

## INSPECTION REPORT

**KIRKLAND & CATTERALL ST HELEN'S  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Churchtown, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119361

Headteacher: Mrs A D Poole

Reporting inspector: Mr R Cheetham  
2592

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> January 2001

Inspection number: 195324

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: The Green  
Churchtown  
Preston  
Lancashire

Postcode: PR3 0HS

Telephone number: 01995 603050

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Meadows

Date of previous inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2592	Mr R Cheetham	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology, religious education, science and equal opportunities	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; how well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9652	Mr C Herbert	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; how well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20230	Mrs J Clayphan	Team inspector	Art and design, design and technology, mathematics, music and the Foundation Stage curriculum	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30677	Mrs Waterston P	Team inspector	English, geography, history, physical education and special educational needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Kirkland and Catterall St Helen's Church of England Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. It serves a rural catchment area near Garstang. Pupils come from broadly average socio-economic backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry is similar to that normally expected. There are 109 pupils on roll, fewer than at the last inspection when it was 136. In common with schools in the area, the school roll is slightly declining. There are a few places in all classes. All the pupils are of white UK heritage. Pupils are admitted to the school at the start of the school year in which they become five and most have attended some form of organised pre-school education, including the school's own Kippers Club. Four per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal. This is below the national average and the same as at the last inspection. Twenty per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. This is an increase of eight per cent since the school was last inspected and is broadly average. The pupils' special educational needs concern moderate learning difficulties. As at the last inspection, there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need.

There have been several important staff changes since the school was last inspected. The former headteacher resigned after being suspended by the governors. The deputy headteacher took over in an acting capacity at this very difficult time for the school. The staff and governors worked very hard to maintain staff morale and ensure that the pupils were not affected by the management changes. However, the development of some aspects of management and curriculum initially slowed down and then progressed normally. The current headteacher was appointed from the start of the autumn term 2000. She has worked very effectively with the deputy headteacher and staff and has been very well supported by the governors. The progress of school development has picked up significantly.

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

Kirkland and Catterall St Helen's is an increasingly effective school that provides satisfactory value for money. Overall standards of attainment have risen since the last inspection. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening and reading are good and are satisfactory in writing. Standards are good in mathematics but not as high as they should be in science. Teaching is satisfactory overall and has improved slightly. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors who are very involved in the school's development. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

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

- Helps pupils attain well in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and religious education
- Cares for pupils very well and fosters their spiritual, moral and social development very well
- Forges a strong partnership with parents and the community
- Has good leadership and a very clear educational direction
- Encourages very good pupil attitudes and behaviour through excellent relationships

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

- Standards of attainment in science and some aspects of information and communication

technology

- The monitoring and evaluation skills of curriculum co-ordinators
- The progressive development of pupils' skills and their assessment in history and information and communication technology

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Because of disruption to the management of the school, it made slow progress initially. The rate has improved and the school's overall improvement has been satisfactory. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have continued to improve, although not enough progress has been made in science and aspects of information and communication technology. Leadership is good. The headteacher has a clear vision for continuing improvement. She has involved staff and governors in planning strategically and in taking action. The school has maintained its strengths during a difficult period. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Relationships within the school and with parents and the community are strong. The school's ethos is very good. The school has made satisfactory progress in improving planning, but in two foundation subjects it is not as advanced as it should be. There is a better system of professional development that is beginning to improve the quality of teaching by raising teachers' expectations. The role of curriculum leadership has improved but more needs to be done to make the co-ordinators' role fully effective.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	D	B	B
Mathematics	B	B	B	A
Science	D	B	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school has comparatively small year groups of pupils. The effect of this can cause greater fluctuations to the results than in larger schools. Pupils start school with standards of attainment similar to those generally found. This table shows that in 2000, the English and mathematics results were above the national average and were below average in science. When compared with similar schools, the results were well above average in mathematics, above average in English and well below this in science. This was principally due to the low proportion of pupils attaining the higher level. Pupils' standards of attainment in the current Year 6 are broadly the same as in 2000.

Pupils attain well in reading and speaking and listening and satisfactorily in writing. They attain well in mathematics but not highly enough in science. Their attainment and progress in most other subjects are satisfactory. However, in aspects of information and communication technology they do not reach high enough standards. In religious education, standards are

good. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are generally satisfactory in the core subjects (English, mathematics and science) but pupils do not attain highly enough in science. The school has exceeded its targets for English and mathematics in the last two years and is set to achieve them this year. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the specific targets in their individual education plans.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their learning. They enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well. They are polite and considerate to others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent. Older pupils care for younger ones throughout the day. They take the initiative and play a productive role in the life of the school
Attendance	Attendance rates have improved since the last inspection and are very good.

Pupils are tolerant and amenable. They accept other people's ideas during discussions and support one another very well. They are willing to take responsibility, listen attentively and are reliable. They play very well together and are concerned for each other's welfare. They mix well and gain confidence through their relationships.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	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 has improved slightly since the last inspection. It is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons. It is unsatisfactory in four per cent, satisfactory in 46 per cent, good in 42 per cent, very good in four per cent and excellent in four per cent. Most teaching of English is satisfactory and the remainder is good. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory; the teaching of numeracy is good. In mathematics, most teaching is at least good and the remainder is satisfactory. The main strengths of teaching overall are teachers' subject knowledge so that they can have extended discussions with pupils and help them clarify their ideas.

Teachers do not have enough subject knowledge in information and communication technology. Planning in the core subjects has improved but is not precise enough in a minority of other subjects. Assessments of pupils' progress are satisfactory in the core subjects but assessment in other subjects is not consistent although there are examples of good practice. Not enough is expected of higher attaining pupils in science and information and communication technology. Teaching is based on excellent relationships. Teachers make good use of resources and use homework well. Pupils respond well. They are



diligent, play an active role in discussions and work well in smaller groups when not directly supervised.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched by a very good range of extra activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is satisfactory and pupils are fully involved in classroom activities. Individual education plans are monitored and updated to set new targets with pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision is very good overall. Pupils have very good opportunities for their spiritual development. By taking part in a range of activities and taking the initiative, their social and moral development is very good. They have a good range of cultural activities that extend their horizons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well by very good formal and informal means and attention to detail. Assessment procedures have improved and are satisfactory in the core subjects. Information is used well.

The school works very well with its parents who hold the school in high esteem. The school has improved its curriculum planning. It intends to complete work in most of the foundation subjects and improve provision in information and communication technology. There is a very good range of extra activities that extend the curriculum. The school has improved its care and welfare arrangements for its pupils and they are now very good. Staff know pupils well and use this knowledge to support and guide them. The school has recently improved its collation and use of assessment information in the core subjects. Governors and staff have used this information to form their strategic plans. The collation and use of assessment information is not as advanced in a minority of foundation subjects and their improvement is one of the school's priorities.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other	The headteacher provides a strong lead. She is supported very well by the deputy headteacher, a committed staff and an

key staff	involved governing body.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They have supported the school through challenging times and now provide a good oversight of the school's strategic direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is developing its monitoring and evaluation procedures and they are satisfactory overall. It monitors pupils' attainment in the core subjects well.
The strategic use of resources	The school now makes satisfactory use of its resources and better targeted spending on the curriculum is resulting in improved provision.

Leadership is good; leaders have a very clear vision on school improvement. Communications are good and staff and governors are fully involved in decision making. The school has a good sense of its priorities. Curriculum leadership is improving but is not effective in all subjects. The school applies the principles of best value well.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with a suggestion or problem</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school is helping children become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	There are no significant suggestions for improvement

The inspection team agrees with parents' views. Parents did not raise any issues of significant concern about the school and were very positive in their support.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 At the time of the last inspection, pupils' standards of attainment at the end of both key stages (Year 2 and Year 6 respectively) matched the expected levels in all subjects except in English speaking and listening where standards were above those expected, as they were in geography and religious education. The trends in attainment over the last four years show that at the end of Key Stage 1 standards have risen in reading but have declined in writing and, to a slight extent, in mathematics. At the end of Key Stage 2, the trend has been one of continuing improvement in the core subjects (English, mathematics and science). The school has exceeded its targets for English and mathematics for eleven year olds in the last two years. This inspection finds a similar picture of attainment as at the last inspection but with some differences. Standards are in line with those expected in most subjects but standards in some aspects of information and communication technology are not high enough. Standards in speaking and listening remain above those expected, as they do in religious education. Higher attaining pupils reach high standards in mathematics but they do not do so in science. It should be noted that the relatively small number of pupils in each year group can lead to year on year fluctuations and statistical comparisons should be used with caution. Standards in literacy are satisfactory and those in numeracy are good.

