

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Skelmersdale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119586

Headteacher: Mrs A Aspinwall-Livesey

Reporting inspector: Mr P T Hill  
6642

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> January 2001

Inspection number: 194133

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant & Junior School

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Flamstead  
Birch Green  
Skelmersdale  
Lancashire

Postcode: WN8 6PF

Telephone number: 01695 721323

Fax number: 01695 555694

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Catherine Ainscough

Date of previous inspection: April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6642	Peter Hill	Registered inspector	Science Information Technology Geography History Equal Opportunities Special Educational Needs	What sort of school is it? How well is the school led and managed?
31718	Denise Shields	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1272	Ian Hocking	Team inspector	Mathematics Design & Technology Physical Education Foundation Stage	How well are pupils taught?
16761	Melvyn Hemmings	Team inspector	English Art Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

School Inspection & Consultancy, 19 Marple Road, Charlesworth, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 5DA

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager, Inspection Quality Division, The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St John's Catholic Primary School serves the parish of St Mary's, Skelmersdale. The school is situated in the heart of a local authority housing area where there are high levels of unemployment and social disadvantage. Many pupils come from homes which are financially much less well off than average. Currently there are 232 pupils in the school, including 20 children in the nursery. Almost 40% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This is well above the national average. The vast majority of pupils come from a white indigenous background with only 3% of pupils of different ethnicity. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils having special education needs (SEN) is in line with the national average but the percentage of pupils with statements of SEN is well above the national average. Children's levels of development, on entry to the school, are often well below those expected for children aged under 5.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very good and effective school. By the time they leave the school most pupils attain standards which, although below the national average, represent good progress as the majority of pupils start school with levels of attainment which are well below average. Pupils are well taught in all areas of the school and during the inspection there was a very high percentage of good and very good teaching. Excellent teamwork between teachers and support staff considerably benefits all pupils. The school is very well led and managed and this is having a very positive effect on standards and on the school ethos. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The leadership and management of the school is very good. Resources and finances are very well managed. Governors play a full and active part in the running of the school.
- Teaching is good overall with a very significant amount of very good and some excellent teaching. Teachers' planning is very good. Teamwork and the contribution of all staff to pupils' learning is excellent. As a result pupils make very good progress in their learning.
- Spiritual education is very good and pupils' moral and social education is excellent. This whole area is a considerable strength of the school.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is carefully aimed at meeting their individual needs and as a result they make very good progress.
- Behaviour is very good throughout the school: in a significant number of lessons pupils' attitudes to their work and their behaviour was excellent.
- Pupils are cared for very well. The school provides a very good environment for pupils' learning.
- There are excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour.
- Parents are well informed and made welcome by the school and the quality and presentation of the information they receive is excellent.

#### **What could be improved**

- The level of attainment achieved by 7-year-olds.
- The coverage of the National Curriculum for information technology (ICT) and pupils' standards in ICT.
- Pupils' standards in design and technology.
- Pupils' level of attendance.
- The preparation of pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.



---

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

## **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since that time the school has made good progress in addressing the Key Issues identified in the last report. Teachers' lesson planning is now very good and a strength, ensuring that pupils' individual needs and stage of learning are clearly taken into account. There has been a considerable improvement in the assessment of pupils' levels of attainment and in checking these against levels expected by the National Curriculum. Those pupils who can work at higher levels often have work set to meet their needs. The provision for pupils with SEN has developed considerably and is very good. There has been satisfactory progress in developing pupils' investigational skills although the school still has work to do in this area. Subject managers now play a significant and very active part in monitoring the curriculum and pupils' standards. This is especially true of the core subjects of mathematics, English and science. Besides addressing the Key Issues, there have been considerable improvements in the decoration of classrooms and the school environment; the level of equipment and resourcing and; the development of teamwork between all staff throughout the school. The school continues to develop and make progress in all areas and standards are improving.

## **STANDARDS**

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

<b>Performance in:</b>	<b>compared with</b>				<b>Key</b>
	<b>all schools</b>			<b>similar schools</b>	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	B	D	D	B	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average    E
Mathematics	B	C	E	C	
Science	B	E	E	C	

The school's results have varied over the past few years. As can be seen from the table, standards in English are above those of similar schools and in line in mathematics and science. When compared with the average standards in all schools, they are below in English and well below in mathematics and science. However, as most pupils enter the school with very low levels of skill and, by the time they leave, are just below expected standards, they have made good progress and achieve well. The inspection found this to be especially true of the current Year 6 pupils whose attainment is in line with the national average. There are a number of reasons for the variations and for the lower than average standards in national tests. There were high percentages of special needs pupils in groups being tested, for example 54% of pupils in Year 2 at the time of the test, and a number of pupils who were expected to achieve higher standards were absent at the times of the tests. However, the well below average standards attained by 7-year-olds is an issue which the school recognises and plans to improve. Pupils' standards, according to LEA analysis, compare very well with those of similar schools within the authority. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Standards in ICT and design and technology are below average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school and to their learning are very good. They are enthusiastic, listen very well to their teachers, and try hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour, in all areas of the school, is very good. In a small but significant number of lessons, behaviour and pupils' attitudes were excellent.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Their relationships with each other and with adults are very good and a strength of the school.
Attendance	Attendance is well below the national average. This is despite the school's very best efforts to improve attendance.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good and strengths of the school. This makes a very positive contribution to the good rate of progress that pupils make and helps to create an environment where pupils enjoy learning, work hard and try their best. Since the previous inspection in 1997 there has been an improvement in all of these aspects. Attendance is an issue that the school recognises and is working hard to improve. The vast majority of pupils attend well and are punctual. Only a small number are frequently late, and much of the absence is due to medical reasons.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very 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.*

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, in 21 percent of lessons, teaching was satisfactory, in 53 percent it was good, and in 24 percent teaching was very good. In 2 percent of lessons excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is an impressive amount of good and very good teaching and is a considerable improvement from the time of the last inspection. English is well taught in both key stages and mathematics is well taught in Key Stage 1 and very well taught in Key Stage 2. Literacy and numeracy are well taught in all areas of the school. Planning lessons to meet the needs of all pupils is very good and is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. As a result, lessons very effectively meet the needs of all pupils. Provision for pupils with SEN are very well catered for and taught and consequently make very good progress in relation to their individual needs. The teaching of design and technology (DT) is not as good as the teaching of other subjects. The school has only just developed an ICT suite. When this is fully used it will enable pupils to spend more time developing their ICT skills. In both ICT and DT, the school has planned further training to improve teacher's knowledge and confidence.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is very good. For pupils aged 5 to 11 it is broad but lacks appropriate balance as it does not meet the statutory requirements for the teaching of ICT. The school provides a very good range of additional and extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for. The teamwork between teachers, support staff and visiting specialist from the Local Education Authority is excellent ensuring that pupils with SEN make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good and a strength of the school. Great emphasis is placed on pupils' social and moral development, which are excellent. All the work of the school is underpinned by the very strong links with the church.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are excellent and the day-to-day care of pupils is very good.

The school provides very good high quality information for parents. The parents' view of the school is that it is very good. Despite the best efforts of the school the part that the majority of parents play in the life of the school is limited. The curriculum is good, and, with the exception of ICT, meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the needs of all pupils including those with SEN. However, the provision for ICT which, although of good quality with modern computers throughout the school and a new suite, does not currently provide pupils with enough time to develop the expected range of ICT skills. As a result, the subject currently fails to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school takes very good care of all its pupils. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well and provide a caring and friendly environment in which pupils work confidently and safely.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Although the headteacher has only been in post for a year she has made a considerable and very positive impact on the work of the school. She is very well supported by the acting deputy and by the governors. Key staff, for example the subject co-ordinators, play a significant part in shaping the work of the school and in raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors are very committed to the school. They are fully involved in shaping its direction and in monitoring and evaluating performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. This has been an area of considerable development recently. As a result, all staff are fully involved in monitoring performance and evaluating what the school does well and what needs to be improved.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Resources provided to support pupils with SEN are very well deployed giving them high quality provision carefully matched to meet their individual needs. The development of the ICT provision has been brought about through careful identification of what was needed and thorough planning

matched to available funding.
-------------------------------

The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, supported by governors and key staff, has high expectations and a clear view of the school's future direction. She is determined to improve standards and provision for all pupils. This determination is evident in all the work of the school and is shared by all staff. The principles of best value are well applied and form an integral part of all the school's monitoring, analysis and planning. The leadership and management are fully aware of the standards throughout the school and how these compare both with similar schools and nationally. The accommodation is very attractive and well used and is enhanced through very good quality display and decoration. It is well maintained and very well cared for. Learning resources are good for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and for ICT. There has been a considerable recent emphasis on improving the quality and appropriateness of the resources. The overall staffing levels are very good with excellent teamwork between all staff. This considerably benefits all pupils and especially those with SEN. This teamwork and provision is an outstanding strength of the school.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p><i>Well over 95% of parents who returned questionnaires strongly agree, or agree, that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable approaching school about problems and suggestions.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• School is helping children become mature.</li> </ul> <p><i>Over 80% of parents strongly agree, or agree, that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School works closely with parents.</li> <li>• School provides an interesting range of activities.</li> <li>• Their children get the right amount of work to do at home.</li> </ul>	<p><i>A small percentage of parents felt that they would like an improvement in the:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information about how their children are getting on.</li> </ul>

