

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLMESWOOD METHODIST SCHOOL

Ormskirk

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119403

Headteacher: Mr M Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mr Robin Wonnacott
2787

Dates of inspection: 20 – 22 November 2001

Inspection number: 194282

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chapel Lane Holmeswood Ormskirk
Postcode:	L40 1VD
Telephone number:	01704 - 821360
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd N Wakeling
Date of previous inspection:	21 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2787	Robin Wonnacott	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology History Music Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9798	Vivienne Ashworth	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?
22644	Barbara Hill	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holmeswood Methodist School is in the village of Holmeswood, some fifteen miles from Preston in Lancashire. There are 19 pupils on roll, between the age of four and eleven years. This makes it a very small primary school compared with primary schools nationally. Pupils are taught in two small classes. The majority of pupils live close to the school. Because of the very small number of pupils in the school, any statistical comparisons with national data is of limited value, as one pupil is the equivalent to 5%. However, when the information for the period of the last four years is considered together, the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals has been below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has been generally similar to the national percentage. All pupils are of white British heritage. When pupils join the school at age four years, their attainment is generally typical of that found nationally for the age group.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This small school is providing pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. It is at the heart of the local community. As pupils move through the school they make satisfactory progress, overall, in developing their skills and understanding in most subjects, including English, mathematics and science. However, in information and communication technology, geography and art and design the progress made by pupils is unsatisfactory. All pupils are included in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils who have special educational needs are provided with good support. The school meets the needs of all pupils.

Management and leadership are satisfactory overall. However, they do not focus enough on raising the standards attained by pupils.

The cost per pupil to run the school is over three times higher than the national average cost for primary schools. Teaching groups in the school are very small. The school is not fully exploiting these advantages in raising standards further. Over the longer period of time teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Pupils only make satisfactory progress in their learning. There are some weaknesses in the school's evaluation of its work and what it should be achieving. When these factors are considered together the school is judged not to provide value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good.
- In the lessons observed in the inspection, pupils' made good progress in their learning in response to some good teaching.
- New national strategies for developing the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy have been effectively established.
- In most lessons, pupils show good attitudes to their learning. Pupils' behaviour is generally good.
- Relationships in the school are good. Pupils work well together and show respect for each other's feelings.
- The school has very good links with the local community and pupils are actively involved in many aspects of village life.

What could be improved

- Management of the school is not sufficiently focused on raising standards and evaluating what pupils should be achieving.
- The school does not make best use of national guidance in planning how to teach the National Curriculum in its small, mixed-age classes.
- The work given to pupils does not consistently build on their past learning and challenge their thinking.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the standards attained by pupils during this inspection are similar to those reported following the last inspection. There has been a slight improvement in the quality of teaching observed during the inspection. However, as previously, no very good or excellent teaching was observed.

The school was last inspected in April 1997 when five issues were identified that needed to be improved. In brief, these were connected with:

- Developing the teachers' planning so that it took into account pupils' past learning;
- Making sure that the targets set by the school reflected the school's aims and that clear procedures were established to measure the school's performance;
- Identifying ways in which the budget could be used to benefit pupils in the school;
- Develop systems to monitor classroom practice;
- Identifying ways of providing pupils with opportunities to take more responsibility for their learning.

The school has made some progress in tackling the five key issues then identified for improvement. However, the school's management has not focused its activities sufficiently so that the progress has had a major impact on pupils' learning. The school governors have redefined the school's aims, but they have not yet developed clear procedures that hold the school to account for its actions and the standard attained. Weaknesses in teaching resources have been tackled but there are still shortages in some areas, for example a good range of play equipment for the youngest pupils. The school staff have identified opportunities for pupils to become more involved in the day-to-day running of the school. However, further thought needs to be given to ways that pupils can become involved in planning their own learning.

STANDARDS

The numbers in each year group are very small. This makes comparisons of the school's results in national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds with national data, of little value for any single year. Hence this report contains no year-by-year data or comparisons with the results of other schools. However, when taken together, the school's results for the last four years indicate that pupils at age seven and eleven attained standards in English, mathematics and science that were broadly in line with those found nationally. There is insufficient data to make such comparisons with schools of a similar size and setting.

The small number of pupils in a year group makes it unrealistic for the school to set overall targets for improvement in national tests. For example, there are only two pupils in the present Year 6 class and one pupil represents 50% of the year-group. However, the school is not setting challenging targets for individual pupils.

Discussions with Year 5 and 6 pupils, together with an examination of their books, indicates that in the key areas of English and mathematics pupils are attaining standards that are broadly in line with those expected nationally for this age group. When the pupils' results in the Year 2 national tests are taken into consideration, the indications are that the very small classes in the school are not having enough impact on the rate of progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils should be attaining at a higher level.

In other subjects, an examination of the pupils' books and discussion with the pupils indicates that standards are variable. For example, in science and history standards are broadly in line with those currently seen in primary schools. On the other hand, standards in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and geography are on the low side. There is little evidence to indicate that the higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 will reach a level of attainment above that expected of the majority of eleven-year-olds.

Pupils enter the school with a range of skills that are generally in line with those typical for the age group. Teaching that is generally of a satisfactory standard enables pupils of all abilities to make generally satisfactory progress as they move through the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	In the lessons observed the pupils' attitudes to work were good. Pupils are generally keen to be involved in activities and they want to succeed. In the majority of lessons pupils respond well to teachers' effective use of praise.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, behaviour in the school is good. In lessons, behaviour is generally good. In the playground, pupils of differing ages play together well and their behaviour is good.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good. Relationships in the school are good. In lessons, pupils work well with each other and share ideas and materials in a sensible way.
Attendance	Attendance levels are similar to those found nationally for primary schools.

In lessons where there is a positive relationship between the teacher and pupils, the pupils show good attitudes to their work and they make good progress in their learning. During the school day, there are satisfactory opportunities for older pupils to take help in the day-to-day running of the school. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The inspectors visited the school over two and a half days and observed 16 lessons. All three teachers were seen teaching at least twice. Lessons where literacy and numeracy skills were being developed were observed in every class.

Overall, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons seen. Evidence collected from the teachers' planning records and from the pupils' books did not convince the inspection team that good teaching occurred in all subjects on a regular basis. Work in the pupils' books shows pupils making satisfactory progress overall, based on work set that was usually but not always appropriate and sufficiently challenging. This indicates that over the longer period of time teaching is generally satisfactory.

Where the teaching was at its best the lessons were well planned, and teachers used good questioning techniques to help pupils think carefully about answers. Pupils responded well to this approach and were confident to put forward ideas and make suggestions. When the teaching was judged as satisfactory, the work provided for pupils did not take enough account of their past learning. As a result not all pupils made the progress they were capable of, given the good opportunities for individual support provided by the very small teaching groups. In a small number of lessons there was evidence of pupils becoming bored with the work provided.

Overall, good teaching was observed in English lessons where pupils were developing skills in reading and writing (literacy skills), and in mathematics lesson where pupils were developing their skills in numeracy. Overall, in all other subjects of the curriculum the teaching in the lessons observed was of a good quality.

Although pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning as they move through the school, the very small class sizes are not having sufficient impact on their rate of progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school gives appropriate emphasis to developing the pupils' skills in reading, writing and number work. Although the curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory overall, the way it is planned over a key stage restricts the opportunities provided for pupils to revisit important aspects of learning. National guidance is not consistently well used in planning work.

Aspect (continued)	Comment (continued)
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, the provision is good. In lessons, pupils are well supported and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, provision is satisfactory. Good provision is made for pupils' social development. Provision is satisfactory for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has satisfactory procedures in place that ensures pupils' welfare. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory.

The school has rightly spent the majority of time developing the pupils' skills in English and mathematics and standards in these subjects have improved. The way the curriculum is planned does not enable pupils to have regular access to important aspects of their education. Too much time elapses before skills are revisited and developed. This means that if a pupil in Year 3, for example, does not understand a particular idea or learn a skill she/he may well not have another opportunity to develop that aspect of learning. Pupils show a good level of regard for the feelings and well being of their peers.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Although the leadership and management are satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses. The headteacher provides the school with satisfactory day-to-day management. However, he does not set clear targets for the future development of the school, including challenging targets for standards to be reached. Teaching and non-teaching staff provides the headteacher with valuable support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The work of the school governors is satisfactory. They are supportive of the school, and carry out their responsibilities efficiently. They do not have well-developed systems that enable them to hold the school to account for its performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Test results in English, mathematics and science are analysed. The data collected is then used to decide on priorities for future years. At the time of the inspection not enough thought was being given to setting detailed and challenging targets for individual pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Overall, the school uses the different specific grants provided to good effect. The school has a large carry over in its budget. Although the governors can explain the reasons for the large sum they have not fully considered the impact of some continuing shortages in resources.

