

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Oswaldtwistle

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119660

Headteacher: Mr S. Wells

Reporting inspector: Katharine Halifax
25439

Dates of inspection: 14th - 17th January 2002

Inspection number: 195001

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mayfield Avenue Oswaldtwistle Accrington Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Fr. P. Bourke
Date of previous inspection:	19 th - 23 rd May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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25439	Katharine Halifax	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Music Foundation Stage	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught. How well the school is led and managed. What the school should do to improve further.
9572	Kitty Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils. How well the school works in partnership with parents.
30243	Anne Heakin	Team inspector	Mathematics Special educational needs	
16939	Malcolm Padmore	Team inspector	English Geography Design and technology Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17681	Roger Sharples	Team Inspector	Science History Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Mary's Roman Catholic is a voluntary aided primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years and serves the parish of St. Mary's, Oswaldtwistle. With 266 pupils on roll it is similar in size to many primary schools. There are more boys than girls in the school. Thirty-six children are in the Foundation Stage. Most are taught in the reception class, a few older ones are in a mixed reception and Year 1 class, but spend much of their time working in small groups with other reception age children. The remaining pupils are taught in eight other classes. Five classes have two age groups. Almost all of the population is white. One pupil speaks English as an additional language but has no problems speaking and understanding English. There are no refugees, no children from travelling families and no children in the care of the local authority. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly average, though the number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is above average. Of those with greater needs, a number have specific learning difficulties, others have emotional and behavioural difficulties or physical needs. All pupils are baptised Catholics and come from a range of backgrounds including private and council estates. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. Most pupils have had some experience of nursery or playgroup prior to entering the school and their attainment is in line with that expected of children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. Following an uncertain two years the headteacher and staff can look to the future. Standards, though unsatisfactory in mathematics, are generally satisfactory in most other subjects and are improving. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The leadership and management by the headteacher, governors and key staff are satisfactory. Managers know what has to be done to improve standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in science are above those expected by the age of seven.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' attendance is very good. They have a very good attitude to school and are generally well behaved.
- The headteacher has been successful in managing the school, whilst maintaining staff morale and parent confidence, through a very trying time.
- Staff are hard working and dedicated. They provide good care for the pupils and reflect the Catholic mission.
- Links with parents are very good.
- The range of out of school activities, including links with the community and partner schools, is very good. Conservation and environmental work is especially strong.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and information and communication technology.
- Standards in writing.
- The achievement of more able pupils.
- Some aspects of leadership and management need tightening.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has gone through a traumatic time, and the uncertainty in a key senior management post for over two years has affected school development. Nevertheless, satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection in May 1997. Results in national tests have improved, though not as quickly as the national trend in mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology are not as good as previously, and are now below those expected of pupils of this age. In response to the key issues, there has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching. Teachers' planning and the way they assess pupils' achievements have improved; though there is room for further improvement in assessment. School developments are more effectively introduced and monitored. The role of subject managers has improved, though there is still room for improvement in some subjects. All aspects of design and technology are now taught. Improvements in other areas include pupils' attitudes and attendance, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and improvements to the building and grounds. The school has the capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	D	C	C
Mathematics	A	E	D	D
Science	A	D	D	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

Standards are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, with most children achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class. Results in national tests for 2001 show that standards in English are in line with those expected nationally by the ages of seven and eleven. Whilst still satisfactory, standards in writing are not as good as in other areas of the subject, especially for older pupils. Pupils' performance resembles that of pupils from schools with a similar number of free school meals, similar backgrounds. Standards in mathematics are below those expected by the ages of seven and eleven and below those of pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards in science are good by the age of seven. Although all eleven-year-olds reach the required standard, too few achieve the higher level 5 of which they are capable. This means pupils' performance is below the national average and below that of pupils from similar backgrounds. Legally required targets for national test results were met in English and exceeded in science. Targets in mathematics were not met and have been revised. Results in national tests have been variable over the past three years but are now improving and getting closer to the expected levels. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. Pupils achieve well in art by the age of seven and eleven, and achievements in games are good by the age of eleven. Achievement in all other subjects is satisfactory. However, more able pupils do not do as well as they could in many subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards for pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and readily join in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils are well behaved in lessons, in the playground and at mealtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good.
Attendance	Very good.

Behaviour is very good up to the age of seven, the infant department, good at the start of the junior department and satisfactory for older pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 is satisfactory overall. Pupils are making satisfactory gains in the knowledge and skills they acquire. Teachers are hardworking and conscientious. A high percentage of good and very good teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2, the infant department. English is taught well in English lessons, as is literacy, but teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects. As a result pupils do not make as much progress as they could. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy is satisfactory, but teachers overlook chances for pupils to improve their mental skills both in mathematics lessons and in other subjects. Some teachers lack confidence when teaching information and communication technology and so pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because of the good support they receive. More able pupils do not do as well as they should because some of their work is not sufficiently challenging.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. However, some lessons are long and pupils lose concentration. A very good range of extra curricular activities, and links with the community and partner schools, contribute well to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are supported well in class and when withdrawn for individual or small group work. This allows them to achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and encourages them to become good citizens. Conservation and environmental work is particularly impressive. Staff provide well for pupils' appreciation of their own culture, but pupils are not sufficiently prepared for living in a multiracial society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures are in place for pupils' safety and welfare. Links with parents are very good and contribute to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has been successful in managing a very difficult situation. Uncertainty about a key management position has resulted in a heavy workload for the headteacher. He and senior staff have not had the time to do all that is expected of them.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities and all legally required policies are in place.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Staff and governors know the schools' strengths and weaknesses. However, further work is needed on setting targets to improve standards. Satisfactory use is made of the principles of best value, especially when comparing the school's performance in national tests to that of other local and Catholic schools.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory use is made of staff, the accommodation and resources. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Satisfactory overall. The outdoor classroom is a very good resource. The school lacks a central library and computer suite. This results in limited opportunities for pupils to study independently.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their child enjoys school and is making progress.• The dedication of the headteacher and staff.• The warmth and Catholic ethos of the school.• Staff know children as individuals.• Older pupils achieve well in sporting activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of out of school activities.• Parents are concerned about the rate of progress of pupils in classes of more than one age group.• The amount of work pupils are expected to do at home.

The inspection team agrees with the strengths identified by the parents. In response to their concerns, the range of out of school activities is much wider than in most primary schools. Pupils in classes of more than one age group make satisfactory progress. The setting of homework is inconsistent between classes. Where homework is regularly set and marked, it makes a useful contribution to pupils' progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. As at the time of the previous inspection, children enter the reception class having had some form of pre-school experience. Though children's abilities vary, on entry to reception, their attainment is in line with that expected of children of this age. Children settle quickly, make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and, by the end of their year in the reception class, the majority reach the required level in all areas of learning.

2. Standards have fluctuated since the last inspection. Some of this is attributable to staffing issues and some to a lack of challenge in the work set. However, staff are now more settled and standards are once again improving. The key issue to improve standards in design and technology has been met and standards are now satisfactory. Standards in English are satisfactory in all elements of the subject. However, standards in writing are weaker than in other aspects mainly because pupils spend a lot of time completing worksheets and copying from the board so do not have the chance to write independently in other subjects. This is particularly so for pupils between the ages of seven and eleven. Standards in mathematics are below those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. This is because the National Numeracy Strategy has not been adopted wholeheartedly and elements such as quick-fire mental work and group work are not undertaken rigorously in all classes. Standards in science are good and well above those expected of seven-year-olds because the work is challenging and pupils have good opportunities to take part in investigations. All eleven-year-olds reached the expected level in science, but too few more able pupils achieved the higher level 5 of which they are capable. This is because more able pupils are not always identified and the work provided is not sufficiently challenging. Consequently national test results are below those expected nationally and pupils' performance is below that of pupils from similar backgrounds. In the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds, boys performed significantly better than girls in mathematics. An analysis of the test results has identified areas where further work needs to be done. This is beginning to show benefit as inspection findings showed little difference in the performance of the current group of eleven-year-old boys and girls in mathematics.

3. An analysis comparing national test results by the same pupils at the age of seven and eleven show that, whilst most pupils have made at least satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding in their time in the junior department, the progress of more able pupils is unsatisfactory especially in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs exceed the rate of progress made by other pupils. They have made good gains in their learning because of the good support they receive. The special needs co-ordinator supports all staff, helping them devise helpful individual education plans. These, combined with early identification of pupils' special educational needs, good assessment and careful monitoring, result in the overall good achievement being made by these pupils. Standards and achievement for pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactory.

4. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English continue to be similar to those expected nationally. Standards in mathematics are improving in both age groups and getting closer to the expected levels. Standards in science continue to be above those expected of seven year-olds and are improving by the age of eleven. Staff recognise the need to identify, target and boost the performance of more able older pupils. However, more able pupils in the junior department still do not do as well as they could and should in all three subjects because some teachers do not provide work at the correct level. Neither do teachers set targets to say where they expect individual pupils to be by the end of the school year. Parents

expressed concern about the standards and rate of progress of pupils in classes with more than one age group. Inspection findings show there are no significant differences.

5. Standards and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory in information and communication technology by the ages of seven and eleven. Standards and improvements have not kept pace with the national trend. This is partly due to a lack of staff confidence, partly due to problems with machines being stolen, broken or out of date, and because there are too few suitable software programmes to support the use of information and communication technology in some subjects. There is no set time for teaching computer skills, and, because no time is allocated on the timetable, in most classes pupils do not get the chance to practise and improve their knowledge and skills on a regular basis.

