dramatic progress has been made overall in the pupils' reading ability and this is now being reflected in the national tests. Pupils enjoy reading and talk about their favourite stories and authors. They understand what they read and their books are well matched to their ability. When new words are encountered, pupils of all ages know how to try to read them independently. In various subjects when pupils are required to read any texts they do so with confidence. Additional efforts are being made to promote reading, such as the reading club, book week and the weekly sales of books.
76. Standards in writing are satisfactory overall. The teachers assess pupils' progress and plan well. Pupils in Year 1, for example, are seen clearly to progress well from writing letters to words to

sentences. Older pupils write for different purposes and in different styles. In Year 3 they write poems in the shape of animals, using some thoughtful vocabulary such as 'slithering snake'. Pupils in Year 4 pool their ideas well to write poetry. In discussion they use and understand vocabulary such as 'free verse' and 'rhyming couplets'. Handwriting is taught appropriately but the quality of pupils' work varies and overall is below what is expected, particularly of pupils in Key Stage 2. Some of them, especially in Year 5, are still printing instead of joining their letters. Insufficient attention is given to the correct posture when writing, particularly in specific handwriting lessons. Consequently the presentation of work of most pupils is not satisfactory. Similarly, spelling is below the level expected. This is not helped when a teacher spells incorrectly in a pupil's book or ignores when a pupils entitles his work 'My Dairy' (diary).

77. Teaching in lessons is good. As a result there is good pace to pupils' learning. This includes that of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers know their pupils well. They manage them so that all are busily engaged in tasks and discussions. Tasks set are matched well to the needs of the pupils. Teachers have high expectations of effort, behaviour and achievement. In most classes the pupils respond well. However some lessons are marred by the behaviour of a small minority. Some boys in Year 5 showed a lack of respect for their teacher and for their classmates so that they achieved little and spoiled the lesson for the majority. Some very good teaching in Year 1 engaged the pupils very well. The teacher maintained a good pace throughout. The teacher read the story expressively so that the pupils gave her their full attention. The interesting methods and tasks set meant that the lesson was most productive. Although teachers have clear weekly learning objectives, sometimes they do not clarify what they want the pupils to achieve in each particular lesson. Staff has grasped the literacy strategy well so that this has been implemented satisfactorily throughout the school. Marking of work is carried out conscientiously. In some classes, Year 6 for example, the teacher's thoughtful comments cause pupils to reflect on how to improve. This is very good marking. In some cases there is no specific aspect noted for the pupil to concentrate on improving.
78. The subject co-ordinator has grasped the previous shortcomings of the subject and has a clear and very appropriate plan of action to maintain improvement. Literacy is well supported in other areas of the curriculum by teachers' awareness and use of vocabulary in physical education. Skills in ICT are used well, particularly word processing. The improvement in reading means that pupils are better prepared for their work in other subjects. The libraries are under-stocked and do not at present provide a good enough resource for pupils to research and work independently.

MATHEMATICS

79. Strengths in the subject include:
- Good teaching which is having a good sustained impact on pupils' learning
 - Very good leadership in the subject
 - Good pupil motivation leading to a productive learning environment in lessons

Areas for improvement include:

- Improving the standards reached by higher attaining pupils
- Ensuring that marking is used to help pupils improve their work
- Less reliance on worksheets as an aid to learning

80. At the time of the last inspection, standards of pupils' work in both Years 2 and 6 were in line with national expectations. The results in the most recent National Curriculum tests for the pupils in Year 2 were in line with the national performance of most schools. However, they were well below the performance of pupils in similar schools, that is, schools with a comparable proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment was in line with the national average and also with that in similar schools. At age eleven in the 2001 tests, taking account of the performance of all pupils, results were below the national average and were well below the performance of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels was also below the national average and was well below that in similar schools. With only 20 pupils in the 2001 group in Year 6, caution needs to

be exercised when interpreting these results as each pupil represents five per cent of the age group.

