

INSPECTION REPORT

MOOR HEY SCHOOL

Lostock Hall, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119880

Headteacher: Mr. C. W. T. Wilson

Reporting inspector: Sue Aldridge
8810

Dates of inspection: 5 – 9 November 2001

Inspection number: 194397

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community Special
Age range of pupils:	4 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Far Croft Lostock Hall Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR5 5SS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr George Woods MBE JP
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8810	Sue Aldridge	<i>Registered inspector</i>	English; French.	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9115	Dr. Terry Clarke OBE	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20055	Sheila Entwistle	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Geography; Personal, social and health education; Religious education.	
2746	Roy Lund	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Design and technology; Information and communication technology.	How well does the school care for its pupils?
10668	David Walker	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art; History; Music; Physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Moor Hey is a mixed, day, community special school for pupils aged four to sixteen. At the time of the inspection there were 90 pupils, in Years 3 to 11. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs, and their attainment on entry is low. Almost half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is high compared with similar schools nationally. Most of the pupils are white. Very few come from homes where English is a second language. Since the previous deputy head retired, the school has found it difficult to recruit a suitable deputy headteacher and is now trying to recruit a headship team instead. The interim arrangements made by the school mean that, currently, there are six teachers on temporary contracts. The school has been unable to recruit a suitable teacher of design and technology.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Moor Hey is a good school. Pupils of all ages achieve well in most subjects. Their attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Teaching is good. The school is well led and managed. It provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics, science, food technology (FT), history, geography, art, music, physical education, religious education, French and personal, social and health education.
- Teaching is good.
- Pupils like coming to school, where they feel secure. They try hard to do their best, and their behaviour is good.
- Relationships within the school community are very good.
- There are excellent arrangements to encourage attendance, and keep this under review: attendance is good.
- Pastoral support for pupils is very good, and there is high quality provision for careers and vocational education.
- The school is well regarded within its local area, and has constructive relationships with other schools, colleges, education and health professionals.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 do not make enough progress in those English lessons where they work on individual programmes.
- The curriculum for secondary pupils does not meet requirements because not all pupils are taught a suitable programme of design and technology (DT). For all pupils, the school day is shorter than the recommended time.
- There is no whole school policy on assessment, including marking. Teachers use a variety of ways of marking pupils' work, and this is confusing for pupils.
- The school has plenty of computers but these are not used well enough to help secondary pupils learn in subjects other than information and communication technology (ICT).

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then there has been a dramatic improvement in the quality of teaching, and standards have risen as a result. The difference is particularly marked for primary pupils. Curriculum planning is now good, and pupils make a smooth transition from the primary department to the first secondary class. There are much better opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness of different cultures. Pupils' statements are now reviewed annually as required, and the individual education plans are good. Longer term school development planning has been developed. Learning resources have improved, and so has the school's accommodation. However, some pupils do not have access to all learning opportunities. Overall, improvement is good.

STANDARDS

The table below summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 6	by Year 9	by Year 11	Key
speaking and listening	B	C	C	<i>very good</i> A
reading	B	C	C	<i>good</i> B
writing	B	C	C	<i>satisfactory</i> C
mathematics	B	B	B	<i>unsatisfactory</i> D
personal, social and health education	B	B	B	<i>poor</i> E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B	

Last academic year, the school set a challenging target for the oldest pupils to achieve accredited units in numeracy, and this was achieved. The literacy target was not particularly challenging, and this was exceeded. In science, the target set was too ambitious and was not achieved, although pupils in Year 11 achieved well. This summer, pupils in Year 9 achieved better in national tests for mathematics and science than they did in those for English. Primary aged pupils achieve well in all subjects. Secondary pupils achieve satisfactorily in English; those in Years 7 to 9 make slow progress in the lessons where they work on their individual study programmes; higher attainers in Years 10 and 11 do not achieve significantly more accredited units than lower attainers. In science, younger secondary pupils achieve satisfactorily, whereas older ones achieve well. This is linked to weaknesses in teaching, by non-specialists, of younger secondary pupils. Primary pupils achieve well in DT. Those secondary pupils who have FT lessons achieve well, but only one class is using a wide enough range of materials at present, and so standards of achievement in DT are unsatisfactory overall for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is particularly strong.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved in class, at break and lunchtimes and at college. They are courteous and polite to visitors. Although a few pupils experience difficulties in behaving well, they are well supported in developing more appropriate behaviour. They are also well supported in developing a good understanding of how their behaviour affects others around them. Inspectors saw no sexism or racism.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. There are very good relationships between all members of the school community, and this creates a harmonious learning environment. Pupils show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others.
Attendance	Good. Attendance statistics compare well with similar schools nationally.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 3 – 6	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching and learning are good overall. They are good in English for primary pupils, good in mathematics and personal, social and health education, and good in science for primary and older secondary pupils. In English and science, teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Teaching of literacy within other subjects is satisfactory. Teaching of numeracy is good. The quality of teachers' planning, high expectations, and the regular setting of homework are particular strengths. Staff know pupils and their capabilities well. Pupils are interested in the tasks they are set, they concentrate well in lessons and try hard to do their best. They steadily improve their skills, knowledge and understanding. The oldest pupils have a good knowledge of their learning, and they are well motivated by the awarding of externally recognised certificates.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for primary pupils and older secondary pupils. For pupils in Years 7 to 9, the curriculum is unsatisfactory, as some pupils do not have DT lessons at present. The school has not been successful in recruiting a suitable DT teacher. The strategy for teaching literacy to pupils in Years 7 to 9 is not yet as effective as that for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The strategy for teaching numeracy is good. Provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There are good opportunities to encourage pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is also a good quality planned programme of personal, social and health education, and opportunities for pupils to develop citizenship skills. Pupils are able to elect representatives on the School Council.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The headteacher and staff provide very strong pastoral support for pupils. The monitoring and promotion of attendance are excellent. There are very good arrangements for encouraging good behaviour, and ensuring that there is no oppressive behaviour. Teachers assess pupils' capabilities well. Individual education plans are well constructed, but pupils do not all know what their targets are. Teachers mark pupils' work differently and this is confusing for many pupils. Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good. There is no medical room.

The school works effectively in partnership with parents, and with a variety of partner institutions. This helps to widen the range of learning opportunities and ensures that pupils are well supported, by therapists for example.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior management team provide strong leadership. They are very successful in securing high quality pastoral support for pupils, and enabling teachers to improve their teaching. The management roles of some subject leaders are still developing.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Governors are a skilled and highly supportive group. At present they are unable to fulfil their responsibility to ensure that the curriculum meets requirements. However, they fulfil their other responsibilities well, and know the school's strengths and areas for further development well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school systematically collects information on its outcomes such as attendance and achievement and uses comparative information well to determine its success. Monitoring of teaching is well established, but has not been successful in identifying weaknesses in the teaching of literacy for secondary pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of all financial resources at its disposal, and deploys its staff well. Learning resources are good. Computers are used well for administration, but too little use is made of them to support learning across the secondary curriculum. The school applies the principles of best value well.

There are sufficient staff in the school, but at present there is no DT teacher. The accommodation is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good. • The school expects pupils to work hard and do their best. • Children like coming to school. • The school is well led and managed. • Teachers are approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few would like to see pupils getting more homework. • A few would like more extra curricular activities.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. They find that the arrangements for homework are good, and extra curricular activities are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of achievement are good overall. Achievement is consistently good for pupils in Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2). Pupils in Years 7 to 9 (Key Stage 3) and Years 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4) achieve well in all subjects except English, where achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards are high because pupils have a broad range of learning experiences; they have positive attitudes to school and their work, and because teaching is good. There has been a significant improvement in standards of achievement in many subjects since the last inspection, and particularly good improvement at Key Stage 2. Parents are positive about pupils' achievements and several identified particular successes.
2. The school's results for summer 2000, either in national tests or teachers' assessment of pupils' performance, compare favourably with similar schools nationally. This applies to English, mathematics and science. Although there are no comparative data for summer 2001 yet, pupils in Year 6 achieved as well as those in Year 6 in summer 2000 in all three core subjects. Those in Year 9 achieved as well in mathematics and science as those in Year 9 the previous year, but in English, results were not as good.
3. The school set non-statutory targets for improving achievement in Year 11 last academic year. These were expressed as the total number of externally accredited units awarded to the cohort. Targets for English were not particularly challenging, those for mathematics were challenging, and the target for science was much too ambitious as it reflected the anticipated achievement for both Year 10 and Year 11 pupils. Targets in English and mathematics were reached, but in science they were not. However, pupils in Year 11 still achieved well in science.
4. In English, high standards of achievement at Key Stage 2 are linked to the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS), which is now firmly established in the primary classes. Communication groups also help to develop primary pupils' speaking and listening skills. By Year 6, all pupils join in class discussions, and higher attainers ask questions as well as answering them. All pupils read whole words. Higher attainers recognise all the high frequency words and read simple texts; some understand underlying meanings of passages. Lower attainers are still learning strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. By Year 6 all pupils write on the line. Higher attainers write in sentences with some punctuation, but lower attainers do not always form letters correctly.
5. In the secondary department, teaching in most English lessons is successful in promoting progress in reading, writing and speaking and listening. However, when younger pupils work on their individual programmes, once a week, they do not all make enough progress because of the way lessons are organised. By the end of Year 9, all pupils speak clearly, listen carefully and make suitable responses. Higher attainers are confident when speaking to unfamiliar adults. All pupils increase their reading ages. Most higher attainers write in joined handwriting, whereas lower attainers still print. All pupils write for a range of purposes, using punctuation such as full stops and capital letters.
6. By Year 11, pupils are confident enough to tackle interviews as part of their preparation for work experience. They read a wide variety of poetry and literature, and their writing includes letters, diaries, reports, and imaginative pieces. They achieve between 6 and 8 units that are externally accredited. However, higher attainers do not all achieve significantly more units than lower attainers.

7. In mathematics, standards of achievement are good across the school. The National Numeracy Strategy has been in place in Years 3 to 6 for some time, and has recently been introduced in Years 7 to 9. Starter sessions in lessons have helped pupils to increase their oral and mental skills, and the mathematics curriculum includes a good emphasis on aspects such as shape, space and measure, as well as number. Older secondary pupils are well motivated by opportunities to achieve externally recognised accreditation. Good teaching also contributes to high standards.