Overall, the headteacher provides the school with satisfactory day to day management. However, during the last four years he has not used the key issues from the last inspection to provide the school with clear direction. The headteacher and school governors have identified a set of appropriate priorities for the school's further development, but with too little attention to raising the standard attained by individual pupils. The school uses its identified priorities in a satisfactory way to plan spending, although the priorities do not always take sufficient account of the need to further raise standards. The governors understand and use the principles of best value when making decisions regarding expenditure. The governors have not developed clear procedures and strategies that enable them to ensure that the school is enabling every pupil to reach their full potential.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are keen to come to school and learn; they like school. • Teachers are very approachable and always make time for parents. • The school encourages pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. • Parents judge that the school is helping their children to mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No items were identified that parents would like to see improved.

Parents returned 14 questionnaires. Six parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector. In general, the evidence gathered during the inspection supports the positive views identified by the parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. *The very small number of pupils in a year group makes it difficult to compare the standards attained by pupils in national tests with national percentages. When the school's results in national tests for the last four years are combined then overall the results for pupils aged seven have been below the national average. The results for eleven-year-olds have shown much variation but overall are close to the national average. Pupils enter the school as four-year-olds with standards typical of those found nationally. Pupils make satisfactory progress in learning as they move through the school.*
2. The national arrangement for assessing pupils' attainment is based on a scale with eight levels. The target for seven-year-olds is Level 2 of the scale; higher attaining pupils should reach Level 3. The target for eleven-year-olds is Level 4; higher attaining pupils should reach Level 5. As well as comparing the school's results with the national picture it is usually possible to make comparisons with schools that are 'in a similar context', that is, schools which have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. However, as only one year's data is available, no comparisons are made with schools in a similar context in this report.
3. When the school's results in national tests for seven-year-olds for the last four years are taken together, then the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected standard in reading and mathematics are been below the national average, in science the percentage are in line with the national average.
4. When the school's results in national tests for eleven-year-olds for the last four years are taken together, then the percentages of pupils attaining the nationally expected standard in English and mathematics are close to the national average. In science the percentage is below the national average.
5. With as few as two pupils in a year group no sensible comparisons can be made between the performance of girls and boys.
6. An examination of the pupils' books in English and mathematics, together with a discussion with the Year 5 and 6 pupils indicates that the majority should reach the expected standard by the time they reach the age of eleven. In English the pupils are beginning to develop their vocabulary so that their written work is becoming more exciting. In mathematics pupils are able to talk about a range of topics including work they have completed on shape and measurement. Although the highest attaining pupils can use a range of strategies to solve problems, for example finding out the answer to multiplying 49 by 7, most pupils have to use paper and pencil; they have not developed a good understanding of the ways numbers operate. Work in the books shows that pupils are making satisfactory progress. However,

- this rate of progress does not reflect the gains that should occur when class sizes are so small.
7. In science standards attained by pupils are generally typical of those found in primary schools. In science, work in the pupils' books indicates that pupils have a satisfactory base of scientific knowledge. For example, recent work on the properties of sound shows that pupils in the Key Stage 2 class understand how sound is made by vibrating an object. However, the work in the books does not show in a clear way that pupils in this class are developing their ability to carry out simple scientific investigations. In discussion the Year 5 and 6 pupils could not explain in sufficient detail what was meant when a scientific experiment was a 'fair test'. Standards in information and communication technology vary across different aspects of the subject, but overall are lower than those expected for eleven-year-olds. Pupils in the Key Stage 2 class can open their own computer files containing their work; they have a good understanding of the word processing program that is used by the school. On the other hand, their knowledge of ways in which the computer can be used to control a range of events is underdeveloped, for example, control of a simple machine.
 8. The standard of presentation of work in the books is good. Work in the books of the highest attaining Key Stage 2 pupils is of a very good quality. Although teachers regularly mark the work, the quality of the teachers' comments about the work is too variable. At its best the marking provides pupils with clear advice about ways in which the work could be improved. On the other hand some marking is little more than an acknowledgement that the work has been completed.
 9. The standards attained in other subjects of the curriculum are variable. In history, music, and physical education the limited evidence collected during the inspection indicates that pupils are attaining standards that are typical of those expected for their different age groups. In art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and geography standards are lower than those typically found for this age group. In subjects where standards are too low, not enough teaching time is being allocated to the subject to cover the national programme of work adequately. In addition, the way the curriculum is planned using a cycle of two or four years, means that pupils do not have regular contact with important ideas for a particular subject. This means that if they do not grasp the idea when first presented to them they may be able to revisit the area again in their time at Holmeswood.
 10. ***In reading and writing the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are generally in line with those typically expected for pupils age eleven; pupils have made steady progress. Pupils enter the school with an understanding of number work that is typical of the age group; they make satisfactory progress in mathematics so that the oldest pupils in the school are on target to reach the expected standard for eleven-year-olds.***
 11. In other subjects the progress made by the pupils' is too variable. For example, in geography pupils in the Key Stage 1 class make good progress, this progress is not maintained when pupils join the Key Stage 2 class. The variable rates of progress reflect the small amount of teaching time that is allocated to some subjects, for example geography and

design and technology. It is not clear how, in this limited time, the nationally required programmes of work are always delivered. In addition, the lack of detailed schemes of work that are particular to this very small school makes it difficult to see how the teachers' planning takes into account the pupils' past learning and builds on this.

12. The staff are making effective use of the national guidance for teaching reading, writing and number work. The approach is having a positive impact on the pupils' progress and their levels of attainment.
13. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate for their age and ability. They make good progress in developing skills in reading and number work.
14. These judgements are similar to those reported following the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. *In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning were good throughout the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school was also good. The pupils know what is expected of them and respond to the encouragement and praise given to them. Attendance is good.*
16. Pupils are keen to come to school. They enjoy their lessons and are happy to join in activities. Pupils are punctual and quickly settle in class. They try hard to complete the work set and show positive attitudes towards the staff and each other.
17. Behaviour is good in lessons and pupils play well together in the playground where behaviour is generally good. They look after the school's resources well and have respect for other people's property. There are no exclusions. There is calm atmosphere in the school and the pupils are able to work and play in a sheltered, protected environment.
18. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils' personal development. The youngest children settle quickly and are encouraged to grow in self-confidence. All those parents who returned the questionnaire indicated that school helped their children to mature well. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to work together. However, even when the teaching groups are very small, pupils are not given enough opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning.
19. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils are well supported by staff and teachers regularly use praise to good effect. Pupils co-operate well together and have some understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Bullying is not tolerated and instances are infrequent. In general, relationships between pupils and staff contribute to the learning process and are a good feature of the school.
20. Pupils are given some opportunity to help others. In discussion they indicated that they would welcome more chances to develop this aspect of their work. They show initiative, for example, by raising money for charity, organising the annual Education Sunday in church and

the themed assemblies in school to which parents are invited. Pupils are happy to help their teachers by distributing equipment and are enthusiastic at tidying up at the end of lessons. They return the registers to the office.

21. Attendance is good and could easily be very good. However, the figures are immediately affected by one pupil's absence. There is no unauthorised absence. Some families take holidays in term time where their occupations on the land make it difficult to take holidays at any other time. This does have an effect on the teaching and learning process.
22. These judgements provide a picture similar to that reported after the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. *Overall, the teaching observed during the inspection was of a good standard. An examination of the teachers' planning records together with a scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicates that over the longer period of time teaching is satisfactory.*
24. There are two classes in the school. There is a Key Stage 1 class with eight pupils on roll between the age of four and seven; this includes two pupils who are four years old. A qualified nursery nurse supports the teacher for this class for three mornings a week. The Key Stage 2 class has eleven pupils on roll. Teaching in this class is shared between the headteacher who teaches the class for three days a week and a regular supply teacher who is responsible for teaching the class on the other two days. During this time the headteacher has time to fulfil his management role.
25. During the inspection, sixteen lessons or part lessons were observed. In total this amounted to just under twelve hours of teaching and learning. Teaching was judged to be good in eleven lessons and satisfactory in the remaining five lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. This is a similar picture to that reported following the last inspection. Teaching of good quality was observed in some lessons in both classrooms.
26. Common strengths that were identified in the lessons observed where teaching was judged to be at its best were:
 - the way teachers used questions to help pupils develop their ideas;
 - the teachers' understanding and knowledge of the subject;
 - the enthusiasm of the teacher, who provided pupils with good quality materials to help them learn.These strengths played a major part in the good progress made by the pupils.
27. In lessons where teaching was judged to be satisfactory, there were some common weaknesses:
 - pupils were not provided with materials that sufficiently built on their past learning;
 - the work provided for the highest attaining pupils did not sufficiently challenge their thinking;
 - time was not used to best effect.As a result the progress made in learning was only satisfactory.