81. Inspection findings show that, in Year 2, pupils are achieving at levels that compare to nationally expected standards and which broadly reflect the results of the most recent national tests. In Year 6 the majority of pupils are also achieving at nationally expected levels. Inspection evidence shows that standards are higher than in the previous year and reflect the generally good progress observed in most lessons, including that of pupils with special educational needs, as a result of good teaching and learning. Over time, since the last inspection, there has been a general downward trend in standards as teaching has not been up to the same standard as that currently in the school. Inspection shows that this downward trend has been arrested because of improved teaching as a result of the recent significant turnover of teachers. Pupils in the current Year 6 have also benefited from the school's decision to form single age classes in the mornings (as opposed to teaching Years 5 and 6 together) so that numeracy can be taught separately to a small group of fifteen pupils.
82. Work in pupils' books in Year 2 from last year shows that all areas of mathematics are covered, with appropriate emphasis on number, including problem-solving, but less-than-expected work on using and applying mathematics. The work shows that teachers rely too much on the use of worksheets and the overall standard of work was below that expected for pupils in Year 2 by the end of the year. Work in the books of the current Year 2 reveals a similar over-reliance on work sheets. From September there has been strong emphasis on numeracy, identifying odd and even numbers up to 100 and practice in identifying missing numbers in sequences such as 14, 12, \square , \square , \square , 4; and 30, \square , \square , 60, 70, \square . Pupils are able to place numbers accurately in order from random sequences such as 21, 17, 27, 30 and 53, 49, 35, 50 and are using metric units to measure areas accurately. The overall standard is in line with that expected for pupils' ages at this early stage of the year.
83. In lessons in Year 2 all pupils respond well to the good teaching and to the good atmosphere for learning in the classroom. They are eager to answer the teacher's quick-fire questions; *"Twenty add ten is? Thirty add five is? Thirty five add one is?"* and so on. In a 'Follow me' game to improve their mental strategies, they listen intently as they look at their cards, working out the right amount accurately as one pupil says, *"I have 11p and I take away 4p: follow me if you have the right amount."* There is a purposeful working environment in these lessons as pupils are keen not to miss their turn. In the main part of the lessons, they enjoy the 'Toyshop' as pupils choose toys from a basket and confidently choose the fewest coins to match the correct price. Their standards are in line with those expected for pupils this age.
84. Teaching is good. This consistently good teaching ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved well and made good progress. The pace was set at a level that was swift and challenging, and succeeded in both capturing and maintaining pupils' interest and concentration. In this small class, the teacher's very good relationships with her pupils reinforced their learning well as they were at ease with her and confident in their responses. For example, at one moment in one of the lessons, the teacher said, *"I'm going to be nasty and give you a hard question"*, after which she asked, *"Now, aren't I nasty?"* "No!" said the class in unison, *"We enjoy this."*
85. In Year 6, pupils have not had the benefit of a similar quality of teaching throughout their time in the school. Even in this class, where teaching is good, it was not consistently so last year, because of the occasional enforced absence of the teacher which led to a series of supply teachers being employed at the school. This is revealed in the work of pupils' books, which shows an over-reliance on work sheets. Marking consisted mainly of ticks and crosses without comments as to how the pupils could improve their work. Much of the work for all ability groups is unchallenging. Work in the books of the current Year 6 since the beginning of the term shows it to be in line with the standards expected for pupils this age. It covers much practice on place-value, for example, confident multiplication of two and three-digit numbers, including decimals. Pupils use brackets well in calculating sums such as, $7 \times (6+2) = 56$. They understand that the concept of equivalence means that, for example, a proper fraction can be written in different ways but still means the same, as in $20\% = 20/100 = 1/5 = 0.2$.