Only a small number of parents attended the parents' meeting and 30 percent of parents returned the questionnaire. Parents are very positive in their views of the school. They have recognised considerable improvement in many areas of the school's recent work, and since the last inspection. Inspectors strongly agree with all the positive views expressed. Inspectors judge that the school has placed a substantial emphasis on communication with parents and that information, including reports to parents on their children's progress, is of high quality.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1 The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were below in English and well below in mathematics and science in comparison with the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The attainment of most pupils in the current Year 6 is in line with that expected for their age, which shows that they have achieved very well in relation to the low skill levels they had on starting school. These pupils are on course to meet the suitably challenging targets set for them by the school in English, mathematics and science. This is a result of the positive effect of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the significant amount of good teaching that pupils aged 7 to 11 receive. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

2 The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds were well below in reading, very low in writing and well below in mathematics in comparison with the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards were well below average in reading and writing and below in mathematics. However, this class had a very high percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and they achieved as well as could be expected. The attainment of most pupils in the current Year 2 class is below average in reading, writing and in mathematics. Again, this shows that pupils achieve well from when they start school and is a result of the good quality teaching that they receive. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

3 On entry to the Nursery class few children have reached the levels of development anticipated for their age. The majority have low levels of skills, particularly in the key areas of language, mathematics and personal and social development. Pupils experience a good range of worthwhile activities, developing them across all six areas of learning recommended for children under five. By the time the children are ready to transfer to Year 1 most have reached the standards expected for five-year-olds apart from in language. Nonetheless, this represents good achievement and is a direct result of the good teaching they receive in the Nursery and Reception classes.

4 In English there is good use of the introductory and the plenary sessions to develop pupils' speaking skills, which are average by the time pupils are 11 and show significant improvement from when they start school. There are good opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain their ideas, as was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson developing pupils' understanding of how text can be used to evoke suspense. The listening skills of most pupils are very good, which helps them to make relevant answers to the teachers' questions and to gain a suitable understanding of the work that they are to do. Pupils aged 5-7 make good progress in their reading, and pupils of all abilities achieve well in relation to their low skills on starting school. The standards in reading are below average with many pupils not showing suitable ability to read accurately and confidently from texts appropriate for their age. By the time that they are seven many pupils are not able to use a suitable range of strategies to determine unfamiliar words, including the use of phonics. However, they do know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and are increasing in their confidence to read aloud in a large group. Pupils who are aged 7 to 11 age also make good progress and by the age of 11 the majority of pupils demonstrate an appropriate ability to recount stories, express preferences in reading matter and to talk in an informed way about famous authors.

5 In an effort to raise standards in writing all teachers now set targets for pupils to achieve. This is not having the desired effect for pupils aged 5 to 7 because of a lack of appropriate expectation of what pupils, especially the more able, are capable of doing. There is also an over emphasis on speaking and

listening activities which means that pupils do not have enough time to develop and practise their writing skills. Many pupils need support to write a sequence of sentences and punctuate them accurately, with simple words spelled correctly. Most pupils do not show the required ability to use an interesting range of vocabulary and demonstrate an awareness of the reader in their writing. Handwriting is legible despite inconsistencies in size and use of upper and lower case letters but the standard of presentation is poor. Pupils aged 7 to 11 are able to spend more time developing their skills by writing in a variety of forms across the curriculum and most pupils in the current Year 6 are achieving well and are attaining standards in line with those expected for their age. Their writing is of suitable length with consistent use of tenses and correct use of direct speech when needed. The spelling of regular words is usually accurate and handwriting is joined and legible. There are sufficient opportunities for them to be involved in extended writing activities and as a result are achieving well in this aspect of English.

6 Pupils have many opportunities to develop their literacy skills well in other subjects. In mathematics lessons the pupils are able to develop these skills when reading questions and then discussing and explaining their strategies for finding solutions. There is a high focus on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary and most classrooms have very good quality labelled mathematical displays. Teachers insist on the use of accurate subject vocabulary, as was seen in science and mathematics lessons. In science, the pupils write with a sense of purpose when recording their results. In geography and history, pupils record their ideas in a variety of written formats and make accurate labelled diagrams in science. In a design and technology lesson, for pupils in Year 2, there was good opportunity for them to develop their speaking and listening skills when discussing toys that were played with in years gone by.

7 In mathematics, pupils aged 5 to 11 are making good progress in developing their recall of number facts and in mental manipulation of number. They are increasingly becoming adept at explaining their methods when performing mental calculations. Pupils in Year 6 have average levels of skill in written calculations but few have reached the required standards in mental calculations because they have only experienced the National Numeracy Strategy for the relatively short period of time of just over one year. Pupils have many opportunities to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, particularly in science when they take measurements during investigations. This was evident when pupils in Year 4 were using Newton meters to take measurements within an investigation involving forces. In history, they make good use of numeracy skills when exploring timelines and placing historical events in chronological order. This is seen in the work of pupils in charting the changes in land use in Skelmersdale since 1850.

8 In science, pupils aged 5 to 11 make good progress from the low skill level when they start school and by the time they are 11 standards are average. This represents good achievement in relation to prior attainment.

9 In information and communication technology, standards are below average and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. The statutory requirements for the teaching of this subject are not met, as aspects of data handling, control and solving problems are underdeveloped. Pupils are not able to spend sufficient time on computers to learn and practise basic skills and consequently these are underdeveloped.

10 In art, history, geography, music and physical education pupils achieve average standards by the time that they are 11. In design and technology the standards that pupils achieve are below those expected for their age. This is a result of a lack of teacher confidence and expertise and not all aspects of the subject being covered in suitable depth. Pupils achieve good standards in singing and are enthusiastic and confident when performing in front of an audience.

11 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve very well throughout the school. This is a result of the very effective procedures in place for the identification and assessment of these pupils and the individual education plans that give appropriate targets, which are broken down into small manageable steps. These pupils also receive very good support from the classroom support assistants resulting in a high proportion of direct teaching. This ensures that pupils have a high work rate and produce a good amount of work. The needs of the more able and gifted pupils in Key Stage 2 are also suitably met and they make good progress in their learning, although this area needs to be developed in Key Stage 1. There are no significant variations in the achievement of boys and girls.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good. These strengths make a very positive contribution to pupils' good rate of progress and helps to create an environment where pupils enjoy learning, work hard and try their best. Since the previous inspection in 1997 there has been an improvement in all of these aspects.

13 Pupils have very good attitudes to their work; they are keen to learn and to participate in all that the school offers. They take an interest in and gain obvious enjoyment from their lessons. They listen to their teachers very well and because of this they are clear about what they are to do next. They answer questions, discuss their work and how they are doing it and they seek help when they need it. They persevere with their work, for example during a PE lesson pupils concentrated for long periods trying to master the skill of hitting fore and then backhand strokes. Pupils are keen to celebrate and show appreciation of the work achieved by others in their class. They listen attentively during class assemblies and applaud spontaneously at the end of the presentations.

14 In classrooms, at lunchtime and at play pupils' behaviour is very good. In nearly 10 per cent of lessons observed behaviour was excellent. Pupils understand the school rules and conventions and try hard to follow them. They appreciate the rewards that are given for all aspects of school life especially the "star worker" and the weekly award, given by the welfare assistants, to the best class or pupil at lunchtime. Pupils are polite, considerate and friendly both towards each other and to all adults in the school. They are keen to help visitors and to talk to them. Instances of bullying are rare. Pupils and parents express confidence that, if any incidents did occur, these would be dealt with promptly. Parents express the view that pupils' behaviour, both in and out of school, has improved: they appreciate this. Members of the community comment positively on the good behaviour of pupils during school and residential visits.

15 There are a very small number of pupils with challenging behaviour. Only on very rare occasions does the behaviour of these pupils interrupt the flow of lessons. This is because they receive very good support from the Special Support Assistants (SSAs), who, in turn receive good advice and guidance from the behaviour support outreach worker who regularly visits the school. One pupil was excluded in the year prior to the inspection.

16 Relationships between teachers and pupils and pupils themselves are very good and based on mutual respect and trust. This gives pupils the confidence to try new experiences without fear of failure. Pupils know that all staff who work in the school are supportive and this gives them the confidence to seek help when they need it, although they know "you have to try first". Pupils show care and concern for those pupils who have physical disabilities. They are careful not to run or bump into them when they are playing outside, but at the same time do not exclude these pupils from their games.



17 Pupils respond very well to the opportunities for them to take progressively more responsibility as they move up the school. From their earliest days in the school they carry out duties. For example, nursery children help to give out drinks and fruit at snack time. Classroom monitors, take the register to the school office each day. The Year 6 pupils carry out responsibilities that contribute to the smooth running of the school. For example, they ensure orderly behaviour around the school by manning the doors at lunchtime and helping the kitchen and welfare staff with simple tasks. They take their duties very seriously. Pupils are encouraged to be independent and respond very well to the opportunities provided. In some lessons they select their own resources and can usually work independently of the teacher during group activities.

18 Despite the school's very best efforts to encourage parents to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time, attendance is well below the national average. Unauthorised absence is above national figures. The majority of absence is due to medical reasons. However, a small minority of pupils are often absent. This appears to be condoned by parents. This adversely affects pupils' learning. There is a very small minority of pupils who are frequently late. Late arrival interrupts the orderly start to the school day. It also puts pupils at a disadvantage because they miss vital teaching.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19 Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In 21 percent of lessons teaching is satisfactory. In 53 percent of lessons teaching is good, in 24 percent it is very good and in 2 percent it is excellent. This represents an impressive amount of good and very good teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teaching of the pupils aged under five is good overall. In 53 percent of lessons teaching is good, in 27 percent of lessons it is very good, and it is satisfactory in the remainder. Teaching in the lessons for those aged five to seven is also good. In 63 percent of lessons teaching is good and in 37 percent it is satisfactory. Teaching for pupils aged seven to eleven is very good overall. In 12 percent of lessons there is satisfactory teaching, in 46 percent teaching is good, in 38 percent it is very good and in 4 percent it is excellent.