6. Achievements in other subjects are at least satisfactory for pupils aged five to seven, the infant department, and for pupils aged seven to eleven, the junior department. Achievement in art is good in both age groups because new skills are taught progressively and because of the opportunity to appreciate and work in the style of a number of famous artists using a wide range of techniques. Pupils' achievements in games are good by the age of eleven because of the enthusiasm and commitment of the headteacher and because of the numerous opportunities to take part in a wide range of sporting activities. This contributes well to their personal development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Children in the reception class settle quickly into school life. They soon become familiar with routine, taking responsibility for their possessions and making choices between the various activities on offer. Pupils in the infant and junior departments have very good attitudes to school and most say that they enjoy coming. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attitudes were satisfactory. The vast majority arrive on time and are well turned out in the school uniform. Pupils enjoy both the work in and out of school visits. Many are involved in the wide range of clubs, sporting activities and residential experiences. Pupils talk enthusiastically about what they are doing. An example of this was seen when two took pride in showing a visitor round their classroom, describing displays with enthusiasm, particularly how they made 'dream catchers' using materials they had gathered from the school grounds.

8. As at the time of the last inspection, behaviour around the school continues to be generally good and as a result the school functions as an orderly community. Movement between lessons and at break times, particularly in the infant classes, is well organised. However older junior pupils are sometimes noisier and less ordered. Pupils are friendly and polite to visitors. They hold doors open for adults and their friends. Entry to and exit from daily worship is well organised and generally orderly. Behaviour in classes is variable and ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the reception class, behaviour is good. Behaviour in the infant classes is never less than good and was very good in a quarter of lessons. This was demonstrated well in a Year 1 English lesson when four pupils were chosen to put on costumes and act the story of the 'Little Red Hen'. They played their part with confidence and followed the teacher's instructions very well, whilst the rest of the class watched in complete silence, clearly enthralled by the performance. However, in the junior department behaviour is good or better in only half of lessons, and was very good in only two lessons seen. In other lessons pupils are less able to maintain concentration and become restless. This is because some teachers are not as skilful at managing behaviour and some activities and lessons are too long. Teachers then have to spend time regaining pupils' attention and valuable learning time is lost.

9. Behaviour at mealtimes is good. Pupils queue up in an orderly manner, make their

choice of food and sit sensibly to eat their meal. They are friendly towards each other and welcome the opportunity to talk to visitors. In all the playgrounds, behaviour, although boisterous, is generally good. Pupils sensibly play games such as football, skipping and catch together. Pupils appreciate the system of stars in the infant classes, and merits and house points in the junior classes, and take pride in the awards they receive for good behaviour and attitudes. They report, "You feel good when you receive a merit". All understand the school rules well and have a clear sense of right and wrong. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

10. Pupils learn to work both in groups and on their own. They answer teachers' questions with enthusiasm and confidence and are keen to contribute. Such an example was observed in a Year 4 history lesson where pupils were asked to feel a Viking object wrapped in tissue paper and to discuss what it might be. The level of discussion was good and pupils shared their ideas well. Through group activities and work in pairs, pupils learn to share and support others. For example when using the computer pupils took turns to operate the mouse and to sit on the computer chair.

11. Development of pupils' initiative and personal responsibility is good. From an early age, pupils take minor responsibilities in class such as taking the register to the office and acting as monitors. As they progress up the school they take on increasing responsibilities such as litter collecting in the grounds, and in Year 6 they help to look after the infants. Elected pupils from each class attend the conservation committee meetings and express their views, taking an active part in decision making. Pupils take their jobs seriously and are very proud of their role. When given the opportunity, pupils take responsibility for their learning, doing their homework conscientiously and taking responsibility for equipment in lessons. However, these opportunities are not consistent throughout classes and in some classes there are too few chances for pupils to select their own resources or undertake individual research. As a result pupils do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning.

12. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good, helping the school function as a happy and supportive community. No incidents of harassment were observed. Pupils from ethnic minorities and those with special educational needs are very well integrated into the life of the school. Many pleasing examples were seen of pupils helping disabled and less able pupils. Though pupils learn about some festivals of other faiths and cultures in history and religious education, pupils are not sufficiently able to appreciate the values and beliefs of others because such opportunities are limited.

13. Attendance is well above the national average and very few pupils arrive late for school. This makes a good start to the day and contributes to pupils' learning. This is improvement since the last inspection when attendance was judged to be good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when teaching was judged unsatisfactory in almost one lesson in four. The percentage of good and very good teaching has improved considerably. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen this inspection. Though good and very good teaching was observed in both departments, the percentage was much higher in the infant department. No very good teaching was seen in the reception class.

15. There has been improvement in teachers' planning since the last inspection. Termly plans are now linked to National Curriculum attainment targets and assessment procedures have been introduced in most key subjects. Teachers plan their lessons conscientiously, giving clear identification to what pupils will learn. They provide work for pupils of different ages in the same class, and different abilities. Planning identifies new words and these are emphasised in all lessons so pupils extend their vocabulary at a good rate. For example, in a Year 1 art lesson, pupils learned the word 'crenellation' and proceeded to use it when discussing their line drawings. Though their pronunciation was not always correct, they understood the meaning. Teachers plan further work for those who complete their activities early. However, tasks are usually more of the same examples rather than work at a more difficult level, so though more able pupils are kept occupied, they are not stretched and do not achieve as well as they could. Teachers use the results of tests when planning groups, but they are not using the analysis to set targets for where they expect individual pupils to be by the end of the school year. This means the expectations of some teachers of some pupils are not sufficiently high.

16. There has been improvement in teaching styles. Teachers now provide more opportunities for discussion, group and individual work. This allows pupils to improve their speaking and listening, and to be aware of the opinions of others. Most lessons begin with a good recap of previous work where pupils demonstrate their knowledge, make links between subjects, and teachers check pupils' understanding. For example, when discussing 'diaries' in a Year 4/5 literacy lesson, pupils recalled work in history and gave accurate descriptions of the conditions in Anne Frank's house, and opinions as to the value of her diary as a historical record. Many teachers use questions well to make pupils think and reason their answers. For example, in a Year 5/6 science lesson studying forces in air, the teacher asked pupils how parachutes balance. Pupils know parachutes have strings and so reason that the strings need to be of the same length to balance. Others join in and a productive discussion ensues with pupils volunteering information about the use of parachutes for pilot safety and for food drops. Interesting objects are used effectively to gain pupils' attention and make lessons more meaningful. For example in a Year 1 science lesson, pupils investigating different sources of light were fascinated by the resources their teacher provided and readily joined in discussions about the implications for road safety. Behaviour management, however, is variable, often being better in the infant department. Where pupils' behaviour is managed well, pupils are calm and receptive. This creates a good climate for learning. However, a few staff do not recognise the difference between productive discussion and general chatter. Unnecessary time is spent in these lessons with staff requesting pupils to 'shush'. Pupils have become resistant to this and continue talking, with the result that noise levels rise distracting those who are trying to concentrate.

17. Most teachers are confident when teaching most subjects resulting in satisfactory standards in most subjects. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted successfully and this is contributing to pupils' achievements in English. Teachers' knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactory and they plan their lessons conscientiously. However, some teachers do not use all elements. For example there are lost opportunities for lively mental activities at the beginning of the lesson, or group activities during the lesson which would allow more able pupils to extend their knowledge of mathematics. A few staff are uncertain when using new technology. They have very limited knowledge of the workings of a computer and printer so are apprehensive about using computers. This has resulted in standards in information and communication technology being below those expected of pupils of this age. Most teachers' plans and reports are meticulously hand written, which is time consuming. However, government funded training is scheduled to take place in the next couple of months.

18. Teachers plan for pupils to use their knowledge of mathematics and literacy in other subjects, for example, by reading from texts in geography and working out dates in history. However, pupils are not helped to improve their writing in other subjects such as history, geography, religious education and occasionally in science, where there is a heavy dependence on worksheets when pupils are expected to complete single words or phrases. Where pupils appear to have been writing independently, close examination of the work shows that pupils of all abilities have copied the same work from the board. This also occurred during the inspection, when what was written was the teacher's thoughts, not pupils' ideas. This limits progress in writing and goes some way to explaining why standards in writing are below other aspects of English. Pupils are suitably encouraged to use thesauruses and dictionaries in English, but these are not always provided or used effectively in other subjects.

19. Some teacher plan for pupils to use CD ROM and computers to assist with their work. This was seen to work well in some mathematics lessons. However, not all staff are confident and some machines not reliable. There are still too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning. This is hampered by the lack of a suitable central library and by unreliable computers. Parents expressed concern at the amount of homework their child receives. Though there are differences between the amount of homework set by class teachers, most provide sufficient for pupils of this age. Where homework is regularly set and marked, it makes a useful contribution to pupils' progress. Almost all lessons now end with a useful review. Pupils are encouraged to consider what they have learned in the lesson and discover what they will learn next.

20. Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs is good. There has been an increase in number and calibre of support staff since the last inspection. Class teachers identify pupils with additional needs early. Work is carefully matched to individual needs and joint planning means support assistants are well informed and work successfully in conjunction with class teachers in making sure pupils gain maximum benefit from their lessons, so raising the achievement of pupils with special needs. Where pupils are withdrawn for individual tuition, staff have carefully considered what provision will be best for those pupils. This work is well planned, carefully organised and regularly monitored. Assistants keep detailed records of pupils' progress and achievement. Teachers and assistants work hard to encourage pupils who have special needs to be fully involved in class activities and to feel proud of their achievements. Teachers are conscious that there are far more boys than girls in some classes and direct their questions at both boys and girls, also different age and ability groups checking that all are fully involved in lessons.

21. In lessons where teaching is less effective, though still satisfactory, lessons start well with teachers providing good instruction and promoting good discussion. However, in these lessons, introductions are often too long and some pupils lose concentration and become restless, disturbing others. This is especially so in junior age classes. Some lessons of almost two hours are too long. Though teachers plan a range of activities, many continue for too long and there is no sense of urgency, so pupils take a while to complete tasks and do not always produce as much written work as they could. In lessons where teaching is very effective, pupils are inspired to learn and make very good gains in their knowledge and skills. Lessons have a sense of urgency and not a moment is wasted. In these lessons, the work is challenging for pupils of all abilities and teachers provide a good variety of activities to extend their pupils and maintain concentration.