86. Pupils' satisfactory standards in their books were reflected in the lessons observed in Year 6. In one lesson in the computer suite, the teacher began with a good snappy pace and set tasks for pupils to practise and extend their mental agility. Her good teaching ensured that these tasks were sufficiently challenging as pupils were set strict time limits in multiplying four digits by each other to produce as many answers as possible. Pupils rose to the challenge well and produced a high degree of accuracy. ICT was used well in this lesson as pupils used their computers to represent, extract and interpret data about the number of letters in each pupil's name in the class. They were confident in preparing graphs to represent this data well, using the x- axis to represent the number of letters and the y- axis for the number of pupils. They benefited from the encouraging prompting of their teacher. Pupils had good relationships with their teacher and with each other which formed a good working atmosphere in the class. Most teachers have a good grasp of the skills to teach the National Literacy Strategy. New technology is used well in mathematics.
87. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has a clear understanding and vision of where she wants to take the subject. She was appointed in January 2001 and updated the policy for mathematics in March 2001 which now takes due account of the National Literacy strategy which has been fully implemented in the school. Her classroom is a good model for other teachers for mathematics. Weekly targets are set for the subjects and helpful posters are displayed to guide pupils in their learning such as; *"If you're stuck can you:*
- *Describe the problem in your own words to a maths partner;*
 - *Talk through what you've done so far;*
 - *Break the problem up into smaller steps?"*
88. Resources for the subject have been improved recently and are adequate overall.

SCIENCE

89. Overall in science, pupils' achievements are good. The results of national tests for eleven-year-olds for the year 2001 indicate the percentage of pupils who took the test to be just above the national average. Following an analysis of these results the school has set challenging targets for a large proportion of more able pupils to gain Level 5 and to improve the quality of investigative work. Inspection evidence shows attainment throughout the key stage to be above average as a result of high quality teaching which includes an emphasis on subject vocabulary and very good question and answer skills. Progress since the last inspection has been at least satisfactory and recent co-ordination of the subject is of a high standard. More able pupils are not consistently challenged across the key stage and more could be achieved.
90. By age seven, pupils learn about the similarities and differences between a baby and a toddler, identify what attributes each has and what one could do more successfully than the other. Pupils form ideas of their own about what it might be like to be a Year 6 pupil. Pupils know and use appropriate subject vocabulary such as growth and exercise.
91. By age eleven, pupils know that gravity is a force and that air resistance acts against gravity whilst having conducted practical investigations. Pupils record their findings, make hypotheses and test these out. Pupils know about a fair test and discuss "how fast spinners fall". They learn about a fair test, work well in pairs and look for patterns whilst evaluating their recordings.
92. Teaching is good in the lessons observed across the school. A very good characteristic of teaching was the effective questioning of the teachers to challenge pupils and check their learning. Sound opportunities exist for practical and investigative work and the effective use of appropriate subject vocabulary. Subject knowledge and enthusiasm leads to improved pupil interest and attention to task. In small group work pupils with special educational needs use materials well matched to their learning ability.
93. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Good procedures exist for the analysis of National Curriculum tests and as a result of this, the school's focus on increasing the number of