#### **English**

2 In the year 2000 national tests for eleven year olds, standards were above the national average and above those of similar schools. However, while the school's performance was well above the national average for pupils achieving the expected Level 4, it was below the national average for pupils achieving the higher Level 5.

3 Evidence from the inspection confirms that speaking and listening skills are well developed throughout the school. Standards are high and pupils make good progress. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to the comments other pupils make. Most teachers have good questioning skills that help pupils to develop their ideas and pupils are keen to contribute to class discussions. These good quality discussions are a regular feature of most lessons and help to raise standards.

4 The current standards in reading of seven year olds are in line with what is expected of this age group. By the time they are eleven, most pupils read competently. A significant proportion does better than that and most pupils make good progress. Reading is taught well and pupils are enthusiastic readers. Pupils regularly read to an adult at school, as well as having opportunities to share books in a group with the teacher. From an early age, pupils discuss what they have read, express preferences about authors and compare one book with another. Teachers stress the relevance of reading by putting the skills to good use right from the start. For instance, in the Year 1/2 class, the pupils read stories about islands to complement their work in geography.

5 As a result of the school's current focus on writing, standards are improving. Most pupils' standards match those expected of pupils at the ages of seven and eleven and they make sound progress. The group of high attainers, although few in number, are making good

progress. The school is providing Year 2 pupils with regular opportunities to write at length which are improving the quality of their work. Pupils in Year 6 write for a variety of purposes, stimulated by the National Literacy Strategy framework. For instance, they write instructions, descriptions and stories and have regular opportunities for extended writing but do not always complete their work. Standards of handwriting and presentation are broadly in line with what is typical for eleven year olds.

### **Mathematics**

6 Most pupils in the current Year 2 are working at the expected level, and a few are working at the higher level. Pupils add and subtract numbers to 20 and apply this knowledge to adding and subtracting single digit numbers to 100. They recognise coins and use them in simple sums. Most pupils have good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and are starting to measure using centimetres. Since 1999 pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have been above the national average and in year 2000 they were well above those of similar schools. In the current Year 6, pupils are working at or above the level expected. All use their skills and knowledge well in all aspects of mathematics and they make good progress. Many pupils can check their results by using other methods of calculation. They can make sensible estimates of differing lengths, use simple formulae and can make and interpret line graphs. The school has recently adopted the National Numeracy Strategy. It works hard to raise the standard of average and below average pupils especially at Key Stage 1 and runs a booster class for the most able Year 6 pupils in order to extend and challenge them further.

### **Science**

7 Most pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 reach the levels of attainment expected for their ages and make satisfactory progress. However, higher attaining pupils do not reach higher standards and make slower progress because not enough is asked of them. Since the last inspection, pupils' standards of attainment have improved at the same rate as that nationally but they remain below it. In the year 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds, the school's results were below the national average and well below the average of similar schools. In the year 2000 teacher assessments of seven year olds, all pupils reached the expected Level 2 but none scored more highly. Pupils in the current Year 3/4 class reach high standards and make very good progress because a lot is expected of them and they receive excellent teaching.

### **Other subjects**

8 and progress in art and design are satisfactory at the end of both key stages with some examples of high quality work. Year 2 pupils paint some high quality pictures of the parable of the Good Samaritan. They choose materials and objects by colour and make pleasing designs with them. By Year 6, pupils plan and evaluate the faces they made to show expressions with curled card. In design and technology, standards and progress are satisfactory and by Year 6, pupils have learned to plan and evaluate work carefully and teachers link this to work in other subjects. For example, they design and make gift boxes using skills learned in mathematics. In geography, there was not enough evidence available to make a judgement about the standards reached by the end of Key Stage 2. In history, pupils have a good factual knowledge but do not make enough progress in developing historical skills. They know a lot about the everyday life of people they have studied such as the Ancient Greeks and have used different information sources to research and present their work. Older pupils have yet to consider how and why sources can differ.

In information and communication technology, at the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reach the level expected of pupils of that age. They can use a keyboard and mouse satisfactorily and can use the computer for simple research. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' skills in word processing have progressed satisfactorily but this is not the case in other elements

such as data handling and control. On the other hand, they can use the Internet to carry out research such as in their work in science on the human body. In music, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. No lessons were observed in the classes at the end of Key Stage 2 so no judgements can be made about standards of music overall. However, standards in singing are good. Some aspects of physical education were seen during the inspection and all are now taught. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are satisfactory in swimming and games' skills. They are unsatisfactory in gymnastics because pupils have only just started this programme of work. In religious education standards are good. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. They have a good understanding of Christian beliefs and values and those of other religions and this is developed over time.

9 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. This is because teachers plan work for them that is appropriate to their abilities, particularly in the core subjects. Targets in their individual education plans are modified at regular intervals, taking into account progress towards previous targets. Teachers make good use of initial assessments of pupils when they first come to school as well as other assessments of their progress to identify pupils who require additional support.

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

10 The attitudes of pupils to school and to their learning are very good and their behaviour in and around school is also very good. The personal development of pupils is very good and the relationships throughout the school community are excellent. This very positive aspect of school life has been maintained since the last inspection and the key issue associated with it has been fully met. All these factors have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Parents in their responses to this inspection also have very positive views about behaviour in school.

11 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in nearly all lessons. Pupils are very enthusiastic learners and respond well to good teaching. They behave very well in the playground, the dining hall and around school. There was no indication of any unsociable behaviour. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and take great pride in receiving team points or certificates in celebration assemblies. All pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to discuss their ideas in class. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson they talked enthusiastically about their ideas for insulation. Additionally, a discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils reflected the confidence they have developed in school. They discussed their views fluently on aspects of school life such as clubs, homework and the move to high school.

12 Relationships are excellent. Pupils collaborate very well in all aspects of school life and enjoy working together. For example, at morning breaktime, pupils work as a team to provide tuckshop facilities. Additionally, in a Year 4 history lesson, pupils were working very well in their groups when they were learning about Tudor life. All pupils are consistently polite towards their teachers and visitors. They were keen to ask visitors if their class would be visited during the day. The very high quality of these relationships has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

13 Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility and this has a very good effect on their personal development. Year 6 pupils enjoy being part of the Richly Reading Club (where they read with younger pupils). A recent innovation, started by Year 5 pupils, is the Friendship Club, where pupils of all ages are encouraged to meet and talk together. Pupils also gain in confidence and maturity by taking part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities such as sports competitions, the gardening club, or by attending a residential camp

in the Isle of Man. Although there is no formal school council, the headteacher often seeks the views of older pupils about school matters. The pupils respond very well to the opportunities for personal research and investigation to enhance their learning, through homework in science for example. In this case, teachers set work related to the eclipse of the moon and pupils followed this up in discussion, written work and art.

14 Attendance rates have improved since the last inspection. They are now very good and well above the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is below the national average. All pupils arrive at school on time. There are no exclusions.

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

15 The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons. This is a slight improvement since the last inspection and excellent teaching is noted for the first time. Four per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory, 46 per cent is satisfactory, 42 per cent is good, four per cent is very good and four per cent is excellent. The main improvements have been in the improvement of teachers' subject knowledge in most subjects and the teaching of children under five. This is now consistently good. There has also been an improvement in teacher and pupil relationships. Previously they were good: now they are excellent. Improvements are still needed in some short-term planning and assessments of pupils' progress in the foundation subjects (subjects other than the core subjects of English, mathematics and science). Although teachers' expectations of what pupils can do remains largely appropriate, not enough is consistently expected of higher attaining pupils. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. Pupils are fully involved in lessons and are given tasks appropriate to their abilities. Learning support staff assist class teachers in providing good learning opportunities for these pupils. Targets in individual education plans are not always taken fully into account in some lesson planning. The school makes good use of homework in English, mathematics and science.

16 In the reception class, teaching is good. The main strengths stem from the class teacher's good understanding of the learning needs of young children and her effective working partnership with the nursery nurse. Children are equally at ease with both of them because they treat the children in the same way. They listen carefully, promote questions and answers and give consistent encouragement. This helps children settle to their work with growing confidence. The teacher plans activities that engage pupils' interests and encourage independence. She understands the Foundation Stage curriculum (the curriculum for children in reception) and plans work from this and from the early part of the National Curriculum. The school is now beginning to assess children's progress using the early learning goals after assessing their development and aptitudes on entry to the school. The class teacher manages the mixed class of reception and the younger Year 1 pupils well. In whole-class lessons, she makes sure that the younger children are involved and this helps the higher attainers among them make good progress. Occasionally, the discussion goes on a little too long for other reception children and the teacher could make better use of the nursery nurse then to give them another activity.