8. Younger pupils, in Year 6, know their two, five and ten times tables. They can distinguish between tens and units, and add coins to 20 pence. All recognise and name squares and rectangles; higher attainers recognise three-dimensional shapes, such as a cube and a cuboid. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils add money to £10. They know the different sorts of triangles, and can say how they differ. Most tell the time to a quarter of an hour. They collect data, make tally charts and construct bar and pie charts. Lower attaining pupils are still working on adding numbers to 10, and the five times table. By Year 11, pupils have made good progress in accredited units, covering a variety of topics. Tasks include planning a party and furnishing student accommodation on a budget. Higher attaining pupils achieve significantly more units than lower attainers.

9. In science, pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, and in Years 10 and 11. Good achievement is associated with a broad curriculum and good teaching. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is satisfactory, as non-specialist teachers of science take a few lessons. For this group of pupils, standards in science are satisfactory.

10. In art and design, geography, history, French, music, physical education, religious education and personal, social and health education, standards of achievement are good. This is linked to the good teaching, and a broad curriculum provided. In ICT there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in the primary classes, but standards are good for secondary pupils. In design and technology, standards are good in the primary classes, where pupils have a suitable range of learning experiences, but in Years 7 to 9, pupils do not all have access to the subject so standards are unsatisfactory overall. Where pupils do FT, in Years 8 and 9, they achieve well, and in Years 10 and 11, pupils achieve very well.

11. At Moor Hey, boys and girls achieve equally well, so do pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. However, amongst secondary aged pupils, the higher attainers do not achieve as well as they should in English.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. Relationships are very good, which is an improvement from the last inspection. Pupils' behaviour, personal development and attendance are all good.

13. Pupils enjoy coming to school: they are enthusiastic when they arrive and quickly get down to their classroom tasks after registration and assembly. The great majority of parents, in their answers to the questionnaires, confirm that their child likes coming to school. Pupils on the school council were happy to talk about their school, of which they are justly proud. In lessons, pupils show patience and learn to take turns, when queuing up for lunch, for example. The positive attitudes of older pupils extend outside the school. For instance the car maintenance instructor and the team leader for learning support at Preston College both spoke highly of the attitudes and enthusiasm of the Moor Hey pupils who attend there.

14. Behaviour is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Overall, pupils' behaviour in the classroom varies from good to very good, and in some cases it is excellent. However, in a small minority of lessons, where behaviour management strategies were less secure, some of the behaviour was unsatisfactory. Pupils' behaviour around the school, in assemblies, during lunchtime and at breaks is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous, say 'please' and 'thank you', and hold doors open for adults. The number of fixed term exclusions has halved since the last inspection. While there were two permanent exclusions in the last reporting year, in the previous two years there had been none. The absence of oppressive behaviour is also very good. Pupils said that there was very little bullying and that they would report it if they saw any. They did speak of occasional 'name calling', but said that it was not a major problem. One parent, at the parents' meeting, said that when verbal bullying occurred it was dealt with promptly by staff.

15. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are aware of the impact of their actions on others: this is brought to their attention by relevant stories told in assemblies. They also show respect for the values and beliefs of others. Examples of this were seen in junior school circle time, and across the school in other lessons, such as art. Pupils show initiative and learn to take increasing responsibility as they grow up through the school. They invariably help to tidy up after lessons, give out books and carry out other useful jobs around the class. During a swimming period, two pupils, who were not well enough to take part and were watching, spontaneously went over to help the teachers put away the arm bands and floats that had been used during the lesson.

16. Relationships across the school are very good, which is an improvement on the last inspection, when they were described as good. Pupils relate well to one another and learn to be kind to one another. They also have very good relationships with the adults at the school, who they like and respect. This was in evidence both in the classroom and around the school.

17. Attendance at the school is good. At the time of the last inspection it was satisfactory. Pupils' attendance has been regularly above the national average for similar schools, and the level of unauthorised absence is well below average. Pupils arrive at school on time unless the transport is delayed. The good level of attendance and the prompt arrival of pupils at school have a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching and learning are good overall. Altogether, inspectors saw 82 lessons or parts of lessons. Of these, 17 were very good, 47 were good, 15 were satisfactory and three were unsatisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when teaching in 16 per cent of lessons was unsatisfactory. Teaching has improved dramatically at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6). Improvements in teaching and learning have been secured through recruitment, monitoring, and the school's very good arrangements for supporting teachers.

19. Teaching is very good in FT at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11). It is good in English at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), mathematics across the school, science at Key Stages 2 and 4, and in French and ICT in the secondary classes. Teaching and learning are good across the school in history, geography, art, music, physical education (PE), religious education (RE), and personal, social and health education (PSHE).

20. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils respond well to this, and they generally work hard in lessons and behave well. Most teachers are skilled in managing pupils, including those who find it difficult to behave well all the time. Experienced staff have very good relationships with pupils and this helps to create a productive and purposeful learning environment. This is particularly evident in Year 10 and

11 classes, where there is a distinctly adult atmosphere and a strong sense of mutual respect, and where teachers and pupils are partners in the learning process. At Key Stage 2 pupils are generally managed well too: two lessons were seen where a difficult pupil was brought back to activities after skilful management. In one lesson, it was almost necessary for the pupil to be taken to the headteacher for a talk; although the pupil left the room with the teacher, they swiftly returned, before reaching the headteacher's office. Teachers know that they will be well supported in this respect, and lessons are not disrupted by occasional instances of difficult behaviour. At Key Stage 3, temporary teachers occasionally lack expertise in managing pupils, as they have not yet had an opportunity to establish an effective working relationship with them.

21. Teachers plan their lessons well across the school. Since the last inspection, teachers have developed good plans showing what should be taught in each year group, and they draw well on these when planning lessons. Some good examples of teachers making different arrangements for pupils of different abilities were seen. For example, in French, a lower attaining pupil was given a simple word search whilst others tackled a more complex reading and writing exercise. In science, higher attaining pupils were given extension exercises, as they were first to complete the planned activity. However, in a few instances, lower attaining pupils were given too much help, or were given tasks that were not demanding enough.

22. Many teachers are specialists in the main subject they teach, and others have increased their expertise by following inservice training courses. In the primary classes, teachers sensibly teach one another's classes for those subjects where they have the greatest expertise and confidence. In most lessons, in primary and secondary classes, subject expertise was a strength, but in a small number of science lessons, in Years 7 to 9, non-specialist teachers confused pupils by giving them information that was not entirely correct.

23. Teaching of basic skills is good at Key Stage 2, where there are suitable opportunities for pupils to acquire ICT skills through the subjects of the curriculum. Literacy and numeracy skills are also given prominence in subjects other than English and mathematics. Teachers here teach their own class most of the time. They know what pupils' literacy and numeracy targets are, and reinforce these at every opportunity. Communication skills are given a high priority, and the grouping of primary pupils by ability for weekly communication skills sessions works well. Pupils are learning to listen carefully to others, take turns, give information in manageable quantities, and think carefully about how to frame requests.

24. In the secondary classes, there are good opportunities for pupils to reinforce their numeracy skills. An excellent example was seen in a FT lesson, where pupils were comparing the cost of home made cakes with those made out of a packet mix. There were opportunities to weigh and measure, and to estimate. There was also a lively mental session when pupils were challenged to add, halve or double figures. They worked through the problem on the board, as a group, to check calculations. This activity had all of the pupils on their toes, thinking hard, and concentrating well. What gave the activity extra meaning for the pupils was the relevance of the calculations to the question they were trying to answer, namely, which cakes gave the best value for money.

25. There are satisfactory opportunities for secondary pupils to practise and develop their communication, reading and writing skills. Through the staff bulletin, teachers are reminded about particular topics that they might be able to reinforce during their lessons. This works well in French, where the teacher reminds pupils about work they have been doing in English, on plurals, nouns or adjectives, for example. However, some teachers are better than others at reminding pupils about what they need to do to improve their basic

skills. Pupils do not all know what their literacy targets are, although the oldest pupils have a good grasp of what they need to do to achieve success in the externally accredited units they work towards. They show a keen interest in what they need to do to get more marks for the tasks they complete!

26. The school is in the process of developing a literacy strategy in Years 7 to 9. At present, whole class sessions contribute well to the development of literacy skills, but weekly sessions where pupils work individually are less successful. The idea behind these sessions is sound, and a great deal of work has gone into the preparation of tasks to promote independent working. Pupils are learning to be more independent in their approach to learning, but a small number do not make sufficient progress in these sessions. They are given too little guidance at the start, and there is too little support to enable them to get on with tasks. Few of them know what their literacy targets are, or what they need to do to demonstrate success in the relatively short term of a lesson.

27. Teachers manage time well in most lessons, although in two primary literacy sessions this was not the case. In one, the lesson over-ran, so there was little time for the pupils to review their achievements at the end. In another, the whole class activity went on for too long, pupils became fidgety, and did not have enough time to complete their individual tasks. Learning support assistants (LSA) are deployed well, and they provide good support for teachers and pupils. During a literacy session, one was well-occupied preparing materials, whilst the teacher led the whole class session, and the assistant later took a group for the writing task. In another, the LSA intervened in a whole class session to ensure that pupils were all joining in the group reading task; later she reminded pupils that having another quick look at the text, to find a word they had been looking out for, was in fact *scanning*. Good teamwork was also seen in other lessons, such as physical education. This results from good briefing of support staff, who have considerable skills, and make a strong contribution to direct teaching, particularly when listening to pupils read.

28. Teachers select good methods, and practical activities are used particularly well to develop pupils' understanding. For example, in science, pupils made three-dimensional models of a plant cell, which helped them to understand how a cell is constructed. These were used in subsequent lesson, and they provided a good memory jogger, helping pupils to recall the features of plant and animal cells. However, the use of ICT as a learning tool is under developed in secondary classes. Teachers use visits and visitors well to bring their subjects to life and provide first hand experiences for pupils. As a result, pupils are interested, and they are generally engaged well in activities provided. Pupils' positive attitudes help them to learn too; they were seen trying particularly hard to improve their performance in PE lessons.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 is good. All National Curriculum subjects are taught and the balance of time within and between subjects is appropriate. The provision for ICT, which is taught within other subjects, is satisfactory. At Key Stage 4, learning opportunities are also good, with all the required National Curriculum subjects taught as well as art, geography and history.

30. At Key Stage 3, the quality and range of the curriculum is unsatisfactory and does not meet statutory requirements. The school has encountered recruitment difficulties and has been unable to find a teacher qualified to teach the resistant materials aspects of the DT curriculum. Consequently, pupils in Year 7 do not receive any tuition in the subject. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 have lessons in FT, but, although one Year 9 class attends lessons in resistant materials at a nearby mainstream school, the other class does not. All the other required subjects at Key Stage 3 are given suitable time allocation.