The quality of teaching that was observed in the Key Stage 1 class was good overall.

28. Eight lessons were observed in this class, this included one observation where the teacher was working with the two pupils in the Foundation Stage. Teaching was judged to be good in seven of the lessons and satisfactory in the remaining one lesson.
29. Good teaching was observed in lessons where pupils were developing their skills in both English (literacy lessons) and mathematics (numeracy lessons). In these lessons the teacher used good questioning skills that enabled pupils to explain how they had reached a particular answer. For example, in a mathematics lesson where pupils were asked to find the height of a flower that was 34 centimetres taller than another flower, careful questioning by the teacher enabled the pupil to explain how she had reached her answer. *'I added the 50 to the 30, then I added the 4 to the 6 to make 10 then I added the 80 to the 10 to get 90'*. This approach enabled the pupil to use her technique to solve more complex problems.
30. Good teaching was observed in a science lesson and a physical education lesson. In both these lessons the teacher had detailed preparation notes that enabled her to ensure the lesson went at a good pace. In the one lesson where teaching was judged to be satisfactory, the teacher's preparation was not as detailed and pupils did not make the same progress as that observed in the majority of lessons.

The quality of teaching that was observed in the Key Stage 2 class was good overall.

31. Eight lessons were observed in this class. Teaching was judged to be good in four of the lessons and satisfactory in the remaining four lessons.
32. Although good teaching was observed in lessons where pupils were developing their skills in both English (literacy lessons) and mathematics (numeracy lessons), lessons were observed in both these subjects where teaching was only satisfactory. Good teaching in mathematics was observed when pupils were developing ideas about symmetrical shapes. The lesson had been well planned and a good range of resources was available to the pupils to help them understand what made a shape symmetrical. The lesson went with a swing and by the end of the session pupils, at different levels of development, had made good progress in their understanding of symmetry. The satisfactory teaching in mathematics occurred when pupils were developing their understanding of fractions. The introduction to the session was too long and a number of pupils became restless. Although individual pupils were provided with good support in the lesson the progress made by the majority was only satisfactory.
33. Good teaching was also observed in music and physical education lessons. In both these lessons the pupils were actively involved in the activity. They showed that they were keen to learn and there was clear development in the standard of their work. On the other hand, in a history lesson where teaching was judged to be satisfactory, the work provided for pupils did not provide them with the necessary level of interest. Although they all did learn something appropriate they became bored in the process and there was some instances of unsatisfactory behaviour.

The teaching observed in both English and mathematics lesson was good overall.

34. Eleven lessons were observed where these important aspects of the pupils' development were being taught. In seven of the lessons teaching was judged to be good and in the remaining four lessons it was judged to be satisfactory. There was no significant difference between the quality of teaching in the two subjects. In both subjects the school is making satisfactory use of the new national guidance for teaching literacy and numeracy skills.

Over the longer period of time teaching in the school is judged to be satisfactory.

35. An examination of the teachers' planning records, together with a close scrutiny of the pupils' books and discussion with pupils, indicates that teaching in the school is generally satisfactory. The broad plan that shows how the school will deliver the nationally prescribed programmes of work (the National Curriculum) does not enable pupils to have regular access to important skills and knowledge. For example, in the Key Stage 2 class the work in most subjects is planned on a four-year-cycle. This means that if a pupil does not understand a particular idea when it is introduced in Year 3 she/he may well not come across that idea again whilst at the school. This approach is unsatisfactory as it means that skills are not being revisited on a regular basis. Pupils are not provided with regular opportunities to practise and improve their skills.
36. The teachers' planning does not take enough account of the varying levels of attainment of the pupils in each class. With teaching groups of eight and eleven, not enough thought is being given to ways in which individual pupils can be helped to make progress. As a result those pupils who are particularly high attainers are not being given work that would consistently challenge their thinking.
37. ***The progress made by pupils as they move through the school is satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of attainment similar to those found nationally. They make satisfactory progress to reach standards close to those expected for five-year-olds when they transfer to the Key Stage 1 classes. The generally steady progress is maintained in the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes so that by age eleven pupils reach standards typical for eleven-year-olds.***
38. Work in the pupils' books shows that during this term they have made satisfactory progress in the majority of subjects. When pupils talk about the work, they display a satisfactory level of understanding of the work they have undertaken. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils can explain that vibrations cause sound and they have some understanding of the relationship between the pitch of a sound and the length of a guitar string. However, in other aspects of their development their knowledge is not secure. Year 5 and 6 pupils find it very difficult to explain how to find places on maps, for example. Although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, the lack of detail in the teachers' planning does not indicate how progress could be better. Not enough thought is being given to the way in which an individual pupil's level of knowledge and understanding can be challenged and further developed. Although there is some evidence that teachers do make assessments of pupils' levels of understanding of key ideas in some subjects, the planning does not indicate how this information is to be used to plan the next step of learning. The teachers' planning does not focus in enough

detail on the learning needs of pupils of very differing ages and abilities. This is particularly true of the Key Stage 2 class.

39. During the inspection, the most effective learning occurred in lessons where the materials were both stimulating and matched to the pupils' differing levels of attainment and maturity. For example, in a Key Stage 1 science lesson where pupils were exploring the different properties of materials, they quickly came to understand that there were some changes that occurred with materials that could not be reversed. Once they had seen an egg broken they soon realised that it would be difficult to, '*Put it together again*'. On the other hand, in mathematics lesson in the Key Stage 2 class, too much reliance was placed on work from the school's commercial materials, the lesson lack excitement and pupils made relatively slow progress.
40. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs generally make good progress as they move through the school. Individual pupils are provided with a good level of support.
41. Overall, these judgements reflect those reported following the last inspection. That report clearly identified the need for teachers to develop their approach to planning the curriculum. The evidence collected indicates that not enough progress has been made in this area.

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

42. *The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory overall. The school gives appropriate emphasis to developing pupils' skills in reading, writing and number work, but does not provide pupils with enough time to develop skills in all subjects effectively. Although all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught as well as religious education, the school does not totally meet requirements because the emphasis on raising standards in English and mathematics means that not enough time is given to covering the nationally prescribed programmes of work in other subjects. The way the staff plans the curriculum has a number of significant weaknesses. The most important being the use of a cycle of topics that does not enable pupils to cover the same subject matter for a number of years.*
43. The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory overall. Pupils generally meet an appropriately varied programme of activities and experiences as they move through the school. In the Foundation Stage, better provision is needed in two areas of learning, physical development and creative development; the school has identified these inadequacies. Provision for out of school clubs and activities is very limited due to the small numbers of pupils.
44. The national guidance for teaching literacy skills is having a positive impact on the standards attained by pupils. The school recognises that several of the schemes of work need to be reviewed so that the teaching incorporates the most recent national statutory requirements for the curriculum, particularly in design and technology and geography. Schemes of work

are not yet in place for all subjects. As a result it is not clear when or how all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered.

45. Although the curriculum provision is satisfactory overall pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, they are not provided with enough opportunities to develop research skills.
46. The governors have policies in place for all subjects and the majority aspects of the school's work. However, the school has no formal programme for sex education. The topic is introduced through health education, science and materials provided by the local health authority through the school nurse. The school's approach to drug education is not fully developed.
47. The way teachers plan the curriculum is broadly satisfactory, but with some significant weaknesses. In the Key Stage 1 class work is planned through a number of topics over a period of two years. A similar approach is used in the Key Stage 2 class, but the time scale is increased to four years. This approach means that particular aspects of the national programmes of work will usually only be covered once in a four-year period in the Key Stage 2 class. There are inherent weaknesses in this system. For example, if a pupil does not understand a particular piece of work in the Year 3 group, there will be no opportunity to revisit this work at a later stage. This will have serious consequences for the progress made by pupils in their learning.
48. The school provides equal opportunities for all its pupil; it is fully inclusive in how it plans their work and experiences. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and given appropriate help by a part-time teacher and a classroom assistant.
49. The school has very good links with the parents. The community makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Relationships with Mere Brow Primary School and Bishop Rawsthorne High School are good. The school works in partnership with the local chapel, putting in displays on 'Caring' for Education Sunday, as well as numerous other activities.