pupils gaining Level 5 in national tests at Year 6 has doubled over the last two years. This year, the school is on target to get 15 per cent (2001-2002). Pupils with special educational needs are predicted to get a Level 4. The school has also focused on developing pupils' subject vocabulary and broadening the range and quality of investigative work. Teacher assessment takes place regularly and at the end of each topic plans are evaluated to promote further learning. Resources are satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Standards in art and design are at the levels expected of pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. This was so in the last inspection and standards have been maintained satisfactorily. Pupils enjoy a range of experiences as they move through the school and acquire a variety of skills and techniques.
95. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn various ways of producing pictures, concentrating on the use of colour and shape. They experiment with different ways of printing, and the use of collage and textiles. Junior pupils continue to improve and acquire new skills that they sometimes apply to cross-curricular projects. In Years 3 and 4 which produce tessellating patterns. Egyptian and Islamic art is explored by pupils in Years 5 and 6. In all years attention is paid to observational drawing and techniques with pencil, chalk and charcoal. Some pupils show above average ability, using pencils effectively in the production of light and shade.
96. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection but some good teaching was observed. The teachers have good knowledge of the subject and plan interesting tasks for the pupils. Pupils in Year 1 learned a range of techniques for showing textures of hair. The class teacher and her assistant were a most effective team working in partnership and taking turns to lead the lesson. The pupils tried very hard and were very successful in copying the techniques they had observed. One boy used his initiative to improve the look of the string by shredding it. Pupils with special educational needs were so well included that they were not noticeable and all made very good progress. Whilst the lesson review allowed pupils to show and share techniques, they were not asked to comment on or praise the work of their classmates. The Year 5/6 lesson was of high quality because the teacher had good subject knowledge and presented interesting and challenging tasks. Many pupils worked enthusiastically and well at their tasks involving images of people in motion. Sadly a few immature and rude Year 5 boys did not know how to behave, so that the lesson was not as enjoyable or productive as it might have been.
97. The majority of pupils enjoy the subject and acquire skills satisfactorily. Famous artists are studied, such as Bridget Riley, Turner and Van Gogh. These studies, however, make insufficient impact on the pupils so that they soon forget them. An experience which made a lasting impression on the pupils was a visit from a potter. All the pupils had the opportunity to make a model from a block of clay and also to attempt to throw a pot. Good cross-curricular links are made, for example, using teabags in water to reproduce the sepia effects of Victorian photography. Sketchbooks are not yet being used to any great effect other than in Year 6.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards in design and technology are similar to those expected of pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. This is based on a range of evidence from previous years and a limited view of current practice. Standards since the last inspection have been maintained satisfactorily.
99. Examples of good practice are seen in all classes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 construct vehicles. They research the task initially and evaluate the success of their constructions. Year 4 pupils use basic knowledge of mechanisms to include pop-up and sliding pieces in their booklets. Year 6 pupils face a challenge to design and construct a machine for leaflet production. They work in groups at different elements of the task, which are later combined to complete the machine. Their plans include measurements and different elevations.

100. Teaching was good in all the lessons seen. Pupils in Year 2 had looked at different types of puppets. After practising basic skills of cutting, sewing and other forms of assembly, some had made glove puppets. During the lesson they worked together planning and making props for a puppet show. Other pupils made stick puppets, following plans they had previously drawn up. Standards in this lesson were above average. The teacher had planned well and was given very good support by her assistant. Pupils paid great attention to detail and the stick puppets generally matched the pupils' plans. In the lesson review those who had changed anything were able to give reasons for the changes. Year 4 pupils were challenged to make a display stand linked to an alarm system. Throughout the lesson the room was a hive of activity. Pupils worked well in their groups and showed secure knowledge of electrical circuits. Pupils with special educational needs were fully included in various groups, playing a full part in the activity. Emphasis was placed on the challenge of making the alarm function. Some of the groups completed the task successfully, using pressure pads, for example. Plans for the electrical aspect were clear. However, those for the stands were not sufficiently carefully planned, with measurements, so that some of the constructions were a little crude. In some cases pupils lacked patience when sawing balsa blocks and ended up by snapping them, hurrying to get on.
101. In both lessons, the teachers had set an appropriate challenge and expected pupils to plan their product and work to their plans. The simple cutting and gluing skills in Year 2 were good. Year 4 pupils' skills had not advanced sufficiently. In a religious education lesson, many of the same pupils found difficulty in folding and gluing accurately, lacking patience. However all pupils enjoyed their activities very much, co-operated well with each other and were pleased with what they accomplished.
102. The subject co-ordinator has identified planning skills as an area for improvement. The planning process is taking place in all classes but is insufficiently ordered to ensure clear progression. Pupils enjoy interesting tasks and use a good range of materials. Good cross-curricular links are made. In a Year 2 English lesson one group made paper plate mouth puppets when they were learning to read and follow instructions but more accurate measurements and scale drawings on plans would better support mathematics. Good links exist with the High School and specialist teachers have worked in the school. Resources are satisfactory except in the range of construction kits for all ages.