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

22. The curriculum for young children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Lessons are planned in the required areas of learning so children receive work at the relevant level. A suitable focus is given to learning through play. The curriculum for pupils aged six to eleven is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The key issue to ensure that all aspects of design and technology are taught has been successfully remedied. The time allocated to the teaching of the curriculum is satisfactory. The hours allocated to individual subjects are similar to other Roman Catholic schools. However, some lessons, especially science are long and pupils lose concentration.

23. Teachers' planning of the curriculum is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection report which identified deficiencies in medium and short term planning. The school has effectively met this criticism and medium and short term planning is now based on guidelines that incorporate the stages of progress set out in the National Curriculum. All subjects have policies and schemes of work that guide the planning of teaching and learning. Subject managers recognise that some policies are relatively old and are in need of urgent review in the light of recent developments in the curriculum.

24. Since the last inspection the school has effectively introduced the National Literacy Strategy and teachers' planning for this is good. However the school has not fully encompassed the National Numeracy Strategy. There is no whole school policy to guide teachers' planning to make the most of opportunities to promote literacy and numeracy across the range of subjects. This is needed in order to reinforce and further develop skills such as writing in other subjects. The school is well aware of the fact that some parents are concerned about the demands of mixed year groups. In recent years it has developed strategies to make sure that a curriculum is produced that avoids unnecessary duplication of work and which caters for the needs of all pupils across the range of abilities. It has done so with the close co-operation of the Local Education Authority.

25. The provision for special educational needs is a strength of the school. Where possible pupils who have special needs are included in all aspects of the school curriculum and make good progress. Where pupils are withdrawn from class, it is because the school has considered carefully what will be in the best interests of each pupil, and staff diligently plan appropriate work to meet the individual needs. Teachers produce high quality individual educational plans and the majority use them well to inform what is to be taught next and to match work to pupils' individual needs. The special educational need co-ordinator provides useful support and advice for her colleagues if required. The school makes sure that the provision outlined in pupils' statements is in place and is reviewed in line with Code of Practice guidance. The good relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils encourage those who have special needs to feel confident and secure. This atmosphere of encouragement allows these pupils to fully access the curriculum and make good progress.

26. The school works hard to give pupils equality of access and opportunity. It is an inclusive school. For example, access for people with wheelchairs is good. However, there is evidence from lesson observations, teachers' planning and an analysis of the results of standardised tests taken by last year's Year 6 class at ages 7 and 11 that there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils. The progress made by these pupils was less than might be expected. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' social, moral and creative development. There is a good number of sports activities and teams are regularly in competitions with local schools. Musical interest is met by clubs for recorder and guitar, and older pupils have the opportunity to learn a foreign

language at French Club. The school also runs annual residential visits, alternating between France and London. These contribute well to pupils' personal development.

27. The personal, social and health education programme is planned and delivered satisfactorily. Good use is made of visitors such as the school nurse and the local police who visit the school to promote greater understanding of, for example, drugs misuse and sex education. Some of these matters are also taught, where appropriate, through science lessons. Good links have been made with the local Catholic high school which takes most of the pupils in Year 7. Information is passed on to the new school and pupils visit it in their final year. These arrangements help to create a smooth transition between schools.

28. The school has, over recent years, developed an 'outside classroom' based around the stream that runs alongside the school. This adds an important dimension to the delivery of various subjects including science and geography. It has led to the school becoming involved in a wider range of activities such as recycling and environmental improvement projects that have a significant and abiding impact on pupils. Work in this area has been rewarded by the ECO silver medal.

29. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when provision was satisfactory. Most parents agree that the values and attitudes that are promoted have a positive effect on their child's personal development. This was confirmed during the inspection.

30. The provision for spiritual development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged that there were too few opportunities for reflection. Daily worship in class and in the main hall allows pupils to develop a reverence for prayer. This is especially effective when teachers use candles and dimmed lights to create an atmosphere that helps pupils focus. Assembly themes are based on the liturgical calendar. Pupils quietly reflect on the occasions when they have been inconsiderate or fallen out with friends, and resolve to put this right. The idea of thinking of less fortunate people and being thankful for their own advantages is reinforced well during assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to have a practical approach by donating to a range of charities. Weekly mass supports pupils' spiritual development well. It gives the opportunity for prayer and supports well the community ethos of the school. Pupils gain an awareness of the world. For example, in a science lesson Year 1 pupils were amazed at the contrast of light and dark and the luminescent stars set in the storeroom. Year 2 pupils were intrigued as they experimented with sound and realised that, "Your larynx goes 'thumpier' when you talk rather than whisper". The school is fully committed to the conservation project and this has resulted in pupils becoming aware of the beauty of nature and a desire to care for and create a better world. Developments in the 'outdoor classroom' bear witness to this.

31. Provision for moral and social development is good. This is an improvement on the last inspection when it was found that pupils had too few opportunities for responsibility. Older pupils are given the chance to help care for younger pupils at lunchtime and help in the smooth running of the dining room. There are opportunities to take responsibility as class monitors, taking messages and giving out equipment. The ECO committee includes representatives from throughout the school who report back to their classes on the new developments. A number of pupils were involved in the 'Gum Busting' project in Accrington, making themselves and others aware of the impact on the community of simply throwing a piece of gum on the ground and thus learning how the environment is affected by people's lifestyles. They have been involved in litter surveys and most recently recycling. The local council has donated a compost bin and pupils are enthusiastic in making sure that apple cores and orange peel become compost. Pupils are encouraged to have clear understanding of the differences between right and wrong. As a result they have a clear understanding of the

need for rules. This was reinforced when Year 6 pupils accepted the rules for fair play during their games lesson. Throughout the school teachers encourage pupils to work together and develop positive social interactions, for example, by playing mathematical games in Year 3 and sorting out 'time cards' in Year 6 history. Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others as they raise money for the Poppy Appeal, St Joseph's Penny and CAFOD. The school provides annual residential activities in London or in France to support pupils' social development. Assemblies are used well to support social development as pupils acknowledge and applaud each other's personal and academic achievements that are recorded in the Golden Book.

32. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory and the findings are similar to those in the last inspection. Pupils have regular opportunities to listen to music as they join in the school assemblies. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils look at art beyond the western world, for example Indian block printing and Aztec designs. Pupils paint and design in the style of famous artists such as Matisse and Kandinsky as well as making observational drawings of items used during World War 2. Having studied the Ancient Greeks older pupils produced necklaces in the same style. This is a good example of combining art and history to support pupils' cultural awareness. Learning is made more meaningful, by visits to local museums such as Ribchester Roman Museum and Skipton Castle, and by visiting musicians and theatre groups. Though pupils in younger classes learn about Diwali and Hanukkah when discussing other faiths, insufficient attention is given to making pupils aware of other cultures and preparing them for living in a multiracial society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school continues to provide a welcoming environment where pupils are valued and well supported. The care given to pupils has a positive effect upon their learning. Staff and governors make every effort to provide for the welfare and safety of pupils. Parents feel that their children are well cared for. Procedures for health and safety, the administration of first aid and for child protection are well documented. All relevant health and safety checks are carried out, for example fire drills and annual equipment checks. The school building is well maintained by the caretaker. Staff are aware of any specific medical needs of pupils, particularly asthmatics. Pupils are well supervised by staff or welfare assistants at all times. The new system of recording visitors will allow the school to keep track of adults present in the building. Pupils learn about healthy life styles, and healthy eating is encouraged. For instance, only fruit is permitted at break times.

34. Staff know their pupils well, and are sensitive to their differing needs so that informal monitoring of pupils' personal progress is continuously taking place. Staff are available at the beginning and end of each day so that parents can share concerns or transfer information. As a result pupils' needs are supported well. Formal monitoring of personal development is less well established although it is recorded at the end of the year. The school provides well for development of personal skills. Achievement assemblies celebrate pupils' successes both within school and outside. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities and the ECO committee provides excellent opportunities for the development of personal skills and gives all pupils valuable experience of living in a democratic community.

35. The school meets the requirements for pupils who have special educational needs and all are well supported. Effective links have been established with outside agencies to make sure the provision outlined in statements of special educational needs is implemented. Regular visits by specialist support teachers and therapists are valuable in supporting the school in meeting pupils' individual needs. Assessment information is used carefully to identify pupils who have special needs and to provide appropriate work for them. The well planned deployment of support staff who work in the school is effective, not only in working

directly with pupils but also, in the better lessons, and in gathering assessment information to support teaching. The special needs co-ordinator meets with appropriate staff in the receiving high school to make sure that transition into secondary education is as smooth as possible.

36. Pupils are well supported in their transfer into and out of the school. As a result the majority settle quickly and happily. In the summer term prior to entry pupils make a visit to school with their parents and the headteacher visits the feeder nursery. The school enjoys very good links with the Catholic high school. A wide range of reciprocal visits by pupils and staff ensures a smooth transfer for Year 6 pupils to their next stage of education.

37. Although the school's policy prescribes procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, these are not consistently applied and as a result behaviour is variable. Through the home-school agreement and prospectus, parents and pupils are aware of the rules and the standards of behaviour expected. Suitable incentives such as stars, stickers and merit points are used to encourage good behaviour and good work. All staff are alert to any signs of bullying or harassment and when instances do occur they are identified quickly and handled effectively.

38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are effective and result in very high attendance rates. Awards are given at the end of the year for pupils with full attendance. Staff mark registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session and use appropriate symbols when categorising absence. The headteacher is aware that late arrivals should be recorded in the registers. Most parents inform the school if their child is absent and the education welfare officer visits school regularly to monitor registers. The level of support and guidance the school gives has a positive effect in raising pupils' achievements.

39. Systems for assessing, recording and analysing pupils' achievement are satisfactory overall. Satisfactory systems are in place in the reception class. These begin before the child enters school when parents complete a booklet that gives useful information for the teacher. Attainment is assessed on entry and half-termly assessments of children's progress are made. However, day-to-day records are sketchy and tend to be of the activities children have taken part in rather than the knowledge and skills they have acquired. The recording of children's achievements and the profile built up over their time in the reception class is not as comprehensive and useful as in many other schools.