Provision for pupils' social development is good. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development are satisfactory.

50. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The curriculum offers satisfactory provision for spiritual development. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on world affairs and know how many hungry people there are in the world. They are encouraged to support charities for example, when they raised money for Afghanistan through a sponsored music event. In assemblies, the pupils sing hymns, say prayers and listen to music and poetry. Close links with the chapel enhances this aspect of the pupils' development.
51. The provision for the pupils' moral provision is satisfactory overall. The school's behaviour policy gives the pupils clear guidelines on how to behave. Rewards and sanctions are effective in promoting behaviour. Relationships are good and pupils know right from wrong.
52. Planned provision for the pupils' social education is good. They learn to work in pairs and

in groups. Milk times in Reception and Key Stage 1 together with dinnertime provide pleasant occasions for pupils to mix with each other. Pupils enjoy the range of school trips and the Christmas party provided for them. They are given the opportunity to spend a residential holiday together.

53. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Through history and geography topics, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of people and places around the world, as well as considering other societies and cultures. Music and poetry provide opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures. However, not enough use is made of the art and literature of other cultures. The school is mono-ethnic and does not provide opportunity for pupils to appreciate and understand the richness of a multi-cultural society.
54. Overall these judgements are similar to those reported in the last inspection report. As yet, not enough thought has been given to the way in which the curriculum should be planned in this very small school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

55. ***Overall the school provides a satisfactory level of care for its pupils. Teachers and support staff are accessible, caring and thoughtful. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory. However, the school does not use the information gained from assessments sufficiently to plan the next stage of learning for pupils.***
56. The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are satisfactory. The small number of pupils and the good quality of relationships throughout the school help to ensure that staff know the pupils well.
57. Satisfactory procedures for child protection are in place. The headteacher is the designated person responsible and is due for updated training. There is also a named governor who takes responsibility for overseeing this aspect of the school's work. The governing body has not yet agreed its own health and safety policy but follows the local authority guidelines. The governors inspect the building, there are regular fire drills, equipment is tested and the accident book is readily available and completed. Clear procedures are in place for any pupil who becomes ill in school.
58. Because of the small number of pupils on roll, the school does not monitor attendance with any rigour. Attendance is in line with the national average for primary schools but the school should expect to see an increase in attendance. The educational welfare officer visits each term as a matter of course. Pupils are punctual and no time is wasted at the beginning of the school day.
59. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. The draft behaviour policy is clear. The pupils understand the teachers' approach to managing behaviour. Monitoring is an ongoing process and some behavioural problems are recorded. Any incidents are dealt with immediately by staff. Parents are informed when there are concerns and the school arranges for the matter to be

discussed with both parents and child. There are opportunities for class discussions to discuss acceptable behaviour.

60. There have been some improvements in the way the school collects and analyses information about pupils' attainment and progress. This aspect of the school's work is satisfactory. Although there may be an intention to regularly record the progress of individual pupils in important aspects of their work, the records seen during the inspection do not always support this intention. Assessment is carried out informally on a daily basis, and teachers carry most of what they know about each pupil's progress in their head. Because the recording is not obvious there is no evidence that assessment is being used systematically or efficiently in planning what each pupil needs to do next. This approach is unsatisfactory, particularly in the light of other weaknesses in planning the curriculum for each pupil. As a result some pupils' progress is too slow.
61. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored and supported satisfactorily, but the information gained is not always used to set targets for individual pupils to aim at. Weekly test results are recorded and achievement is discussed as the work is returned to the pupil. 'Smiley faces' are given to the infants for good work and good behaviour with a weekly awards ceremony. Team points are awarded to the juniors. These are charted on the wall and certificates are awarded to those who achieve twenty points. The school is developing a system of records of achievement examples of pupils' good work.
62. These judgements are similar to those reported after the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

63. *All the parents who returned the questionnaire indicated that they were satisfied with the standards achieved by their children and with the information they received from the school. Parents regard the caring attitude and family atmosphere as a major strength of the school. They are confident in approaching the school on any matter and feel that there is a very effective partnership in place.*
64. The parents are extremely supportive of the school and this is greatly appreciated by the staff. Parents value the strong moral code implicit in the work of the school, and the way in which the children are helped to become mature and responsible individuals.
65. The school has established a number of links with parents. All parents have completed the home-school agreement that is included in the prospectus. The school views the agreement very seriously and feels it is effective. Most parents visit the school daily whilst bringing their child to and from school. This is an opportunity to share information. The school occupies an important place in village life.
66. The Friends of the School association is open to anyone who wishes to become involved with raising money for the school or helping in any other way. This is a successful group that holds events throughout the year to include the village and the surrounding community.

67. The school prospectus and Governors' Annual Report to parents contain good clear information. There are well presented newsletters that are issued at least once a term, together with other notices and letters from both school and the Friends group.
68. The annual reports on pupils to their parents detailing progress in school vary in quality. A scrutiny of the Key Stage 2 reports provided evidence of a small number of incorrect grammar and spelling mistakes. When the school's bank of statements had been used, there was some confusion over the gender used in individual pupils' reports. The reports do not clearly state what pupils can and cannot do and no targets are set. The Key Stage 1 class reports are more informative and the language is more appropriate. Throughout the school there is little in the reports to help parents understand the progress made by their child; this aspect of the reports is generally unsatisfactory. The school provides a limited amount of information to parents on the curriculum but does advise parents of the topics to be studied and encourages families to become involved in the work to be covered.
69. Parents are welcome to come into school and help, for example with readers, although constraints on available space mean that numbers have to be restricted. The reading record book is used well as a dialogue between home and school for the younger pupils. There is weekly homework for pupils. Parents are encouraged to help children with spellings and arithmetic. Parents and former pupils are happy to bring their skills into school, for example a photographer and potter who have been able to share their knowledge and experience with the children. The school is also very receptive to parents' suggestions such as getting more and better books or pointing out that the field needs draining.
70. These judgements are similar to those reported after the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

71. ***Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Nevertheless, there are weaknesses in aspects of the leadership. The school lacks clear educational direction. Although the governors are supportive of the school, they do not have sufficiently well developed strategies that enable them to hold the school to account for its actions and the standards attained.***
72. The headteacher ensures that the school runs efficiently, on a day-to-day basis. He has developed a range of satisfactory strategies that enable him to combine his work as headteacher with a teaching commitment for three days per week for pupils in the Key Stage 2 class. However, at the time of the inspection aspects of leadership were unsatisfactory. In particular the school did not provide a clear picture of its overall educational direction. There is not sufficient commitment to raising standards. The small teaching groups are not seen as an opportunity to set ambitious targets for pupils. The headteacher and governors are too concerned with the perceived difficulties of working in a small school, and insufficient exploitation of the clear advantages, most notably the extremely generous teacher-to-pupil ratio and the generous funding per pupil.
73. The progress made in addressing the issues identified in the last inspection report has been

too variable. Five issues were identified. Taken together, they provided a clear agenda to help the school raise the standard of education. Some limited progress has been made in addressing aspects of each issue. However, progress has been slow and as a result the issues identified in this report are of a similar nature. The headteacher and governors need to put the raising of standards higher up their separate and joint agenda. The school is isolated from other schools. This means that the staff, particularly the headteacher, does not have the opportunity to discuss and evaluate ideas. Contact with an outside agency would strengthen the school's overall evaluation of its performance.