17 In Key Stage 1, most teaching is good. Learning is well organised and pupils know what to do and respond well. Teachers give pupils enough time to talk through their ideas as in discussions about the characters in stories or when they explain how they mentally calculated a sum. Pupils gain confidence in their attitudes to learning but occasionally teachers do not direct pupils to more challenging work soon enough. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and they support well, for instance the development of technical language in science introducing words such as opaque and rigid. This subject knowledge also underpins the briskly moving mental and oral mathematics lessons. Reading

is taught thoroughly and the teacher in Year 1/2 takes particular care to pinpoint pupils' difficulties and give them extra support. Pupils regularly take books to read at home and this reading helps their progress. There are now more opportunities for writing and this emphasis is starting to improve standards and progress. Teachers make good use of resources in science, for example, and encourage pupils to develop investigative skills. However, not enough is expected of higher attaining pupils. Teachers' short-term planning is generally at least satisfactory in the core subjects. In some foundation subjects, the lesson objectives are too long term and accurate assessments of what pupils have learned are not systematic.

18 In Key Stage 2, there is a wider range of teaching. Most is satisfactory and there are examples of both unsatisfactory and excellent teaching. Good features of teaching include the emphasis teachers consistently put on pupils' investigative work in science. They encourage pupils to ask questions, explore answers methodically and present their work well. However, there is a variation in teachers' expectations. While they are high in Year 3/4, they are not high enough in Year 5/6. As a result, higher attaining pupils do not work at a high enough level. More is now being asked of higher attaining pupils in writing and this is improving progress. Reading is taught well throughout the key stage. Teachers consistently encourage pupils to engage with the text by empathising with characters, to make predictions about the next steps in the story and to talk about the kinds of literature they prefer. Planning in the core subjects is generally good with teachers trying to provide different challenges for the pupils' different levels of attainment. Planning in history and information and communication technology is improving but has not been in place long enough for all the appropriate skills to be developed to the same level. Pupils mostly work at a good pace, but too much time is given to explanations to the whole class of older pupils. While this is appropriate for most, higher attaining pupils could move on to stiffer challenges. The best teaching has a fast pace because the teacher poses questions that challenge pupils' thinking and uses their answers with the class, as was seen in the Year 3/4 science lesson.

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

19 The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements in all subjects. It provides a range of learning opportunities that are relevant to pupils' needs. For instance, teachers use pupils' backgrounds well to make the examples they use more interesting. The school is implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum well. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are good.

20 The school is making satisfactory progress in improving curriculum weaknesses mentioned in the previous report. It has made arrangements for pupils in Key Stage 2 to have indoor physical education lessons using another school's facilities and ensures that

subjects have a satisfactory amount of time allocated to them. A good start has been made to improve the quality of schemes of work, but clear planning for the progressive learning of some skills is an important area that still needs attention in a minority of foundation subjects.

21 The school is adapting the guidance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to suit its circumstances. Planning based on these schemes is satisfactory. Planning in other subjects is in a stage of transition and is satisfactory in most subjects. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's schemes of work and is integrating them into its overall curriculum plan. The number on roll means that all classes contain two year groups and subjects are taught in a two-year rolling programme. The outline schemes of work indicate satisfactory coverage and have been developed to show which parts are to be taught, and how much time is to be devoted to each unit. There is some indication of the skills in information and communication technology and history on which the teachers should focus to ensure that pupils build on them progressively. This is satisfactory guidance for further improvement.

22 The school offers many opportunities to enrich pupils' learning through a very good range of extra activities. These include a highly informative gardening club and different sports activities that combine to supplement class lessons well. Pupils learn well on visits, such as to the theatre when they saw 'The Firebird', and also when visitors come into school. For example a sculptor kept Year 4/5 pupils enthralled as he talked about his work and explained techniques that they later used on their own models. Year 5/6 pupils benefit from valuable social and academic learning experiences on their residential visits.

23 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. The pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and are fully involved in all class work. As a result, they make satisfactory progress.

24 The school has very good links with the community. It plays a strong role in the parish by joining in local walks and festivals. Parishioners come into school to hear pupils read, talk to them about their lives and share their knowledge. Local people are strong supporters of the school, and the governors are drawn from the surrounding community. Among support from local companies, an energy company sponsors the school brochure and the photographer from the local newspaper visits school to talk about his work and incidentally provides an additional male role model.

25 There are good relations with other educational institutions. The reception class teacher visits nursery groups to meet the children, and they are welcomed for lunch and a trip on the school bus. These activities ease their entry into school. Visits from students at the local horticultural college and visits by pupils to the college strengthen pupils' interest in nature and gardening. Secondary school students, student teachers and trainee nursery nurses work well in school, bringing new ideas and giving pupils additional support. Year 6 pupils visit their prospective school, and secondary teachers come into school to teach them in the summer term.

26 The school's provision for personal, social and health education, including sex education and drugs awareness, is good. There are a number of incidental and planned opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary knowledge and understanding.



27 The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is supported very well by the strong Christian ethos promoted throughout the school. Assemblies make a valuable contribution by providing good opportunities for pupils to reflect. During hymn practices pupils are reminded of the focus of each hymn and pray thoughtfully at the end. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to experience the spiritual dimension of life. For example in Year R/1, while thinking about Creation, pupils were awed at the beauty of a rainbow and the delicate, intricate design on a butterfly's wings. The sight of an apparently dead bulb showing life through its dried roots caused amazement among the younger members of the gardening club.

28 Teachers and other adults have very high expectations of pupils' moral behaviour and values, and provide excellent role models for them. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They have a high respect for each other and for other people in school and the wider community. The school celebrates individual and group achievements and values politeness and helpfulness. Pupils are proud of their house team and try hard to win merits for it. Older pupils provide valuable initiatives that enrich the curriculum. Two girls set up and run a flourishing Friendship club and Year 6 pupils organise the Richly Reading Club to encourage younger pupils' reading skills and to deepen their love of books. Pupils regularly raise money for charities. The annual residential visit for Year 5/6 pupils has a very positive impact on pupils' moral and social development. They become more independent and deepen their awareness of others and their needs. By the time they go on to secondary school they have mature levels of responsibility.

29 Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about art through visits to a local gallery that displays both historical and contemporary art. They also learn about art from other cultures such as Ethiopia. In music lessons and assemblies they hear a range of music from other continents. Visitors to school include sculptors, authors and theatre groups. An African friend of the school provides an insight into a different way of life and a Muslim mother talks to the pupils about her beliefs. As a result of this provision, pupils' horizons are widened and they develop a sense of curiosity and respect.

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

30 The school takes very good care of its pupils and this aspect of school life has improved since the last inspection. This level of care is enhanced by the very good knowledge that staff have of their pupils and the very high quality of relationships within the school community. Parents expressed very positive comments about this aspect of school life.

31 A number of highly appropriate, comprehensive procedures are in place for both child protection and health and safety, which result in a safe environment for children to learn. There are effective arrangements for first aid and recording accidents. A noticeable improvement since the last inspection has been the greater involvement of the governing body in risk assessment and safety inspections. The governors have a clear understanding of their role and take prompt action to resolve situations. A very good example is when they recently analysed the accident book for trends and decided to replace leather footballs with plastic ones for playground use. Staff are also constantly vigilant about both child protection

and safety through regular agenda items at their meetings. The school keeps good records for pupils with medical conditions and for emergency contact. Welfare assistants, who are an integral part of the school family, provide very good supervision of pupils at lunch and in the playground.

32 The school identifies pupils with special educational needs effectively and organises appropriate support. Liaison with outside support agencies is well established. The special needs register is accurate and regularly updated. Assessment of pupils' progress at various stages on the register is continuous and helps them make satisfactory progress. The targets in individual educational plans are sharply focused enough when the teachers' detailed plans are taken into account and they enable the pupils to make satisfactory progress.

33 The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The school has high expectations of its pupils' behaviour that are based on mutual respect and consideration for everyone in the school community. These expectations help pupils see the difference between right and wrong and respond appropriately. The procedures to monitor and promote attendance are also very good. Regular analysis of registers by the headteacher ensures that any trends are quickly spotted and acted upon.