40. For the older pupils, assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection. Satisfactory systems are now in place for mathematics, English, science and art. Assessments in other subjects vary from teacher to teacher. There is a need to develop assessment in these subjects in order to produce a consistent system across the school. Good practice is being developed, for example, in geography where assessments clearly test attainment against the requirements of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator is developing a very useful portfolio that is being used to moderate standards in the subject. This is good practice that can be used to inform development in other subjects. Staff use reading and spelling tests as well, as the compulsory and optional national tests and a great deal of assessment information is being gathered. However, the analysis of this information is underdeveloped. An analysis undertaken during the inspection by the inspection team tracking the progress of last year's Year 6 revealed underachievement by more able pupils. This is the kind of analysis that should be regularly undertaken by the school and which it should use to guide planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Links with parents are very effective and are a strength of the school. Staff continue to enjoy very good relationships with parents. Through the questionnaire, the meeting held for parents before the start of the inspection and discussions, parents express very positive views.

42. Parents have a positive impact on the work of the school and on their child's education. A large number of parents work in school either as employees or on a voluntary basis, helping in class, on out of school visits and assisting pupils to select library books. The Parent Teacher Association makes every effort to involve all parents. New parents organise an event during the autumn term which is an excellent way of encouraging them to feel involved in the school community. Impressive amounts of money, raised by the Parent Teacher Association, have been used to provide additional resources such as reading schemes, extra staging, and in creating the outdoor classroom. Through charity events, parents support their children in raising money for a wide range of good causes such as the Catholic Association for Overseas Development, the Catholic Children's Rescue and Red Nose Day.

43. The 'open door' policy and friendly atmosphere are valued by parents and result in good communication between home and school. Parents appreciate invitations to attend class assemblies, coffee mornings and parents' meetings. Attendance at most of these events is very good. The majority of parents say that they feel comfortable to approach the school if they have a concern.

44. Helpful written information such as the prospectus, advice to parents of new starters and letters home, all keep parents up to date with events in school. The end of year reports comply with legal requirements, are easy to read and informative. These, together with two parents' evenings, give parents an accurate picture about how their child is progressing. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved from the time staff have an initial concern and are kept fully informed about their child's progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs report they feel well supported, being welcome to discuss their child's progress and additional needs at any time. Parents of new starters in the reception class are invited to literacy and numeracy workshops during the autumn term. From these workshops they gain a valuable insight into the work of the school, a deeper understanding of the work their children will be doing and how they can help their child at home.

45. Most parents encourage their child to work at home through their commitment to the home school agreement and homework. Reading records are well used by both parents and staff; most parents enter relevant comments about their child's progress. As a result they provide an effective channel for home to school communication. A small minority of parents expressed concern about homework. The setting of homework is inconsistent between classes. Where homework is regularly set and marked, it makes a useful contribution to pupils' progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Leadership and management continue to be satisfactory. The headteacher is hard working, dedicated to the school and well respected by staff, parents and governors. He has a high profile around the school and knows all the pupils and their families. Over the past two and a half years, the headteacher has had to channel his energies into shielding his staff and pupils from press intrusion, co-operating with the police and maintaining parent confidence. This he has done with great success. Staff morale is good, pupil numbers have been maintained, and despite numerous negative reports in the newspapers, the school has managed to make satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher has taken on a heavy teaching commitment to give his staff time out of the classroom, and is

managing a key subject until the staffing issue is resolved. Understandably, in this situation his management and overview of some systems within the school have not been as thorough as they could have been. Nevertheless, his day to day management is satisfactory. The headteacher recognises that he must now redirect his energies and ensure that curriculum policies are reviewed, behaviour management systems, recording systems, and opportunities for more able pupils are given high priority in order to improve standards, and to make sure that systems are applied consistently by all members of staff.

47. The headteacher is ably supported by a loyal acting deputy headteacher. Though only on a term by term contract, she gives selflessly to the work of the school. In addition to her role as deputy headteacher, manager for early years and literacy, she has made sure all teachers' planning meets requirements and has taken on responsibility for overseeing the trainee graduate teacher. The headteacher and acting deputy regularly meet informally. The senior management team, consisting of the headteacher, acting deputy, special educational needs co-ordinator and numeracy co-ordinator has not met for a while. Earlier meetings have been informal and there are no minutes of previous meetings. The team recognises that there is a need to meet regularly, to set agendas, and to minute meetings to improve the rate of school improvement. The Catholic ethos is reflected in the work of the school and staff are committed to their pupils.

48. Subject management is satisfactory overall, though there are some good subject managers, especially in English, art, geography and history. All subject managers are aware of the strengths and weakness in their subject, but the quality of development plans is variable and not always linked to improved standards. The headteacher and some senior teachers have taken part in classroom observations and this has contributed to improved teaching and learning. Managers have planned further observations and recognise this is an area for further development.

49. The special educational needs co-ordinator is strong and manages support staff well and gives helpful guidance to class teachers. This has resulted in good provision and good achievement for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator and staff are caring and work hard to support pupils' progress. The governor with responsibility for special needs has had training. She meets regularly with the co-ordinator and is very supportive of the work done in the school. The number of support staff has increased since the last inspection and has a positive impact on the progress of pupils who have special educational needs. The co-ordinator recognises the need to adapt to the new Code of Practice and to monitor inclusion making sure that pupils' interests continue to be the main priority.

50. The governing body supports the school well. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Those who are able visit regularly, though few spend time in classrooms. The chair of governors, the Parish Priest, meets with the headteacher each week and so is aware of day to day management. All legally required documents are in place. Of necessity, much of governors' time in meetings has been spent discussing the staffing issue. As a result they have not spent as much of their time reviewing curriculum policies or questioning standards as they should. There is no rolling programme for curriculum review. Governors use their skills well to help the school. For example the chairman of the buildings committee who is a surveyor, has produced a high quality audit of the accommodation, highlighting weaknesses and producing a long term plan. An application to the Diocese by the chair of governors has resulted in a substantial grant to the school which will cover the repair and refurbishment of the roof, windows and gutters. Once the fabric of the building is secure, plans are in hand to produce a schedule for a rolling programme of interior redecoration and refurbishment.

51. Statutory targets have been set by the school and agreed with the Local Education

Authority. Targets in English were met but the school did not meet its target in mathematics last year. This is partly because target setting needs refining and partly because the National Numeracy Strategy is not fully implemented in the junior department. The target for 75% of pupils reaching the required level in science was exceeded with all pupils achieving the required level. However, the target for the number of more able pupils achieving the higher level 5 was not sufficiently challenging, so the school's results do not compare favourably with national results or those of pupils from similar backgrounds. Whilst the school compares its performance with that of other local primary schools, insufficient use is made of national test results to check the progress of different ability groups and to set challenging targets for individual pupils.

52. The number of staff employed in the school, including classroom assistants, is satisfactory. All staff are suitably qualified to teach the range of subjects, and job descriptions provide a clear identification of their roles. There are suitable opportunities for staff to develop their professional knowledge through a relevant programme of training programmes. In conversation with the most recently appointed teachers, they expressed satisfaction with the good induction processes that are in place. The accommodation is satisfactory. However, there is no space to provide a dedicated room for the teaching of computer skills. Although there are sufficient computers in classrooms these do not provide the opportunity to teach specific skills to pupils in the important area of information technology. There is no adequate central library. Books have been dispersed around the school and some staff are unaware of what titles are available for each topic. Some books are old and out of date and few reflect the cultural mix of society. This alongside the lack of a computer room limits the opportunities pupils have to develop independent research skills. The outside play area used by young children is not fenced. There is limited space in school when pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for individual or small group work. This often has to take place in the corridor which is inconvenient and can be distracting for pupils and adults. The headteacher and governors are aware of these needs.

53. Staff make good use of facilities in the locality to make learning more interesting. For example, there are visits to museums to allow pupils to experience a wide range of interesting historical objects. The provision of learning resources is adequate overall, though there is a limited range of wheeled toys for young children. Resources for pupils with special educational needs, including computer software are adequate and used well by teachers to support classroom work. Whilst the school has sufficient computers and printers, some of these are not reliable and the range of software is inadequate in some subjects.

54. Financial planning and management are satisfactory. The cost of initiatives is now identified in the school development plan and progress is discussed at governors' meetings. Issues identified by the recent audit report have been addressed. Day to day administration is good. The office is well organised and the administrator provides a warm welcome for parents and visitors. Though good use is made of new technology in the office, some teachers lack confidence in using computers and cause more work for themselves by hand writing many of their plans, assessments and reports. The school currently has large financial reserves but this is partly because money is due to be paid out. A number of groups such as Brownies and Beavers use the school during the evenings. Whilst this strengthens links with the community, the school is losing revenue as the groups are not charged even though additional costs are incurred through heating, lighting and the caretaker's wages. The headteacher and governors are beginning to adopt the principles of best value. Value for money is sought when making purchases. Results in national tests are compared to those of other local Catholic and primary schools. Parents have been consulted about the anti-bullying policy, the behaviour policy and the home-school agreement.