74. A limited amount of monitoring of the standards attained by pupils has been undertaken. The staff are beginning to gather together examples of work to show how pupils have progressed in their learning. At the time of the inspection, it was not clear how this folder was being used to develop the teachers' understanding of the different levels of the National Curriculum.
75. The governors have been able to use the school's budget to provide the headteacher with two days a week release from teaching. He uses this time to undertake general school management and this aspect of his work is satisfactory. However, there is little evidence to indicate that sufficient of the two days is being used to focus on raising standards in the school. For example, the planned programme of classroom observations through which the headteacher could identify the strengths and weaknesses in teaching needs to be more rigorous. Similarly, there is no evidence to indicate that he uses the time to evaluate the impact of the curriculum as it is currently planned.
76. Overall, the work of the school governors is satisfactory. The governing body is very supportive of the school and is keen that standards attained by pupils should improve. The governing body is organised into an effective committee structure to consider and then take action on matters to do with curriculum, finance, and premises.
77. The governors' systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school are underdeveloped. The minutes of governors' meetings do not contain sufficient evidence to indicate that they ask the necessary searching questions about the school's overall performance. At the time of the inspection the governing body was not totally fulfilling its role as the school's 'critical friend'.
78. The school's plan for its further development is a satisfactory document. Governors are involved with staff to identify priorities in the plan. This plan comprises a number of manageable targets. However, the plan does not provide enough detail on how particular targets are to be attained.
79. The school's budget shows a larger than normal carry forward to the next year, amounting to 15% of the annual budget. The governors are aware of this and have identified some of this large sum of money to protect staffing levels in the school. Although this approach to budget planning is acceptable, the governors need to be absolutely sure that provision for pupils who are presently at the school is appropriate. The limited evidence collected during the inspection indicated weaknesses in provision in a number of areas, the most significant of

which were:

- no large outside play provision for the Foundation Stage;
 - limited large construction equipment for pupils in the Key Stage 1 class;
 - science equipment that was not stored in a way that is accessible to pupils’;
 - a shortage of maps, photographs and similar visual aids for use in geography.
80. Systems for the day-to-day administration of the school’s financial affairs are good and effective. The school secretary has access to an appropriate range of technology to support her work. Governors are kept well informed about matters connected with the school’s finances.
81. There are satisfactory procedures for applying aspects of the principles of best value.
82. ***The level of staffing in the school is very high. Teaching staff are suitable qualified to teach the age range in the school. The size of the accommodation is unsatisfactory, with playground space being restricted. Although the school has no hall space, good arrangements are made with a local primary school so that pupils have opportunities to develop their skills in physical education. Generally, despite some continuing weaknesses, learning resources are satisfactory in terms of their range and quality, although they are not always stored in a way that makes them accessible to pupils.***
83. The school’s accommodation is very well maintained. During the inspection the school was kept immaculately clean. Staff have used pupils’ work to enhance the learning environment. The majority of the displays are of a satisfactory quality, having an appropriate mix of pupils’ work and other artefacts. A small number of displays do not show the pupils’ work to best affect and do not provide the necessary level of inspiration for pupils.
84. Overall, the areas surrounding the school are satisfactory. Playground space is very limited but the school does have the benefit of a good-sized grass area. There is no secure outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage and there are no large sets of outdoor equipment for this age group. This limits their ability to develop the range of physical skills set out in the new national guidance for the age group.
85. Resources are satisfactory, overall, although with some weaknesses including those listed above. There is a good stock of books both fiction and non-fiction. Although resources are generally at a satisfactory level they are not well stored and not easily available to pupils. This limits the pupils’ opportunities to take some further responsibility for their own learning.
86. The school has clearly invested in appropriate resources in order to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school has a satisfactory range of computers and related software.
87. These judgements do not indicate a satisfactory degree of improvement in the school’s overall management and leadership since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

88. The school governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions to raise standards in the school.
- (1) Focus the school's management on raising the standards attained by pupils by:
 - Evaluating the way the present time allocated for management is used;
 - Allocating sufficient of the management time to the specific issue of raising the standards attained by all pupils;
 - Setting clear targets for management that are connected with raising standards;
 - Using external agencies to monitor, on a regular basis, the progress that has been made in reaching the management targets;
 - Developing procedures and strategies through which the governing body fully fulfils its role to hold the school to account for its actions and the standards attained.

 - (2) Develop structured programmes of work for each class, that are specific to this school and that use the national guidance as support, by:
 - Discussing and then deciding on ways in which the schemes of work for this school should have a particular emphasis and relate to the school's local environment;
 - Reviewing the present topic approach (two and four yearly cycles) to ensure that pupils are provided with regular opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in all key areas of learning;
 - Using the national guidance as a tool to ensure that all aspects of the nationally prescribed programmes of work for all subjects (the National Curriculum) are being delivered through the school's schemes of work.

 - (3) Provide work for all pupils that builds on their past learning and challenges their thinking by:
 - Developing the school's assessment procedures so that the level of attainment of each pupil is clearly established and recorded;
 - Using this information to plan learning programmes for pupils that take each pupil to the next stage in their development;
 - Involving pupils in understanding what they will need to do to attain the next stage in their learning.

(Further reference to these issues can be found in the numbered paragraphs of the full report 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 18, 27, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 42, 45, 47, 60, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 94, 100, 110, 118, 119, 121, 122, 127, 131, 132, 135, 136, 145, 158, 160, 163, 174).

In addition the governors need to take the appropriate actions to address the following minor issue:

- Provide a suitable range of equipment for children in the Foundation Stage of education.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

16

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	0	11	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0	0	69	31	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	19
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	3

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	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment

Because of the small number of pupils in each year group no comparative data with national results is included in this report.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	19
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	7.6
Average class size	9.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	124,182
Total expenditure	115,928
Expenditure per pupil	6,101
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,742
Balance carried forward to next year	41,996

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	19
Number of questionnaires returned	12

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	9	3	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	10	2	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	10	2	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	8	3	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	9	3	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	10	2	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	10	2	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	11	1	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	12	0	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	9	3	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	10	2	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	4	1	4	3	0

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

- 89 *Overall the provision made for children in the Foundation Stage of education is good. At the time of the inspection the two children in the age group formed part of the Key Stage 1 class. The class teacher is well supported on three mornings a week. This level of support enables the children to make good progress in learning.*
- 90 The Foundation Stage of education includes children in the age group three and four years. The national guidance for this stage of education sets out a number of targets that children should attain; these targets are divided into four developmental stages. In this section of the report a limited number of judgements are made about the stage of development of children when they first join the school at age four years. Because of the very small number of children involved, two in the present Reception Year, other evidence has also been used when judgements have been made. This evidence included an examination of past records and discussions with the teaching staff.
- 91 The school does not admit children until they are four years old. At the time of the inspection there were two children in this group. For the majority of the time they form part of the Key Stage 1 class. However, on three mornings a qualified nursery nurse is employed by the school to help with the education of this small group of children.
- 92 Good provision is made for children when they start school. There are no home visits but good opportunities are provided for children and their parents to visit the school before they start school. When children enter school, the teacher makes an informal assessment of their attainment. This is followed up with a formal assessment early in the first term. The more formal assessment is linked to the steps in the new national guidance for the age group.
- 93 Assessment on entry shows that, on average over recent years, children attain standards broadly in line with the national expectations for four-year-olds. Good teaching, overall, is having a positive impact on learning and the children in reception are making sound progress. The teacher and the nursery nurse work closely together. They are beginning to plan the curriculum with reference to the new national guidance for the age group.
- 94 The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. A small space has been created next to the Key Stage 1 class and this provides some opportunities for the young children to learn through play. The outside area available provides a place for limited outdoor play; this is used for small games activities. The school has plans to develop this area with a safe surface and large climbing and balancing equipment. Overall, resources are satisfactory though actions are needed to provide children in the Foundation Stage with a much greater range of materials and equipment.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 95 Overall, provision in this area of children's development is good. The children begin school with good social skills. The teacher and the nursery nurse are sensitive to their needs. They listen carefully to what the children have to say encouraging them to talk about feelings. This builds confidence in the children so that they are prepared to try new activities. Every-day routines such as 'snack times' encourage a sense of belonging and sharing. Good personal development is seen in 'carpet times' when the children meet with the older pupils to report on the activities they have enjoyed. For example, after reading the book *Where's Spot?* they showed good levels of confidence as they talked to the other pupils. Gentle reminders encourage the children to sit quietly and to listen when appropriate. They learn to take turns and to say thank you. The children are becoming independent in tidying away activities and managing their own personal hygiene.

Communication, language and literacy

- 96 Good teaching in this area of the children's development ensures that they make good progress. They enjoy listening to stories and readily share books with each other and with adults. They know how to hold a book and turn the pages correctly. In reading the book *George and the Dragon* they could retell the story and predict what happens next. Using picture cards of the story, *Where's Spot?* they can put the cards in the correct sequence and then check the order by rereading the book. Good links with creative development were seen when the children made stick puppets of the characters and acted the story. Children learn the initials sounds of letters. In homework they look for objects that begin with the 'sound of the week'. They learnt the sound 'm' and brought a toy motorbike and a mushroom.
- 97 The children can write their names and hold a pencil correctly. Good use of resources makes writing lessons exciting. The children guessed what animals were 'in the bag'. If they were right they drew the animal and wrote its name with guidance from the teacher. The children are encouraged to use different pens and papers. Attractive supplies of papers, pens and jotters are well organised in the Holmeswood Estate Agents. A model of a computer and keypad, together with a mouse, calculator and telephones, develop good speaking and writing skills through role-play.