31. The accommodation for art and FT has been improved and, as a result, the learning opportunities in these subjects have been extended. It has not been possible to upgrade the indoor accommodation for physical education, which remains unsatisfactory, as it restricts the range of activities that can be safely provided indoors. Religious education and personal, social and health education, including sex education and drugs awareness, are taught as required. Careers education is begun in Year 7 and continues throughout the secondary phase, with work experience and college placements in Year 11. This - and the increased opportunities for nationally accredited certification - adds relevance to the Key Stage 4 curriculum. At the last inspection, the time devoted to taught lessons was low, and in spite of consideration being given to this important issue, taught time is still significantly below national guidelines. In this respect the school does not compare favourably with similar schools nationally.

32. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively adapted to the needs of the pupils in Key Stage 2, and are improving pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. Numeracy has been introduced into Key Stage 3 and this is further improving the pupils' skills in this subject. However, the school is still developing the literacy strategy at Key Stage 3, and current arrangements for pupils' individual study programmes are unsatisfactory. All subject policy documents have reference to the means by which literacy and numeracy may be developed through the subject.

33. Extra-curricular activities are curtailed by the transport requirements of the pupils, but provision is satisfactory. The school has a small number and variety of activities. There are competitive sports and residential opportunities, such as a visit to Snows Heights.

34. The school places a suitable emphasis on personal, social and health education, (PSHE), which is taught both as a discrete subject and through the many facets of the curriculum that permeate the daily life of the pupils. Sex education and information regarding drug misuse are handled sensitively. Circle time, and the pastoral support that the school offers enhance this area of the curriculum. The overall provision for personal, social and health education, taking account of a good quality taught programme, and the high quality of pastoral support, is very good. For example, when things go wrong in their personal relationships, pupils are guided in how best to make up with classmates, other teachers and also members of their family.

35. Although there are fewer pupils attending other schools as part of integration programmes than at the last inspection, there are many opportunities to mix with pupils at other schools through competitive games and sports, and at leisure facilities. Most pupils have satisfactory equality of opportunity and are generally able to enjoy access to everything the curriculum offers. However, there is an obvious inequality caused through the provision of DT in Years 7 and 9.

36. The provision for careers education and guidance and work related education is very good. Careers lessons begin in Year 7 and parents and pupils meet the careers officer, who attends all transitional reviews, giving advice and guidance on the range of opportunities available to the pupils when they leave school. The careers programme is comprehensive, and together with the PSHE programme, prepares pupils very well for the world of work. Pupils are provided with good opportunities for work experience in a variety of settings. A college link enables pupils to experience a different environment in a supportive way and take advantage of a good range of vocational opportunities.

37. The local community plays an important part in the learning opportunities of the pupils. There are links with the Variety Club, local churches, some local businesses and the local professional association football club. There are very good links with partner

institutions. Some pupils attend a nearby mainstream school for tuition in DT and Year 11 pupils go to college for a 'tasters' course in vocational studies. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in the various group events organised by the Area Special Schools Sports Association.

38. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is good. The latter is an improvement on the last inspection, which reported that cultural development was less well promoted. All subject areas make a contribution to SMSC, which is good in most subjects and very good in religious education.

39. The Christian ethos of the school ensures that there is good provision throughout for spiritual development. A number of staff are practising Christians and their sincere beliefs are communicated non-intrusively across the school, influencing pupils' own thinking. In a number of lessons, pupils' basic knowledge of Christianity was made clear during class discussions. For instance in a Year 7 RE lesson, one pupil knew that some early Christians 'had stones thrown at them'. In a junior class circle time using the theme: 'I would like to meet ...', one pupil thought for a moment and replied: 'Jesus'. Pupils reflect and say prayers in assemblies and say grace in their classroom before going to lunch, after which grace is also said. Other examples of spiritual provision were seen in art lessons, where pupils explored ideas, feelings and meanings, making sense of them in their own art work. Displayed in the school entrance is a book of prayers made up by pupils. Many of these are very touching and show that a considerable amount of thought has gone into them, although one or two did ask God to look favourably on the football team they support!

40. The provision for moral development is good. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and this is reflected in their behaviour across the school. For instance, at the start of junior school circle time, a list of the rules was held up to the class emphasising that the aim was to listen to what each other was saying. In history, pupils learn about the slave trade, and in an assembly they learn about the importance of listening to advice from older people. This was illustrated by a story about a mouse, who ignored advice from his granddad. There was a good example of an older pupil copying what he had learnt from an older member of his family. Learning about motor vehicle maintenance, a Year 11 pupil, after taking the wheel off a car, placed the nuts and bolts tidily in the hubcap. When the instructor asked him where he learned to do that, he said that he learned it by watching his granddad. Members of the school council understand that pupils from an ethnic minority should be treated in the same way as everyone else. The school does everything it can to promote pupils' self esteem. For example, Year 11 pupils seen learning motor vehicle maintenance were wearing clean overalls with the school motif on the front and 'sponsored by the North Preston Lions Club' on the back.

41. Pupils' social development is promoted well. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility within the school, such as being elected Year captain. Badges indicating this were shown off proudly in a meeting with the school council. Within the council, pupils are able to express views openly. They take surveys of what pupils would like to see at the school, and bring the information back to the council to discuss. For example as a result of a decision by the council the school 'fixed' the toilets. Pupils are encouraged to develop a social conscience and are aware of those worse off than themselves. This leads to pupils raising money for a number of charities including a hospice for terminally ill children, Guide Dogs for the Blind, shoeboxes for Romania, Scope and Jeans for Genes. The older pupils develop socially through work experience, the school's links with Preston College and other education establishments. Pupils' social experience is widened through competitive sport with other schools. However, the short school day, which dictates a short lunch hour, restricts opportunities for socialisation, including extra-curricular clubs.

42. At the last inspection, one of the key issues for action was to increase opportunities for the cultural development for all pupils. This has been addressed well. Staff have audited subject plans, and ensured that there are opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures. A number of good examples were seen during the inspection. In art, there were examples of religious art of different faiths. There was a range of multicultural CDs in music and the study of the North American Indians in history. In French lessons, pupils have the opportunity to learn about French culture, but they have not yet had the opportunity to visit France on a school trip. In a religious education lesson in the juniors, pupils were given the opportunity to compare the architecture of a church with that of a Hindu temple. The provision for cultural development is now good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school is a caring community that supports and looks after its pupils well. The pupils are treated with respect and courtesy and they respond by treating each other and the staff in a similar manner. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly community. The parents and carers appreciate this aspect of the school's work.

44. The pupils have initial baseline assessments in numeracy, literacy and personal and social development soon after they join the school. These assessments are linked to the National Curriculum Levels and also to Lancashire's PIVATS 'P' scales (Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting). After the baseline assessments, testing takes place on a regular six-monthly basis using the PIVATS 'P Scales' and also other nationally recognised tests for reading and numeracy. All pupils have comprehensive and well-written individual education plans (IEPs) with clear targets for literacy and numeracy and personal and social development, linked to each pupils' statement of special educational needs. There are clear criteria for success in meeting targets. Many, but not all pupils, know what their targets are.

45. All subject policies have sections on assessment and most teachers have a good idea of what the pupils know, understand and can do. All assessment is based on National Curriculum Levels or P Levels. However, there is no whole school policy for assessment, and marks and grades vary between subjects. Some subjects, notably science, ICT, history, geography, music and religious education are still developing their assessment procedures. Teachers keep suitable records, which are used well to plan the next steps in learning. Particularly informative records are kept in FT, physical education French and PSHE in Years 7 to 11.

46. The monitoring of the pupils' progress in learning is good. The annual reviews of statements of special educational needs are used well by the school staff and other professionals to review each pupil's targets in learning and in personal and social development, and to modify them or set new ones, as appropriate. Annual review procedures have improved since the last inspection.

47. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are excellent. The school analyses the attendance record of each individual pupil and compares this with the average attendance at the school. Information on pupils' attendance is presented in graphic form. The school writes to parents of any pupil whose attendance record falls below 90 per cent, with a copy of the pupils' attendance record, and sets an attendance target for the following term. When a pupil's attendance improves he or she receives an award. This has been highly effective. One pupil, whose attendance fell below 90 per cent last year, achieved 100 per cent attendance in the first half of the autumn term. The headteacher works closely with the education welfare officer, who attends the school regularly, to follow up any pupils with attendance problems. The attendance monitoring carried out by the school is being made easier by the introduction of an electronic recording

package at the start of the autumn term. Pupils' lateness is recorded in a book in the office. While lateness is nearly always due to a delay in the transport system, this information is recorded and is sent to the LEA, where it is used in deciding future transport contracts.

48. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting appropriate behaviour are very good, and the school is particularly successful at eliminating oppressive behaviour. The teachers and special support assistants have high expectations of behaviour and there are clear routines for lessons and for other activities, which ensure that pupils behave appropriately. The few instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with promptly, consistently and effectively. The pupils understand their behaviour targets in the IEPs and on their report cards and work hard to achieve them. As a consequence, most lessons are calm and purposeful, with little time wasted. There is a good policy for anti-bullying, and pupils are taught how to deal with bullying and intimidating behaviour, as part of the curriculum in PSHE. The pupils say that, although there is some bullying and intimidating behaviour, they have confidence in the systems that exist to deal with it.

49. The school makes good provision to ensure the pupils' health and safety, welfare and protection. The school council, which consists of two representatives from each group, meets regularly. It provides an effective forum for discussion and action about pupils' concerns. Representatives were able to explain to the inspectors how they discuss their concerns with the staff, and expressed confidence that whatever the concern was, 'it would be sorted'. Pupils feel valued as part of the school community.

50. The policies and procedures for the pupils' and staff's health and safety are very clear and are regularly monitored. Health, safety and hygiene also form an integral part of the school's curriculum in subjects where there are risk areas like science, FT and physical education. Keeping safe also forms an integral part of the curriculum in personal, social and health education. The pupils are well aware of the reasons for the health and safety procedures. Their welfare is also well served by the consistent routines for teaching and learning and in other activities, which ensure that the pupils behave sensibly and safely. There are good procedures for supervision of arrivals and departures, and for break times and lunch times. The school assesses risks for school trips well. A recent audit of health and safety by the local education authority indicated no areas that needed development.