20 Teaching of the pupils aged under five is good overall with three very good lessons observed. Teaching is very well prepared, making good use of resources. A striking feature of this successful teaching is the high emphasis that is justifiably given to developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. Periodic assessment of pupils' learning enables staff to gain a clear knowledge of pupils' developing skills, knowledge and understanding. Both the Nursery and Reception classrooms provide a secure, stimulating and caring environment that engages pupils' curiosity and motivates them to learn. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate and listen to staff and to each other and to develop self-confidence to express themselves. Very good relationships between the staff and pupils contribute to very effective and quietly effective class control. A strong sense of teamwork between teachers and able support staff contributes a great deal to the good provision that exists in the Foundation Stage.

21 In Years 1 and 2, (Key Stage 1) teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, art, history, geography, music and physical education and satisfactory in design and technology. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2) is good in English, art, history, geography and music and very good in mathematics, science and physical education. The teaching of ICT topics during the inspection was satisfactory in both key stages although the school recognises that teachers' confidence and expertise in the subject needs to be further developed. Insufficient lessons were taught during the inspection week to enable secure judgements to be made about the quality of teaching in design and technology in Key Stage 2.

22 The most successful lessons for pupils aged 5 to 11 took place in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and were predominantly in mathematics and science. Enthusiastic teaching, allied to good subject knowledge

promoted very good learning. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson, on testing the insulation properties of materials, the teacher's high quality explanations and very good classroom organisation was well rewarded by the pupils' keen interest and productive collaboration with each other.

23 In an excellent Year 6 numeracy lesson, the teacher's high level of subject knowledge enabled her to pose increasingly probing questions to the pupils. She emphasised key vocabulary such as 'inverse' and 'partition' and encouraged pupils to share their strategies with the class. She had arranged an interesting range of activities, including a dice game that challenged the high attainers. Good use was made of the computer in this lesson.

24 In all lessons, pupils' behaviour is managed very effectively. Teachers and support staff work in close partnership to present a consistent and supportive ethos in classrooms. Pupils respond very co-operatively as a result of the high levels of mutual respect between staff and pupils. Teachers take care to make clear to pupils the intended learning outcomes of the lesson. These objectives are usually revisited during the summary phase of the lesson to reiterate the key learning points made earlier and to enable pupils to become more self-aware of their learning. This approach is especially prevalent in the English and mathematics lessons and reflects the highly successful manner with which the school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In Key Stage 1 and 2, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The teachers' good delivery of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is enabling pupils to make solid gains in English and mathematics.

25 Teachers' own evaluation of their lessons allied to good systems of assessing, recording and checking individual pupil progress in English, mathematics and science are used effectively to plan future work. This means that teachers are able to present work at levels that are appropriately matched to pupils' prior attainment and therefore enables them to build on what they already can do, know and understand. The school recognises the need to extend record keeping to cover all subjects.

26 Teaching is very good for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Lesson planning reflects the fact that teachers and support staff have a high level of awareness of the needs of pupils. Teachers and support staff respond sensitively and appropriately to the needs of all pupils including high attainers in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. However, there is a need to raise teachers' expectations of the quality of work to be attained by potential high attainers in Key Stage 1.

27 Homework is set appropriately in line with the school policy and supplements work done in school.

28 There has been a considerable improvement in teaching since the last inspection when there was a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching i.e. 14 percent of lessons. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of very good teaching has increased from 3 percent to 24 percent. This improvement is attributable to the combined effect of the headteacher monitoring teaching throughout the school, much improved planning, a better match of work to pupils' ability and the very good teamwork amongst the staff. Despite these substantial improvements, since the last inspection, there is a need to continue to develop teacher's expertise and confidence to teach ICT and design and technology.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

29 The curriculum that is provided for children in the Foundation Stage of learning, in the nursery and reception classes, is very good. There is a strong emphasis placed on promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development, which allows them to gain confidence and settle into everyday

routines quickly. This is important as many children enter the school with underdeveloped personal and social skills. The teachers and other adults working with children aged up to five provide a very stimulating learning environment for the children in their care, leading to them making good academic progress in language and communication and in mathematics. The children are very well prepared for the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum as they enter Year 1.

30 The curriculum that the school provides for pupils aged 5 to 11 is good, being broad but lacking balance as it does not meet the statutory requirements in the teaching of information communication technology, which leads to standards being unsatisfactory in this subject. The school implements the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in a very effective way, which has been an important factor in the steady improvement in standards in English and mathematics, especially for pupils aged 7 to 11, in recent years. The school effectively plans to meet the demands of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school successfully supports the children's physical and personal development and there is suitable provision for them to experience personal education, including health education and attention to drug misuse, within the science curriculum. The school provides for sex education in a sensitive and supportive manner that emphasises family values within a very caring Catholic community. The provision for social education is very good and is a significant factor in promoting the excellent relationships to be seen through the school. There are many opportunities for pupils to relate to others in a variety of situations, in and out of school, and as a result they learn to respect the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults.

31 The school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has been improved since the last inspection and is now very good with very effective procedures in place for the identification and assessment of these pupils. The individual education plans give appropriate targets, which are broken down into small steps to enable pupils to make good progress in their learning and achieve well.

32 The school has improved its planning procedures since the last inspection and a good structure is now in place in all subjects to ensure that pupils learning builds on what they already know. There is now a long term planning framework that provides an overview of the aspects of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study delivered to each year group over the year. The medium-term planning consists of schemes of work that clearly outline what is to be taught. Short-term planning is taken from these schemes and is now clearer and more focussed and details the key skills, knowledge and understanding that is to be covered. The planning for English and mathematics is exemplary and is a testament to the commitment of all staff. It enables pupils of all abilities to achieve to the level of which they are capable, although, in Key Stage 1 the provision for higher attaining pupils remains an area for further development.

33 The provision of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils is very good, including football, music club, aerobics, art, guitar, netball and homework club, and pupils are also able to take part in a variety of competitive team games. The school gives all pupils opportunity to take part in a wide variety of educational visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences. Children in the nursery have been to Blackpool Zoo, as part of their topic on animals. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good use of the local environment to further their work in science and geography, and have visited St. Mary's Church as part of their studies in religious education. Pupils also have opportunity to take part in activities such as 'Book Week' to develop their skills in reading and writing, in an imaginative and stimulating way.

34 The school has very good links with the community and the church. These make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. There are very good links with a local college of education and secondary schools that have positive effects on pupils' learning. The links with the secondary schools very effectively prepare pupils in Year 6 for when they transfer to the next stage of their education.

35 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

36 Pupils' spiritual development through the curriculum and acts of collective worship is very good, being set within the secure context of the Catholic Faith. There are many opportunities for pupils to quietly reflect in assemblies and, at other times of the day, in classrooms. A very good example of this was seen in an assembly, led by the acting deputy headteacher, in which pupils had time to think about the importance of faith in their journey through life. In this assembly, led by pupils in Year 4, good use of music to heighten the mood of spirituality. Representatives of the clergy come into school on a regular basis to work with pupils. There are regular visits to St. Mary's Church, as part of pupils' work in religious education. This helps to support pupils' spiritual development. All teachers greatly value pupils' ideas and efforts and this is shown by the way that all pupils are encouraged to make contributions during lessons and by the impressive displays of pupils' work throughout the school.

37 The school's provision for moral development is excellent and it is a very orderly community in which all pupils clearly know right from wrong. Moral themes feature in many aspects of the curriculum and are an integral part of the school ethos. The pupils are encouraged to develop good moral values through the behaviour policy, which is consistently applied throughout the school, and by the very good examples set by teachers. The pupils are given clear expectations of their behaviour and they took an active part in drawing up the code of conduct alongside teachers and parents. The staff work very hard to promote a sense of fairness among pupils and are successful in teaching them to be tolerant of each other. Any incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with promptly and in a very sensitive manner. This is clearly a school in which pupils have a very good sense of self-discipline and as a result are able to feel safe and secure in all that they do.

38 There is excellent provision for the social development of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to work and play together with respect and tolerance. From the start of their time in school pupils are provided with outstanding social development opportunities, with the staff providing very good role models. Pupils in Year 6 are able to take responsibility for helping to look after the pupils in the Reception class at playtimes and during the lunch hour. Pupils listen to and respect the opinions of others, as was seen during the introductions and round up sessions of most lessons. Pupils go into the community at Christmas to sing carols in the local shopping centre and the home for elderly citizens. There are opportunities for members of the local and wider community to come into school to watch concerts at Easter and Christmas. Pupils are actively involved in raising money for a variety of charities, including 'The Good Shepherd': this helps them to gain a good understanding of the needs of others. The very good provision for extra-curricular activities and opportunities for older pupils to take part in a residential visit at Crosby Hall very effectively promotes their social development.