34 The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The school is very aware of all the personal achievements of its pupils, both in and out of school. Pupils are particularly proud to have their outside achievements acknowledged in assembly. A special feature of the provision is that pupils of all ages are chosen to welcome visitors formally to the school.

35 At the time of the last inspection the school lacked effective arrangements for the assessment of pupils' academic attainment and progress. Satisfactory progress has been made towards addressing this issue. A policy statement is nearing completion and the school has procedures to measure pupils' achievements at regular intervals and to track individual progress. Statutory assessment arrangements are satisfactory. Pupils' results in statutory and other tests help with the setting of school targets in English and mathematics. The school carries out initial assessments of pupils' development within six weeks of entry to the reception class and the results guide lesson planning and resource allocation. Staff and governors have used very well the recent analysis of pupils' performance to decide priorities in the school development plan, and to identify pupils with special educational needs.

36 The procedures that the school is putting in place to monitor and support pupils' academic progress are good. Test results have been very effectively used to organise teaching groups for mathematics and to identify pupils in need of extra help with spelling and letter sounds. Assessments also help teachers group pupils within classes in the literacy hour and in the daily mathematics lessons. A consistent method of recording results is being developed to make monitoring their accuracy straightforward. For example, an analysis of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' writing has been collated in a way to help lesson planning. In the core subjects, teachers are beginning to use their day-to-day assessments of what pupils have learned to help them plan subsequent lessons. A minority of teachers do this very well. The school recognises the need for all teachers to develop this area of their work and to extend it to other subjects.

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

37 The school continues to work very well with parents since the last inspection. The key issue from the previous inspection has been fully met. It is clear from the comments at their meeting with inspectors and from their responses to the questionnaire that parents hold

the school in very high esteem. Their consistently strong views reflect the success of the partnership.

38 A number of parents and grandparents help out in the classroom and more assist on class visits within the community. This contact has a positive impact on pupils' learning because they can explain things in slightly different ways and bring other insights to bear, for example, parents who are information and communication technology specialists or engineers have provided help in class. Additionally, grandparents have visited the school to talk about their experiences during World War 2. Parents lend very good support to the Friends of Kirkland School Association and are active in the community. This association promotes events such as the barbecue, Christmas fair and car wash day that raise in excess of £3000 each year. The money is spent on improving school resources and there are plans to buy an interactive computer whiteboard jointly with the school. Parents are also very involved in other initiatives such as organising and running the school bus.

39 The school produces very good information for its parents. In particular, the regular newsletters are attractively produced, informative and include pupils' contributions. The school also provides parents with other useful information through letters and notices. The quality of annual reports on progress is satisfactory and they contain comments on how pupils can improve their knowledge and understanding of their subjects.

40 The school keeps parents well informed about pupils with special educational needs through the school's prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents. Parents receive early notification of their children's needs and are kept fully informed of their progress. There are regular meetings to ensure that parents are aware of all aspects of their children's progress, and they are encouraged to be fully involved in their learning.

41 The support provided by parents and carers to home reading and to other homework is good. Parents are closely involved in their children's learning and encourage them to do well.

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

42 The management of the school was significantly disrupted by the suspension and resignation of the former headteacher that slowed the pace of development of the school's curriculum and management for a time. The current headteacher took up her post in the autumn term, succeeding the deputy headteacher who, as acting headteacher, led the school through a difficult time. The school is now well led and much has been accomplished in a short time. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are satisfactory. The school makes satisfactory use of its resources and applies the principles of best value well.

43 The headteacher has quickly gained the confidence and commitment of her colleagues and the governors and is well supported by the deputy headteacher. She has established a very clear educational direction for the school by conducting, with the staff, a thorough audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses. From this she put together an initial set of proposals for improvement and worked successfully with governors and staff to draw up the school's three-year development plan. This is fully in line with the school's mission statement and agreed aims and ensures these are reflected throughout the school's work. A good example is the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The headteacher sets

a very good personal example. She brings energy and insight to all her work. For instance, through her work on literacy, she is establishing the role of co-ordinator by modelling it with her colleagues.

44 The headteacher and deputy are developing their separate and joint senior management responsibilities but the fine detail has yet to be agreed. There are innovative plans to include the chairs of the governors' committees in half-termly meetings with the senior managers. The role of co-ordinator is currently becoming more influential especially in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. The school recognises that the skills of monitoring and evaluation particularly are to be developed in other subjects and the development plan sets out a clear timetable to bring this about, and helps to clarify the delegation of responsibilities. The special needs co-ordinator ensures that there are effective administrative arrangements and that provision for pupils with special educational needs is monitored soundly. The co-ordinator and the link governor meet regularly to ensure that governors keep up to date with developments.

45 The governors are very committed to the school's further improvement. They do their work well and the chairman of governors in particular makes a distinctive contribution with modesty. They have supported it very effectively by working closely with the acting headteacher to sustain staff morale and to keep the welfare of the pupils as their priority. They are now working enthusiastically with the headteacher to fulfil their statutory responsibilities and guide the school's strategy for the future. They have been fully involved in deciding the school's well-chosen priorities as part of a good development planning exercise. They subsequently matched finance to these priorities and have contingency plans for reducing expenditure if their initiatives to attract additional pupils fall short of their expectations. The finance committee has done some forecasting to back this up. Governors are well organised and informed. Their meetings are well documented and they are now receiving detailed reports from staff that help them make decisions. For instance, they have worked on an analysis of the most recent test results, which helped them confirm the school's targets for pupil performance. They have a good understanding of the school's weaknesses and are clear about the improvements the school must make. They are proud of the school's strengths and appreciate the efforts of staff and the sustained support of parents that has seen these maintained. For instance, they are pleased that pupils are happy in school and develop confidence and very good relationships.

46 The monitoring and evaluation of teaching has improved recently and is now satisfactory. The newly developed teaching and learning policy lies at the heart of this improvement. It gives clear guidance on practice and sets out criteria for reaching judgements on quality. Led by the headteacher as part of her initial audit, the programme of classroom observation is now widening to involve other staff such as the co-ordinators for special educational needs and science. The programme involves observation of teaching followed by a discussion to agree the findings and make improvements if necessary. This has led to greater consistency in the teaching of literacy for example. There has also been some analysis of planning that highlights the need to improve medium-term guidance and make learning objectives clearer in teachers' short-term plans.

47 The school is making satisfactory progress in implementing its performance management policy. Objectives have been set with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The headteacher has interviewed teaching staff as part of the initial audit and discussions are continuing to formalise responsibilities within revised job descriptions. Although it is not a major school priority, staff who are new to the school are inducted soundly. Currently, the headteacher is the mentor of the newly qualified teacher who has had her work carefully monitored and supported. During the induction, staff become familiar with

school procedures, routines and expectations through mentoring, staff meetings and some planning with other teachers.

48 The school has arrived at its priorities for improvement through a thorough process of development planning. The plan sets out the key activities to make further improvements over the next few years. The priorities are carefully costed and spending is monitored well. The priorities are set into a demanding but manageable timescale. The plan is well laid out and lists who is responsible for carrying things out. The headteacher carefully monitors the progress of the plan and reports on it to staff and governors. Currently, tasks are on schedule for completion. The improvements that are planned largely anticipate the key issues for action in this report. Besides meeting its current targets in the development plan, the school has taken satisfactory action to meet its other targets. For instance, it exceeded the targets agreed with the governors and the local education authority in the year 2000 test results for eleven year olds. These good results were mainly because of improvements in the quality of teaching. Within its target setting, the school recognises the need to improve standards in information and communication technology and in science. Again, improvements to teaching are planned. Staff are very committed to making these and other improvements. Led by the headteacher, fully backed by the governors and staff, and extremely well supported by the parents, the school is showing that it has the capacity to continue to improve.

49 The school makes effective use of new technology to improve its efficiency. The secretary is familiar with finance and word-processing software and the facility makes a good contribution to the quality of information the school supplies. The school makes good use of the telephone answering machine when the office is not staffed and the headteacher is in class. Improvements to the e-mail link are planned. Specific grants are used well. For instance, finance for minor building improvements is earmarked and will improve easier and secure access. Similarly, the funding for hall improvements are planned to give easier access to equipment as well as to improve its appearance. The school targets finance for staff training on its main curriculum priorities and there are now better arrangements for staff to pass on this expertise to colleagues. Grant from the 'School House Trust' is spent on additional staffing to keep class sizes low in the light of mixed-age classes across the school. As a result, it is well staffed to meet the particular curricular demands of a small school and to avoid a mixed-age class that would include pupils from two key stages.