51. The school responds well to the difficulties of pupils who have additional needs and makes very good use of a wide range of external support from speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, the school nurse, the educational psychologist, education welfare officer and, where relevant, local authority social workers. These outside professionals work hard to support pupils and have positive relationships with staff in the school. However, the work of outside professionals is affected by the lack of a medical room or suitable private room where pupils can be seen. Without such a room, it is necessary to use the girls' changing rooms for medical examinations, and this is unsatisfactory.

52. The policy and procedures for child protection are good and are in accordance with the procedures of the local Area Child Protection Committee. The designated teacher and the rest of the staff receive regular training and have good links with appropriate local agencies. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of possible child abuse. The staff know the identity of the named person. They are also aware of the pupils on the child protection register and those who are looked after, and are sensitive to their needs and to the needs of their parents, carers and those with parental responsibility.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The parents' views of the school, the effectiveness of the school's links with parents, the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and the contribution of parents' to children's learning at school and at home are all good. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress is satisfactory.

54. The parents' views of the school, as expressed through the parent questionnaires and at the parents' meeting, are positive. All parents thought that the teaching was good and that the school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. The great majority said that their child liked coming to school, that the school is well led and managed and that teachers are approachable. The most common statements with which parents disagreed were those relating to homework and the range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors found that extra-curricular activities are satisfactory. The school day is relatively short, and the lunchtime too short to accommodate lunchtime clubs. Transport arrangements make it difficult for the school to put on clubs after school. Inspectors found that homework arrangements are good. All pupils are given regular homework, and this is marked and returned to pupils. Tasks are relevant and are suitably challenging.

55. The school has effective links with parents. The school is quick to contact parents if there are concerns about pupils' attendance, progress or behaviour. It also informs parents about pupils' good behaviour and when a pupil no longer needs to have a 'support' card marked. About half the parents are able to attend pupils' review meetings. The school itself sends out questionnaires to parents to measure parental satisfaction, and takes suitable action when parents express dissatisfaction.

56. The school provides a wide range of information, including a detailed prospectus and annual report from the governing body, both of which are clear and readable. The school sends out termly newsletters, which inform parents about what is going on at the school. Some information required by law is missing from the brochure and annual report. The brochure omits information on admissions and the school's policy on special educational needs. The governors' annual report omits the name and address of the Chair and clerk and equality assurance for pupils with disabilities, as well as other statutory information. Pupils' annual reports vary from one subject to another. Some report clearly on pupils' attainment and progress, others do not. Some contain educational jargon, which is not always easily understood.

57. Parents make a good contribution to pupils' work at school and at home, both through their contribution to their child's homework as well as their attendance at parents' meetings. The school is also supported through an active *Friends* association, whose financial contribution pays for the running of the minibus, enabling pupils to take part in school visits and outside sporting activities, such as swimming. Parents are generally supportive of the school. For example, during the inspection the school arranged a buffet for members of the community associated with the school as well as members of the governing body. The food for this was provided by caterers, but was set out very attractively by PTA members and staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. Leadership and management are good overall. There has been a lack of continuity in the senior management team during the past two years, since the deputy headteacher left. The school was unable to appoint a suitable replacement, and the governors and headteacher decided to change the school's management structure by appointing a headship team instead. Although interviews have been held, the school has not yet been successful in making these appointments. As a result, there is an unusually high number of temporary teachers, because governors are unable to make permanent appointments until

the headship team has been finalised. Although every avenue has been explored, no teacher of DT has been recruited. Despite these difficulties, the school has continued with planned developments, and there has been a clear focus on improving standards through the setting of whole school targets and further development of teaching and learning. To strengthen the work of the management team, the school has employed a consultant to carry out monitoring and evaluation, and LEA advisers also provide an objective view of the school's performance.

59. When considering how best to manage without a DT teacher, the headteacher and governors decided reluctantly to 'close' the DT workshop and offer FT only this term. Pupils in Year 7 do not have FT lessons, as the FT teacher does not have sufficient time on her timetable for this. This means that pupils in Year 7 do not receive their entitlement to the full National Curriculum, although they do have additional English lessons. The search for a DT teacher goes on, and the school is considering ways of making up for time lost in DT in Year 7 at a later date. Although the school sought advice on how to deal with this situation, little consideration was given to providing DT activities for Year 7 that did not involve the use of specialist facilities.

60. The headteacher leads well on a number of whole school developments. In particular, he is instrumental in encouraging extensive links with outside institutions and agencies, and he seeks to move the school forward as part of a more inclusive pattern of provision within the area. He and the senior management team set high standards of pastoral care in the school. Teachers and pupils are secure in the knowledge that members of the team are ready to support them. Very good support is provided for teachers through induction, staff development, and performance management. There is good communication within the school, and temporary and part time teachers are well integrated into these arrangements. There has been considerable success in improving the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection, and the good quality of teaching seen at this inspection testifies to the effectiveness of support. Nonetheless, weaknesses in the teaching of individual literacy programmes have gone undetected.

61. Governors are a skilled and very supportive group. They keep the school's work under review well through their committees, and have a good understanding of the school's strengths as well as areas for further development. Several have additional responsibilities, for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs, for example. Some visit when the school is in session, and report orally to other governors about their visits. They attend some of the whole-school training sessions, such as literacy training, and are well informed about developments in education. The headteacher keeps governors informed about developments in school through detailed reports, and governors ask pertinent questions to help them make informed decisions. For example, analysis showing how the school's results compare with similar schools nationally has been considered by governors. They share the headteacher's vision of a more inclusive role for the school in future. At present, governors are unable to meet their responsibility to ensure that the curriculum meets requirements.

62. Governors, the headteacher and staff are all involved in policy formulation and review. The school has a good range of policies, although the absence of a whole school policy for assessment is an omission. It leads to a confusing array of different ways of teachers marking pupils' work. Through its policies, the school ensures that its aims are met well. The aims themselves are suitable for a school of this type, but they do not fully reflect the move towards a more inclusive pattern of provision.

63. Overall, staffing is satisfactory. There are sufficient teaching staff with suitable training and phase experience to meet the demands of most subjects of the curriculum. The school has no laboratory technician to assist science staff in lesson preparation, and although the school has the part-time services of a computer technician, staff do not have someone to call upon when there are technical difficulties with computers in classrooms.

This occasionally means that teachers cannot fully implement their lesson plans. Well-qualified, motivated support staff are effectively deployed to make a significant contribution to pupils' progress. The roles of subject co-ordinators are still developing, and this is formally recognised in the school's development plan. The headteacher has efficient administrative assistants who enable the school to function very effectively.

64. The standard of accommodation has improved since the last inspection, with the addition of specialist rooms for science, art, ICT. The FT room has been refurbished and there is a new literacy and numeracy resource centre. However, the school is still without a library, preparation room for science lessons and a medical room for pupils when they are ill. The school hall is not large enough for older pupils' physical education lessons indoors. It is also a thoroughfare, so people need to go through it during PE lessons. One primary classroom is used for the whole of one day for music lessons. This causes disruption for pupils and staff at Key Stage 2. Attractive displays in most classrooms and corridors enhance the appearance of the accommodation, and provide a stimulating environment for pupils' learning.

65. Learning resources available for teaching the curriculum are used effectively to support pupils' learning. The quality of these resources is good in most subject areas and very good in art and music. Materials and textbooks are easily accessible for use in the classroom. However, there is no library, although there are plenty of books as the school makes good use of the library loan service.

66. The school's educational priorities are supported through good financial planning. They have put in place the minor recommendations of the most recent local authority's audit. The school finance officer has longstanding experience in bookkeeping and financial management. She and the headteacher put together a draft budget based on the school development plan priorities, together with a number of alternative proposals. This is presented to the Finance Committee, on which all the governors sit. As a consequence, all governors have the opportunity to question, discuss and make suggestions about the school budget.

67. A large carry forward has built up due to the school's inability to appoint a deputy headteacher. This has now been appropriately reallocated for use in the 2001/02 budget year. Of this £45,000 will go towards the new staff accommodation; it is hoped that this will be completed in the current year. The school ensures best value from work tenders and those for the new building work have recently been invited. Specific grants, such as those from the standards fund, the mainstream secondary school link, and for devolved capital spending are used for the purposes intended. The school uses its own budget to finance the services of a peripatetic music specialist, as it does not have one on its staff. Overall the school gives good value for money. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when value for money was satisfactory.

68. The school makes good use of new technology for administration purposes. For instance they have recently installed the most up to date financial administration package as well as software for the electronic recording of attendance. They are being put to good use in the management of the school's finances and the monitoring of attendance. Suitable software is also used for analysis of performance data. The use of computers to support the learning of secondary aged pupils is less well developed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. The headteacher, governors and staff should:

- Improve the teaching and learning of literacy skills for secondary pupils by:
(*Paragraphs 5, 6, 26, 79, 80*)
 - * developing the literacy strategy at Key Stage 3*;
 - * ensuring that pupils have short term goals to work towards;
 - * ensuring that higher attainers at Key Stage 4 are challenged to achieve as many accredited units as they can;
 - * ensuring that pupils know their literacy targets.
 - Improve the curriculum by:
(*Paragraphs 30, 31*)
 - * ensuring that the curriculum at Key Stage 3 meets statutory requirements, and that all pupils have the same opportunities to learn and make progress;
 - * increasing the length of the school day in line with recommendations.
 - Develop a whole school assessment policy, including guidance on marking pupils' work.
(*Paragraphs 45, 62*)
 - Ensure that teachers make good use of ICT to enable secondary pupils to learn in all subjects.
(*Paragraphs 28, 126*)
- * This forms part of the school's existing development plan.

70. Governors should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:

- * Ensure that the prospectus and governors annual report to parents contain all the information required by law.
- * Ensure that reports to parents on pupils' progress are clear about what pupils know understand and can do, and that they are written in plain English.
- * Improve the accommodation for physical education, and to include library provision, a medical room and a preparation area for science.
- * Improve staffing to provide teachers with technician support in science.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	17	47	15	3	0	0
Percentage	0	20.7	57.3	18.3	3.7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	90
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.3

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

No pupils were entered for National Tests.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

20 pupils eligible

Subject	% of pupils at Test/Task Levels 2001			
	Working towards L1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
English	0	10	70	20
Mathematics	5	5	55	35
Science	5	25	5	65

Attainment at Key Stage 4

Pupils in Year 11 achieved 118 AQA Units in English.

Pupils in Year 11 achieved 105 AQA Units in Mathematics.