55. Specific grants are used appropriately for staff training and the purpose they are

intended. Money from the Access Initiative has been used well to adapt the premises for the disabled. This has allowed wheelchair users to have access to all areas of the school. Money from a number of trusts has been used to convert a derelict stream, adjacent to the school, into an outdoor classroom. Training has been given to staff from local schools, who are welcome to use the facility alongside pupils at the school, to make science and geography lessons more meaningful and more exciting.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- Improve standards in mathematics and information and communication technology by :
 - Further staff training in numeracy and in information and communication technology
 - Implementing the National Numeracy strategy fully in all classes
 - Providing more opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge of mathematics and computers in other subjects
 - Providing more opportunities for pupils undertake mathematical investigations.
(paragraphs 2, 5, 17, 19, 24, 76, 79, 80, 86, 95, 102, 104, 106)

- Improve standards in writing by
 - Further staff training
 - Developing a whole-school policy for writing that will provide guidelines to help teachers
 - Providing opportunities for pupils to write independently in other subjects
 - Planning and providing opportunities for pupils to use the library
 - Ensuring the handwriting programme and spelling programme is taught consistently
 - Encouraging pupils to use dictionaries and thesauruses
(paragraphs 2, 17, 24, 71, 73, 74, 96, 102)

- Improve the achievement of more able pupils by
 - Further staff training
 - Formulating effective systems for identifying more able pupils
 - Providing work which challenges their ability and makes them reason their answers
 - Setting challenging targets for pupils to achieve
(paragraphs 3, 4, 15, 71, 74, 82, 85, 102)

- Improve the leadership and management of the school by
 - Ensuring all school policies are consistently applied by all staff
 - Planning formal meetings of senior staff with set agendas, and keep minutes of the meetings
 - Refining the way in which targets are set
 - Making sure curriculum policies are up to date, and having a rolling programme for curriculum review
 - Analysing and using the results in national tests more effectively
 - Monitoring more rigorously what is happening in school.
(paragraph 4, 23, 37, 40, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 75, 81)

The first two and fourth key issues have been identified by the school in their improvement plan.

In addition to the above issues, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

Behaviour management (paragraphs 16, 79)

Preparing pupils to live in a multi-racial society (paragraphs 32, 52)

Continue to improve assessment (paragraphs 39, 81, 107, 110)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	30	21	0	0	0
Percentage	0	14	51	35	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	266
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	57
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	24	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	12	13
	Girls	23	22	21
	Total	37	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (84)	87 (86)	87 (89)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	23	20	24
	Total	37	33	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (92)	85 (84)	97 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	18	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	18
	Girls	16	9	18
	Total	31	23	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (63)	64 (66)	100 (87)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	15
	Girls	13	12	17
	Total	28	28	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (66)	78 (63)	89 (78)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	265
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.5
Average class size	33

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	163.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000 – 2001
	£
Total income	486,380
Total expenditure	471,542
Expenditure per pupil	1800
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,288

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	266
Number of questionnaires returned	86

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	33	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	42	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	58	1	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	51	10	2	0
The teaching is good.	44	53	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	57	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	37	5	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	47	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	38	51	10	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	58	36	1	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	47	2	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	43	15	4	11

Other issues raised by parents

The progress of pupils in classes where there is more than one age group.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56. Provision for children in the foundation stage continues to be satisfactory. Children enter the reception class in the September before their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, 36 children were of Foundation Stage age. Most are taught in the reception class. A few older children are in a mixed reception and Year 1 class, but spend much of their time working in small groups with other reception age children. Most children have had some form of pre-school education. Assessment at the start of the school year shows that attainment on entry is in line with that expected of children of this age. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in their learning and end of year assessment shows that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class.

57. A carefully planned programme helps children settle quickly into school life. Good links are established with parents before each child starts school, and useful information evenings about reading and writing help parents to understand how they can support their child at home. The accommodation is satisfactory. Good use is made of the two rooms for small group work. However, the small room does not have a carpeted area. This is uncomfortable for children sitting on the floor, and makes the room noisy.

58. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to good, being satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection, there has been improvement in planning, with the emphasis now being on what children will learn. Groups are planned so children of similar abilities work together, whilst taking account of children's ages and needs. Children with special educational needs and those who are a cause for concern are identified early and receive additional support to help them take a full part in all activities. Children's knowledge, skills and understanding are assessed at the end of each half term. However, day to day records tend to focus on the activities children have covered and not the knowledge and skills they have acquired. Staff in the reception class are experienced and work well together as a team. Routines are firmly established so children know what is expected of them, and take responsibility for their possessions and for making choices between the various activities on offer.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Children make good progress with the majority achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception. Behaviour is good and children are co-operative, playing happily together in large and small groups. They know how many children are allowed to play in each area, pointing to the large '4' by the water play when others try to join in. Children respond well to adults joining in, finishing activities and tidying away when asked. They make good progress in their emotional and spiritual development through discussions and work in religious education, as when thinking about what they will see and how to behave in Church. Children talk vividly about how they see God, with "a white beard, a big head and big hands" and commenting that "Heaven is like America, very big".

60. Teaching in this area is good. Staff create a relaxed atmosphere in which children and adults show respect and concern for each other. Children are encouraged to become independent, to make choices and to play sociably together. Effective settling-in procedures allow children to feel happy and secure. Children are given time to develop their skills, for example when washing their hands. Suitable attention is given to familiarising children with the Catholic faith.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Children make good progress in this area of learning, and most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Children readily engage in conversation with adults and with each other. They willingly talk about what they are doing with some more able children explaining why, for example when investigating ice melting in water. All abilities take full part in imaginative play at the 'baby clinic' or whilst 'hunting bears in the Polar Region'. Most are eager to look at books and, when sharing books with adults, enjoy repeating familiar phrases. Most more able children recognise letter sounds and give them their names, such as 'Hairy Hatman', locating objects around the room beginning with the chosen sound and gleefully commenting "Hairy Hatman doing a handstand" on recognising a capital 'H' on the inspector's badge. Almost all recognise their first name with some children writing their first and second name. Older and more able children recognise a good number of words on sight, using the clues from pictures to help them recognise new words.

62. Teaching is generally good. Staff provide varied and interesting activities to encourage children to communicate and express their thoughts and feelings. Staff make sure all children take a full part in discussions by targeting their questions. For example, "I'm asking the quiet ones this time", checks children's understanding and helps all abilities to improve their speaking and listening. Daily discussions about children's 'news' encourage children to take turns and listen to others. Staff ask questions to encourage children to improve their speech, and, though some attention is given to encouraging pupils to reason, opportunities for pupils to think are overlooked. For example, when talking about a boy cycling children could have been asked to consider why he was wearing a helmet. Good opportunities are provided for children to make marks and develop their writing. Children are thrilled to be asked to write a particular letter on the board for their classmates to see. Older and more able children are encouraged to write and copy from the board. However, the position of tables and chairs means that some children have their backs to the board. They struggle to copy the letters, having to turn round to see the board and so do not do as well as they could.

Mathematical development

63. The majority of children make satisfactory progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals. Most children count backwards and forwards to ten, with a good number counting and recognising numbers to 20 and beyond. More able children give the correct answer to 'one more than' and 'one less than' a given number. Many children form their numbers correctly and some record their work neatly. When playing with water they say which container holds most liquid, with some knowing 'half full'. In the shop, they exchange coins for goods, some identifying coins to £1.00.

64. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. The classroom is equipped with suitable resources and displays, such as sand, water, the 'shop', the 'post office and the 'Birthday Wheel'. Children are encouraged to weigh and measure their child in the 'baby clinic'. Staff place strong emphasis on teaching children how to count and use numbers, for example counting backwards from 10 to zero as their 'space rocket blasts off'. Staff provide different activities for different ability groups, but the work is not always sufficiently challenging. For example, some pupils who can count to 20 are still working with numbers to ten.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children make good progress and most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. They are developing an awareness of their surroundings through tasks such as taking the register to the office, and giving instructions to each other "Down the steps,

through the hall, through the double doors and knock on the door". They have a good understanding of 'hot' and 'cold' and how a thermometer works through their investigations with ice and hot water. Children of all abilities have a good awareness of the Polar Regions. They know penguins live at the South Pole and that the Inuit people live in igloos. More able children compare the Poles with Oswaldtwistle, recognising that Oswaldtwistle has roads, traffic and trees and very little snow. Children are at the early stages of using the computer. Nevertheless, they are developing reasonable mouse control and keyboard skills.

66. Teaching in this area is good. Good emphasis is placed on specialist vocabulary such as 'freezing' and 'chilly', and more able children make good progress in their language development by identifying 'cold', 'colder' and 'coldest'. Suitable regard is paid to health and safety when using ice cubes and hot water. Staff use resources well, including maps and high quality photographs when discussing the Antarctic, to gain children's interest.

Physical development

67. Progress in this area of learning is satisfactory with the majority achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Children are beginning to move with confidence, showing an awareness of space. They run, jump, hop, balance and scramble over equipment. Children listen carefully and follow instructions, for example when 'going on a bear hunt'. When playing outside, children manoeuvre wheeled toys such as bicycles and trucks and throw and catch balls with increasing accuracy. Their imagination and development in this area are limited, however, by a lack of markings on the walls and playground. Children make good progress in dance, in following instructions, and are becoming aware of cultural traditions through maypole dancing.

68. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Children are taught to move and play safely. Good attention is given to health and safety in the hall, and when using scissors and hand tools in the classroom. The commercial scheme for physical activities is used appropriately so children have fun and extend their range of movements. Whilst teaching is good indoors, and children are encouraged to socialise when playing outdoors, insufficient attention is given to developing specific skills outdoors.

Creative development

69. Children make satisfactory progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Paintings show the range of skills expected of children of this age. Children use their imaginations as when using thick paint to produce snowmen, and observe well when drawing winter plants. They mix colours and know that red and yellow make orange. Children are becoming aware of famous artists and produce patterns in the style of Mondrian. In music, they explore the sounds different instruments make and start and stop on command. Most make a good attempt at interpreting music such as '2001 Space Odyssey', playing untuned instruments louder and softer in response to the music. About half the children recognise when music is fast or slow.

70. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Resources for art are readily available. However, there is no music table for children to investigate. Good links are made to topics being studied, for example in the creation of 'icebergs' linked to the Polar Region topic. Staff provide a variety of activities to encourage children to develop their imagination, but at times are too directive, giving children instructions for every stage of their 'iceberg' or 'penguin', rather than letting children use their imaginations.

ENGLISH

71. Standards in English continue to be in line with national averages by the ages of seven and eleven. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection. The results of the 2001 national tests for both age groups show that, overall, pupils achieve the required standard. However, analysis of the figures reveals two areas of concern. Test results show that the writing of older pupils is a relative weakness. The school is developing strategies to improve this and must continue these efforts particularly by extending opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in other subjects. Further analysis of the tests shows that although the achievement of most pupils is at least satisfactory, more able pupils in the older age range do not achieve as well as they could and should. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are identified early and because of the support they receive. There are no concerns about the achievements of pupils with English as an additional language. Neither are there significant differences in the achievements of pupils in classes with more than one age group.