50 The accommodation has some shortcomings that the school works hard to overcome. The hall is too small for indoor physical education lessons and the school has recently arranged for older pupils to use an agricultural college's sports facilities some distance away. The school also arranges swimming lessons and an extra swimming club to provide more balance to the physical education curriculum. The reception and Year 1 classroom is small and the situation is not improved by its proximity to the temporary classrooms and staff room. In poor weather, this classroom is the only route to these rooms

and this thoroughfare reduces the available space for the younger pupils. The class teacher is imaginative in her use of space in this room and successfully provides a lively learning environment. The spare classroom is used during the week for the Kippers Club and for timetabled activities for the reception class. Its more regular use is restricted because of dampness and because traffic noise is distracting, as it is in one of the temporary classrooms. The Kippers Club room is also used for storage. This is at a premium and staff make good use of any available space.

51 Learning resources are generally adequate but storage and access are continuing issues for the school. There have been recent improvements in the provision for mathematics, English and science and the school has used grants well to purchase information and communication technology equipment. The school makes good use of the local environment to enhance its provision in history, geography and religious education.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Raise the attainment of higher attaining pupils in science and improve progress in control and data handling in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 2 \*  
Paragraph: 7
  - (2) Improve the skills of curriculum co-ordination, particularly in monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work \*  
Paragraph: 44
  - (3) Complete the work on planning guidance in history and information and communication technology \*  
Paragraph: 21
- \* Indicates that the school already has this improvement in its plans.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	4	42	46	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	109
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	22

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1



## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3
National comparative data	5

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	8	9	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	15	15	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (86)	88 (71)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	8	8
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	16	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (79)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year		2000	10	12	22
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	9	
	Girls	11	10	11	
	Total	20	19	20	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (74)	86 (78)	91 (74)	
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	9	
	Girls	11	9	10	
	Total	20	18	19	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (83)	86 (87)	90 (87)	
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)	

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	98
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	22

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	245212
Total expenditure	244409
Expenditure per pupil	2037
Balance brought forward from previous year	13805
Balance carried forward to next year	14608

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

75

Number of questionnaires returned

44

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	49	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	44	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	56	5	0	7
The teaching is good.	60	40	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	53	5	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	42	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	21	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	37	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	47	2	0	0

### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

There are very high levels of parental support and appreciation for the school.

### **Other issues raised by parents**

None

## **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**

52 Children in the reception class work mainly in the same room as the younger Year 1 pupils and are taught by the same teacher. A trained nursery nurse supports her very well and they are an effective partnership. Children are admitted to reception at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. Few children enter the reception class without having attended nursery or other pre-school experience. The school has also started a weekly afternoon session, Kippers, for pre-school children that is run by the nursery nurse. At the time of the inspection, there were eleven children in the reception class.

53 On entry to reception, most children's attainment is in line with that normally found. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children have made good progress attaining the early learning goals for children of this age, with a few beginning the early part of the National Curriculum.

54 Planning for reception children is satisfactory and incorporates appropriate planning for the Year 1 pupils too. Teaching is good and, when working with the whole class but with the focus on Year 1, the teacher is particularly careful to make sure that she involves all the children. She does this by varying the pace and using a good range of resources and questioning. This is very stimulating for the more able reception children. For example in literacy lesson, one of them remembered immediately the words 'speech marks' and their function. Very occasionally, class sessions are a little long for the less mature reception children and the class teacher untypically does not make enough use of classroom assistance to give them alternative activities. Assessing and formally recording the children's progress is newly in place and it is too soon to judge its impact on planning.

55 The classroom is small, but made bright and colourful with children's work. Learning resources are adequate to promote all areas of learning. Staff set out simple resources in the home corner effectively to encourage imaginative play and the development of a rich vocabulary. During the inspection it became a treasure island. The children have access to the school hall to develop physical skills in addition to the small apparatus resources provided in the playground. They also have useful access to a spare classroom where they can spread out and have good, first-hand experience to increase their knowledge and understanding of materials for instance.

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

56 The school places a high priority on this area of learning. The teacher and nursery nurse work closely together to promote a calm, attentive atmosphere and they have excellent relationships with the children. Their high expectations of good behaviour and the range of interesting activities they provide encourage good attitudes both to learning and towards other children. Children enjoy coming to school. They quickly understand school routines, and are eager to help and to clear away at the end of an activity. Staff encourage children to share and take turns, and also within the limits of the room, to make choices and initiate activities. There are good links with parents who are welcomed into the classroom at the start of the day. Children respond well to adults and join in the activities well.

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

57 The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning and pupils make good progress. Children listen attentively and the majority speak confidently and clearly. Adults encourage these skills by using careful questions that require full answers to extend the children's thinking. Children continue to use language well to clarify their thinking, to develop ideas in their imaginative play and to describe what they are doing. There is a satisfactory range of books and children enjoy their frequent, regular reading times when they share books. They love to listen to stories and join in the ones they know. The teacher uses games well to develop children's ability to hear and record initial sounds in words. The writing corner is attractive and children are encouraged to use it to practise writing skills.

### **Mathematical development**

58 Teaching is good and children make good progress. Higher attaining children count objects accurately beyond ten, and all the children can count to ten in chorus. In one lesson, adults gave valuable help during activities so that most children began to understand that a number of objects could be separated into two countable groups and put together again. The higher attaining children started to understand and record basic addition. Two children chose to order the numbers on a counting line from ten back to one. Most children have some understanding of two-dimensional shapes such as triangles and circles. There is also provision for children to experiment with capacity and size and use vocabulary such as 'more' and 'less', 'heavier' and 'lighter'.

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

59 The teacher carefully selects activities to stimulate children's interest and develop their ideas, and they make satisfactory progress. They taste different foods and discuss their favourite meals. They investigate a range of materials and choose the one they like best. Children gain confidence in using the computer and they use the mouse to operate programs. They develop their vocabularies by savouring such words as 'wonderful', 'marvellous' when looking at photographs of trees in autumn and a rainbow, as well as using more specific words for rainy days and the difference between day and night. They enjoy learning about islands and start to understand that different birds and trees flourish where the climate is hot.

### **Physical development**

60 Pupils make satisfactory progress in this aspect. There is no outside area to give the children continuous access to large play equipment to help them develop confidence, for example in climbing and balancing. They do, however, have a daily time for games and play with small apparatus and they join the rest of the school for playtimes. They use the hall regularly to help them gain an idea of how to move in a larger space. The space in the classroom is limited but the children adapt and move around it carefully with good control. Children have many planned opportunities to improve their skills using pencils, brushes and small tools and these skills are developing very well.

### **Creative development**

61 The home corner is used to provide good opportunities for children to develop their imaginations. To fit in with the current theme, it became a treasure island and children loved drawing maps showing buried treasure. Children have good opportunities to explore a range of techniques such as painting, drawing, printing and collage. For example they use different fabrics to make collages of a lady and stick a variety of materials on their felt glove puppets to form the eyes and mouths. They paint very good portraits of themselves and make good paint and crayon calendars. The children enjoy singing and join in well-loved songs and rhymes both in class and in the hall with the whole school.

## **ENGLISH**

62 In the year 2000 national tests for eleven year olds, standards in English were above the national average and above those of similar schools. However, while the school's performance was well above the national average for pupils achieving the average Level 4, it was below the national average for pupils achieving the higher Level 5. The school's Key Stage 1 results have improved at a slightly faster rate in reading than the national trend, but at a slower rate in writing. The Key Stage 2 results improved at the same rate as that nationally.

63 Standards in reading of the current seven year olds are in line with what is expected of this age group. By the time they are eleven almost all pupils read competently for their age and a significant proportion does better than that, reading with imagination and insight. The school's recent focus on improving writing standards is having a positive impact throughout the school. Pupils' written work shows that most pupils' attainment is as expected for seven and eleven year olds. Although few achieve more highly, these higher attaining pupils are now making good progress.

64 Speaking and listening skills are well developed throughout the school with the result that standards generally are above those that are typical for the age groups. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to the comments of their peers. Some teachers have good questioning skills that enable pupils to develop their ideas. There are a few times when pupils have the chance only to provide one-word answers and then opportunities for fostering thinking are missed. Pupils are keen to contribute their ideas in class discussions and do so from the moment they enter the reception class. They work very effectively in pairs and in groups, showing courtesy and consideration for others. Older pupils understand, and use, a wide range of vocabulary. They discuss their work and express themselves clearly.