39 The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to learn to appreciate aspects of their own culture by having opportunities to work with visitors including authors, poets and historians. They are able to visit museums, libraries and places of interest, for example Wigan Pier, to support this aspect of their education. By taking part in the Halle Project, the pupils in Year 5 have had opportunity to work with professional musicians and also to visit the Bridgewater Hall to attend a performance of the Halle Orchestra. Pupils in Year 6 are able to take part in a residential stay at Crosby Hall, to help further develop their personal and social skills. There have also been visits from a variety of theatre groups to help develop the pupils' understanding and enjoyment of drama, for example a recent performance of the 'Pied Piper'. In religious education, the pupils learn about the Catholic faith and, with the adoption of the revised religious education programme of work, are to explore the beliefs and traditions of other major world faiths. The school recognises the need to further prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

40 The school takes very good care of all its pupils. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well and provide a caring and friendly environment in which pupils work confidently. The secretarial and support staff also play an important part in the success of this aspect of the school's work. Because of this very good provision pupils grow in self-esteem and confidence and this contributes to the overall standards they achieve. Parents appreciate the fact that their children are well cared for.

41 Staff are clear about the health and safety arrangements and teachers adopt safe practices in their day-to-day work. For example, during a science lesson when discussing teeth, pupils were reminded, by the teacher, that whilst examining their teeth as part of the investigation they were not to put their fingers in each other's mouths because of the risk of spreading germs. Health and safety tours and risk assessments are regularly carried out and there are effective procedures that ensure the governing body is kept fully informed. Pupils' medical needs are catered for very well; the teachers and welfare assistants have training in emergency first-aid and there are very good arrangements to inform parents about illness or accidents at school. The arrangements for child protection are very good and are underpinned by a detailed policy. The school ensures that any concerns raised receive attention from the appropriate authority. The arrangements for supervising pupils at play and during lunch-time are good. All the welfare assistants have received training for their role; relationships are relaxed and friendly. Because of this pupils willingly help with lunchtime tasks and behave well. There is a good induction programme for pupils entering the nursery and reception class and this ensures they settle quickly into the routine of new school life. Good liaison arrangements with the secondary schools in the area ensures the smooth transition of pupils to their next stage of education.

42 The school places great emphasis on promoting good behaviour and is successful in this element of its work. Appropriate behaviour, effort and achievement in all aspects of school life are consistently and regularly rewarded. Pupils understand the need for sanctions to be used and very much appreciate the rewards they receive, especially the "star worker". Pupils and parents helped to draw up the schools' code of conduct. Consequently, everyone is fully aware of the high behaviour expectations. Pupils who sometimes find difficulty controlling their behaviour are very well supported by the SSA's and the outreach worker from the behavioural support team. The school has very good procedures to eliminate bullying and harassment. Pupils and parents are confident that any incidents brought to the school's attention are dealt with promptly.

43 Attendance is promoted and monitored very well. The school is very aware of those pupils whose attendance and punctuality is not regular. Every opportunity is taken to remind parents of the need for their children to attend school regularly and on time. Currently, the school is involved in the LEA attendance project which is aimed at improving levels of attendance. Evidence indicates that overall rates have slightly increased as a direct result of a number of strategies that have been introduced.

44 The support and guidance provided for pupils make a very good contribution to their academic achievement. Teachers know their pupils very well, they involve pupils in class and school life, support and encourage them in their learning and recognise and reward pupils' efforts and achievements. They ensure pupils are given responsibilities from their earliest years in the school. Consequently, pupils want to do well in their learning and are keen to take on the responsibilities offered. Pupils' personal development is monitored effectively. Although staff have relied, in the past, on informal communication and procedures, recently a formal written monitoring system was introduced. It is too early to assess the impact of this new initiative.

45 The systems for assessing and monitoring individual pupils' attainment and the progress that they make, in English, mathematics and science, as they pass through the school are good, which shows improvement since the last inspection. There is an effective whole-school system of assessment and record keeping that can be used by teachers to determine pupils' levels of attainment and set targets for improvement in these subjects. However, there are inconsistencies in the use of this system. There are very effective procedures in place to analyse the optional and statutory test results to identify areas of weakness from which manageable targets are set to bring about improvement for groups and individual pupils. These procedures have helped the school to improve standards in English and mathematics, since the last inspection, for pupils aged 7 to 11. Assessment information is used effectively by teachers to evaluate pupils' performance so that they can plan future learning experiences accordingly. Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs is used very effectively to plan future work. The information from the baseline assessments is used in an effective manner to plan future learning experiences.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

46 The school aims to encourage parents and carers to take an active and constructive role in their children's education and in school life. It makes considerable efforts to try and involve parents and carers in activities and provide them with information that will help support their children's learning. To a great extent it is successful in this aspect of its work. Parental views of the school and support for it have improved since the appointment of the new headteacher. Parents have a very positive view of the school and they appreciate the changes that have been made. Many say that the "door is always open", staff are approachable and everyone is made to feel welcome.

47 The quality and range of information provided for parents and carers is very good and this makes a significant contribution to their involvement in the school. Parents and carers receive high quality information about the school and their children's progress. The prospectus and governors' annual report are very informative and well presented. The very informative reports on pupils' progress are of a good quality. They are supplemented effectively by many opportunities for parents and carers to consult staff about how their children are doing. Additionally, there is a good flow of information about day-to-day school life.

48 Several parents and carers give freely of their time, helping regularly in lessons and with other activities, such as accompanying pupils on educational visits or with sporting events. A number have received training and are now employed as SSA's. Their contribution is particularly helpful in supporting the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those who find learning difficult. The help parents give is greatly valued by the school. Parents also help the school financially. There is an active parents and teachers association (PTA) that organises social and fund raising events. It provides funds for additional resources for teaching and learning. Parents' and carers' support for the school is seen in their attendance at concerts, class assemblies and parents' evenings. Nevertheless there is often a disappointing lack of support for events which could help parents and carers become more involved in supporting their children's learning. Not all parents support the school by ensuring their children attend regularly and on time. As a result, this puts their children at a disadvantage, their learning is frequently interrupted, because of absence, and the progress they make is restricted.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

49 The school is very well led and managed by a highly committed and caring headteacher. Since her appointment, just a year ago, she has made a significant impact on many aspects of the work of the school, building on the previous structure and strengths. The headteacher, very well supported by governors and key staff, has high expectations of what can be achieved and a clear view of the school's

future direction. She is determined to improve standards and provision for all pupils. This determination is shared by all staff and is evident throughout the school. Very good teamwork and leadership are provided at all levels and this is a major factor in ensuring that pupils achieve as highly as they can and that the school achieves very well when compared with neighbouring schools. The teamwork is one of the great strengths of the school, contributing considerably to the very positive ethos and to the progress that individual pupils make.

50 The governors play a significant role in shaping the direction of the school, being very enthusiastic and highly committed to improvement and raising standards. Many governors play an important part in the weekly life of the school. They make regular visits and this ensures that the governing body has up-to-date information, and is able to evaluate and put the work of the school into a broader context. The headteacher greatly values this support.

51 The governing body has effective systems, procedures and committees in place and is playing a full and effective role in managing the school. Governors are working very closely with the headteacher and staff to further improve performance. There is a high level of shared commitment to improvement and to succeed in addressing its areas for development, building on its recent strengths. The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities with the exception of the coverage of the National Curriculum for ICT.

52 The evaluation of progress being made and identifying areas for development are given high priority. The current school development plan is based, not only on previous development plans, but on a series of well structured and informative reviews instigated by the headteacher when she took up post. This review, which involved all associated with the school, including parents, pupils, and governors was a very good and open process, setting the tone and the targets for the current year. An important part of the overall review of the school has been the monitoring of teaching, especially by the headteacher. This has been a very effective process, providing individual teachers with a clear analysis of strengths and areas for development.

53 The school makes good use of its available resources. In the school development plan, which is of very good quality, governors clearly identify the areas for development and the resources needed to support improvements. Governors are fully involved in the process of evaluating the progress made in each of the targets identified in the school development plan and in establishing new targets. The school budget is very well managed and the school has up-to-date and efficient systems in place to monitor and account for expenditure. The school's administrative support is very good.

54 The teaching staffing level is adequate and provides for all the subjects of the National Curriculum and RE. The school has an above average number of support staff, many of them employed to work with pupils with special educational needs. The school makes very good use of the excellent services provided by other agencies, including support for literacy and a range of professionals working on a regular basis with pupils with special needs, some of the needs being very complex. There is excellent teamwork between all staff. Staff are very well deployed and this is having a considerable impact on pupils' standards. In all classes, support staff are highly valued and are an integral part of the lesson, working very effectively with all pupils.

55 The school carefully targets effective use of resources at improving provision and standards. The school now has a good level of up-to-date learning resources and these allow the delivery of most subjects of the National Curriculum. This has been an area which has been clearly targeted since the appointment of the current headteacher, with out-dated and no longer appropriate resources being replaced. Resources are clearly provided to ensure best value for expenditure. The resources for

teaching ICT are developing rapidly and the new ICT suite is being effectively used. This is clearly raising pupils' standards in this subject.

56 Given the relatively high income it receives and taking into account the good teaching provided and that pupils enter school with levels of attainment well below average and, especially the current Year 6, leave with standards which are in line with the national average, the school is providing good value for money.



## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- Raise standards for 7-year-olds in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. (paragraph 70, 74, 78, 89, 90.)
- Raise standards in information and communication technology by: (paragraph 113, 116)  
increasing pupils' access to the use of ICT, especially computers;  
ensuring National Curriculum requirements are met;  
further enhancing teachers' confidence and expertise in the subject.
- Raise standards in design and technology throughout the school by: (paragraph 9, 100, 101)  
increasing staff confidence and expertise in the subject.