GEOGRAPHY

103. Standards throughout the school match those expected for pupils' ages, and are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
104. Work in pupils' books for the last academic year in Year 2 is less in quantity than might be expected and shows that work begins with looking at the school and Blackrod village. Pupils study some of the work that people in the locality undertake, including street traders. But some of the pupils would not like to do this work and give sensible reasons for their views; *"Your feet would get wet and would get swollen. You would hurt your voice as you would shout a lot."* They study buildings in the village and place pictures of local buildings in the correct order geographically. Having visited the seaside they give clear opinions about what they enjoyed the most.
105. In the one lesson seen in Year 1, pupils were taught to recognise some of the physical and human features in the local area and were beginning to understand some of the ways in which they were used. In this lesson many pupils were able to name readily local features such as houses, the roundabout, safety fences, and shops, houses and the church. They completed prepared work sheets reasonably confidently and identified local features in the locality and what they are used for, accurately. Their standards matched those expected for pupils this age. In this lesson pupils listened well to their teacher and their behaviour was satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory, overall. The teacher used good questioning, such as, *"What is geography?"* to which the class thought for a moment before one boy replied, *"Where we live."* The teacher had good knowledge and understanding of the subject that enabled her to talk confidently about it. She used resources well such as photographs she had taken of the local environment and the

school. The pace of the lesson detracted from these good features. This was because the teacher tended to interrupt the flow of her otherwise good presentation by giving too much attention to very minor infringements by a few pupils.

106. The work in the books of pupils last year, when they were in Year 6, revealed it to be insufficient. It ranged from 'Inside the Earth' to the weather and floods. Work on the Earth showed good emphasis on technical language such as 'crust', 'liquid' and 'core', and contained a good chronological account of how the Earth was formed. Earthquakes in Assisi in 1997 were adequately covered and satisfactorily written up. Their books contained sound work on volcanoes with accurate distinctions made between 'active', 'dormant' and 'extinct'. Work in the books of pupils in Year 6, currently in the school shows a limited amount of work since the beginning of the year. There is appropriate emphasis on water and the fact that everyone needs water to survive and that it is the source of life for all living things. Pupils accurately identify various different uses of water, for example, at home, at the farm, for leisure and for other uses such as the fire services, an aquarium and the Zoo. The 'water cycle' is satisfactorily presented and ranged from water evaporation from clouds to rain falling in rivers. The overall standard of work is in line with that expected for these pupils' ages. Marking in pupils' books was satisfactory, overall.
107. The headteacher is currently looking after the subject on a temporary basis and describes herself as care-taking the post in the absence of a co-ordinator, a situation that has existed for some years. This lack of co-ordination is evident in, for example, the policy which needs updating and the resources for the subject, which overall, are unsatisfactory. Although some atlases have been bought, more are needed. The school broadly follows the scheme of work published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which is modified for Years 5 and 6 as these classes are taught together on a two-year rolling programme.

HISTORY

108. Pupils' achievements and standards throughout the school are satisfactory overall. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, analysis of teachers' planning and records; displays and talking to pupils.
109. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls and those with special needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior learning.
110. By the age of seven, the pupils are developing a sound understanding of the past by learning about the differences and similarities of life and work in Roman Britain. They understand the passage of time by relating it to their own lives, and are beginning to acquire key historical skills such as why people acted in the past as they did. There is no marked difference between the standards of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make progress with support. Strengths at Key Stage 1 include the pupils' increasing sense of chronology, understanding of the passage of time and the difference between past and present.
111. In a lesson in Year 4 pupils are confident about devising appropriate questions for their enquiry about World War II and then researching answers from a variety of secondary sources, including different types of books, pictures, posters and the internet. They are developing information gathering and analysing skills and their best work gives a sound interpretation of events and explains causes and effects in a structured way. In their study of 1940 Britain pupils make use of historical and archaeological evidence and express feelings of excitement and discovery in an empathetic manner.
112. Pupils generally display sound factual understanding of events and are beginning to acquire the skills to use relevant historical terms in describing and sequencing events. Their research skills are improving particularly by age 11.
113. History makes a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills by extending the range of writing the pupils tackle when they cover areas such as fact, opinion and empathy, but occasionally less

developed writing skills in English reduce pupils' effectiveness in expressing them better. The subject also makes a sound contribution to numeracy.