72. By the age of seven, standards in all aspects of English are satisfactory. Pupils listen well in a variety of situations and show their understanding through appropriate responses in question and answer sessions and in their books. Though there is no whole-school policy for promoting speaking and listening in other subjects, teachers and classroom assistants often use question and answer well to gain extended responses and reasoning from pupils. This is so, for example, in science when pupils were shown the absence of light in a storeroom, and expected to describe what they could sense. Similarly, in geography pupils were asked to describe the class weather maps they modelled on a computer, to the rest of the class. Pupils gain confidence in reading aloud through taking part in acts of worship. They read from a range of texts with satisfactory accuracy and expression. Teachers use the school's reading scheme well to allow pupils to make progress in suitable stages. Pupils enjoy reading. Most explain the motives of the characters in their books well, and happily discuss what they find most exciting or interesting about them. When asked to find information in a non-fiction book, they use their knowledge of the alphabet in their searches, though the sample selected in Year 2 used the index only when it was pointed out to them. Pupils write in a suitable range of forms. Analysis of books for this age range shows appropriate progress from the start of this year in extending writing from phrases to whole sentences. Handwriting too shows satisfactory improvement over this time, demonstrating that the regular time slots given to handwriting are paying off. Pupils write well, as when they create instructions for board games. There is little evidence that pupils draft or improve the presentation of their work using computers.

73. By the age of eleven, standards are satisfactory across the range of activities, though pupils' achievements in writing are noticeably weaker than other aspects. Pupils are gaining in confidence in speaking and listening through a variety of experiences, though there is little evidence of the use of drama techniques to further develop these skills. Nevertheless, most pupils are confident speakers in classroom discussions and often offer extended responses to the questions their teachers pose. They make a good contribution in Mass, reading aloud with confidence and expression. Pupils reach satisfactory standards overall in their reading. More able pupils read challenging texts such as 'The Hobbit' with fluency and accuracy. They discuss various aspects of their books such as character and motive well, competently referring to the text to back up the points they make. The weakness in writing revealed by an analysis of the 2001 tests is being tackled and pupils are being introduced to ways of structuring their writing. However, the range of writing attempted at the time of the inspection remains narrow and activities which might prompt pupils to write extended pieces, such as journal writing, are not given sufficient emphasis. The teaching of structure in writing is over complicated. Some of the best work is simple description of things the pupils observed first hand.

74. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teaching in the infant classes ranged from satisfactory to very good, being good overall. Teaching in the junior age classes ranged from satisfactory to good, being satisfactory overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This quality of teaching results in good learning. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted well and is contributing to improvement. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach the basic skills and use this well in literacy lessons. However, some teachers of older pupils do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write independently in other subjects. The pace of many lessons is good and this helps maintain pupils' concentration and keeps pupils challenged. Planning for literacy is usually good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. These lessons are well structured and work builds on previous learning. Teachers and support staff generally have good relationships with their pupils and this helps to promote the good attitudes pupils have towards lessons. Question and answer is often good as teachers work to involve the whole class and draw out extended answers. Teachers use assessments appropriately to put pupils into groups that correspond with their ability but do not use the results to challenge pupils by setting annual targets. Group sessions are well organised and this leads to purposeful learning by individuals. Work given usually matches ability levels, although work provided for pupils who complete their tasks early is often more of the same exercise and is not sufficiently challenging for more able pupils. Lessons normally conclude with whole-class discussions that draw together what has been learnt and which gives pupils a clear idea of the progress they have made.

75. The management of literacy is effective. Though the national strategy has been effectively introduced the co-ordinator is not complacent and is aware of the challenges facing her and her colleagues. She and the headteacher have begun monitoring the teaching of literacy. This is designed to identify strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. Immediate areas for concern revealed by this process are inconsistencies in assessment and target setting practised by teachers, and a lack of challenge for more able pupils. The co-ordinator recognises there needs to be more detailed analysis of assessment data to identify and target more able pupils. Though there has been improvement in resources since the last inspection, there is still no central library. The designated area in the corridor is not conducive to work and many books in this area are out of date. The absence of suitable library facilities reduces opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning and limits their research skills. The range of texts studied in literacy makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

76. The results of the 2001 national tests at seven and eleven show standards are below the national average and pupils' performance is below that of those from similar backgrounds. During the week of inspection the attainment of pupils during lessons was judged to be satisfactory. The proportion of pupils attaining standards that are higher than those expected for their age is below that found nationally. Throughout the school, the rate of progress made by more able pupils is less than expected and could be improved. Results in national test have not kept pace with national trends. Standards have fluctuated since the last inspection and the school has not been able to meet the targets set for the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels by the age of eleven. However, close scrutiny of recent national test results indicates that standards are improving. With the exception of more able pupils, the majority of pupils including the one who has English as a second language make satisfactory progress and their achievements are satisfactory. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well for their abilities and make good progress. Teachers make good use of their assessment information to plan work specific to the needs of these pupils. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants who work closely with class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator. Recent national test results show that boys achieve better

than girls. This is not evident with the present pupils. There is no significant difference in the achievements of pupils in classes of more than one age group.

77. By the age of seven, pupils add ten to a two digit number, they halve and double numbers and know that numbers can be written as figures or words. They make very good progress as they count backwards and forwards in tens, reinforcing their understanding of tens and units. More able pupils are confident in their knowledge of the value of hundreds, tens and units. Younger pupils know the days of the week, and older pupils increase their knowledge of time as they estimate time taken to do such activities as writing names, tying laces or walking to the office. They improve their understanding of time and data collection because they do the tasks, comparing the actual times with their original estimates and recording the results. Pupils in Year 2 build well on their earlier work on shape and gain a good knowledge of the features of two and three-dimensional shapes. They enjoy practical activities such as using straws to construct square and triangular pyramids and recording the numbers of faces, edges and corners. Teachers reinforce appropriate mathematical vocabulary throughout their teaching. Pupils use correct mathematical vocabulary to describe addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Good progress is made in recording data as pupils produce bar graphs of favourite colours and how they travel to school. Satisfactory progress is made in investigation as they take part in a traffic survey and use dominoes in an investigation supporting their understanding of odd and even numbers.

78. Between the ages of seven and eleven pupils make satisfactory progress. By the age of eleven, pupils have extended their knowledge of number to include problem solving and the use of a variety of strategies to multiply and divide four figure numbers. They change fractions to percentages and understand the relationship between multiplication and division. When considering the use of a thermometer, pupils learn to calculate negative numbers as well as positive. Pupils develop their knowledge of data handling well as they record information on a variety of charts and graphs. By the age of eleven, they plot co-ordinates using a four-quadrant axis. They understand 'mean', 'median' and 'mode', and the majority are able to apply this knowledge when given a range of numbers to analyse. Pupils measure accurately in metric scale, change centimetres to millimetres and calculate the area of a regular shape from given measurements. They draw and measure angles and know the difference between equilateral, isosceles and scalene triangles. Though provision is good for pupils who have special educational needs, those pupils who are more able do not get sufficient opportunities to extend their skills as they consistently do the same work as the rest of the class and do not work to full capacity. Insufficient emphasis is given to developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills. This is evident when they take a long time to calculate or recall answers to problems involving tables or those requiring mental agility.

79. The quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils aged seven and under. For pupils between seven and eleven years of age, teaching is satisfactory with strengths in the teaching of the younger junior age pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Features of the good quality teaching include lively and challenging activities which pupils enjoy and so become enthusiastic in developing their number skills. Where teachers are consistently firm when managing their pupils with strategies including the use of the merit system, pupils do not waste any time but involve themselves totally in the activities and thus make good progress. Where well planned opportunities are given for pupils to learn independently, they respond well. However this is not a regular feature of the teaching seen during the inspection. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is satisfactory and they plan their lessons conscientiously. However, the school has not wholeheartedly embraced the national numeracy strategy. This means there are lost opportunities to introduce lively, meaningful mental activities at the beginning of the lesson, or to organise group activities during the lesson which would allow more able pupils to extend their knowledge of mathematics. In question and answer time, it is regularly possible for

pupils to opt out rather than contribute, so pupils are not fully focused throughout the lesson. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics relate directly to the quality of the teaching. When teaching is good or better, pupils respond positively. They know exactly what is expected of them and enjoy the range of challenging mathematical activities. All teachers have very good relationships with pupils, and pupils are keen to learn.

80. Teachers throughout the school question pupils about their work, and, in the better lessons pupils are required to explain how they arrive at their answers. Consequently in these lessons pupils gain a good understanding of the different methods of calculating a correct answer and are more easily able to see where they might have gone wrong. Homework is given regularly and supports pupils by reinforcing what they have learned in lessons. However there is little consistency between classes in how the homework is recorded whether in homework folders, within class exercise books or returned home. Opportunities for pupils to apply their number skills in other subjects are underdeveloped. Teachers use information and communication technology well in mathematics. The programmes are chosen well to support class learning and pupils enjoy their regular sessions to use the computer during mathematics lessons. This consolidates their learning well. A very good example of pupils tutoring each other was seen in Year 3 as they used a data-handling programme. As well as consolidating their understanding of mathematics, this also gave pupils good opportunities to take responsibility for demonstrating their skills to each other. Analysis of work shows the school has worked hard to improve data handling and graphical work.