Pupils in Year 11 achieved 14 AQA Units in Science.

Pupils in Year 11 achieved 156 AQA Units in French.

Pupils achieved 12 AQA Units in Physical education.

9 pupils achieved Profile Certificates in ICT, and one achieved a pass in CLAIT (Computer Literacy and Information Technology).

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	85
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	9	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Financial information****Qualified teachers and classes:****Y3 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.92
Average class size	8.18

Education support staff:**Y3 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	215

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	744,568.00
Total expenditure	663,527.00
Expenditure per pupil	5,924.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	49,651.00
Balance carried forward to next year	130,692.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	5.5
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
Number of questionnaires returned

90
43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	33	0	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	56	33	9	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	47	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	35	19	5	5
The teaching is good.	70	28	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	40	5	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	28	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	49	40	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	28	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	30	5	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	42	12	9	9

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

ENGLISH

71. Standards of achievement in English are good at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), and satisfactory at Key Stages 3 (Years 7 to 9) and 4 (Years 10 and 11). Boys and girls do equally well in English. There is a high quality document to guide teachers in their planning and teaching of literacy skills to primary pupils. The National Literacy Strategy (NLS) is now well established at Key Stage 2, and good teaching of literacy promotes progress well. The youngest pupils in the school develop a good understanding of those habits that help them to speak and listen. They know that they must take turns, for example. By Year 6, all pupils join in with class and group discussions. Higher attainers ask questions. All answer these, mostly with single words or short phrases. Pupils make good progress in reading high frequency words. By Year 6, higher attainers read all of these. They understand simple texts, and are beginning to be able to recognise the underlying meanings in passages. They can retell a story in sequence. Lower attainers are developing strategies to help them read words that they do not recognise. As clues they use both the pictures and letters - at the beginnings and ends of words - whose sounds they know. Pupils in Year 6 all write on the line, although lower attainers do not always form the letters correctly. Higher attainers write simple sentences; they need help with spellings, but are beginning to use a dictionary for this. They begin to use capital letters and full stops correctly.

72. For secondary English, there is also very good guidance for teachers. Pupils have a wide range of learning experiences in lessons that cover all the required aspects of literacy, as well as drama sessions. Pupils are also introduced to a wide range of literature and poetry. They make good progress in most lessons. However, there is a weakness in teaching in the lessons where pupils work on individual programmes, making standards satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 9, all pupils speak clearly, with a wide vocabulary. They listen carefully and make suitable responses. Higher attainers have increased their confidence when speaking to unfamiliar adults. All pupils increase their reading ages. Higher attainers read a wider range of texts. Most higher attainers write in joined handwriting, whereas lower attainers still write using print. All pupils write to convey meaning, and for a range of purposes, using punctuation such as full stops and capital letters.

73. By Year 11, pupils are confident enough to tackle interviews as part of their preparation for work experience. They read a wide variety of poetry and literature, including Shakespeare plays, and their writing includes letters, diaries, reports, and imaginative pieces. They achieve between 6 and 8 units that are externally accredited. However, higher attainers do not all achieve significantly more units than lower attainers.

74. Overall, teaching and learning are good at Key Stage 2. Four lessons were seen, and teaching was very good in one, good in two, and satisfactory in one. The grouping of pupils by ability for weekly communication sessions works well. Speech therapists support teachers in their planning, and an assistant leads one of these sessions well. Carefully graded activities, presented as games, are used well to help pupils develop an awareness of the conventions of speaking and listening. In one session, pupils made clear progress in their ability to understand and communicate information. At the start of an early game, a pupil asked a partner to give her *a triangle*, when there was more than one of these on the table. By the end of the lesson, the same pupil was able to refine her questioning by asking for, *the red square... the big one*. Pupils enjoyed this session, and many prefaced requests with *please*, then thanked partners for giving them what they had asked for.

75. In the daily literacy hour at Key Stage 2, teaching and learning are good overall. Planning for these sessions is very detailed, and closely linked to the NLS. Lessons incorporate a suitable range of activities including shared reading, guided reading and writing

exercises. When teachers time the duration of these well, pupils continue to be well motivated and interested, but when an activity goes on for too long, a few pupils become fidgety. Teachers use good strategies to help reinforce learning. For example, following the reading of the story *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, pupils were involved well in retelling the story using finger puppets and taking spoken parts. This helped them to remember the storyline as well as details of characters and events. Staff manage pupils well, and teachers and learning support assistants work well together as a team. Learning support assistants are well briefed about literacy matters, and make an important contribution to direct teaching. For example, in one lesson, the teacher suggested that pupils should have *another quick look* at the text to find a word they had been looking out for. The LSA pointed out that this would be *scanning*. Teachers make good use of computers to reinforce learning of literacy skills. Pupils are well motivated by this. All pupils have homework. In one class, a popular weekend task is the reward given to the pupil who is the runner up in the weekly awarding of stickers for good work. This pupil takes home a small teddy bear, Joe, and writes a diary of his weekend activities.

76. At Key Stages 3 and 4, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Altogether 11 lessons were seen. Two were very good, five were good, four were satisfactory, and one was unsatisfactory. The best teaching and learning is seen in whole class lessons, led by a teacher. In these lessons, pupils are clear about what they have to do. Instructions from the teacher are clear, and there is an opportunity for pupils to ask questions before settling to tasks. This ensures that all know what is required. Teachers successfully encourage listening when they read texts aloud, with expression, and different voices for dialogue. They then pause to question pupils, who recall the storyline as well as details such as house numbers and surnames of characters. Videos are used well to help pupils understand the finer points of novels and plays, and to promote discussion about these. Reading resources are sensibly colour coded to ensure a match between the pupils' capability and the difficulty of text being selected. Teachers select activities that appeal to pupils. For example, Year 7 pupils have recently designed book covers. Through this project they have learned about jargon associated with publication, such as *illustrator*, *logo*, *flyer*, *bar code* and *blurb*. Teachers also provide opportunities for pupils to meet and work with adults such as storytellers, authors, poets and actors in theatre workshops. However, there is very little use of computers to assist learning of literacy skills in the secondary classes.

77. In drama, which has been introduced this term at Key Stage 3, teaching successfully develops pupils' understanding of topics such as loneliness, and improvisations devised by pupils show that they are able to empathise with those who are lonely. There are high expectations of pupils acquiring an understanding of the terms associated with drama activities. The terms are carefully explained, and pupils are becoming familiar with these. They know what a *freeze frame* is, and an *improvisation*. Pupils enjoy their drama sessions, and work hard to improve their performances.

78. Teachers know the pupils' capabilities well, and use this knowledge to set suitable tasks that offer both challenge and a chance of success. Pupils are regularly tested to measure their progress in literacy skills. During whole class lessons, good feedback is given to pupils to enable them to improve and to learn from one another. For example, in a lesson where pupils were placing a list of motor vehicle spares in alphabetical order, the teacher paused some way into the activity to review the strategies that different pupils were using. This helped some to approach the task in a more effective manner. However, marking of pupils' work is very complicated. For some work an 11 point scale is used, for other work a 13 point scale. Pupils find this confusing.

79. In lessons at Key Stage 3 where pupils work individually, a significant minority does not make enough progress. The individual study programme (ISP), is based on sound principles, and a great deal of work has gone into the preparation of a variety of tasks well designed to provide challenge, address individual needs, and develop independent working habits. The teacher plans a range of tasks for each pupil to tackle over a period of time.

Pupils have a choice about the order in which they will approach tasks, and resources are highly organised into a series of coded boxes so that pupils can select a task, collect resources and get on with their work. The idea is that pupils get on independently and the teacher circulates, providing help when needed. The learning support assistant also provides support, and listens to lower attainers read. Reading records show that clear progress is made.

80. In practice, the ISP system does not work well enough for all pupils. This is because there is too little clarification at the start of a lesson, and too little feedback given to pupils during the lesson. Too many pupils need help, just to get started during the lesson, and some inevitably need to wait for this. Pupils are well motivated though, and they are keen to produce something. As a result, they do not always complete tasks in the way intended. For example, pupils commonly copy out passages unnecessarily. One took most of a session writing out a passage, when he should have written answers to questions about the passage. Pupils find it particularly difficult to tackle imaginative writing exercises alone, as they have too little stimulus to generate their own ideas. Some of the resources used in the ISP are old and in poor repair. A few pupils do not know what their literacy targets are. These are written into IEPs, which are reviewed every six months, but in between pupils are not given short term targets to help them work towards the longer term ones.

81. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory. The transition arrangements from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 have been improved since the last inspection, and detailed documentation supports teaching of English. This represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school has no library, but there is a good supply of books, and pupils occasionally use a nearby public library. The school development plan formally recognises the need to further develop the literacy strategy at Key Stage 3.

MATHEMATICS

82. Standards of achievement at all key stages are good, and boys and girls achieve equally well, as do pupils of different attainment levels. The three part lesson is well established at Key Stage 2 and this format has recently been introduced at Key Stage 3. The starter session of the three part lesson has contributed to better progress in oral and mental skills. The main activity part of the lesson has been given a sharper focus by the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils at Key Stage 4 are well motivated by studying for accreditation. Regularly set homework also helps pupils to make better progress.

83. By Year 6, pupils are familiar with two, five and ten times tables. They distinguish between tens and units and they add coins to 20p. Most pupils recognise the fractions of one half, one quarter and one third. They also know the meaning of more and less. They estimate lengths in centimetres and then use a ruler to check for accuracy. They know the names and properties of simple shapes, a square and triangle, for example. A higher attaining pupil recognises three dimensional shapes, such as a cube and a cuboid.

84. By Year 9, pupils are adding money up to £10. They know the angles 360°, 180°, 90°. They name different types of triangle, and say how they are different. Most pupils tell the time to a quarter of an hour. The higher attaining pupils add on time and subtract time. They plot co-ordinates in the first quadrant and know about line and rotational symmetry. They collect data, make up tally charts and frequency tables, and present results on a bar chart. They also represent data on a pie chart. The lowest attaining pupil is still working on adding numbers to ten and five times table.

85. By Year 11, pupils are working on accreditation that covers a wide variety of topics. A higher attaining pupil gained the maximum number of units, which included two practical tasks. These involved planning a party and furnishing student accommodation on a budget. An average attaining pupil was awarded eight units and the lowest attainer in the group achieved three units.