114. Pupils are interested in history. They concentrate well and are mostly keen to express themselves in different ways, orally, in writing, drawing, painting and model making.
115. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed was good at both key stages. Most teaching is done through the use of a variety of teaching methods and the appropriate deployment of resources to assist learning – books, posters, pictures, artefacts and visits. Lessons are varied and sometimes challenging. There are good displays around the school. The breadth of the study of history is enhanced through displays of historical interest.
116. Resources such as artefacts, posters, books, videos and maps are adequate.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Pupils' standards and achievements are satisfactory overall and inspection evidence indicates that the trend is one of further improvement since the previous inspection.
118. By the age of seven, pupils can use a graphics program to draw pictures, select tools and add text, and they can save their work, with support, to the appropriate "drive" for their class. They use the mouse and keyboard with confidence. They use ICT appropriately in their numeracy work. By the age of eleven, pupils are confident in using text and combining text and graphics to achieve a particular effect. They are aware of the potential uses of ICT in everyday life. Pupils know how to use the computer to find information, either from programs on disk or CD-ROM, or through the Internet. They can also discuss the relative merits of books and computers, and are aware of the need to make well-defined queries on the Internet to avoid wasting time.
119. Based on the small number of lessons seen, an analysis of pupils' work and observation of the use of ICT in other lessons, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers' knowledge of ICT is sound and is developing well and improving with ongoing training. Some teachers have good knowledge of the subject and use it well across the curriculum in the ICT suite. The recording of pupils' work is good, as pupils are able to save work to their classes file and print it out when necessary. In some classes there is good practice in assessment and in the use of assessment to plan future lessons.
120. In the most successful lessons there is good structure, good pace and challenging levels of work. There is good emphasis on developing pupils' ability to work independently and to explore the possibilities of the hardware and software. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop collaborative working skills and to share expertise, often promoting good speaking and listening. Many teachers use ICT well to support other areas of the curriculum.
121. Pupils' attitudes to ICT are positive. Where teaching is at its best, attitudes are good and sometimes very good. All pupils appreciate the quality of the ICT suite and equipment provision and treat it with respect.
122. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The school is aware of the need to develop some areas of ICT and has included this in its development plan for imminent action. The planning of the ICT suite has been well-done and resources are now good. Staff training is ongoing and when completed will enable all staff to take full advantage of the new resources to raise standards further. Progress since the last inspection is good.

MUSIC

123. Judgements are based on the observation of two lessons. At the last inspection, standards were judged to be in line with the standards expected nationally, with the standards of some pupils by

the age of eleven, especially those involved in extra-curricular music, being good. In this inspection, most of the music observed consisted of singing. Standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils' ages, although it was not possible to compare standards at the end of by the age of eleven. Judgements are made about teaching in the few lessons seen, but there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching overall.