Mathematical development

- 98 Children enter the school with a sense of number that is typical for their age group. Satisfactory teaching, together with effective planning and organisation, enables them to make satisfactory progress. During the inspection they showed that they could count every day objects, recognise, name and order numbers up to ten. Through creative play they have made a collage of space, showing a rocket following ten stars to the moon. Effective questioning develops mathematical vocabulary. The children know and understand 'more', 'less', 'full' and 'empty'. They enjoy sorting and matching objects, such as biscuits. Challenging teaching enables the children to develop mathematical ideas, such as thinking of space when building a house using *Lego* that is big enough for Spot to hide in. They learn to

compare the heights and lengths of animals and which containers in the sand tray hold more or less. Number games are well used to develop numeracy. The children are on course to reach the level of attainment expected when they reach five.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

99 Provision in this area of children's development is satisfactory. Children enter the school with an understanding of their world that is typical for the age group. Much of the work in this area of the children's development is linked to the other areas of learning. The children investigate and compare materials. They know that things can be changed as they discovered when dyeing wool. The children were excited when the teacher broke an egg and understood that when some things change the change couldn't be reversed. The children learn about time when they collect leaves that have changed colour. An autumn display shows a collection of fruits and nuts. Books such as *After the Storm* teach the children about weather. They know where they live and how they come to school. Using a map of the school and its neighbourhood they talk about *Who lives in a cottage?* and consider *What is the house made of?* The children can record their work by drawing pictures of houses they have seen, with titles such as '*House for Sale*'. A chart of the children's addresses shows good development of literacy. The children are proud of the pictures they have made on the computer, in this area of work the children are on course to reach the standard expected for five-year-olds.

Physical development.

- 100 Children's attainment in this area of development is broadly similar to those found nationally. Opportunities for outdoor play are unsatisfactory. There is no high fixed equipment for children to climb, slide and balance, nor tunnels to crawl through. A lack of large constructional toys and bricks prevents the children from building large community playthings. Through using the small games equipment the children are aware of space and safety issues.
- 101 The children can handle tools such as pencils, scissors and brushes. In making the stick puppets they learn to draw, colour, cut out and glue. The children can manipulate the puppets, handle water and sand and roll and mould the play dough. The school has recognised the need to develop outdoor play, but at the present time, the children are not on course to reach early learning goals in physical development.

Creative development

102 Overall provision in this area of the children's development is satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress in exploring colour, texture and space through making a collage of autumn leaves. They have painted the pressed leaves and used them to print patterns that are of a satisfactory standard. The good teaching on autumn is seen in the drawings of *Home for a Hedgehog*. Children listen attentively to sounds in the music played but no evidence was seen of children exploring how sounds can be changed or of recognising patterns in music and dance. They do, however, enjoy singing their favourite songs, tunefully

and with good rhythm. Role-play is planned through 'The Holmeswood Estate Agency'. This provides only limited opportunities to use their imagination. From the work seen and from the school's planning records, opportunities to express ideas and feelings through art and design, drama and creative play are missed. Overall, the evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that children will not reach the expected standard for children of five.

103 These judgements indicate an improvement over those reported after the last inspection.

ENGLISH

104 *The very small number of pupils in a year-group makes year-by-year comparisons with results in national tests for English of little value. When taken overall, the school's results for the last four years show that standards are in line with those typically found nationally for the respective age groups. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. An examination of the pupils' books together with discussions with pupils indicates that they make satisfactory progress in English as they move through the school.*

105 Standards in speaking and listening are average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills in speaking and listening as they move through the school. Pupils listen well and are keen to join in discussions. In the best lessons observed, effective questioning by the teachers encouraged the pupils to extend the range of their vocabulary. Pupils are expected to answer in sentences when explaining their methods of working. After writing instructions on 'How to Bath a Baby!' pupils in Year 2 were confident in reading their own notes to the class. Good teaching in Key Stage 2 on brainstorming synonyms gave pupils a wider vocabulary. They were able to use descriptive language: adjectives such as 'trembling', 'shivering', 'shaking', and 'wobbling' and adverbs such as 'mercilessly'. A good choice of subject, 'Interviewing the actor who played Harry Potter' led to a good discussion. The pupils used newspaper cuttings to give them ideas; they were fully involved in this activity which they found stimulating.

106 Standards of reading across the school are average, and pupils make satisfactory progress. Overall, teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 are good. Pupils enjoy reading and can talk about the characters in the stories. Higher attaining pupils use punctuation well to read fluently, with good expression. They use the picture to help read new words. Lower attaining pupils remember the repeated patterns in the stories and use pictures and the initial sounds of letters in order to read their books. Most pupils are on course to reach the standard expected nationally at age seven years. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Older pupils are reasonably confident in conveying meaning when they read aloud and they make few errors in their reading. They can break down complex words into syllables. Pupils can offer opinions on the books that they enjoy. They have some technical knowledge of books and can identify author, title and illustrator. Pupils in Year 6 were unable to name a favourite author. Progress and attitudes are satisfactory.

107 The majority of pupils make good progress in writing. The highest attaining seven-year-olds write well. They can write in full sentences and use capital letters and full stops. Spelling is

usually accurate. They know the conventions of story telling; such as beginning with 'A long time ago'. The highest attaining pupils understand past and present tense and can use conjunctives such as 'so'. They can write for different purposes: writing stories, telling news, giving information, making notes and writing poetry. There are some examples of constructive marking that enables the pupils to improve the standard of their work. Satisfactory progress is seen in writing through Key Stage 2. Pupils use different styles to match the type of writing, including imaginative, factual, note taking, instructive and poetic. Satisfactory progress is seen in the presentation, content, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling.

- 108 Standards of handwriting seen in pupils' books are above average. Younger pupils practise forming the letters correctly and many are able to join the letters. Older pupils develop their own style. In the best handwriting, letters are formed correctly, consistent and well spaced. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are encouraged to use ink and fountain pens. They take pride in their work and are keen to show it to visitors. Spelling is taught and spelling patterns are displayed on wall sheets. Targets for improvement is given such as, 'Think carefully about 'b', 'p', and 'd''.

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall. Over the longer period of time, teaching is satisfactory.

- 109 Teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach reading and writing. Teaching was at its best when the subjects chosen appealed to the pupils. They enjoyed working on newspaper texts to find the writer's point of view. The articles included information on the *Harry Potter* film and facts about Michael Owen. Good planning of resources included recent newspaper cuttings. Support cards giving ideas on 'What will help me?' enabled the pupils to make good progress. In the least successful teaching, work was not sufficiently challenging. The time spent on the introduction was too long and the pace was too slow; pupils lose interest. Filling in missing words does not make the pupils eager to learn.
- 110 Over the longer period of time teaching is satisfactory. An examination of the teachers' planning records, together with a scrutiny of the pupils' books, indicates that pupils are only making satisfactory progress in this aspect of their education. The very small teaching groups are not being used to maximum benefit so that pupils make more rapid progress in English. Work in the pupils' books does not show how skills developed in literacy lessons are influencing standards in other subjects. Although a small number of pupils were able to talk about the their target for this term, this process of target-setting is underdeveloped. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils were not clear about what they would need to do to attain the expected Level 4 in this subject. In other respects, the school is making effective use of the national guidance for teaching literacy skills. The school is making effective use of the national guidance for teaching literacy skills
- 111 Overall resources for English are satisfactory. The school has bought many excellent books but many of these are not yet on display. As a result they are not adding to the pupils' enjoyment of the subject. Opportunities are missed for pupils to become independent readers. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils in the Key Stage 2 class to undertake their own research. Work on display that had been completed during time when

pupils were involved in research work was of a low standard.