86. The curriculum is broadly based and, although there is a clear emphasis on numeracy through the National Numeracy Strategy, other aspects of mathematics are not neglected. Shape, space and measures and handling data are begun at Key Stage 2 and continued throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves. For example, in one Key Stage 2 lesson, higher attaining pupils were asked to choose the best method of working. They could choose to use cubes or a number line. Another example occurred in a Key Stage 4 lesson when pupils had to find how much it cost to rent an apartment. They had to select whether to find the answer in weekly or monthly cost.

87. Teaching and learning in mathematics are good. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. Altogether, 11 lessons were seen; teaching was very good in two, good in four and satisfactory in five. The best teaching has planning which makes good use of the three part lesson, especially where the starter session links with the main activity. This provides continuity of focus for pupils and helps concentration. This good standard of teaching means that pupils behave well and show application to the tasks set. Pupils learn less effectively when the lesson lacks practical activities and concepts are introduced that are too difficult for some pupils to grasp.

88. The subject has three co-ordinators, one at each key stage. Leadership is good and the quality of assessment procedures is also good. However, assessment is not yet fully used to assist future planning. The range of resources is good and there is a significant contribution to learning by support staff. Although ICT is planned into the curriculum, it was only observed in one lesson. There are wall displays of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors. These are of a high standard, particularly those at Key Stages 3 and 4. One display of Islamic art, using geometric shapes, demonstrates the subject's contribution to pupils' cultural development.

89. Improvement in the subject since the last inspection is good. Transition arrangements from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 have been formalised. Accreditation has been introduced at Key Stage 4, and the quality of teaching has improved.

SCIENCE

90. The pupils' achievements in science are good in Years 3 to 6 and in Years 10 and 11. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Years 7 to 9, as was the case at the last inspection. Lower standards at this stage result from the need to use some teachers who are not subject specialists and have weaknesses in subject expertise. Overall, standards are higher than those found in similar schools nationally. Pupils aged 16 are expected to complete externally accredited courses for the Certificate of Achievement at the end of this school year. There is no discernible difference between the achievements of boys and girls or across the different areas of science.

91. By Year 6, the pupils know how to use simple instruments for measuring and weighing. Higher attaining pupils make predictions. For example, they say which metal objects will be attracted to a magnet. They separate sand from salt by dissolving and evaporating. They know which domestic appliances need electricity to work and they construct a simple battery powered circuit to make a bulb light up. Some know that the circuit has to be complete for the bulb to light. Lower attaining pupils test metals with a magnet, construct a circuit and name some domestic appliances.

92. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils are aware of the concept of a 'fair test' and predict outcomes. For example, they predict the likely result of changing the conditions under which plants are growing. They test foodstuffs and know about the variety of life. They know about different kinds of forces and that liquids evaporate into the air. They record and evaluate the results of their experiments. Lower attaining pupils cover the same work but their standard of presentation is not as good because of literacy difficulties.

93. By Year 11, higher attaining pupils are able to complete planning and recording sheets well. They know about the workings of the human body, the role of the blood and how to keep fit. They know what plants need for growth. They are able to differentiate between physical and chemical changes. One higher attaining pupil is able to speculate on quantum theory. They know about electrical circuits in parallel and in series. Lower attaining pupils cover the same work but in less depth.

94. Overall, teaching is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was poor in the upper primary age range and satisfactory in the secondary age range. Now, teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, where both the lessons seen were good. It is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9, where, of the five lessons seen, one was very good, two were good and two were unsatisfactory. Of the three lessons seen in Years 10 and 11, two were good and one was satisfactory.

95. Whilst the teachers' knowledge and understanding is mostly good, two lessons were observed in which the knowledge and understanding of two inexperienced science teachers was unsatisfactory. The teachers' planning is good across all age ranges and this ensures that the pupils gradually improve their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The basic skills of numeracy and literacy are taught well within science, with good use of questioning to encourage communication and speaking and good opportunities for measuring and weighing during experiments. Graphs and tables are used to help record and analyse results. However, too little use is made of ICT to research information and to assist in planning and recording practical activities.

96. The good lessons are also characterised by clear routines within which the pupils feel secure and this helps to maintain their interest and concentration. These routines also apply to health and safety issues, with which the pupils comply automatically. The teachers expect the pupils to do well in learning and to behave well, and they do. The lessons are structured well, with well-focused questioning, which enables the pupils to recall what they know and to discuss the sequence of and rationale for their practical activities. The activities are carefully chosen and with plenty to do, the pupils are occupied and interested throughout the lessons. Higher attaining pupils are able to work well on their own or to co-operate with other pupils. Lower attaining pupils receive good, targeted support from the teachers or from special support assistants. Whilst it is satisfactory, ongoing assessment needs development in order to develop specific targets in learning for the pupils. Although homework is used, it is not yet used regularly enough in order to reinforce the work done in the classroom and to encourage the pupils to undertake their own, independent research.

97. The subject co-ordinator demonstrates good leadership overall, with good planning of the curriculum and a clear vision for taking the subject forward. However, there is currently no systematic monitoring of the quality of science teaching, or ongoing training for inexperienced teachers and this is affecting standards, especially in Years 7 to 11. The laboratory, which has been installed since the last inspection, is good but accommodation is satisfactory overall, because of the lack of a preparation room. There is a good range of resources. The staffing for science is satisfactory, as there is a need to use inexperienced teachers and no technician to support teachers in their lesson preparation.

98. The improvement in science since the last inspection has been good. Teaching is better and the schemes of work, accommodation and resources have all improved, and this is reflected in higher standards.

ART AND DESIGN

99. The provision for art and design is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in accommodation at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the range and depth of study. The main strengths are the quality of the teaching and the pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships. The subject has a positive influence on the cultural development of the pupils.

100. Standards of achievement and progress in art are good. It is clear from the colourful and well-presented displays of art throughout the school that pupils enjoy the subject, which is successful in promoting pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. By Year 6, pupils remember looking at a picture the week before and are able to interpret simple things from it, such as clouds that foretell rain and the colour of the sky. They study some of the work of William Morris and use it to influence their creation of design, which higher attaining pupils colour carefully and accurately using crayon or felt-tip pens. Lower attaining pupils enjoy their artwork and develop their observational skills, but find it difficult to fill a page with a picture.

101. By the Year 9, higher attaining pupils show good creative and fine motor skills. Their work is clear and drawings are easily recognisable as imaginary houses. They can talk about Klimt and some of his work, which they use to inspire their own textile collage in his style, showing an awareness of the way shape and colour adds interest to the work. One pupil was creating a picture using the computer. Lower attaining pupils use heavy pencil work, some of which is marred by smudging and rubbing out, but they have inventive shapes and good ideas. Kandinski, Mondrian, Picasso and Van Gogh are also used as inspiration for pupils' work.

102. By Year 11, pupils choose an artist and a piece of work for inspiration and work towards the nationally recognised units of accreditation or the certificate of achievement moderated by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA). Developed from drawings and sketches, they select their preferred design, which they commit to fabric using contrasting textures and different media that show recognition of the chosen artist.

103. The quality of teaching and learning is at least good at all key stages. Of the five lessons observed two were good and three were very good. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and very good at Key Stages 3 and 4. The art co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge, and all teachers have an enthusiastic and positive approach to the subject. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' needs and abilities to plan and prepare activities and tasks that are demanding, but also interesting and enjoyable, so that they encourage the pupils to learn. Relationships are good, with teachers encouraging pupils by giving careful guidance and assistance. This keeps pupils motivated and absorbed so that the management of behaviour is both good and unobtrusive. Both during and at the end of the lesson, the teacher makes evaluations of the pupils' achievements and effort, which encourages pupils to evaluate their own work and performance and to improve their work. Teachers use the work of other artists to inspire pupils in the use of media, colour and paint: Van Gogh, Klimt and Picasso for example. The special support assistants, who know the pupils well, are deployed effectively in the primary department. They ensure that materials are easily accessible and that pupils are clear about what they have to do. Pupils enjoy art and the range of opportunities available to them for creative and practical activities, including the use of computer software, such as Dazzle.

104. The subject is very well co-ordinated and managed and there is a clear agenda for further development. There is a comprehensive scheme of work, consistent with the revised National Curriculum, and there are detailed assessment and recording procedures, particularly in terms of skills, though these are not yet linked to National Curriculum Levels of attainment. The art room provides good specialist accommodation, and resources have been improved: both of these have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and achievements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

105. At present, the school's provision for DT is good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Here, pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding using the required range of materials. For pupils in Years 7 to 9, provision is unsatisfactory, as no pupils in Year 7 have DT lessons this term, and in Year 9 only one group has lessons using resistant materials. This group has lessons in a mainstream secondary school, but it was not possible for the lesson to take place during the inspection week, so inspectors could not observe it. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 have lessons in FT. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 also have FT lessons.

106. No teaching of DT was seen in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection week, as it was not timetabled that week. However, evidence from pupils' work and displays shows that standards of achievement are good. Unsatisfactory provision for DT in Years 7 to 9 results in unsatisfactory standards at this stage. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, achievements are very good in FT.

107. The pupils' achievements in FT are good in Years 7 to 11, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils know the basic principles of health and safety and hygiene. They develop good skills in designing and making. For example, they can make soup to their own design, and then evaluate the soup. They know how to use milk in the preparation of food. Lower attaining pupils cover the same areas but some work is not collated or presented to the same standard and they need more support, especially where handwriting is required.

108. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve very well in FT. Those in Year 11 are expected to complete AQA externally accredited units at the end of this school year. There is no discernible difference between the achievements of boys and girls or across the different areas of FT. Higher attaining pupils know about dietary requirements and about which foods provide healthy eating. They are able to discuss ingredients. They can design and make a variety of recipes including cakes, and pasta and tuna bake. Pupils in Year 10 compare bought, packet-made cakes and home made cakes for cost and flavour. They can add up the cost of ingredients. Lower attaining pupils cover the same work but need support to help them complete tasks.

109. Teaching and learning in FT are good in Years 7 to 9, and very good in Years 10 and 11. In FT, there are clear routines for lessons which mean that the pupils feel secure, get down to work promptly and work safely. Lessons are well planned. There is good use of targeted questioning at the start. This reminds pupils of previous work, and gives them confidence to take part. The basic skills of numeracy and literacy are taught well within FT, with good use of questioning to encourage communication and speaking, and good opportunities for measuring and weighing during practical sessions. The activities are well chosen and with a good pace to lessons, the pupils maintain their interest and behave well throughout each lesson. The pupils work well in practical sessions. There is a purposeful, happy buzz and higher attaining pupils are able to work well on their own or in small groups. Low attainers receive sensitive and well-targeted support from teachers and special support assistants, mainly over literacy difficulties. They pay very good attention to hygiene and to health and safety issues. In one lesson, about meat, the teacher

demonstrated considerable sensitivity to the possibility that pupils might be vegetarians or might have religious beliefs about meat. Good use is made of homework, to connect lessons with life skills in the home. Insufficient use is made of ICT to research information and to assist in planning and recording practical activities.