## **OTHER AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

In addition to the above areas for further improvement, the following should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Continue to explore ways to encourage parents to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. Increase parents' awareness of the effect that the small amount of condoned intermittent absence and frequent lateness has on their children's learning.
- Continue to develop the provision for multi-cultural education and pupils' awareness of life in a multi-cultural society.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2%	25%	53%	21%	0%	0%	0%

*The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10	212
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		87

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	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	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.8
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	24	10	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	18
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	20	19	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59 (81)	56 (81)	76 (85)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	16
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	21	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (89)	71 (89)	71 (81)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	20	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	5	9
	Girls	15	13	16
	Total	19	18	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (69)	53 (73)	74 (73)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	10
	Girls	14	15	17
	Total	21	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (81)	68 (81)	79 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	207
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	1
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 – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	26.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	290

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	5
--------------------------------	---

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	444759
Total expenditure	450078
Expenditure per pupil	1966
Balance brought forward from previous year	46538
Balance carried forward to next year	41219

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	222
Number of questionnaires returned	66

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	21	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	30	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	26	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	61	29	9	2	0
The teaching is good.	82	14	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	29	12	0	9
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	18	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	12	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	29	6	0	9
The school is well led and managed.	73	23	0	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	20	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	26	3	2	5

## **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**

57 Pupils aged under five, in the Foundation stage, are prepared well for entry into Key Stage 1. The school provides a secure, caring and stimulating environment for pupils. Pupils experience well-chosen activities within a broad and balanced curriculum that covers the required Early Learning Goals and provides a smooth transition to the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1.

58 On entry to Nursery, pupils' attainment is well below the level of development anticipated for their age. The vast majority has under-developed skills particularly in the key areas of language, mathematics and personal and social skills. By the time pupils are ready to transfer to Key Stage 1, most have reached the standards expected for five-year-olds but a significant number need to make further progress in language skills to reach this standard. Nonetheless, this represents good achievement and is the result of the good teaching they receive in the Nursery and Reception classes.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

59 Pupils make very good progress and are on line to meet the expected levels in their personal social and emotional development. Teaching is very good; children are encouraged to communicate and work harmoniously with others, in a variety of contexts. They are encouraged directly and through the excellent role models of staff to show good manners. Relationships amongst the pupils and between pupils and the adults are at least very good. Pupils are able to express their ideas, for example, when enacting roles in the 'hospital'. In play, even the youngest pupils in Nursery co-operate well with their peers, with most taking turns as necessary, for example when waiting for their snack. Pupils follow instructions and readily comply with class routines. Almost all in Reception are able to dress and undress independently for physical activity. When working alone, or in large groups, they behave very well and sustain concentration. They respond well to responsibility such as tidying up. Pupils carefully use school resources such as the computer, books and materials. During acts of prayer, pupils are reverent and participate appropriately.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

60 Pupils aged under five make good progress in communication, language and literacy development. As a result of good teaching, and the strong emphasis that is given to improving pupils' language skills many achieve the expected levels by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Reception pupils can select an appropriate letter sound and match it to a relevant object. They can sequence pictorial representations of a story and are developing an awareness of the purposes for writing, for example, when completing appointment slips for St John's Hospital. Most pupils can copy their name under the teacher's writing and higher attainers are able to write short sentences. Low attainers are reliant upon the teacher doing the writing on their behalf. Adults in Nursery and Reception take every opportunity, including snack times and play, to encourage good quality dialogue between pupils and themselves. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are progressing well. Though most pupils are reticent at first, they develop increasing confidence to express their thoughts orally. Pupils develop a familiarity with and love of books for

example; as a result of the teacher reading 'Handa's Surprise' they learned the names of exotic fruits. The teacher combined good humour and expressive reading to hold the pupils' attention and interest such that they could readily spot 'errors' in the reading. They grew in confidence as a result of this very good teaching and because the teacher valued their answers.

### **Mathematical development**

61 As a result of good teaching, pupils are making good progress in mathematical development and most are on course to meet expectations. Nursery pupils begin to learn the names of simple 2D shapes, such as triangle and circle and about half the class are able to distinguish between a square and a rectangle. Some good teaching in the Nursery class promoted pupils' counting skills within the context of song and rhymes such as "5 Little Men" and when counting the number of beats made on an instrument. Pupils responded with high levels of enjoyment and involvement. Most pupils in Reception have secure skills in counting to twelve, both from visual and aural stimulus, for example when counting the number of shells on a sandcastle or socks on a washing line. They have learned appropriate words, such as 'in between' and 'on top' to describe position. Good teaching in this Reception class lesson resulted in good learning across a range of mathematical activities, including use of the sand and water trays.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

62 Pupils are making good progress and most are on line to attain expected levels in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Nursery pupils are becoming aware of the names of the days of the week. Pupils have learned about the elementary controls that allow them to proceed through computer software, for example Nursery pupils can manipulate the mouse to 'dress teddy'. Good teaching enabled Reception pupils to learn the names of fruits such as mango, avocado etc. They have learned about key features within their local environment and have been made aware of issues such as litter.

### **Physical development**

63 Effective teaching enables pupils to make secure progress in physical development, especially in the skills of fine motor control. Pupils are on line to meet the expected level in this aspect of learning. They make good progress in Nursery in developing their manipulative skills, as seen in their 'self portraits'. Pupils in Reception can exercise above average control of technological equipment such as a computer "mouse" for example, in using a graphics package to draw people. A few high attainers are able to select the colour of lines they use on the screen and one pupil is able to select from the menu. Reception pupils listen well, follow instructions promptly, and behave safely within physical education lessons. Effective teaching encourages pupils to show physical skill, for example, in travelling around the hall and in taking their weight on hands and feet. In outdoor play, pupils are confident and skilful in controlling toy vehicles.

### **Creative and aesthetic area of learning**

64 Good progress is made within the creative and aesthetic area of learning. Insufficient teaching was seen to make a secure judgement in this area but it is evident that pupils are given many opportunities to develop these skills to the expected level, especially within singing, painting, drawing and computer activities. Nursery pupils have drawn self-portraits that indicate a good level of skill development. They have learned about the sounds that can be made from percussion instruments and can distinguish soft and loud sounds. Reception pupils have also painted self-portraits, following the observation of some work by famous artists.

65 The good quality teaching that the pupils receive encourages them to develop academically, spiritually, personally and socially. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons and in most lessons it is good. Teaching is purposeful and has clear learning outcomes. Lessons are extremely well planned. Resources, both human and material are used to maximum effect. Concentrated input from teachers is facilitated by excellent organisation that maximises the skills of support staff and promotes pupils' independence, for example, enabling other pupils to work independently and productively without the need for frequent adult intervention. Thorough initial assessments are made both in Nursery and in Reception and the information gained is frequently updated. The excellent collaborative working of the teachers and support staff ensures a consistent approach to the teaching and welfare of the pupils.

66 All resources are very well organised and readily accessible to children. Classrooms are also particularly well organised and are enhanced by very good quality displays.

67 Co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has attended many courses and brings a clear philosophy of good practice to the provision made for young pupils.

68 Management has ensured that the importance of the Foundation Stage is duly recognised in terms of resourcing. The combined experience, expertise, enthusiasm and teamwork of the staff contributes to the effective and efficient running of the Nursery and Reception classes. At the last inspection, provision for children aged under five was judged to have some areas for improvement which have now been successfully addressed. The school recognises that the next aspect to be developed is to produce a revised policy and scheme of work for the Foundation Stage.

## **ENGLISH**

69 The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year olds were below the national average but in comparison with similar schools standards were above average. The majority of pupils in the current Year 6 class are on line to meet the expected levels by the time that they are 11, which shows improvement on previous years. This shows that they have achieved very well in relation to the low skill levels they had on starting school. This is a result of the positive effect of the National Literacy Strategy and the significant amount of good teaching that pupils aged 7 to 11 receive. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

70 The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds were well below in reading and very low in writing in comparison with the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards were well below average in both reading and writing. However, this class had a very high percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and they achieved well in relation to their individual targets. The attainment of most pupils in the current Year 2 class is below average in reading and writing. Nevertheless they have achieved well in relation to their low language skill levels on starting school. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

71 The quality of English teaching is good throughout the school. The teachers have good classroom management and organisational skills resulting in very little time being lost when pupils are moving between activities. There is excellent teamwork between teachers and support staff ensuring that pupils receive a high proportion of direct teaching and as a result have a high work rate. All teachers plan thoroughly to follow the structure of the literacy hour and prepare and resource their lessons in an effective way. They use questioning skilfully to find out what pupils know and can do before they start the activities. Lesson introductions are good and the plenary sessions develop pupils' speaking skills, which are average by the time pupils are 11 and show significant improvement from when they start school. There are good opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain their ideas, as was seen in a literacy lesson in Year 6 on developing pupils' understanding as to how text can be used to evoke



suspense. In this good lesson the expertise of the teacher gave the pupils the opportunity and confidence to take full part in a class discussion that effectively developed their communication skills. Pupils are very well behaved, have good powers of concentration and a high work rate. The listening skills of most pupils are very good. This helps them to make relevant answers to the teachers' questions and to gain a suitable understanding of the work that they are to do. The teachers ensure that there are many opportunities for pupils to listen to the views and ideas of adults and other pupils and consequently there is good development of their listening skills.