- 112 These judgements do not indicate any improvement in English from those reported following the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

- 113 ***The combined results for the last four years in tests for eleven-year-olds show the school's results to be close to the average of schools nationally. The limited data available makes sensible comparisons with the results of similar schools impossible. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils indicates that throughout the school, standards in mathematics are similar to those found in primary schools nationally.***
- 114 When the school's results for the last four years in the statutory assessments for seven-year-olds are combined, the pupils' attainment in mathematics was close to the national average. With the very small number of pupils involved, a sensible judgement cannot be made about the different levels of attainment of girls and boys.
- 115 When the school's results for the last four years in the statutory assessments for eleven-year-olds are combined, the pupils' attainment in mathematics was in line with the national average. Once again the very small number of pupils involved makes it impossible to make a sensible judgement about the differing level of performance of girls and boys.
- 116 An examination of the Years 1 and 2 pupils' books shows that they started the school year with a wide range of ability. The most able pupils could recognise the difference between numbers in the hundreds, tens and units. They presented their work accurately. During the inspection pupils were able to show that they had made progress in their understanding of mathematics. The highest attaining pupils in the group could explain how they had calculated that 64 was half of 128, by working out that 60 was half of 120 and 4 was half of eight. Some Year 2 pupils are also able to identify common two and three-dimensional shapes; they are able to describe objects in terms of 'heavier', 'lighter', 'longer' and 'shorter'. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use standard units to measure objects. They can choose an appropriate measuring stick when asked to find the length of objects in centimetres. The higher attaining pupils in the class are well on course to reach the nationally expected Level 2 by the end of the school year. If provided with the necessary opportunities a small number of pupils should attain the higher Level 3.
- 117 An examination of the Year 5 and 6 pupils' books, together with discussions with the group, indicates that they have covered many aspects of the nationally prescribed programme of work for mathematics. Work in the pupils' books shows that they have progressed in their ability to complete sums involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They have a satisfactory understanding of the processes they have been taught. However, their ability to complete mental calculations quickly is less well developed. For example, when asked to work out 49 multiplied by 7, only one pupil was able to explain that the easiest was

to multiply 50 by 7 and then subtract seven from that answer. When other similar examples were given to pupils it was evident that they were limited in the number of strategies they used to complete tasks involving numbers. Work in the pupils' books indicates that they have a satisfactory understanding of a range of other mathematical ideas. During the inspection all the pupils in the Key Stage 2 class were able to explain the principles involved in making a shape symmetrical.

- 118 ***The progress made by pupils in mathematics as they move through the school is satisfactory. The very small teaching groups are not being used to maximum benefit to enable pupils to make even more rapid progress in their learning.***
- 119 The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and, generally, drawing on its guidance to set the pupils appropriate activities for their age and ability. However, in the Key Stage 2 class too much emphasis is placed on using a commercially produced scheme without a close review of the work given to pupils to see how it relates to the numeracy strategy. The over reliance on this set of materials means that work does not consistently build on the pupils' past learning or take enough account of what they can already do. Pupils present their work tidily and overall the standards of presentation of work in mathematics are high.
- 120 ***Overall the teaching observed in mathematics was judged to be of a good quality. An examination of the pupils' books and the teachers' planning indicates that over the longer period of time teaching is satisfactory.***
- 121 During the inspection five lessons were observed where pupils were developing skills in mathematics (numeracy skills). In three lessons teaching was judged to be good and in two lessons it was judged to be satisfactory. All the teaching observed followed the structure set out in the national programme for teaching mathematics and was generally effective, promoting learning at a good or satisfactory rate. The planning for the lessons that were observed showed in a clear way how pupils were to be introduced to new ideas. However, an examination of the teachers' planning files did not show the same level of planning, it was not clear how teachers undertook planning for individual lessons in other weeks of the school year. The longer term planning does not focus on the way in which the learning needs of individual pupils are to be considered. As a result the rate of progress made by pupils is not as great as it should be given the very small teaching groups.
- 122 In the best lessons, teachers made effective use of questioning to develop learning or to reinforce key ideas. Activities were well organised and pupils were aware of the expected classroom routines. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils moved quickly and quietly from the mental activities on the carpet area to a series of well-planned activities that involved them in measuring a range of objects. Pupils showed that they were able to work together well, the teacher provided them with good support when needed. When teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall, pupils were not always fully involved in the activity. For example, in a lesson where the Key Stage 2 pupils were developing ideas about fractions the introduction to the lesson went on too long and a number of pupils became restless.

- 123 Overall, any pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The support given to this group of pupils is generally satisfactory.
- 124 Throughout the school, homework is not used in a consistent way to support teaching and learning in mathematics. During the inspection hardly any evidence was seen of pupils being given mathematics homework.
- 125 Resources for mathematics are satisfactory. The school has a good range of computer programs that support pupils' mathematical development. The pupils are keen to use the programs and during the inspection they used them to good effect.
- 126 These judgements are similar to those reported following the last inspection.

SCIENCE

- 127 ***Overall, standards in science are in line with those found in primary schools nationally. The combined results for the last four years in tests for eleven-year-olds show the school's results to be close to the average of schools nationally. The limited data available makes sensible comparisons with the results of similar schools impossible. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils indicates that throughout the school, standards in those aspects of science that are to do with understanding scientific facts are similar to those found in primary schools nationally. The pupils' understanding of scientific investigations is less well developed.***
- 128 When the school's results for the last four years in the statutory assessments for seven-year-olds are combined, the pupils' attainment in science was close to the national average. With the very small number of pupils involved, a sensible judgement cannot be made about the different levels of attainment of girls and boys.
- 129 When the school's results for the last four years in the national tests for eleven-year-olds are combined, the pupils' attainment in science was in line with the national average. Once again the very small number of pupils involved makes it impossible to make a sensible judgement about the differing level of performance of girls and boys.
- 130 The limited amount of work in the pupils' books shows that in the Key Stage 1 class pupils have been involved in developing their ideas about materials and the ways they can be changed. In discussion pupils were able to explain that stretching some materials changed them, whilst other materials returned to their original shape. Higher attaining pupils were able to explain that some changes, for example making a cake, made it difficult to get the ingredients back. They understood that once an egg had been broken open then they would not be able to put it together again.
- 131 An examination of the work in the books of the Key Stage 2 pupils showed that during this

term they had explored ideas about light and sound. In discussion pupils were able to explain that when they heard a sound a vibration had occurred. They could also explain that light travelled from objects to the eye. However, pupils were not aware of the differences between the way sound and light travel through a substance. The books contain limited evidence of pupils undertaking any scientific investigations. The investigations that have been completed are at a level below that typically expected for Year 6 pupils. The tasks they were set were too similar to those set for younger pupils in the class, with too little opportunity to make use and build on what they already knew and could do. For example, when exploring the effect of different volumes of water on the pitch of the note produced by a milk bottle there had been no attempt to make any measurements. In discussion the Year 5 and 6 pupils were able to talk in very general terms about the idea of making an investigation fair. None of the pupils could explain the need to control variables.

- 132 Work in the pupils' books does not indicate that the progress they make in their learning is satisfactory. The slower than expected rate of progress is closely related to the way science ideas are introduced in the school. The curriculum is planned over a two-year period in the Key Stage 1 class and a four-year period in the Key Stage 2 class. This approach means that pupils come in contact with key scientific ideas on an infrequent basis. For example, a pupil in Year 3 may not have the opportunity to revisit important scientific ideas again, whilst at the school.
- 133 Pupils with special educational needs attain satisfactory standards overall. They make steady progress in science and generally enjoy their science lessons.
- 134 *During the inspection one lesson was observed where science was being taught, the teaching was judged to be good. However, an examination of the teachers' longer term planning together with an examination of the pupils' books indicates that over the longer period of time science teaching in the school is generally satisfactory.*
- 135 The very limited direct evidence of teaching in science means that a secure judgement about science teaching is difficult. When the teachers' planning is taken into consideration then the picture over the longer period of time indicates that teaching is generally of a satisfactory standard. The planning is very broad and does not provide enough detail about how and when parts of the national programme of work are to be covered. There is no indication that assessments of pupils' past learning will be used to plan the next step in learning. Tasks set to a class are not sufficiently matched to individual pupils' age, ability and maturity. The very small teaching groups are not being used to maximum effect to enable pupils to make rapid progress in learning in science.
- 136 The school does not have a clear scheme of work for science. The recently produced national guidance for the subject has not been used in a constructive way to develop a science scheme that is particular to this school and its very peculiar needs, that is very small teaching groups with pupils of very different ages and abilities.
- 137 Resources for science are adequate. However, they are not organised in a way that makes

them readily available for pupils to use. This contributes to the general lack of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning.

- 138 These judgements indicate little improvement in science work in the school since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 139 ***By the ages of seven pupils attain standards that are typical for the age group. By the age of eleven pupils attain standards that are lower than those expected nationally. Few pupils attain the higher levels for their respective ages. As pupils move through the school, they make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge and skills in ICT.***

- 140 A good number of computers with appropriate software in both classrooms enables all pupils to have regular opportunities to become familiar with computers and their uses. The school receives regular support from the Local Education Authority. This is having a positive impact on the pupils' understanding of ways they can use the computer to improve their work.

- 141 From an early age, pupils have the opportunity to become confident users of the keyboard and mouse. For example, in the Key Stage 1 class pupils are able to use the mouse to control items on the computer screen. The pieces of work they have produced shows that they are able to understand how they can combine text and pictures. At the time of the inspection there was no opportunity for pupils in this class to develop their skills in controlling simple equipment.