65 Provision for reading development is good in all classes. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on reading and, as a result, nearly all pupils become competent readers. Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic readers. Shared reading sessions take place daily during the literacy hour. In addition to understanding the texts, children learn about letter sounds and grammatical rules. Younger pupils need encouragement to use letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words. Individual pupils read regularly to an adult at school, as well as sharing books in a group with the teacher. Parents support the development of reading skills very well with younger pupils. From an early age, pupils discuss what they have read, express preferences about authors and compare one book with another. Teachers plan for pupils to practise their reading skills in other subjects. Year 5 pupils, who had studied Ancient Greeks in history, considered the features of myths such as 'Theseus and the Minotaur'. In the Year 1/2 class, pupils reading stories based on islands during their group reading time complemented a geographical study of island features.

66 As a result of the school's current focus on writing, standards in this aspect of English are improving. Pupils in Year 2 have regular opportunities to write at length and, as a result, are making steady progress overall. They spell simple words correctly and their ideas are developing into a sequence of sentences that are sometimes punctuated with full stops and capital letters. Most pupils are working at the levels expected for their age group.

Pupils in Year 6 write for a variety of purposes, stimulated by the National Literacy Strategy framework. They have written instructions, descriptions and stories, completed comprehension activities and covered various grammatical rules. Pupils have regular opportunities for extended writing, but do not always complete their work and need to work more accurately and quickly.

67 Standards of handwriting and presentation are broadly in line with what is typical for pupils of eleven years old. Most pupils use fountain pens well, but letter formation is often

uneven and letters are not always joined. Handwriting is being taught systematically but this is not yet improving the quality of handwriting in other subjects.

68 Most teaching is satisfactory and the remainder is good. The booster classes in Year 6 are helping to improve the progress of the higher attaining pupils. In a Year 1 and a Year 4 lesson, the teachers maintained a lively pace and used good questioning to help develop pupils' ideas. Teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly and manage shared reading sessions, and group activities, well. A minority of plenary sessions at the end of lessons are not as successful. This is because the objectives of these lessons are too broad and the lessons' conclusions do not reinforce the main learning points. In a few lessons not enough was expected of higher attaining pupils and they do not make enough progress. In most of the lessons, teachers ensured that pupils concentrated well and that most made satisfactory gains in their learning. When marking pupils' work, teachers are beginning to make suggestions or set targets to help pupils improve.

69 The school has successfully created an environment that promotes literacy by providing displays, which extend vocabulary, and lists of words, and sounds to which pupils may refer. Whole-school initiatives such as 'wobbly words' encourage pupils to think about words and to use them creatively. Pupils quickly grasped this idea and suggested 'fascinating phrases and clever clauses' as extensions to the work. The library is situated in the middle of the school; it is well managed by a parent and contains an appropriate range of books, of which a significant proportion is supplied and regularly changed by the schools' library service. There are sufficient stocks of books to meet the needs of the curriculum and classes have equipment such as flip charts to assist with whole-class teaching. This is a significant help in focusing pupils' attention as in a Year 2 lesson where, in the space of a few moments, pupils discussed characters and their motivations, learned that bold fonts could indicate emphasis and considered what the gathering of dark clouds might mean for the next stage of the story. Curriculum planning is based upon the National Literacy Strategy framework and, in conjunction with the provision for speaking and listening, ensures that the curriculum for English is broad and balanced. The quality of teachers' weekly plans is variable, being clear and coherent for some classes and less so for others.

70 The headteacher is currently acting as literacy co-ordinator and she provides strong leadership. A literacy audit has been completed as part of the school self-evaluation process. It has identified writing, spelling and letter sounds appropriately as areas of improvement and the action the school is taking is having an effect. Staff training has been provided in these areas. The school is working towards a school specific policy and scheme of work. Pupils' progress is closely monitored, targets are set and this is helping improve their progress.

## **MATHEMATICS**

71 The last inspection found standards of attainment to be satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Since then standards have generally been above the national average except for 1998 when the standards at the end of Key Stage 1 fell below this. In 2000, all seven year olds met the required standard and the proportion reaching a higher level was average. The overall results were close to those found in similar schools. The year 2000 results in Key Stage 2 remained well above the national average and were well above the average for similar schools. The overall trend of attainment in both key stages has kept pace with improvements nationally.



72 Nearly all pupils in the current Year 2 are working at the expected level, and a few are working beyond this. Most are making satisfactory progress. They add and subtract numbers to 20 and show good understanding by applying this knowledge to adding and subtracting single digit numbers to 100. They recognise coins and use them in simple sums. Most pupils have good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and are starting to measure using centimetres. Most pupils in the current Year 6 are working at the appropriate level and are making satisfactory progress. A significant minority is working within the higher level and making good progress. All pupils use their skills and knowledge well in all aspects of mathematics. Pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 2. In Year 3/4, pupils become agile in mental calculations, for example when doubling numbers, and explain clearly how they reach an answer. They understand mathematical vocabulary such as angles and vertices. They can divide regular shapes into equal parts and recognise simple fractions. Older pupils work with tallies, frequency charts and line graphs. They know the properties of different triangles, compare fractions, and use mixed numbers and improper fractions.

73 Most teaching is at least good and has been influenced by incorporating the National Numeracy Strategy into the daily mathematics lessons. Lessons start with a mental calculation. Most proceed at a brisk pace and challenge pupils to think clearly and calculate rapidly. Teachers understand the subject well and make it clear to pupils what the main learning points of each lesson will be. They ask carefully focused questions that encourage pupils to extend their thinking and to explain their reasoning fluently and logically. The main tasks are planned at different ability levels and, particularly in Key Stage 2, teachers emphasise work that involves pupils solving problems independently. Sometimes there is not enough difference in the tasks set for the average and the above average pupils. Occasionally, this leads to a lack of concentration and slower work. Lesson planning covers two age groups. Teachers are careful to include both age groups in the main teaching part of lessons. Learning support assistants (and some parents and grandparents as helpers) are well briefed and help lower attaining pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils use resources sensibly and share them very well. Information and communication technology is used to a small extent. For instance pupils in Year 4/5 were using spreadsheets and bar graphs for the first time and pupils in Year R/1 used a mathematics program to add simple numbers. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and works hard to raise the standard of average and below average pupils, especially at Key Stage 1. It runs a booster class for the most able Year 6 pupils to challenge them further.

74 The subject is carefully managed and the co-ordinator is due to have some additional training. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and her role covers some of the basic elements. She is incorporating elements of the school's previous scheme of work into the guidelines of the National Numeracy Strategy. She monitors the results of the national tests and identifies any weaknesses as a teaching focus for the following year. She has introduced an assessment system this year that teachers are using well. She is encouraging teachers to use targets to involve pupils in their learning. There is scope for extending the co-ordinator's role so that she sees teachers' plans regularly and samples pupils' work to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning.

## **SCIENCE**

75 The school has made satisfactory progress in this subject since the last inspection, but higher attaining pupils do not reach the levels of which they are capable. Curriculum planning and the range of equipment have improved. The subject is also better led.

76 Most pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 reach the levels of attainment expected for their ages and make satisfactory progress. However, not enough higher attaining pupils reach higher standards, and make slower progress because not enough is asked of them. Since the last inspection, pupils' standards of attainment have improved at the same rate as that nationally but they remain below it. In the year 2000 National Curriculum tests, the school's Key Stage 2 results were below the national average and well below the average of similar schools. In the year 2000 teacher assessments in Key Stage 1, all pupils reached the expected level, but none scored more highly. Pupils in the current Year 3/4 class reach high standards and make very good progress because a lot is expected of them and they receive excellent teaching.

77 The quality of teaching is broadly the same as at the last inspection. Most is satisfactory, one lesson was unsatisfactory and one was excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge and introduce pupils to the right scientific terms. They teach basic scientific skills of observation and questioning well. They encourage pupils to talk about their ideas and make predictions about what might happen. This method worked very well in the Year 3/4 lesson on heat insulation. Pupils discussed a whole-class experiment to find out how well hay retains heat while setting up their own experiments with different materials. Pupils responded very well with one boy describing how he and his father defrosted water pipes by using the heat-retaining properties of 'box muck' (a mixture of calf dung and straw chopped finely). This vivid yet everyday example helped all the pupils understand the scientific concept very well. In other lessons, the discussion was not as rich but still helped extend vocabularies and support pupils' understanding.