110. The leadership of the subject co-ordinator in FT is good. She has taken the subject forward considerably since the last inspection and she has a good vision for future developments. The accommodation is good, with a well-equipped FT room, and resources are also good. The improvement in FT since the last inspection has been good. Teaching is better and the schemes of work, accommodation and resources have all improved and this is reflected in higher standards.

111. There is no overall subject co-ordinator in DT. The school has taken every step it could to appoint a new teacher but has not yet been successful. The link with a local high school has enabled some Year 9 pupils to use a wider range of materials, but not all pupils in the year group have this opportunity. The accommodation and resources are good overall, with a well-equipped workshop, currently not in use.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Although it was only possible to observe a few lessons, evidence from teachers' planning, analysis of pupils' work and good wall displays indicate that pupils are making good progress across Key Stages 2 and 3 and in Year 10. The subject is not studied in Year 11. There is no external accreditation for geography except for elements of one unit that contributes to science accreditation.

113. By Year 6, pupils understand how the weather affects people, animals and plant life. They know the main differences between polar, desert and tropical regions. They are able to contrast life in an Indian village with life in a village in England. By Year 9, this is developing into greater awareness of peoples' lives in different parts of the world, through topics such as the global fashion industry. By Year 10, pupils have extended their understanding of geography topics such as land use in Germany.

114. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to very good. The better teaching has well-structured lesson plans, varied use of resources to reinforce learning, and tasks appropriate to the ability of pupils. The less effective teaching occurs when oral part of the lesson continues beyond the pupils' concentration span. Overall, pupils' response in lessons is good. They listen carefully, settle quickly to tasks set and try hard to produce a good standard of work. Behaviour is usually good and very little disruptive behaviour was seen.

115. Overall management of the subject is good. A new curriculum has been introduced at Key Stages 3, and the co-ordinator is developing new procedures for assessment. The curriculum makes use of ICT, and there are links with other curriculum areas written into the schemes of work.

HISTORY

116. The provision for history is good. The main strengths are the quality of the planning and the knowledge that the teachers have of the pupils' abilities and needs. The subject makes a clear contribution to the cultural development of the pupils. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in teaching and learning, the transition procedures between Key Stages 2 and 3, and the quality of the resources.

117. Standards of achievement in history are good. By Year 6, pupils learn about life in Victorian times. After watching a video of a lesson being taught, pupils especially remember that children were caned for arriving at school late. They were amused by the euphemism of going to the 'office', rather than the toilet and horrified by the thought of sitting for long periods with hands clasped behind the back. The empathy that they showed for those young pupils showed that they would remember those few facts for some time. They are beginning to realise that time can be divided into different periods and that life in the past was very different from their own.

118. By Year 9, pupils make a study of canals, using the Bridgewater canal as an example. They know that these are man-made waterways, so that boats called barges could carry heavy cargoes, such as coal, from the mines to the factories to produce the heat to make steam to power the machinery. Higher attaining pupils showed understanding of locks and how they were used to allow barges to travel up and down the hills. They also understood why aqueducts were built.

119. By Year 11, pupils study World War One. They know it ended in 1918, and was followed by the signing of the Versailles Treaty. Pupils knew that France and Russia were on Britain's side and a higher attaining pupil recalled that Austria sided with Germany and Italy. By the end of the lesson most pupils could remember the name of the treaty and the date it was signed. Other topics of study at this key stage are the slave trade and the other events of the 20th century, including World War Two.

120. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Of the four lessons observed one was satisfactory, two were good and one was very good. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and good at Key Stages 3 and 4. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and lessons are carefully planned so that interesting activities gradually build on previous learning. It is usual for the main points of previous lessons in the module to be revised, using the pupils' power of recall, and the objectives of the current lesson to be presented to the pupils at the start. The objectives are then run through at the end of the lesson to ensure good learning and their relevance to the next lesson is made known. Learning is supported by prompts and worksheets, which allow all pupils to succeed. Skilful questioning by the teacher elicits good responses from pupils. Pupils are interested, well motivated and prepared to work hard and concentrate for comparatively long periods of time. As a result, they are able to make good progress. Pupils have developed positive attitudes towards learning because of the good quality of teaching, which brings the subject to life. The teacher has a good knowledge of the pupils' levels of understanding, ensuring that the work is well matched to their range of needs.

121. This is a developing subject that is effectively co-ordinated. Pupils' self-evaluation of their learning has been introduced and complements the sound assessment made by the teachers. Teachers' records are satisfactory and support the reports to parents, but these do not always contain clear statements about what pupils' know, understand and can do. Schemes of work, which have been revised to meet the changes in the new National Curriculum documents, are good. Cross-curricular links with all subjects are now incorporated into the planning and good use is made of the internet for historical and photographic records. A suitable programme of visits to places of interest further supports the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

122. Insufficient evidence was obtained to judge the pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6. In Years 3 to 6, the subject is not taught separately but ICT skills are used to support other curriculum areas, particularly literacy and numeracy. In Years 7 to 11, standards of achievement are good. The pupils in Year 11 are engaged in the Computer Literacy and

Information Technology (CLAIT) initiative and will be assessed at the OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts) Foundation Level next summer. There is no discernible difference between the achievements of boys and girls or across the different areas of ICT.

123. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils know how to use a computer and operate a mouse. They use their skills to work independently, on spelling programmes, for example. They undertake simple word-processing. They can log on and off, save files and open programs. They can import clip-art. Lower attaining pupils cover the same work but need more support from teachers and special support assistants.

124. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils can use the internet to find out the departure and arrival times of planes. They can use *Word* for word-processing and *Excel* to make a table of costs. They can import digital images. They can build up a sequence of actions to plan a trip, using *Publisher*. They can log on and off and build a sequence of actions using a mouse. Lower attaining pupils cover the same work but do not demonstrate the same levels of skill, in the use of digital imaging, for example.

125. By Year 11, higher attaining pupils have developed their skills further. They can send and receive letters by e-mail and search for information on the Internet. They can use *Publisher* to form text boxes, and can enter text. Lower attaining pupils cover the same work but do not demonstrate the same levels of skill in the use, in web searching, for example.

126. Teaching is good overall. Five lessons were seen altogether: four were good and one satisfactory. Where teaching is good, the teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of the pupils, notably in the use of technical computing language. There are good routines for lessons so that the pupils get down to work quickly and quietly. They are keen to learn. There is a good emphasis on health and safety and respect for the resources in the ICT suite, so that they remain in good condition, two years after installation. Communication skills are enhanced through discussion of tasks in lessons and through the use of the Internet. The teacher makes very good use of the interactive whiteboard in the ICT room to demonstrate and discuss sequences of tasks. Numeracy skills are enhanced through the use of graphs and tables, for example. However, there is little planned co-operation between ICT as a subject and its use in other curriculum areas. There is a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in ICT lessons with well-chosen activities and a good mixture of direct teacher-support and enabling, which keeps the pupils fully occupied and interested throughout the lessons. As a result of this, the pupils behave well and often very well. They work well on their own and also co-operate well in planning tasks. Current assessment procedures are still being developed and, whilst satisfactory, do not enable a clear check to be kept on the skills pupils have learned. Individual targets for pupils are not identified. The use of homework is satisfactory.

127. In some other curriculum areas, ICT is being used effectively. These are in English in Years 3 to 6, RE, art, history and geography. However, across the school as a whole, ICT is not used as extensively or regularly as it should be.

128. The leadership of the subject co-ordinator is good. She has taken the subject forward considerably since the last inspection and has a good vision for future developments. However, there is insufficient monitoring of the use of ICT in other curriculum areas. The accommodation is good, with a well-equipped computer suite and there is at least one computer in every classroom. Resources are good. The improvement in ICT since the last inspection has been good. Teaching is better and the schemes of work, accommodation and resources have all improved. These are reflected in higher standards.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

129. Standards of achievement are good. This is linked to a broad curriculum and good teaching. Pupils make particularly good progress in their understanding of spoken French, because the teacher uses French as much as she possibly can. Pupils in Year 7 have little understanding of the subject or of life in France at the start of the year, but they soon begin to understand classroom commands and begin to give and return greetings. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils can express themselves simply in French. They can state their likes and dislikes, for example. They are also able to take part in short exchanges that they have prepared; they read simple phrases, and write words and some phrases. Lower attaining pupils respond orally with single words, and a few short phrases. Pupils' all have pronunciation that is fairly correct. By Year 11, pupils have achieved an impressive number of accredited units. Higher attainers in the present Year 11 have already achieved 10 units each.

130. Teaching and learning are good at both key stages. The teacher has very strong subject expertise and uses French extensively, giving instructions and feedback to pupils in the language. This exposure to spoken French helps pupils to understand and learn a wide range of words and phrases. Pupils become so accustomed to speaking French that a few use it spontaneously. On completing his work, one pupil declared, *J'ai fini!* Pupils are well motivated. They show interest and keen anticipation in lessons; they know that there will be a good variety of stimulating and challenging tasks for them to tackle, and that they will, with hard work, achieve success. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace. New vocabulary is introduced carefully, with good opportunities for reinforcement and practice, such as games and songs. Pupils have opportunities to speak, listen, read and write during each session. Pupils have individual targets, and although they know what these are, the teacher reminds them at a suitable point. For example, when a pupil is attempting to master joined up writing, this is mentioned when pupils are completing worksheets. Homework is set frequently and regularly. This is marked using French too. There are also stickers that are awarded for particularly hard won achievements. The teacher keeps good records of pupils' achievements, although these could be further improved to make them less time consuming to complete, and to show, at a glance, what pupils have achieved and what progress they have made.

131. Leadership in the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has maintained the high standards reported at the last inspection, and continued to improve her own skills, and resources for the subject which are good. Her own ICT skills have improved so that she is now confident in making learning resources, and worksheets using the computer. Good quality curriculum planning shows how the Internet can be used as part of French lessons. There is interactive software for pupils to use in French, but this was not seen in use during the inspection, and its wider use is an area for further development. The co-ordinator has sought advice and support from other groups in the area, and her teaching has been evaluated by an adviser. She has taken steps to further improve her practice as a result of feedback given.