72 The teachers manage the guided reading sessions well and pupils aged 5-7 make good progress. However, the standards in reading are below average with many pupils not showing suitable ability to read accurately and confidently from texts appropriate for their age. By the time that they are seven many pupils are not able to use a suitable range of strategies to determine unfamiliar words, including the use of phonics. They do know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and are increasing in their confidence to read aloud in a large group. This was evident in a good lesson for pupils in Year 2 in which they read the introductions to a variety of traditional stories and then discussed how they differed. The teacher used role-play effectively to stimulate and capture the children's interest and, as a result, the pupils made good progress in their skills of reading out aloud. It was obvious that all the pupils greatly enjoyed the lesson and the relationships between the pupils and the teacher were very good. In classrooms there is a good variety of fiction and non-fiction books to enable teachers to develop pupils' reading skills.

73 Pupils who are aged 7 to 11 also make good progress and by the age of 11 the majority of pupils demonstrate an appropriate ability to recount stories, express preferences in reading matter and to talk in an informed way about famous authors. The skilled way that teachers use resources to stimulate pupils' interest is an important factor in the good progress that they make. This was evident in a good lesson for pupils in Year 4, delivered by the literacy co-ordinator, in which good use of an overhead projector enabled all the class to read extracts from the 'Iron Man' and discuss how descriptive text can create moods. The school has improved its library provision since the last inspection and this is now good with all classes being timetabled to use it on a weekly basis. The central library is used effectively by pupils to develop their library and individual research skills and provides a stimulating environment in which to foster an enjoyment of reading.

74 In an effort to raise standards in writing all teachers now set targets for pupils to achieve. However, this is not having the desired effect for pupils aged 5 to 7 because of a lack of appropriate expectation of what pupils, especially the higher attainers, are capable of doing. There is also an over emphasis on speaking and listening activities which means that pupils do not have enough time to develop and practise their writing skills. Many pupils need support to write a sequence of sentences and punctuate them accurately, with simple words spelled correctly. Most pupils do not show the required level of ability to use an interesting range of vocabulary and an awareness of the reader in their writing. Handwriting is legible, despite inconsistencies in size and use of upper and lower case letters, but the standard of presentation is poor. Pupils aged 7 to 11 are able to spend more time developing their skills by writing in a variety of forms, across the curriculum, and most pupils in the current Year 6 are achieving well and are attaining standards in line with those expected for their age. Their writing is of suitable length with consistent use of tenses and correct use of direct speech when needed. The spelling of regular words is usually accurate and handwriting is joined and legible. There are sufficient opportunities for them to be involved in extended writing activities and as a result are achieving well in this aspect of English. A good quality lesson for pupils in Year 6 enabled them to make good progress in their ability to write text to develop a mood of suspense in response to their reading of 'Ghost Dog'. In this lesson the pupils responded in a mature way, showed a great deal of enjoyment and interest and collaborated in an effective manner. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology by pupils to word-process their stories and poems. Pupils with special educational needs

make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve very well as a result of the very effective extra support that they receive from teachers and good quality classroom support assistants. The school has identified further improvement in the standards in handwriting and presentation as a priority area for development.

75 There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects. In mathematics lessons, the pupils are able to develop these skills when reading questions and then in discussing and explaining their strategies for finding solutions. Teachers insist on the use of accurate subject vocabulary, as was seen in science and mathematics lessons. In science, pupils write with a sense of purpose when recording their results. In geography and history, pupils record their ideas in a variety of written formats and make accurate labelled diagrams in science. In a design and technology lesson, for pupils in Year 2, there was good opportunity for them to develop their speaking and listening skills when discussing toys that were played with in years gone by.

76 The planning for English is exemplary. It follows the framework of the National Literacy Strategy and is used very effectively by teachers in supporting progression and continuity of pupils' learning through the school. Since the last inspection the school has improved its procedures for assessing and monitoring individual pupil's attainment and progress and they are now good. Effective procedures are in place to analyse the optional and statutory test results to identify areas of weakness from which manageable targets are set for improvement for groups and individual pupils. This has resulted in the school targeting an improvement in the quality of writing for all pupils. Teachers use assessment information in a satisfactory way to evaluate pupils' performance. This ensures that they can plan future learning experiences accordingly. An area for teachers' development is to use these procedures to let their pupils know what they need to do next to improve. The Literacy Strategy is being carried out in a very successful way throughout the school and is having a positive effect on the progress made and standards achieved by pupils.

77 The leadership of the subject is very good with the co-ordinator having a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She is able to give very good support and advice to her colleagues to enable them to teach the basic skills in English in an effective way. The accommodation, in terms of the library provision, is good. The current provision for English shows a good improvement since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78 The school's 2000 national test results for 11-year-olds are below average when compared to all schools nationally but average when compared to schools of a similar nature. This represents significant achievement when taking into account the well below average standards that pupils have on beginning school in the Nursery. Also, in the three most recent years there has been a particularly high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), who despite making good personal achievements have understandably been unable to meet the national average. Scrutiny of work completed by the present Year 6 pupils, and lesson observations, indicate that many of these pupils are on line to attain the nationally expected standards. This represents an improvement on the standards reached by 11-year-olds in 2000.

79 The school's 2000 national test results for 7-year-olds are well below average when compared to all schools nationally and below average when compared to similar schools. This was due to the fact that more than half of this group of pupils have SEN. Scrutiny of work from the present Year 2 pupils, and lesson observations, suggest that standards are better than those achieved by 7-year-olds last year. Nevertheless, the school acknowledges that the below average standards achieved by 7-year-olds should be higher than they are.

80 By the age of 7, pupils have made good progress in learning about basic number facts and operations, such as addition and subtraction, and the concept of place value. They are able to find halves and quarters of sets of objects and identify missing numbers from an incomplete set of ordered numbers to 100. Most are able to apply their knowledge of number when solving simple problems involving money. They are able to tell the time, including half-past the hour, when reading an analogue clock. However, very few of the potentially higher attaining pupils are currently working at the standard required to reach National Curriculum Level 3.

81 By the age of 11, pupils have achieved well to reach average levels of skill in written calculations. They are able to manipulate, with appropriate skill, fractions, decimals and percentages. In problem solving, pupils can determine the missing digits within an incomplete calculation. They can express in correct vocabulary the probabilities associated with coin tossing and have acquired the required knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures. Whilst pupils in Year 6 have average levels of skill in written calculations very few have reached the required standards in mental calculations mainly because the class has only experienced the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) over the course of the last two years. For example, very few could mentally divide 1800 by 4 or multiply 25 by 16. They are, however, becoming increasingly adept at using correct terminology when explaining their methods of performing mental calculations.

82 The school has been very successful in introducing the NNS. As a result, teaching is planned very carefully and lessons are organised in line with the recommended structure. This has been central to the improvement in the quality of teaching since that reported at the last inspection. Teaching is now good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2.

83 Some outstanding teaching was seen in Year 6. Here, the teacher's good level of subject expertise enabled her to be especially effective in her probing questioning of pupils. This was successful in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of partitioning numbers to aid mental calculation. By the end of the lesson, and as a result of some inspired teaching, pupils were able to make appropriate use of brackets to express the order of operations in a calculation.

84 In all lessons, pupils' behaviour and concentration are very good. Pupils clearly enjoy mathematics and respond well to both the work they are set and to the adults with whom they work. Excellent teamwork between teachers and support staff ensures a consistency of approach, which allied to very good relationships with pupils, provides a positive and supportive climate for learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a direct result of this very good quality support. Pupils listen very well and co-operate fully with the adults who teach them, showing eagerness and confidence to answer questions and to undertake collaborative tasks.

85 Pupils are able to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, particularly in science, for example older pupils measured force in Newtons. Other examples include, use of pattern and measuring in design and technology, scale in geography and time lines in history.

86 Record-keeping systems are satisfactory. Teachers evaluate the outcomes of lessons, which then provide a secure basis for planning future work that builds upon what pupils have already achieved. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and positively, giving praise where appropriate and, in best practice, setting targets to help pupils to improve. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. Homework is set appropriately and supplements classwork.

87 The co-ordinator is well qualified and enthusiastic. Her very good leadership of mathematics allied to teachers' commitment to changes in methodology has resulted in significant improvements in the

subject since the last inspection. The NNS has provided a very secure structure for lesson planning and has contributed to a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. Textbook resources are used judiciously and teaching is systematically monitored. The combination of all these improvements is beginning to raise standards, especially in Key Stage 2.

88 The school is well resourced for mathematics. However, though there is some very good use of ICT to support mathematics, for example in Years 1, 3 and 6, the school needs to provide greater opportunities for pupils to use computers. Similarly, greater opportunities need to be provided for pupils to undertake investigative tasks in mathematics. Appropriate use is currently made of calculators, at the upper end of Key Stage 2.

## **SCIENCE**

89 The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year olds were well below the national average but in comparison with similar schools standards were average. However, the majority of pupils in the present Year 6 class are on line to meet the expected levels by the time that they are 11, which shows improvement on previous years.

