

## INSPECTION REPORT

**GISBURN ROAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Barnoldswick

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119265

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Banks

Reporting inspector: Mrs. R.J. Schaffer  
23698

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> May – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 196356

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 years – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gisburn Road Barnoldswick Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Barbara Hill
Date of previous inspection:	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23698	R J Schaffer	Registered inspector	Science Music English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14404	A Rolfe	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14842	S Cook	Team Inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Geography History	
31838	M Williams	Team Inspector	English Art and design	
23204	C Wojtak	Team inspector	Special education needs Information and communication technology Design and technology Religious education	
3687	G Bancroft	Team Inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a community primary school with 380 boys and girls on roll, which is larger than most primary schools. The nursery provides a morning or afternoon session on a separate site, a short walk from the main school. Some of the children from the nursery go on to other primary schools, and approximately half of those in reception have come straight from home or play groups. There are a significant number of pupils who leave or join part way through their primary education, which was not the case at the time of the previous inspection. The school has recently integrated 28 pupils from a primary school that closed in July 2001. Nine per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. Most speak English competently but a few are at an early stage of acquisition. Almost all joined the school this year from the one that closed. Thirty four per cent of the pupils have special educational needs which is above average nationally and an increase from the time of the previous inspection. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or problems with social and emotional development. Four pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The majority of pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage with a small proportion having Asian heritage. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is average for this type of school. However, not all those entitled make a claim. When children start in the school their attainment is below average. The school has attained the Investors in People standard.

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

The school is successful in providing an environment where pupils are happy to come to school and are keen to learn. Although standards are below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils, especially those who start their primary education at the school, achieve well in English and mathematics. Teaching in all year groups is good. There is a very strong commitment to including all pupils in the school's provision and to promoting this message within the community. Effective leadership from the headteacher, key members of staff and governors provides good direction for the school's work, even though some improvements have been slow in coming about. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Teaching is good throughout the school and, as a consequence, pupils learn at a good rate.
- Significant improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology has resulted in pupils in all classes making good progress in using computers in their work, and those at the end of Year 2 achieving standards higher than you would expect.
- Pupils attain high standards in Art and Design.
- The good development of moral and social awareness ensures that pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to their work.
- The school has taken more steps than most to ensure that all pupils are successfully included in its provision and support for pupils with special educational needs is good.

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

- The proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard of work by the end of Year 6 in mathematics, writing and science; and by the end of Year 2 in writing.
- Pupils' confidence and skills in speaking, both in informal and formal situations.
- Opportunities in the reception year for pupils to develop writing and mathematical skills through play activities.

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. There has also been good improvement in planning and assessment arrangements; the management of pupils through a consistent application of the discipline policy; methods used for pupils who learn more slowly than others; and the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders. The need to improve the quality of pupils' reports has been addressed in most respects, although not all reports help parents to know what their child needs to do

next. Improvements have not yet impacted on the school's results in national tests, but the numbers of pupils achieving the nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6 has increased in science and English. Overall improvement has been sound.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	D	C
Mathematics	D	E	E	E
Science	E	D	D	C

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

In English and science, the schools' results were below average in comparison to all schools nationally (average in comparison to those schools in similar circumstances to itself), because insufficient numbers of pupils reached the higher level. The well below average results in mathematics reflect the fact that improvements in teaching had not yet impacted on the oldest pupils in the school. However, in this year group, test results were affected by the numbers who joined the school at a late stage in their primary education and the greater than usual number with special educational needs. This is also the case for the current Year 6, where the standard of work in all three subjects is higher than last year, but is still below average, because not enough pupils will reach the higher level. In 2001, the school fell well short of its target for mathematics, but almost reached it for English. The results of tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, in 2001, were average for mathematics and well below average for reading and writing. Real improvement has been made in English because, although standards are below average overall, pupils are on track to achieve an average standard in reading. In mathematics and science, standards are average. The achievements of those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are good.

Pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards in information and communication technology. In art and design, standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. They are average for both age ranges in geography, history, design and technology, and religious education. In physical education standards are average overall, but are good in dance. The children in the reception class are on track to achieve the goals set for their age in reading, creative and physical development, knowledge and understand of the world, but are unlikely to achieve the goals set in writing and speaking and mathematical development. Throughout the school standards in speaking are below average. No judgement was made on the standard of music at the end of Year 6 because timetable arrangements were such that it could not be inspected. Standards in music in Year 2 are satisfactory.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Children in the nursery and reception year are happy in school and confident to participate in all activities. Older pupils have very good attitudes to their work and are keen to come to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave very well during lessons. A small minority occasionally need help from adults to control unacceptable behaviour.