78 Teachers' planning is satisfactory and aims to cater for different levels of attainment in each class. Teachers set out what they want pupils to learn during the lesson. Some of these objectives are very specific but most include what they want pupils to know and understand over a longer period. This then makes assessing what pupils have learned each week more difficult. While a minority of teachers keep very clear, detailed records of pupils' weekly progress in science, most do not and this then makes further planning more difficult for them. The teaching of investigative work has improved. Pupils are used to setting up experiments to find things out. As one Year 5 pupil suggested when talking about the sound insulation properties of different materials, "Science is about finding things out, not just whether they're right." This investigative approach engages pupils' interests, encourages questioning and keeps most of them concentrating hard.

In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were finding out about pulse rates and recovery times after exercise. The pupils worked slowly because they were not encouraged enough to develop their own ideas or think about how they might present their findings in more interesting ways. While most pupils worked satisfactorily at the method suggested by the teacher, higher attaining pupils were not encouraged to think of their own method, or why they should be methodical in recording their findings.

79 All lessons have a satisfactory structure. There is some time for an introduction that includes what pupils have covered previously. Pupils then work very well in smaller groups, sharing ideas and equipment. Finally, they come together as a class to discuss their group work. Too much time is allowed for pupils to complete work of a similar demand in Years 6 and 2. In the former, the teacher does not set a high level of challenge and in the latter, higher attaining pupils are not directed to extension work quickly enough. In the Year 3/4

lesson and to some extent in the Year 4/5 lesson, there was a wider range of challenge and teachers were quick to spot the opportunity to extend this to specific pupils.

80 The management of the subject is now satisfactory and reflects the school's aims and values well. The co-ordinator has helped the staff plan the curriculum and has made a start on monitoring the quality of teaching. With the headteacher, she has analysed pupils' past performance and has helped decide the school's current priority of improving the performance of higher attaining pupils by improving the quality of teaching. The science budget is now better managed and has allowed the co-ordinator to buy much needed equipment with more on order.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

81 Due to timetable constraints, no lessons were observed during the inspection and information comes from other sources such as teachers' planning and pupils' work. The previous report concluded that pupils' standards of attainment matched those expected of seven and eleven year olds and that seven year olds sometimes attained above this. Pupils' current standards of attainment remain satisfactory at both key stages but with examples of work of high quality work at each key stage.

82 In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress. Year 1 pupils make self-portraits using a variety of media to create skin tones and hair. Year 2 pupils paint pictures of the parable of the Good Samaritan, some of which are of high quality. They choose materials and objects by colour and make pleasing designs with them. Both year groups produce vivid collages of the Great Fire of London. The Year 1/2 class makes colourful collages of Our World and Jack Frost, using a wide variety of media. They also design simple and attractive flying birds.

83 In Key Stage 2 progress is satisfactory. Year 3/4 pupils investigate pattern using coloured chalks on a black background, and also black and white patterns of high quality that the pupils evaluate constructively. They effectively used information and communication technology to explore pattern design further. Year 4/5 pupils develop their skills of portraiture when they study the work of the Tudor miniaturist Hilliard and produce small portraits using paint and crayon in his style. These show good attention to detail and good knowledge of colour mixing to make flesh tones. These pupils have also made detailed relief models of Indian elephants from papier-mache. To do this they planned, described what they did and evaluated their achievements in a good link with other subjects such as English and design and technology. Year 5/6 pupils carefully made faces with curled card to show the features, which were used to demonstrate points of dialogue.

84 The subject co-ordinator is keen and knowledgeable. She is aware that the lack of systematic assessment is a weakness and has designed a simple system for assessing her own class. The outline scheme of work gives the opportunity for good coverage, but has not yet been extended to ensure that teachers use a variety of media in ways that build pupils' skills systematically. For example, a visit by a sculptor was very valuable in extending Year 4/5 pupils' knowledge of modelling in relief and three dimensions, but did not build on previous experiences.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

85 The organisation of the school's timetable meant that no lessons were observed and inspectors based their judgements on other inspection information. The previous inspection found standards to be satisfactory and the available evidence indicates they have been maintained.

86 Teachers' planning shows that pupils have a satisfactory experience of design and technology and a good feature is the links that teachers plan with other subjects. There is scope for lessons to have a clearer focus on the practice and extension of specific skills. For example, there was limited evidence at Key Stage 1 that Year 1 pupils drew and planned what they hoped to achieve before making pleasing puppets using a range of methods to join the pieces of felt. There was no evidence of work from Year 2 since the subject is planned for the second half of term.

87 At Key Stage 2, pupils learn to plan and evaluate work clearly. For example, Year 5/6 design and make gift boxes and use mathematics skills to draw nets of their boxes before transferring them to card. They draw diagrams of how they wish to decorate them and write clear accounts of how the boxes were made and what could be improved. This was a good link with literacy with scope for more attention to presentation and points of grammar. Year 4/5 pupils make stringed and percussion musical instruments, in a good link with their music lessons.

88 The co-ordinator has been in post since September. She is keen and competent and is developing the role. The school has made a good start in improving the subject and is now beginning to use a nationally recognised scheme of work. The outline plan has yet to be fleshed out to show a clear progression of skills against which pupils' progress can be assessed.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

89 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are working within the level expected for seven year olds. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement about pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because geography is mainly taught in the second half of the school year and the older pupils had no current written work.

90 In the two lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory. In the Year 1/ 2 class a fictional starting point (stories about Katy Morag) was used to help pupils understand what it is like to live on the Scottish island of Struay, and to compare this locality with their own. Pupils could explain what an island is and are beginning to use a vocabulary related to geographical features. Higher attaining pupils could identify different buildings and explain their uses. In the Year 3/4 class pupils were preparing to study their local area in some depth in order to identify its distinguishing features and to compare it with other localities. The lesson was curtailed because of inclement weather.

Teachers' lesson planning is satisfactory but limited by the lack of a scheme of work to develop skills progressively in each year group. This lack also makes teachers' assessment of pupils' skills' development more difficult. Teachers have good class control and make very good use of available resources.

91 The school is using a nationally recognised scheme of work as the basis for its geography curriculum. It ensures that there is appropriate coverage of the content of the National Curriculum programmes of study but the school has yet to plan how skills, such as those for mapping, are to be taught in a sequence to make them relevant to other aspects of the subject.

92 There are sufficient resources for teaching because the school makes good use of the project loans from the schools' library service and of the local environment. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has made a start on some aspects of subject management such as resources audit and ordering. There is routine monitoring of teachers' plans and the work pupils produce.

## **HISTORY**

93 The limited amount of evidence available shows that pupils achieve nationally expected standards in some aspects of history by the time they are eleven. The work of Year 6 pupils shows a range of well-presented historical knowledge about the Ancient Greeks. Pupils have written, for example, about everyday life, beliefs, myths, and the Olympics. They have selected information and used it in their own work. However, other strands of historical study are not developed enough; pupils have not had opportunities to consider different interpretations of history or why events happened at the time and in the manner they did.

94 In a well-planned lesson in the Year 4/5 class, pupils made good progress and attained well. They made an inventory of a room in their own house and considered what this told about them and their way of life. The teacher then encouraged them to apply the same techniques to an inventory from a Tudor house. Pupils used information from a variety of sources and began to understand the differences in the way facts are presented. Pupils worked together well in small groups. They shared ideas and became engrossed in their work. The teacher kept up a good pace to the lesson by setting realistic time targets for pupils to complete each section of their work.

95 The school's curriculum, which is based on a nationally recognised scheme, provides appropriate coverage of the content of the National Curriculum. The school recognises that it has not yet used this scheme to plan how pupils are to learn the key elements of historical study progressively. The school plans to develop a more detailed scheme that identifies the skills to be developed.

96 Resources to support learning are adequate and the school makes good use of project loans from the schools' library service and from the Lancashire Museum Service. Pupils also visit local points of historical interest. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on this role. She has the knowledge and experience to fulfil the role and carries it out effectively.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

97 Since the last inspection, the school's progress in developing two aspects of this subject has been unsatisfactory. It has made satisfactory progress in the remainder. Progress has been adversely affected by the resignation of the previous headteacher who was also the subject co-ordinator. There have been some improvements to teachers' planning and resources, but pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is not high enough in all aspects because their skills have not been developed progressively in previous classes.