90 The level of attainment of 7-year-olds in the 2000 National Curriculum tests was below average when compared with national levels for pupils of this age. As pupils come into the school with levels of knowledge and understanding of the world which are below those expected, they make good progress as they move through the school. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils who were looking at the world around them and at forms of pollution, identified and made written records of the types of sounds they heard around the school environment. The information they obtained was well recorded and pupils were able to explain very clearly the effects of some of the noises on the lives of people close to the school. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils learning about electrical circuits, worked well in groups. The groups discussed the task and used scientific knowledge from previous lessons to predict what would happen when more than one bulb was connected to the power supply. They then wrote very well constructed sentences which they shared with the rest of the class. The predictions that they produced clearly showed that they had an above average understanding of the topic and that they had developed good scientific skills. The Year 6 pupils' work in books is of a high standard, not only of presentation, but in the informed way they have written up their investigations and drawn scientific conclusions.

91 In all the science lessons observed pupils were interested, confident and well behaved. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in all lessons and a significant number of pupils throughout the school are exceptionally well behaved. The level of co-operation between pupils is very good and there are such strong relationships between each other and between adults and pupils that many are able to hold sensible and extended conversations, clearly explaining why they hold their opinions and on what scientific knowledge their hypotheses are founded. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are included in discussions. Where work is specially tailored to meet their needs, for example where they work with a visiting specialist teacher or are working with individual support, discussion forms an important part of learning and pupils are usually confident and express themselves clearly.

92 Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good level of expertise in the topics they are covering, and lessons are well planned and managed. Throughout the school, the teamwork and relationships between teaching and support staff is very good and this plays an important and very effective part in ensuring pupils are secure and want to learn. This is especially true of pupils with special educational needs, who are very well catered for with clear targets for their development built into teachers' lesson planning. Teachers' class control and organisation is good and lesson objectives, i.e. what pupils are to learn in the lesson, are clear to all. At the end of lessons teachers re-visit these objectives and carefully check with the pupils what has been learnt and

understood, and what might need further work to deepen pupils' understanding. Teachers carefully plan investigations and experimental work on numerous occasions and this is a good and very positive feature of the science teaching in both key stages.

93 The subject management of science is very good. The subject is well organised by a well qualified co-ordinator. There is a subject policy and a scheme of work, and although the school plans to update the scheme, it provides an essential and very effective structure on which teachers to base their planning. All staff have had recent training, especially to update their skills in teaching investigative and experimental science. The co-ordinator has a clear and informed view of the science provision across the school and of pupils' levels of attainment. She sees all colleagues' plans and has recent opportunities to observe teaching in classrooms.

94 Resources are adequate overall and, for some aspects of the subject, are good. They are carefully matched to the requirements of the National Curriculum and to the school's scheme of work, thus ensuring that teachers have sufficient and appropriate equipment for their lessons. The use of ICT resources in science is limited and the school has identified this as an area for development.

95 Overall, since the last inspection report, there has been an improvement in a number of aspects of science, including the match of resources to lessons. Although the standards have varied, especially at Key Stage 1, there has been an overall improvement and there are strong indications that there will be a considerable improvement in pupils' performance, especially that of 11-year-olds, in the coming national test. The school recognises the need to improve pupils' levels of attainment by the time they are 7 and has strategies in place to raise standards.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96 By the ages of 7 and 11 pupils achieve average standards and have made good progress through the school.

97 The quality of teaching is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2 with an emphasis on the development of pupils' basic skills in the subject so that they are able to effectively build upon their prior attainment. They are presented with a suitable range of activities in all areas of the subject and develop satisfactory skills in the use of different media. Art contributes in an appropriate way to pupils' cultural development, with pupils having appropriate experience of a range of artists and sculptors. Pupils aged 5 to 7, develop satisfactory skills in using a range of media. They have opportunities to experiment with line, texture and colour and show suitable ability to use these skills in their drawings and paintings. In Year 1, pupils learn how to use hard and soft pencils and pastels to draw a self-portrait, trying to incorporate correct proportions. Pupils in Year 2 were seen making good progress in their ability to make close observational drawings, using the work of William Morris as their inspiration. Pupils aged 7 to 11, work with a wider range of materials and work is often linked to other subjects. In a good quality lesson in Year 4 pupils made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of how to evaluate the design features of a variety of chairs and how to sketch them with contrasts in terms of light and shade. Good quality teaching in a Year 6 lesson enabled pupils to make good progress in their ability to use paint to investigate and experiment with colour mixing. In both these lessons, the teachers had high expectations of their pupils' performance and were able to effectively demonstrate the artistic techniques to be used.

98 Older pupils are given suitable opportunities to develop their artistic skills through the use of sketchbooks. Pupils throughout the school have opportunities to study the work of famous artists and then develop work in their style. This is evident in the good quality displays in the hall where pupils have produced work following the style of artists such as Paul Klee, Claude Monet and John Turner. The good quality of art display makes a significant contribution to the stimulating learning environment to be

found through the school. The pupils obviously enjoy their art lessons and respond in an enthusiastic and positive manner that results in a good work rate.

99 There is good leadership of the subject and the co-ordinator is able to effectively advise and support her colleagues. Resources are adequate and used well by staff. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection with pupils now having less direction from teachers and as a result are more able to use their own initiative.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100 Standards are below average both for 7-year-olds and 11-year-olds. This means that standards have declined since those reported in the last inspection due in part to the high emphasis given in the last three years to developing the teaching of literacy and numeracy. There is also a lack of teacher expertise and confidence in the subject. The school has identified this and plans to provide training in the imminent future.

101 Standards are below average because pupils have not gained the necessary knowledge, skills, and understanding specified in the National Curriculum. Pupils' work on display reflects a limited range of good quality work in textiles, for example, Year 2 pupils have produced an impressive patchwork quilt. However, there is no evidence of pupils, in any year group, using tools with more resistant materials.

102 Satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1 results in pupils making secure gains in their skills of designing and making. For example, some pupils collected information about the design and construction of playground equipment. Pupils used the skill of selection, cutting and sticking. However, only a few were able to make sufficiently detailed responses, for example in terms of the materials and methods of fixings they would use. In another lesson, the teacher discussed with the pupils the differences between toys from the past with those of the present. Effective teaching lead to pupils learning about various sources of energy used to power toys with moving parts. The teacher maximised opportunities for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills and on a few occasions, their numeracy skills were brought into play, as for example when the teacher posed the question "Mrs X is 37, she had this doll when she was 6, how old is the doll?" Following very good guidance from the support assistant, pupils used card and paper fasteners to make "Jumping Jacks" which had moving limbs. In both lessons, pupils' behaviour and attitude was good and those who had made the "Jumping Jacks" were proud to show them.

103 Amongst the displayed work of Key Stage 2 pupils are some good examples of fabric purses. Year 4 pupils observed and evaluated some manufactured examples, focussing on materials, fastenings etc. This provided an appropriate basis from which to plan and make their own designs. Pupils successfully used the skills of measuring, threading and sewing. Year 3 pupils were involved in similar processes when making Joseph's Dream Coat.

104 There is an enthusiastic subject co-ordinator who took up this responsibility at the beginning of the term in which the inspection took place. Therefore, she has had no time in which to bring about any improvements in the subject. However, she has clear intentions to review the current provision.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

105 During the inspection week, only a small number of geography lessons were observed. However, from planning documents and from a review of pupils' work, it is clear that the subject is suitably planned for, and covered, within the curriculum in both Key Stages 1 and 2. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils who had been studying the local environment were able to link and contrast what they know of their own local area with some of the features of Southport. Most pupils made clear and relevant comments

comparing the two areas. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils, studying rivers, knew about the main features of a river and were able to describe how these have developed and where they occur on the river. The review of pupils' work in books and folders, taken together with the standards achieved in the lessons observed, confirms that standards of pupils aged 7 and 11 are average.

106 In the small number of lessons seen in both key stages teaching was good. Lessons are well planned and teachers use a good range of strategies for managing the class and for presenting information. Teachers ensure that the lessons build on what pupils already know, as in the case of the Year 6 lesson on rivers where the pupils remembered the names of river features from a previous lesson.

107 The majority of pupils are very interested in their lessons and, as a result, they concentrate well, listening carefully to their teachers. Behaviour is very good and pupils share ideas with each other and co-operate well, as, for example, they are engaged in group discussions. In some lessons the quality of the discussion is very good.

108 The subject is competently organised and there is a policy and a scheme of work. These are followed throughout the school and now ensure that new learning builds on what pupils already know and can do. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work and in this way, gains a view of pupils' standards of work and the coverage of the National Curriculum. The review of pupils' work has been a feature of school development this year, and is already having a positive effect on standards. Resources are adequate and have been improved recently.

## **HISTORY**

109 During the inspection week there were only limited opportunities to observe history lessons. However, it is clear from those lessons seen, the links between history and other subjects, for example geography, ICT and design technology, the work in pupils' books, from the overall timetable and from the planning documents, that the subject is suitably covered within the curriculum in both key stages. Pupils in both key stages have levels of historical skills, knowledge and understanding which are in line with the national average.

110 Teaching is good overall, and there were some good examples of history lessons. In a well taught Year 1 lesson, studying the development of toys, pupils were able to use information derived from a range of evidence to tell the teacher and the rest of the class things about the past and how they could tell the difference between old and new toys. Pupils were able to develop their speaking skills and to be involved in class discussions. The teacher had prepared the lesson very well, with a good range of resources which acted as a stimulus and promoted discussion. She had a secure knowledge of the topic, and this, together with very good classroom management, ensured that the lesson was very productive and the pupils were very well behaved. Links with other subjects are good and considerably enhance the teaching of history. For example, in a Year 2 design technology lesson, again focussed on toys, pupils learned about toys from bygone eras and in a Year 5 ICT lesson pupils wrote about life in Victorian times. After researching the topic, they answered questions set by the teacher, entering the text into a word processor. In both these lessons pupils demonstrated an at least average understanding of the historical aspects of the topic.