MUSIC

132. Music is only taught in Key Stages 2 and 3. Overall, the provision for music and the pupils' achievement and progress in music is good. This is largely due to the high quality of specialist teaching.

133. By Year 6, pupils listen carefully. They enjoy singing in groups, but will also sing duets and solos. They show understanding of beat and rhythm. Higher attaining pupils develop their understanding of pitch, structure and dynamics. They recognise some instruments by sight and sound.

134. By Year 9, pupils quickly achieve an understanding of simple graphic scores and play their instruments accordingly. They know the purpose of a conductor, and can keep in time with one, starting and stopping as indicated. They know that a pentatonic scale has five notes, and recognise and understand the crochet, minim, 'repeat' and 'rest' signs in a musical score. Higher attaining pupils are able to talk about their composition in terms of notes played and make progress with the keyboard. They sing clearly and in tune, and will perform a solo, whilst lower attaining pupils can beat time. Some pupils have instrumental tuition, to learn the clarinet, for example.

135. Overall, the teaching of music is good. Of the four lessons observed one was satisfactory, two were good and one was very good. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and good at Key Stage 3. Teachers' good preparation and planning enables the lesson to get off to a brisk start. The teacher's energy and enthusiasm infects the pupils, with the result that a good amount of work is covered in lessons and they are inspired to work hard and react to a variety of musical experiences. Teaching ensures that all the pupils have opportunities to improve their skills of listening, playing, turn taking, and expressing preferences and feelings. As a result, pupils maintain a good level of interest and concentration. They respond well to these opportunities and expectations, generally showing good behaviour and attention. When pupils create musical pieces of their own they are encouraged to evaluate their performance and suggest possible alterations and improvements. Pupils' efforts are praised and careful questions are asked to extend learning. Assessment, including self-evaluation, is part of each session and teachers make good use of time and resources. In one lesson, the lack of a member of support staff meant that the management of pupils was made more difficult; new instruments fascinated the pupils, and the need for the teacher to manage this alone slowed the pace of the lesson and inhibited the pupils' progress.

136. The music curriculum is well organised and reflects what is expected nationally. Pupils have opportunities for public performance, which enhances the curriculum. The employment of a specialist teacher ensures that the quality of subject knowledge is very high. Assessment is satisfactory and used effectively to build on pupils' learning experiences. There is no dedicated music room and the environment in which music is taught at Key Stage 3 places restrictions on teaching and does not enhance the status of the subject, although the teacher successfully encourages enjoyment, participation and learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. The provision for physical education is good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection, although the indoor accommodation for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 remains unsatisfactory. The range of activities provided is more extensive than at the last inspection. The main strengths are the quality of the teaching, good behaviour management and successful motivation of the pupils.

138. Achievement and progress over time is good at each key stage. By Year 6, pupils are throwing and catching large and small balls. They have learnt the need to watch the ball carefully and work hard on this aspect. Higher attaining pupils can throw a ball one or two metres in the air and catch it regularly. Lower attaining pupils try hard, but have difficulty in controlling a throw of one metre. While at swimming, higher attaining pupils can swim the width of the pool with arm floats using a front crawl stroke. Lower attaining pupils can hold their breath under water as they gain in confidence. In gymnastics, higher attaining pupils can balance diagonally on one knee and the opposite hand, and all pupils develop their skills

in moving and balancing using *patches* and *points*. In dance, pupils follow instructions, use space well and display good control and co-ordination of their movements.

139. By Year 9, pupils practise the skills of stopping and passing the ball in football. Higher attaining pupils are able to stop the ball with one foot and pass it with the other, using either foot. In basketball, pupils practise chest passing skills and work at teambuilding. Two higher attaining pupils, working at about national expectations, have mastered several ball skills. They pass accurately and quickly, bounce the ball with either hand and can change hands. They understand the need to cover an opponent and find their own space. They know the importance of rules, and apply them; they are able to adapt and refine existing skills. Lower attaining pupils follow a similar programme, but make less progress toward the overall targets. They can hold a balance when stationary. They apply some of the rules of the games. In basketball, they have some co-ordination difficulties when catching the ball and are not always ready for a pass, but can throw and catch the ball independently. They change into correct clothing for PE.

140. By Year 11, higher attaining pupils have developed good hand-eye co-ordination and are able to both serve and return well, but cannot yet continue a rally for long while playing badminton. They can play cricket and improve their strokes. They know the important rules, understand the tactics and principles involved and use relevant technical terms, so that they can competently umpire a game. Lower attaining pupils practise similar skills using sticky balls and bats and improve their hand-eye co-ordination in both games. All pupils have opportunities to visit the local leisure centre.

141. The quality of teaching and learning is good at all key stages. Of the six lessons observed one was satisfactory and the other five were good. The PE co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and other teachers have a positive approach to the subject. Teachers have consistent expectations of participation and behaviour. This linked with a very good knowledge of the pupils' abilities and needs, a good variety of relevant and interesting activities and very good relationships with pupils, ensures that there is good management and control of behaviour. Pupils are involved in demonstrating activities and in discussing their own performance, which helps to reinforce their learning. They respond positively to lessons and are keen to participate. Relationships are good between pupils. There is generally an atmosphere of hard-work, concentration, and a will to succeed. Pupils compete against each other well, usually without bad feeling if they are unsuccessful. Teachers make frequent assessments of pupils' achievements, which they use well to vary the skills they teach to different pupils. They keep clear records of the skills each pupil has mastered. Support staff are used well to give small groups of pupils additional practice in appropriate skills. Health and safety are very well considered and pupils and staff are appropriately dressed for lessons. All classes use warm up and cool down routines, which pupils can do as a routine, without teacher direction, by the time they reach Year 9.

142. The curriculum for physical education is planned well. It is broad and balanced and includes all the required elements. In addition other adventurous activities, such as rock climbing, trampolining, ten-pin bowling, residential opportunities and other options are made available at the local leisure centres. The co-ordinator is a very effective, enthusiastic leader. Opportunities for games activities are good, with soccer, cricket, tennis, badminton and basketball all taught on a regular basis and equally available to boys and girls. A girls' netball league is being formed. With the exception of the school hall, other resources for the teaching of PE, including the use of off-site facilities, are good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. During the inspection, only a limited number of lessons could be observed. However, analysis of pupils' work, teachers' plans and records confirm that pupils are making good progress overall. Pupils are given the opportunity to explore Christianity and other faiths and they use these to develop knowledge and understanding of key concepts.

144. By Year 6, pupils know the major events in the life of Jesus and how He had feelings like us. They have an awareness of other faiths, such as Islam and Hinduism. They know of the five pillars of Islam and the Hindu festival of Holi, which they compare with Bonfire Night. By Year 9, they understand the difference between the Old and New Testaments. They consider the use of the Bible in public worship. They learn about the Torah and write their own Torahs to reflect their own lives. They discover how the Koran was revealed, how and when Muslims read the Koran and how they respond in their lives to the Divine Guidance from the Koran. Pupils are also given the opportunity to think of what is important to them, and why, and to consider the true meaning of certain feelings they have.

145. By Year 11, pupils have studied for units of accreditation. Five modules are covered, two about the life of Jesus Christ and one entitled 'Rites of Passage' which involved a study of baptism, marriage and death. The other themes are studies of Islam and Judaism.

146. The quality of teaching is good at all key stages. Lessons are well planned and there is good management of pupils. This was particularly evident in an incident at Key Stage 2 when a pupil who had been disruptive earlier, returned to the group. This was sensitively handled by the teacher, the boy apologised to the group and no further problems occurred. Well-planned lessons arouse pupils' interest and they settle well to written tasks and respond appropriately to oral questioning.

147. In the past few months, there has only been a co-ordinator at Key Stage 2. The teacher at Key Stages 3 and 4 is on a temporary contract. The Key Stage 2 co-ordinator is taking on the role for the other key stages. The immediate task is to amend the Key Stage 3 curriculum to the same level of detail as at Key Stage 2. This is to be done in conjunction with the new Lancashire Agreed Syllabus which has just been published. Procedures for assessment are to be revised so that pupil records are to be used in future planning. There is a comprehensive inventory for all resources. Assemblies make a good contribution to the subject especially those that give pupils time for reflection.

148. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. There is a new curriculum at Key Stage 2, and pupils at Key Stage 4 study for accreditation. Resources have been audited and improved; good wall displays of written work and artefacts reflect the high standard of work produced.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

149. Standards of achievement at Key Stages 3 and 4 are good; they are satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The curriculum at Key Stage 2 is still under development and 'circle time' has only recently been introduced. Good planning and teaching in conjunction with effective classroom management contribute to good progress at Key Stages 3 and 4.

150. By Year 9, pupils have a Progress File with work from lessons and achievement awards. They have discussed their likes and dislikes, use of leisure time and their own idea of a perfect school day. This is designed to help them to form an action plan for the future. Pupils know how to complete a job application form and job interviews are practised.

151. By Year 11, the Progress Files contain records of work experienced, worksheets and materials of how to behave at interviews and 'mock' interviews with a visitor to school. Separate records are kept of time spent on link courses at the local colleges.

152. The quality of teaching is good at each key stage. Good planning with initial teacher explanation help pupils to focus on the topic being studied. Skilful questioning enables all pupils to achieve success by answering correctly. Teachers use praise to encourage pupils to contribute to the lesson and pupils settle quietly to written tasks. Behaviour is good in all lessons. Suitable resources are used to sustain pupil interest.

153. Leadership and management are very good. At Key Stage 2, the co-ordinator is working to develop a curriculum that ensures that pupils continue to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through Years 3 to 6 and then into Year 7. The curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 is comprehensive and covers all aspects of personal and social development, health and safety and careers education. The curriculum is planned through themes that are taught at different levels according to the ages of the pupils. For example, the theme of violence is introduced in Year 7 by the topic of bullying, but the older pupils tackle such subjects as domestic violence, physical aggression and sexual assault. Assessment procedures are effective at Key Stages 3 and 4 and evaluation of pupils' records assists in future planning.

154. Assemblies make a valuable contribution to this subject with topics of social and moral significance discussed. Informally, all teachers support personal and social development during lessons by insisting on good standards, not only of behaviour but the manner in which pupils treat one another.

155. This area of the curriculum has not been previously inspected but a recent innovation has been the introduction of Progress Files at Key Stages 3 and 4. This has enhanced the records kept in the Record of Achievement file.