124. In Year 1, singing was satisfactory. Pupils listened to their teacher's instructions well and the majority of pupils clapped reasonably rhythmically to the beat of the song, "*Heads and shoulders, knees and toes.*" However, a significant minority has a long way to go before they are able to clap in time to a beat. Pupils enjoyed this lesson and what they lacked in expertise they made up for in enthusiasm. Teaching in this lesson was satisfactory, overall. The teacher emphasised clear articulation appropriately when, after singing 'Three blind mice', she did well to insist that they practised carefully, 'Did-ev-er-you-see-such-a-thing-in-your-life' until it could be clearly heard by the listeners. She emphasised technical terms well such as 'rhythm', 'beat' and 'pulse'. On occasion the pitch of the songs was set either too high or too low for the pupils. In this lesson they made satisfactory progress. In Year 3 pupils attempted to sing 'Humpty Dumpty' in three parts. This was an ambitious challenge for the ability of this class, because whilst the majority managed to maintain their part, about a third of the class quickly got lost. Similarly the challenge to play un-tuned instruments in three parts was introduced too early for pupils who were struggling to maintain the parts in their heads without instruments. Despite these weaknesses pupils made satisfactory progress which reflected the teaching overall. The teacher moved the lesson along at a good pace maintaining pupils' interest, and did well to include all pupils in the session, including pupils with special educational needs.
125. In both the session for hymn practice for all juniors and an extra-curricular club for choir, which consisted of 25 pupils (20 girls and 5 boys), singing was satisfactory, overall. The singing in the choir club was more enthusiastic than that for the hymn practice.
126. There is no co-ordinator for the subject and there is no music specialist on the staff; a former music specialist left the school last Easter. Some of the teaching staff have received further training in music teaching, although not those teachers most recently appointed. However, the teacher in Year 4 generously gives of her time and plays the guitar, taking responsibility for managing the hymn practises and running the choir club. The school follows an amended version of a scheme of work published by the Curriculum and Qualifications Authority. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, overall, although some of the music books are old and outdated.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Pupil's achievement is satisfactory and attainment is close to that expected for pupils' ages but in dance many pupils achieve high standards. Pupils' with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
128. The provision made for this subject has improved since the previous inspection of the school and pupils in Years 5 and 6 experience outdoor and adventurous activities as part of a residential visit.
129. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, especially in dance. Pupils aged seven to eleven produce very good, sustained sequences, responding very well to the enthusiasm of their teacher and to the challenging and stimulating music chosen to help them compose their dances. Many pupils are sufficiently confident to dance as part of assemblies, school productions and other celebrations.
130. Older pupils make satisfactory progress in athletics and team games. When undertaking standing long jumps, standing triple jumps and vertical high jumps the distances and heights they are able to achieve increase. Helped by the sound advice of their teacher they are able to evaluate their own performance and make comments that help each other to improve. Their

work in these lessons reinforces their mathematical abilities when they estimate and measure distance and heights accurately.

131. The abilities of the oldest pupils in netball are close to those expected for their age. However, their work in small groups is far better than when they are working as a whole class. Other younger pupils when using gymnastic apparatus, their sequences with a partner are sustained and linked together imaginatively. However, their work on the floor lacks finesse and they are given insufficient opportunity to refine what they are doing, or are asked to consider too many variables in their work.
132. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school provides a programme of extra curricular sporting activities that includes football and netball .

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. Standards in the subject at the ages of both seven and eleven meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection and standards have been maintained satisfactorily.

The strengths of the subject are:

- Good teaching
- Learning about other faiths
- Recording of work
- The use of artefacts and displays

Areas for improvement are:

- Knowledge of Christianity and other faiths by making more comparisons
- Links between beliefs and personal values and behaviour
- Resources, particularly artefacts

134. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about Christianity through Bible stories. They know who the disciples were, about some of the well-known parables and some of the miracles of Jesus. Pupils in Year 2 also learn about Islam and about the significant aspects of Moslem prayer. These studies are extended in Year 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study Judaism and in Year 5 the Hindu faith. Satisfactory links are made with Christianity, for example, work in Year 4 stems from a story about Moses.
135. Teaching is always at least good. The teachers have good subject knowledge and plan and prepare well. Good use is made of resources so that the pupils can see exactly what some of the important artefacts and ceremonies are. A very good lesson involved Year 4 pupils celebrating Hanukah. All pupils were fully involved. When they made some card spinners to play the game of Driedle some pupils with special educational needs produced a particularly well made spinner. The teacher had taken great trouble to make the lesson as realistic as possible so that it was a meaningful occasion. Pupils are set some interesting recording tasks and enjoy carrying them out. More care could be given by some teachers to marking of work. Titles such as 'Hindisum' and 'Judism' are uncorrected. Generally the amount and range of writing expected provide good support for English. Some comparisons are made between, for example, Hinduism and Christianity in Year 6. This is not extended so that pupils have sufficient awareness of the many similarities of all faiths. Whilst knowledge increases, understanding does not to the same extent. Pupils are insufficiently able to relate what they learn to their own lives. Pupils are not encouraged in enough depth when Year 6 pupils write about people they admire and the reasons for their choices.
136. Assessment of pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding features in lesson reviews. When a Year 3 girl writes her daily diary she writes about getting up and going to the milk side of the kitchen. She can explain Jewish beliefs about food. The new co-ordinator has an action plan, which includes improving resources, since the artefacts currently in use having been borrowed.