111 Subject co-ordination and leadership is good and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator sees colleagues lesson planning and also looks at all pupils' work. In this way she is able to monitor the way in which the subject is covered through out the school and the range and quality of pupils work. There is now a structured scheme of work to ensure a logical progression in pupils' learning. The school has an adequate range of resources, artefacts and these

clearly contribute to pupils' learning. The range and quality of resources has improved recently and the school makes very good use of the Museum Resource Service of the Local Authority. Good use is made of a range of visits and visitors and this enhances the subject throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

112 The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is developing very quickly and well in all areas of the school. The development of the ICT suite, in a prominent and easily accessible part of the school, is very good, with networking in place, good up-to-date hardware, and a planned increase in the number of computers. Currently, however, the school fails to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for information technology as there is not enough coverage of the strands and the programme of study to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.

113 Overall, pupils' standard of attainment by the end of both key stages is below average, although in some aspects, for example word processing, especially by older pupils, it is at least average and for many pupils above. Similarly some very young pupils are able to draw figures on the computer screen, choosing the correct tools from a menu, use the mouse to accurately draw a figure and then print the drawing. A few pupils in this class are able to change the colour of the pen and the thickness of the line they are drawing. Such skills are well above average.

114 All age groups of pupils are very well behaved. When they work in pairs they discuss what they are to do and are helpful to each other. Levels of concentration are good and they listen acutely to each other and to their teachers. Behaviour and attitudes to work and each other are generally very good and on occasions, is excellent.

115 Lessons in the ICT suite are well taught overall with teachers' planning very effectively for the needs of all pupils. In these lessons the teachers observed had a good knowledge of the aspect they were teaching and a sound knowledge of IT overall. Organisation and management of the pupils was good and lessons proceeded briskly. In most lessons, in classrooms, the use of ICT is less well developed and during the inspection week pupils were infrequently engaged in using ICT. This is not so in all lessons, but clearly pupils are limited in the amount of time that they can gain the required knowledge and skills. The school acknowledges, that while some of the staff are very confident in the use of ICT, overall teacher expertise remains an area for development. This is recognised in the development planning.

116 The development of ICT, and the improvement of pupils' standards and the coverage of the National Curriculum are important issues for the school. The very positive strategies and good developmental points employed to improve ICT are impressive and augur well for the future. The co-ordination of the subject throughout the school is very good. The co-ordinator has played a major part in the subject's development plan; ICT has a prominent place in the school timetable; staff have had training and more is scheduled; the provision of the ICT suite is almost completed; pupils have achieved above average standards in some of the strands of ICT, and; the management of the school are determined to make the overall provision as good as possible.

## **MUSIC**

117 Pupils achieve standards that are appropriate for their age by the time that they are 11 and make good progress throughout the school. In singing, pupils achieve good standards and are enthusiastic and confident when performing in front of an audience.



118 The quality of teaching is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers are well prepared for their lessons, provide suitable resources and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Planning is good, with a variety of activities that are motivating and challenging for all pupils. Younger pupils learn to sing a range of songs from memory and in so doing demonstrate suitable rhythm and pitch. They handle instruments skilfully, work together well when performing and show that they can respond well to a beat and use a variety of untuned instruments to accompany their singing. Year 2 pupils show an appropriate ability to choose and play a variety of untuned instruments to represent the characters and noises of animals in a story they had been reading. Older pupils sing clearly, tunefully and with a great deal of enthusiasm. This good quality singing is well developed in the song practices, led by the co-ordinator, in which singing techniques are well taught. They learn how to use musical notation and can use the correct musical vocabulary to talk about their musical activities. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson made good progress in learning how music can be descriptive and convey different kinds of mood. Year 6 pupils show a suitable understanding of what is meant by the word lyric and how lyrics can reflect the time and place in which they were written. By the time that they are 11 the pupils can sing expressively with controlled phrasing and are able to improve their performance by practice. Pupils' response to music is very good with the majority of pupils showing much enjoyment in their singing and when experimenting with sounds. Pupils listen very attentively and are keen to follow the teachers' instructions. They are willing to listen to and appreciate the musical talents and contributions of other pupils.

119 The school provides pupils with a rich and varied musical environment. All pupils have opportunity to join the choir and are able to take part in musical presentations for parents and members of the local community. They have been actively involved in 'Lancashire Brass' workshops and with a visiting multicultural group 'Wood from Africa'. At Christmas they have opportunity to take part in the school concert and to sing carols at the local home for elderly residents. Pupils have opportunity to be involved in extra-curricular activities that include a guitar club and a music club. By taking part in the Halle Project, the pupils in Year 5 have had opportunity to work with professional musicians and also to visit the Bridgewater Hall to watch a performance of the Halle Orchestra. The management of the subject is good and gives clear educational direction. There are adequate resources that enable an appropriate range of musical activities to be undertaken. Accommodation is adequate and allows for a variety of individual and group musical activities to take place. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement with pupils now having wider access to instrumental techniques.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

120 Pupils nearing the end of Key Stage 2 attain standards that are in line with those expected of 11-year-olds. In games, the vast majority are competent in the elementary technique of controlling and striking a tennis ball. Pupils are aware of the need for warm-up before physical exercise and the effect of exercise on the body. Almost all pupils have learned to swim to at least the standard required by the National Curriculum, the majority exceed this standard, and a few achieve a high standard.

121 On the evidence of a dance lesson in Year 2 and a gymnastics lesson involving some Year 2 pupils, it is evident that pupils approaching the end of Key Stage 1 are on line to attain the level expected for 7-year-olds. They are able to make sensible use of available space, showing awareness of others. Almost all can make appropriate use of their bodies to respond appropriately to musical stimuli. Many are expressive in their actions, for example, when performing their rain dance. Pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies.

122 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. In a Year 1/2 gymnastics lesson, effective teaching resulted in pupils making secure gains in their skills of travelling and balancing. They were able to demonstrate good levels of confidence in their actions, with many pupils beginning to enhance their performance as a result of observing the teacher's well-chosen exemplars. In a Year 2 lesson good

teaching resulted in pupils making good gains in their imaginative interpretation of music. They responded particularly well when required to collaborate in groups of 4 to perform a co-ordinated starting routine for their dance sequence.

123 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is very good overall. Very good teaching in a Year 3 class resulted in pupils' very good gains in their ability to balance on a decreasing number of points of their bodies. As a result of very good teaching, pupils in Year 6 were able to make good gains in their ability to strike a tennis ball with a racquet. The teacher made some very effective coaching points that enabled pupils to improve the quality of forehand and backhand strikes. Her enthusiasm allied to excellent relationships, and good resource provision contributed greatly to the high levels of co-operation and enthusiasm shown by pupils.

124 Effective and sensitive support from classroom assistants contributes considerably to the full level of integration of pupils with special educational needs. Their specific needs are well understood by support staff and every effort is made to provide opportunities for the pupils to be challenged to an appropriate level.

125 On the evidence of all lessons it is evident that there are very good and often excellent relationships and mutual respect between adults and pupils. This underpins the very good control teachers have of their classes. In all lessons, good contributions were made to pupils' social and moral development. Pupils demonstrate sensible behaviour and a good attitude and achieve well. They make safe use of equipment and are aware of the needs of others.

126 Good subject leadership has contributed to the good improvements made in the subject since the last inspection, especially in the quality of teaching. National Curriculum requirements are met and there is an even provision of lessons throughout the school.

127 Pupils' learning benefits from good quality playing areas. Good provision of extra-curricular activities, including football, netball, rounders, aerobics/keep-fit and a residential experience contribute significantly to pupils' personal and physical development and demonstrates teachers' substantial commitment to their pupils. In recent years notable team successes have been achieved in netball.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

128 This area of the work of the school was identified in the last inspection report as one in need of development and was the subject of a key issue. Since that time there has been considerable improvement. The provision for pupils with special and individual needs is now very good and a strength of the school.

129 The provision is very well organised, the headteacher taking overall responsibility as special needs coordinator, with another member of staff overseeing the special needs in Key Stage 1. This system is very effective and ensures that all the procedures run smoothly so that pupils receive the help support and guidance to which they are entitled.

130 The total number of pupils identified as having special needs is currently in line with the average in schools nationally. However, the number of pupils with statements of special educational need is well above the average for a school of this size. Furthermore, the range of individual need is far greater than that of pupils in most schools, ranging from pupils who need help with developing language and numeracy skills, to pupils with very complex needs and some with physical disabilities.

131 The range of need and the level of support provided for pupils with special needs is, as a result, far greater than that found in most schools. There is a large number of support staff as well as a considerable input by regular, timetabled support staff from the local education authority (LEA).

132 The contribution of all staff and agencies is very well co-ordinated and structured to provide a high level of support carefully matched to the needs of the pupils. Visiting support staff from LEA services feel welcome in the school and speak highly of the way in which the school values their input and advice. In return, the school has developed a full and valuable partnership with these professionals.

133 Pupils with special educational needs are taught through a variety of strategies including individual work with specialists and special support assistants (SSAs), both within the classroom and outside, group work with other pupils with similar needs, and, where they can manage, without special support within their classes. Through this carefully structured and individually tailored programme pupils have full access to what the school has to offer. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly to meet all pupils' needs and individual education plans contain targets which are carefully matched to pupils' areas for development.