81. Arrangements for assessing pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Teachers keep records of assessments, though the format varies between classes. The information is passed on by teachers at the end of each year and is used alongside the results of national tests to place pupils in groups the following year. Staff have used the results to reorganise the sequence of mathematical topics and when they are taught, in relation to the dates of the tests. Insufficient use is made of assessment information for teachers to set group or individual targets for pupils. Similarly the results of the national tests taken when pupils are seven are not used to forecast pupils' potential attainment up to the age of eleven. The school does analyse national test results carefully and has identified areas for development. These include extending the achievement of more able pupils, further development of investigative work and further work on developing pupils' mental strategies. Inspection findings concur with these priorities. The co-ordinator has already started to address these issues by piloting new resources, and attending relevant training to help raise standards especially for pupils who are of higher ability. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum is carefully monitored to make sure that, despite the split classes, all topics are covered and pupils do not repeat work other than to reinforce their knowledge. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching within the subject. The subject lacks cohesion because good practice in some classes is not shared throughout the school. Effort has been put into addressing the weakness identified at the time of the last inspection by introducing practical investigative mathematics. The school acknowledges that further work needs to be done in this area. Taking account of the uncertainty of the situation the school has found itself in, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

SCIENCE

82. The results in the year 2001 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds are above the national average and are a strength of the school. In the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds, all pupils reached the required level. However, too few pupils achieved the higher level 5. As a result pupils' performance is below the national average and below that of pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection findings show a similar picture. Staff have recognised the need to target and boost the performance of more able junior age pupils. Teachers are

looking at ways to increase the number of pupils achieving the higher level.

83. By the age of seven, pupils name a number of body parts such as the head and arms, with more able pupils naming the lungs and the heart. They understand the necessity of food and water. Pupils make very good progress in their understanding of how different sounds are made as they experiment by pouring water, and deduce that it is the movement of the water that creates the sound. They describe the effects on the larynx of shouting, singing and whispering. Pupils know that light comes from various sources and that the reflective property of certain materials can be put to good use in the improving of road safety. They are beginning to understand forces and give instances of how pushing and pulling are used in everyday activities, such as how both a push and a pull action can be used to open a door.

84. By the age of eleven, pupils understand how muscles contract and relax to make the arm bend, and that the dilation of the eye is an involuntary action. Pupils have increased their knowledge of their body and understand that healthy eating includes an awareness of what is meant by a balanced diet. They know the names of the different food groups, and that vitamin C is important in the development of healthy teeth. When conducting an investigation, pupils make reasonable predictions as to what the outcome might be and why and how their test should be fair. When discussing physical processes, they describe the effect of the two 'like' poles of a magnet repelling each other. Pupils know an electrical circuit has to be complete before a bulb will light. Pupils show good progress in their knowledge of the effects of air resistance by considering the type of material used to design their model parachutes. They appreciate that the material must be light, strong and able to trap air, and they reject tissue paper because it will tear too easily.

85. Since the previous report there has been an improvement in the teaching of science. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in this inspection. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Teaching is good in the infant department and satisfactory in the junior department. A further improvement has been an increase in the use of investigations. This is providing pupils with more practical opportunities to discover scientific facts, such as the designing of parachutes in the Year 5 lesson on air resistance. Pupils enjoy taking part in investigations. They work well together and show good concentration during these activities. Pupils discuss the possible outcomes of their work with their partner and ask staff relevant questions. Investigations work well when the lesson has a clear structure and lasts for an appropriate length of time. However, a number of lessons are too long and it is difficult for the teachers to maintain the pupils' interest and concentration, particularly when the practical activity is introduced too late in the session. Where lessons are more successful, the activities and resources are well structured and prepared and pupils are informed of the amount of time they are allowed to complete a task. In these lessons teachers provide good support for all pupils. Activities are designed to match their varying abilities. One instance is how they record their findings as in a Year 3 lesson on healthy eating. Where lessons are less effective, though still satisfactory, there are insufficient opportunities for more able pupils to increase their knowledge at a suitable rate or to learn independently.

86. The subject is managed by the headteacher in a temporary capacity until the present staffing issue is resolved. Staff have recognised the need to develop a more consistent method of assessing the progress of pupils as they move through the school, and to use this information to set targets for individual pupils. Resources are adequate for investigation work, but there is limited evidence of pupils using the computer to record their work, as when using spreadsheets or graphs to record their findings. Good use is made of additional resources to make learning more meaningful. The creation of the 'outside classroom' contributes very well to learning opportunities, allowing pupils to increase their understanding of living things as when studying water creatures in the stream. Good use is made of a visiting theatre group to

reinforce pupils' knowledge of the position of the planets in the solar system.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Pupils' achievements in art and design have improved since the last inspection and are above those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. By the age of seven, pupils investigate and use a good range of media. Following a visit to the zoo, they produce recognisable observational drawings and pastel work depicting lions and tigers. When working in the style of other artists, they confidently discuss the techniques used to produce, for example, the 'Houses of Parliament' by Monet, 'Street Light' by Giacomo Balla, and collage representations of the 'Snail' by Matisse. Pupils are familiar with 'hot' and 'cold' colours and use this knowledge effectively when creating collage winter scenes using torn blue, white and silver papers of different textures as a background for their 'snowman'.

88. Pupils make good progress in developing their skills in the junior classes and by the age of eleven have acquired a good understanding of a range of techniques. For example they describe how, in their pictures of 'Hunters in the Snow' in the style of Pieter Briuegel, they achieved perspective by placing large figures in the foreground and smaller figures in the hills. Pupils have a good understanding of how to create texture by using different lines, different grades of pencil and different techniques such as 'pointillism', dot patterns, in the style of Seurat. Skills in textiles are satisfactory with younger pupils producing bookmarks, and older pupils weaving and creating 'dream catchers'.

89. The quality of teaching seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good in both age groups. Teachers have the confidence to try new techniques and to allow pupils to use their imagination. This is good improvement and has resulted in pupils being more creative. Teachers use a good range of resources to stimulate pupils as when using books and videos to inspire pupils drawing borders in the style of the Ancient Greeks. Some teachers are confident in using new technology and provide opportunities for pupils to use computers to create their own pictures and designs. On a few occasions pupils have used CD-ROM to find information about famous artists. However, staff recognise this is an area for further development. In the lesson where teaching was very good, pupils made very good progress in observing when they were expected to recognise how Japanese and Indian artists had used 'line'. Pupils discussed how Hiroshige had used straight lines to give the illusion of rain falling. The teacher expected them to read the names of examples of lines from prepared cards, so pupils improved their reading as they read words such as 'dotted' and 'zig-zag' and increased their vocabulary as they discovered 'crenellation'. The provision of gold and silver pens and crayons had pupils bursting to start their activity, and clear instructions resulted in attractive patterns showing good understanding of the use and variety of lines.

90. Subject management is good. Though not an art specialist, the co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has attended courses which she has shared with other staff. This has resulted in improved standards. Teachers' planning has improved and now focuses on the skills pupils will acquire. The introduction of sketchbooks, more opportunities for three-dimensional work and working in the style of famous artists have contributed further to standards. The co-ordinator has built up a library of pictures and information which provide helpful guidance for teachers who are less confident. Pupils' work is assessed using a useful skill checklist that identifies the next stage of learning. The policy is dated and in need of review. The teaching of art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. This is evident in the study and appreciation of the work of a very wide range of artists. An understanding of the traditions and beliefs of other cultures is developing through Indian block printing, African bead jewellery and the designing and making of material and gift wrap paper based on Aztec designs.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. During the inspection it was only possible to observe three lessons and so a judgement on teaching of the subject across the school is not given. Nevertheless it is clear from discussion with the design technology co-ordinator and from evidence such as teachers' planning, pupils' books and photographic records, that standards of attainment for all pupils including those with special educational needs are now in line with national expectations. This represents good improvement on the situation reported in the last inspection when standards in the subject were judged to be unsatisfactory.

92. Teachers now use a nationally recognised scheme to plan and teach most of the projects in this subject. The scheme guides teachers and pupils through the various aspects recommended in the National Curriculum. It gives suitable emphasis to the design elements of National Curriculum design technology, the lack of which was the main criticism of the subject in the last report.

93. Pupils in all years attain satisfactory standards as they work with a suitable range of materials including food. In Year 2 they construct vehicles that are designed to move on the moon. In the design stage of the project they dismantle boxes to learn about simple constructional techniques. They discuss the properties of fixing media such as glue, and select what is suitable. When they work with food, they learn about what is healthy in a project that makes useful links with the science curriculum and in particular in health education. They also learn simple stitching in a textiles project. Younger pupils develop as designers as well as makers when they work purposefully with construction kits modelling the built environment.

94. In Year 5/6 the teacher makes good links with the science curriculum in a project to make and test parachutes. Pupils develop their evaluation skills as they consider the properties of materials used in the parachute and fair ways of testing its performance. They learn the importance of accuracy in assembly and use sketches and drawings to demonstrate their progress. They make insufficient use of labelling to add information to simple drawings. Year 6 pupils learn about mechanisms when they make a toy with moving parts. In a food project pupils learn about the food industry. Teachers arrange visits to a local supermarket and a bakery to introduce pupils to the industrial aspects of food production.

95. The subject is well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator has attended a good number of courses to develop her expertise in the subject and this has helped to produce the improvement noted in pupils' performance. There is a need to further develop the use of new technology in design technology.

GEOGRAPHY

96. During the inspection it was only possible to observe a small number of geography lessons and therefore no secure judgement on teaching and learning in the subject can be made. It is clear from analysis of books and from discussion with the geography co-ordinator that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and attain average standards in the subject. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. However, the scrutiny of work shows teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to write independently.

97. Year 1 and 2 pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of weather in a half term unit that progressively teaches them to observe and record the weather. They go on to learn various ways in which weather affects people. They use information technology well during

this unit. They model weather charts of the British Isles and when requested, explain the meaning of the symbols they use. This helps to develop their literacy skills. Planning shows that teachers introduce geographical terminology at relevant times and this also makes a useful contribution to literacy.

98. Year 6 pupils attain average standards when they study settlements. They employ sound map skills to explore and describe the differences between places. Their work shows a moral dimension when they consider the plight of migrants in South America. Year 4 pupils gain a sound sense of the changes in localities over time when they compare Oswaldtwistle with Ribchester. They develop research techniques as they gather information from sources.