- 142 In the Key Stage 2 class, pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of opportunities to further develop their computer skills. They have produced work of a satisfactory standard using a word processing program. In discussion, the Year 5 and 6 pupils were able to explain a number of important functions from the program. They could explain how you could move text, change the size of the text and check work for spelling mistakes. However, they were less clear on how you could use a computer to help display data in a graphical form. Pupils' work is stored electronically and pupils are confident in both retrieving work and saving the outcomes of new work.

- 143 ***No direct teaching of computer skills was observed during the inspection. An examination of the teachers' planning records, together with discussion with pupils indicates that teaching is generally satisfactory.***

- 144 During the inspection no lesson were observed where pupils were being taught to develop their computer skills. Where computers were used, they supported pupils in developing other aspects of their work, for example in mathematics. An examination of the teachers' planning records does not provide clear evidence of when or how pupils will be helped in developing ICT skills. For example, the plans do not clearly indicate how pupils will improve their skills in using word processing skills or data handling skills.

- 145 Although the progress made by the pupils as the move through the school is satisfactory, the small teaching groups, together with the generous ratio of pupils to computers, provides the opportunity for pupils to make rapid progress in this area of their learning.
- 146 Resources for ICT are good. The ratio of computers to pupils is high. With a more structured teaching programme, pupils could make better progress.
- 147 These judgements are similar to those reported following the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 148 *The governors and headteacher have identified raising standards in English and mathematics as a priority. As a result of the relatively limited teaching time and priority given to other subjects, and because of some weaknesses in planning work in mixed-age classes, standards in these subjects are variable. The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that in these subjects standards, although at times on the low side, are typical of those found in similar primary schools.*
- 149 The evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that in *art and design* standards are lower than those expected for pupils aged seven and eleven years.
- 150 There are no artwork displays of good quality around the school to show the range of work that is detailed in the school's long-term planning. A display of the dinosaur topic in Years 5 and 6 included drawings and paintings of dinosaurs of a low standard. Opportunities to explore different shapes, textures and forms were not evident in the work.
- 151 Pupils in Key Stage 1 can draw and illustrate their writings as is seen in the class story books in which they have written about *Mister Magnolio*. With help, they can use information and communication technology to investigate shape, colour and pattern in making their designs. The pupils are proud of this artwork. There is limited evidence to indicate that the pupils are provided with regular opportunities to paint pictures make collages using different media, or work in designing two-dimensional forms.
- 152 In a discussion with older pupils it was evident that pupils have very little knowledge of famous artists. They do not study or work in any artists' style. No lessons in art and design took place during the inspection. The only other artwork seen was in Key Stage 2 sketchbooks. Pencil sketches of objects such as boxes, were drawn and highlighted by shading. Pupils had designed and painted a pumpkin.
- 153 Resources are satisfactory and include a good selection of books on art and design.
- 154 The evidence of work in classrooms and on display indicates that pupils' attainment at age seven and eleven in *design and technology* is below that found nationally, for the respective age groups. During the course of this inspection it was not possible to see any design and technology lessons. Design and technology has not been a priority for development for the school.
- 155 There is limited evidence of pupils' work in design and technology. In discussion Year 5

and 6 pupils could recall making a Father Christmas last year. They could explain how they had designed their own artefact and how they had then dressed it. They were not so sure that they had evaluated what they had made and thought about ways in which their Father Christmas could have been improved.

- 156 The limited evidence available indicates that pupils make unsatisfactory progress in developing skills in design and technology, as they move through the school.
- 157 Overall, the school has a satisfactory range of resources for teaching the subject. In the Key Stage 1 class the range of large construction materials is unsatisfactory.
- 158 The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that, overall, standards in *geography* are lower than those typically expected nationally. Pupils aged seven achieve the nationally expected standard but pupils aged eleven do not reach the standard expected for this age group. Time allocated for geography is low and particularly low for Key Stage 2. Planning for geography is on a four-year cycle in alternate terms. Consequently too much time elapses before important geographical skills can be revisited and developed. Progress is satisfactory through Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory through Key Stage 2.
- 159 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 pupils talk with enthusiasm about their journey to school, pointing out key features. The pupils have made a map showing where they live. Roads and street names are marked. Signposts to the neighbouring villages of Rufford and Burscough are included. Effective question labels encourage the pupils to identify the different types of houses and to discover why some houses have chimneys.
- 160 In the previous summer term, pupils in Key Stage 2 had been studying the local environment. They wrote a letter to the local Member of Parliament expressing concern about river pollution. In a discussion with older pupils, they were able to name towns near Holmeswood and find them on a map. They have an understanding of the differences between rural and city life, and spoke about the shopping precincts and busy streets in town. The pupils know about long distance travel to other countries, but they have little understanding of different climates or landscapes. They are not aware of wider issues such as settlement and pattern. They are not attaining the levels expected in mapping or in making use of atlases and globes of various scales. No evidence was seen of pupils using information and communications technology to present information about a range of countries with the use of a database. Neither was use made of secondary information sources such as aerial photographs.
- 161 Resources for geography are limited and do not provide pupils with the necessary opportunities to develop a range of important skills.
- 162 The evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that by the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain standards in *history* that are similar to those found nationally. An examination of the pupils' books indicates that they are developing a sense of change over time. In discussion Year 5 and 6 pupils were able to put a number of historical periods in the correct order. They were also able to identify the main differences between Victorian times and

today. They would not have liked to have lived in Victorian times because the health care was not as good.

- 163 The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their historical knowledge. However, the teachers' planning records do not show clearly how important skills in history will be developed. For example, there is not enough detail to indicate how pupils will use research skills or how they will be helped to evaluate the relative importance of first and second-hand evidences. There is also little systematic planning to ensure that pupils revisit key historical ideas and skills regularly, with tasks becoming progressively more challenging.
- 164 Resources for the subject are satisfactory.
- 165 The limited evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that standards in *music* are in line with than those that are typically found in primary schools nationally.
- 166 One lesson was observed where older pupils were developing their skills in music. The pupils showed that they had a satisfactory understanding of the way a range of different instruments could be used to enliven their thinking. In school assemblies the pupils sing in tune and with enthusiasm.
- 167 Resources for music are satisfactory. The school has a satisfactory range of pitched instruments. However, with the considerable carry over in its budget the school can afford to enhance the range and number of instruments. This could lead to pupils' attaining even higher standards.
- 168 Overall standards in *physical education* are typical of those found nationally. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to improve their performance in all aspects of physical education, including swimming.
- 169 The school does not have indoor facilities for physical education. Appropriate arrangements have been made with a neighbouring school to use its hall on one afternoon a week; this arrangement works well and provides all the pupils in Holmeswood with the opportunity to use a range of physical education equipment.
- 170 During the inspection each class was observed using the hall space of the neighbouring school. Pupils in the Key Stage 1 class showed that they could use mats as a basis for developing a satisfactory range of movements. Pupils in the Key Stage 2 class were able to use a range of equipment to develop a sequence of movements connected with their mathematics work on shapes. During the two sessions seen, all pupils made satisfactory progress.
- 171 The school has a satisfactory range of small equipment that can be used on the school playground. This equipment is stored in an appropriate way. However, during the inspection it was not used either at break-times or lunchtime.
- 172 ***Overall, the teaching observed in the above subjects was good. Over a longer***

period of time, teaching is judged to have only a satisfactory impact on learning, largely due to weaknesses in planning the work to be done.

- 173 In total four lessons were observed when the above subjects were being taught. Two physical education lessons, one music lesson and one history lesson were observed. Teaching was judged to be good in the physical education lessons and the music lesson. In the history lesson teaching was judged to be satisfactory. In the three lessons where teaching was good the pupils were provided with stimulating materials and they showed that they were interested in the work; they made good progress in their learning. In the history lesson the pace was too slow and pupils lost interest in the content of the lesson.
- 174 An examination of the pupils' books and a scrutiny of the teachers' planning records indicate that over the longer period of time teaching in these subjects is no better than satisfactory. Work in the pupils' books shows that they only make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The teachers' planning does not show in a clear way when and how different aspects of the subjects are going to be taught to pupils of very different ages and levels of attainment. For example in the Key Stage 2, class work is planned on a four-year cycle; this means that pupils experience some key aspects of the different subjects only once in this class. If a pupil does not grasp an idea on first meeting, then she/he will not have another opportunity to develop that aspect of their development before they leave the school. This approach to planning the curriculum limits the progress made by pupils.
- 175 Overall, these judgements do not represent a significant improvement over those reported after the last inspection. There is little evidence to indicate that enough thought has been given to planning a curriculum that needs the needs of a very small school.