98 At the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reach the level expected of pupils of that age. They can use a keyboard and mouse satisfactorily and can click and drag features and words. They can plan and command things to happen and can use the computer for simple research such as a basic dictionary and encyclopaedia. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' skills in word processing have progressed satisfactorily but this is not the case in other elements. Some younger pupils in the key stage are beginning to present data in different ways such as in block graphs or pie charts; older pupils have not progressed beyond this and are still using the two basic designs. They are not yet considering the most effective way to make presentations or developing ideas of linking different aspects of information and communication technology for this. Their work on control elements is at an early stage. On

the other hand, the oldest pupils can use the Internet to do their research such as in their work in science on the human body.

99 Very little teaching was observed during the inspection and no judgement can be made on its overall quality. However, the quality of teachers' planning is satisfactory and is drawn from nationally recognised medium-term plans. Much teaching is planned to be in small groups as part of lessons in other subjects. In this way, the school has made a start on making the subject a learning tool in other subjects. Teachers know that many pupils have access to computers at home and build on the skills they develop there. There is, however, no systematic assessment of pupils' skills and teaching is not targeted enough to improve them progressively. Teachers take the opportunity to work with small groups of pupils as in the Year 4/5 class developing their use of databases. However, much of the activity is left to pupils working together and helping one another. While they do this well and are very positive about their work in information and communication technology, important teaching points are missed. In this respect, teaching has not improved enough since the last inspection. It is reported that this is partly due to a lack of teacher confidence and expertise. Both of these factors are being taken into account, as the subject becomes a main focus of improvement in the school development plan.

100 The co-ordinator is new to the role and, while some elements of the work are satisfactory, some important elements are not. The school has introduced planning guidance and improved resources. Although the subject is planned into many lessons, there is no systematic monitoring of planning to support its development. The school has recently introduced improvements in assessing pupils' progress. This is done well in the Year 3/4 class, but this good practice is not widespread. There are plans to improve this aspect and to develop a collection of pupils' work so that their progress can be more easily understood and teaching become more accurate. Parents are involved in improving provision by raising finance towards an interactive whiteboard that the school plans will help to teach larger groups of pupils than can easily be taught at the moment.

## **MUSIC**

101 The last inspection found standards to be average and sometimes good. The school has recently lost its specialist music teacher and the subject is being developed from this point. All class teachers are now involved in teaching music. The school is using national planning guidance so opportunities for pupils to sing, make, play and listen to music remain satisfactory. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. No lessons were observed in the classes at the end of Key Stage 2 so no judgements can be made about standards of music overall. However standards in singing are good.

102 Pupils in Key Stage 1 love singing and joining in with their class or the rest of the school in a range of songs and hymns. They sing sweetly, clearly and with growing confidence. They understand that sounds can be made loudly and softly, quickly and slowly. They use parts of their bodies very effectively as instruments and they responded well to their teacher when she showed them a series of prompt words to read and react to.

103 Pupils in Year 3/4 develop their listening and performing skills further by drawing patterns in response to the mood a piece of music invokes. They use their voices at varying volume and pitch to imitate a pupil's conducted pattern, and then use a variety of untuned instruments to interpret each other's recorded patterns. This links well with their pattern work in art. Key Stage 2 pupils sing tunefully and enthusiastically, enunciating the words of hymns

clearly during the school hymn practice. Their attitude inspires the younger pupils who respond well. Pupils throughout the school have the opportunity during music lessons and assemblies to listen to a range of music from Europe and other continents. They are encouraged to appreciate the rhythms, to think about the mood the music inspires and to move appropriately in time to the rhythm that adds to their enjoyment.

104 Two lessons were observed, one in each key stage, and the quality of teaching was satisfactory in both. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and plan carefully so that their pupils develop their skills of understanding and performance appropriately. They use simple resources well to enhance their pupils' enjoyment and learning. Both teachers held their pupils' interest and set learning tasks at appropriate levels.

105 The music co-ordinator has been in post since September. She has made a good start in adapting national guidance to the needs of the school and is developing the co-ordination role. The outline scheme ensures satisfactory coverage and staff development is aimed at improving teachers' confidence in teaching and assessing music in the classroom. Resources are satisfactory and stored as well as limited space in school allows. About 15 per cent of pupils have regular tuition from visiting specialists in keyboard, recorder, violin and guitar.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

106 At the time of the last inspection pupils between the ages of seven and eleven did not have gymnastics lessons because the school hall was too small. A key issue for improvement was for the school to explore ways to improve provision. The school has recently made satisfactory progress in meeting this issue. Since the beginning of this term, pupils in two of the Key Stage 2 classes have travelled, once a week, to the sports hall of the local agricultural college to take part in gymnastics lessons.

107 It will take time for the new arrangements to have an impact on standards and it is not surprising that pupils' current standards in gymnastics are well below what is expected of eleven year olds. Two classes are using the hall simultaneously, which creates problems with sharing very limited equipment, and for teachers in using their voices to promote good quality responses from the pupils. There is little opportunity for pupils to evaluate and improve upon their performances. Staff training is needed so that teachers who have not taught gymnastics for a while can refresh their skills.

108 Only some aspects of physical education were seen during the inspection, although all are now taught. In a good gymnastics lesson with the youngest pupils, they performed good quality stretching and curling exercises. The teacher had high expectations of them and challenged them to work at a good pace for the tasks, thus maintaining their interest. In the Year 5/6 lesson in the sports hall, the teacher was finding out how well pupils could move and jump in different ways but did not always ask enough of them. However, in a games lesson involving the same class, the pupils' ball skills of passing and close control were similar to what is expected nationally of this age group. Pupils who take part in the extra-curricular football club reach higher than the expected standard.

110 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have regular swimming lessons and all leave the school able to swim the 25 metres expected of them by the time they are eleven. A significant proportion of pupils is enthusiastically involved in the weekly swimming club. Many of these pupils reach

high levels of achievement in nationally recognised awards and are sponsored to swim long distances for charities.

111 The co-ordinator brings interest and enthusiasm to the role. She has overseen the introduction of the Top Play and Top Sport initiatives that bring much needed resources to the school as well as providing staff training and ideas for improving pupils' games skills. A school-specific scheme of work is being developed based upon the local education authority's guidelines.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

112 This continues as a strong feature of the school's work since the last inspection for a number of reasons. The co-ordinator has been in post for several years and has a good background in the subject. Teaching is based on a detailed interpretation of the locally agreed syllabus. Assemblies make a strong contribution to the subject. Teachers take incidental opportunities throughout the day to link pupils' experiences to work in the subject. They encourage pupils to explore, and reflect on, their thoughts and reactions to areas of faith and their beliefs. The school enjoys close links with the local church.

113 At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are attaining well and have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. They have a good understanding, developed over time, of Christian beliefs and values and those of other religions. For instance, the youngest pupils listened to the story of creation with rapt attention, enjoyed looking at spectacular pictures of rainbows and then talked about what they found wonderful. Year 2 pupils discussed how they thought the world began. "It was a big bang", said one. "No, God made it with a big bang," offered another. A third volunteered, with some conviction, "No, the big bang made God." In Year 4/5, pupils compare the religious rules of Christians with those of Muslims. They make up their own prayers and know what is worthwhile to pray for. The oldest pupils talk with confidence about the religious significance of water and have continued their studies as part of their homework. They know about the importance of religious symbols. They have reflected on their own faith journeys inspired by the local vicar's moving account of how he grew in faith as a result of a strong personal example.

114 The quality of teaching is good and teachers routinely encourage pupils to explore their thoughts with the group. Pupils are given a variety of activities to deepen their knowledge and understanding, some of which have an element of spirituality about them. For instance, Year 4/5 pupils listened closely to a local sculptor who explained his work in making a work of art for display outside the school. They understood what the different symbols represented and gasped in wonder as, with a slight movement of his scalpel, he altered the expression of the face in his clay work. Pupils followed this up later with some delicate clay work of their own. In a similar way, during a well-prepared Year 5/6 assembly, pupils watched with stilled attention while one pupil guided another who was blindfolded, around the classroom. Later the talk was about interdependence and pupils tried to empathise with the feelings of a blind person who used his other senses to envisage a daffodil. At one point, a pupil said, "Well, if you've seen yellow or a daffodil before you went blind, then you can picture it. But what about if you were blind from birth?" The teacher allowed the class to ponder on this in silence.

115 The co-ordinator has provided a scheme of work to help teachers plan their work and offers advice if necessary. She is ready to incorporate another locally agreed syllabus if the school and governors decide to adopt it. She organises resources and offers advice on planning. She does not monitor planning nor systematically look at what the pupils produce. As a result, her whole-school view of the subject is not as comprehensive as it should be.