99. The geography curriculum gains much from the development of the outside classroom. The geography co-ordinator is fully involved in the development of this resource. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work for geography which makes sure that pupils in the combined year groups do not repeat work in subsequent years. She keeps well abreast of developments in the teaching of geography through regular training opportunities and productive relationships with the local authority advice team. Assessment in the subject is developing well.

HISTORY

100. Standards in history have been maintained since the last inspection and continue to be in line with those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils' pupils make good progress in their historical knowledge in all classes.

101. By the age of seven, pupils have a suitable understanding of why the actions of historical figures have led to them becoming famous, such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes. They use their knowledge and compare them to famous people of today, writing to and receiving letters from well known figures such as Tony Blair and Prince Charles. They have a satisfactory knowledge of historical events and explain how the Great Fire of London started. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge in the construction of a simple time line and have made produced a timeline from 1910 to the present day showing their date of birth and those of their teachers. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good knowledge of significant periods in history, including Roman Britain, Ancient Egypt and the Viking Invasion. Pupils consider the feelings of others. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrated a deep understanding of the emotional heartache caused by the evacuation of children from their families during World War II. This makes a good contribution to their personal development especially as they considered what items they would take to remind them of home. In this lesson pupils used new technology well by using the Internet to read recollections of people who experienced evacuation. Pupils of this age translate information from a time line recognising, for example, that the Egyptian period was BC and that the Victorian age was AD. Pupils compare the similarities and differences between past times and life today, by learning about practicalities such as cooking methods and utensils used in Roman times and those of the present day.

102. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good, being good overall in both age groups. Teachers use interesting objects well to bring the subject alive as in a very good lesson in Year 4/5 where the teacher invited pupils to pack a suitcase, including an identity card and ration book in preparation for the evacuation during World War II. Throughout the classes, good use is made of objects, visits to museums and visitors to make lessons more interesting and relevant, such as the visit of Thor Hammerhand, a Viking warrior. Pupils were fascinated and amazed at the strength required to lift and wield the Viking sword. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements and encourage them to make an active contribution to discussions. Pupils respond in a positive manner and are willing to give their opinions as in Year 6 when talking about the Ancient Egyptians. However,

pupils have too few opportunities to write in history lessons. The scrutiny of work showed much of the writing is completing worksheets or copying from the board. This limits pupils' progress in writing and is not sufficiently challenging for more able pupils. Some staff encourage pupils to use CD ROM and the Internet for research, but overall, too little use is made of new technology to support the subject.

103. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic member of staff who monitors pupils' progress using the planning documents provided by class teachers. A helpful portfolio of examples of pupils' work is used to identify how activities are designed to meet the needs of all the pupils. The teaching of history makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' understanding of their cultural heritage.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. At the time of the last inspection, standards were similar to those found in other schools. However, standards have improved nationally but the rate of improvement at the school has not followed the national trend. This is partially explained because the subject manager is on extended absence and, for the last two years, co-ordination has been undertaken by staff with other responsibilities. Coupled with this, the machines have been unreliable and some computers were stolen and have only recently been replaced. Only three of the nine classrooms are linked to the Internet.

105. By the age of seven, some pupils use the computer to word process simple sentences, though few do this confidently. Keyboard skills and mouse control are basic. Pupils use commercially produced programmes, for example, in mathematics to match objects and numbers. Pupils recall using a carpet robot and programming this to move in different directions with the help of their teacher. By the age of eleven, pupils word process and know how to change the font, size and colour of their text. They become aware of how to use the technology to sort information. When working on 'Bodies' they record six fields of information such as length and food intake. Pupils use spread sheets in their mathematics lessons, but insufficient use is made of computers in English to draft and refine their writing and pupils have little idea of the use of computers as control mechanisms. Older pupils of all abilities have designed informative multi-media pages, such as 'Disco Diva' and 'Sweety Weekly'.

106. Only one 15 minute session was observed during the inspection. The teacher was confident and used the technical terms so pupils became familiar with 'mouse', 'enter' and 'space bar'. Useful prompt sheets were provided to give pupils confidence and to encourage independent use of the computer. However, few staff are confident when using new technology, though this should improve with the planned training. Only two teachers teach information and communication technology as a separate subject. Whilst others teach new skills to individual pupils, and occasionally to groups, this is not giving pupils the skills they require. Staff occasionally use the technology to support other subjects, as in mathematics, or using CD ROM to research historical facts or information about the lives of famous artists. However, overall too little use is made of computers, for example in science to record data or to illustrate the outcome of investigations.

107. Subject management is generally satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the subject. A very useful policy was compiled by a previous manager which provides helpful guidance for staff. Assessment is in its infancy. Staff recognise this is an area for development. All classrooms now have their own computer, though some of these are still not reliable. There is no central suite for teaching groups or classes new skills.

MUSIC

108. Standards in music are satisfactory and are similar to the last inspection. Achievement for pupils of all abilities is satisfactory.

109. During assemblies pupils have frequent opportunities to sing to guitar or piano accompaniment. They sing with enthusiasm. During mass pupils sang 'Our Father' tunefully, echoing each phrase, and with obvious enjoyment. Pupils in Year 1 are aware of repeating patterns in music. They listen carefully as their teacher claps a rhythm and use percussion instruments to repeat the pattern. The same pupils enjoy themselves as they join in with a lively chorus of 'I am the captain' to taped music. By the age of seven, pupils improve their sense of rhythm and keep time as they beat a rhythm to taped music. They learn to be performers and audience as they use percussion instruments to accompany 'Little Bird', performing hand movements at the appropriate time. All are eager participants and are beginning to appreciate music. For example, they listen quietly and express opinions about sounds and the images they represent when listening to 'Mars' from the Planet Suite by Holst. By the age of eleven, pupils understand that sound can be recorded by symbols, and experiment and design their own symbols to represent the sounds of a wide range of percussion instruments. They have a satisfactory understanding of the elements of music such as rhythm and pitch. Pupils in Year 4 make good progress in identifying pulse or beat in environmental sounds such as bird song, a police siren, or baby crying. Pupils perform and appreciate the performance of others through special events in church and the sacramental programme. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. Opportunities to work as part of a group, to perform and express themselves extend their learning and improve their self-confidence. All pupils have positive attitudes and behave well in their music lessons

110. The quality of music teaching is consistently good. Teachers have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and encourage active participation from all abilities. Work is based on a combination of published schemes and the national programme. Features of good teaching are the questioning techniques used to make pupils listen and think carefully about what they have heard. Pupils respond well to this expectation and consequently improve their listening as well as extending their familiarity with a range of songs and orchestral performances. A wide range of percussion instruments is used effectively so that all pupils are able to participate in music making. Teachers emphasise the names of instruments such as Indian bells, castanets and guiro, so pupils extend their knowledge of instruments from beyond the Western world. Pupils are encouraged to volunteer suggestions about new words that they hear in songs and this extends their vocabulary. All lessons seen were well prepared and structured. All resources were easily available and minimal time was spent distributing instruments or managing the audio system. Assessment is done by general observation and is informal. This needs to be developed. More stringent monitoring of teaching and pupils' levels of attainment is required so the school can set realistic targets in this subject.

111. The subject manager is clear about future developments. These include increasing pupils' skills and extending the music curriculum to include a wider awareness of world music. Recorder and guitar lessons are provided after school, and the local authority provides paid violin tuition for six pupils. The school is supported by the music support team who visit annually, demonstrating particular instruments, such as brass or string, to the whole school. The teaching of music makes a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Overall, as at the time of the last inspection, pupils' achievements continue to be in line with those expected by the age of seven and eleven. Achievements in games are above those expected by the age of eleven. This is evidenced by pupils' success in district and regional football and cricket championships.

113. By the age of seven, pupils perform a range of good quality movements in gymnastics. They change direction and explore different ways of moving using their hands and feet. They successfully transfer these movements onto a bench and mat. When jumping from the end of the bench onto the mat, pupils perform a controlled landing by bending their knees. They put individual movements together to create a sequence that they are able to repeat. When putting out equipment, pupils understand the need for appropriate safety measures, such as carrying a bench with a partner. By the age of eleven, pupils successfully transfer their ball skills to playing games. For example, in a Year 6 lesson when learning how to serve in volleyball, after practising they transfer their new found skill to a game, including scoring correctly. When line dancing, pupils co-ordinate their steps to the beat of the music. In gymnastics, they develop a sequence of movements using two feet, alternate feet and one foot and complete the sequence by holding a balance. Almost all pupils attain the required standard in swimming with the majority of pupils achieving distance awards by the time they leave the school.

114. The quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to good, being good overall in both age groups. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some of the teaching was unsatisfactory. In most lessons, teachers plan carefully for new skills to be used in real situations, as when steps learned in line-dancing were transferred to a complete dance by end of the lesson. The use of a warm up activity at the beginning of lessons is not consistent. Where used effectively, pupils stretch and warm their muscles in preparation for vigorous exercise, recognising the effect of exercise on their heart rate and their body heat. However, not all pupils are aware of the purpose of 'warm up' nor of the effects of exercise. In well planned lessons where the pace is good, pupils take part enthusiastically and make considerable physical efforts to improve their skills. For example in a Year 3 gymnastics lesson they endeavoured to improve their jumping and landing by accelerating their speed and bending their knees on landing. Teachers make sure pupils of all abilities take a full part in the lesson. In a Year 2 lesson, a pupil who uses a wheelchair was helped to transfer to her walking aid and then she participated fully in the activities.

115. The subject is effectively managed by the headteacher. Planning indicates all aspects of the subject are taught. Learning opportunities are good, especially in the junior department where pupils have the chance to develop their skills in a wide range of sports such as cricket, rugby, soccer, netball, volleyball, indoor hockey and take part in a wide range of out of school activities including cross-country and orienteering. Good use is made of visiting specialist coaches, such as those from Blackburn and Burnley football clubs. This extends pupils' learning. The subject manager is investigating ways of assessing the pupils' progress as they move through the different classes. The teaching of physical education makes a good contribution to pupils' moral development through understanding the need for rules and fair play.