	On a few occasions, pupils have been excluded for a short time.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils generally show respect for each other and for adults. On the few occasions when bullying has occurred, all staff take great care to help pupils understand the impact of their words and actions on others. Pupils show initiative when opportunities to do so arise.
Attendance	Very good. Few pupils are absent from school without a good reason.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching in mathematics and English from Year 1 to Year 6 is good. It is based on well-judged planning and the teachers' good knowledge of the methods advised in the national guidance documents. In the reception year, the teaching of letter sounds is very good, but teachers do not provide enough opportunities for children to write independently, especially in their play activities. In all age ranges, teachers have good relationships with pupils, organize lessons effectively and provide tasks that stimulate and interest. Teachers assess pupils' achievements well, and so provide tasks at the right level to meet all pupils' needs. Some teachers make very perceptive comments when marking work but others do not. Strategies are limited for improving pupils' skills in writing by improving their skills in speaking, and in some lessons, mental arithmetic sessions are too short. Learning support assistants and teachers provide well for those pupils with special educational needs and they are often given more oral work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given good support and, as a result, they are learning well. Planning is generally effective in meeting the needs of those of higher attainment, except in science and in the setting of mathematical problems where opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge pupils' thinking. Teaching is very good in art and design and dance.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education contribute to pupils' knowledge, and the range of activities offered outside of lessons is very good. However, planning in some aspects of science, and for drama, role-play and speaking is limited.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Their needs are identified at an early stage and they are given effective support. A careful check is kept on their progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school has taken proper steps to provide for the needs of these pupils who have recently joined the school. However, a system of assessment, specific to their needs, is not used.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school has good measures for teaching pupils right from wrong; for developing their social skills and their understanding of the many cultural influences in our society, including those of the immediate locality. Spiritual provision is satisfactory.
How well the school cares	All staff know their pupils well and have their care and welfare at heart.

for its pupils	Proper attention is paid to all aspects of health and safety, except for a formal assessment of risks. Good systems for assessing pupils' achievements are used effectively to check their progress year on year.
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Although few parents come into school regularly, those that do make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school provides parents with good information about the curriculum and their child's progress.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher's leadership has successfully promoted an effective staff team who work very well together. Senior staff respond to the rigours of their responsibilities very well, but on occasions the process of evaluating teaching lacks clear direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors know the school well and take proper steps to appraise its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There are good systems to evaluate pupils' achievements and the school's performance in national tests, but these are not always linked to classroom practice.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the funds available to the school and staff are well deployed so that their strengths are used to best advantage.

The school makes satisfactory efforts to compare itself to other schools. Parents are consulted on some aspects of school life, but this could be developed. The accommodation has some very good features such as the exceptionally large hall and the large computer suite. However, the school has no grassed area within its boundaries and the rooms accommodating reception children are too small for teachers to plan some of the activities recommended for young children. Resources are satisfactory and in some subjects very good.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their child makes good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their child is expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The school helps their child to become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their child does not get the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• The school does not work closely with parents.</li> <li>• The range of activities provided outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection confirms parents' positive views. Inspectors consider that the school's use of homework is satisfactory. Homework is set regularly in all classes and for different subjects, but a significant proportion of pupils do not undertake the work. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, more than in most schools. Whilst few parents help in classrooms, the school is making every effort to encourage parents to be involved in the life of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school's below average results in national tests for 2001 for pupils at the end of Year 6 in English and science, and their well below average results in mathematics were carefully analysed by the school and checked against the expected targets for each pupil. From this analysis, the school explained the low results by the significant number of pupils who joined or left the school in Years 5 and 6, and by the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. As the results for English and science were average in comparison to similar schools, it is safe to say that this is a well-founded explanation for these two subjects. However, the well below average result for mathematics cannot be fully explained in this way. Clearly, during 2000, the school did not tackle the below average attainment in mathematics for pupils in Years 3 to 6 with sufficient rigour. In contrast, effective strategies have improved the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 and, although there is still more to be done, the current year has resulted in a marked improvement for mathematics.
2. At the time of the previous inspection standards were found to be average, and the school's current test results do not compare well against this picture. However, the number of pupils with special education needs was not so great as at present, and the numbers leaving and joining the school were much less. Thirty five per cent of the pupils in the current Year 6 have joined the school part way through their education. Whilst not all of these pupils are of lower attainment, a good proportion of them are. At the time of the previous inspection, the attainment of children who were five was average. Currently children's attainment is below average for those starting in the nursery, and for those starting in reception not having had the benefit of nursery teaching.
3. In the current reception year, children are on course to meet the goals set for them in reading, creative and physical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. The majority will not attain the goals for writing, speaking and mathematical development. Their achievements are good in reading because they learn letters sounds quickly and securely. They confidently use them to work out unknown words. Their achievements in writing and speaking are satisfactory but many children are reluctant to talk and do not communicate readily. Many of those with higher attainment write their own interesting sentences, but those of average and below average attainment struggle to write words without adult support. Children's diction is weak when they start school and although this improves, there are many unconfident, hesitant speakers who use brief phrases and sentences that are not always grammatically correct. Children learn to count and make simple additions and subtractions with numbers up to ten, but few are confident to use mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems.
4. The school has set itself high targets for the tests in Year 6 for 2002 in English and mathematics. These will not be achieved comfortably but, if the results do fall short, it should be by a small margin. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average in the current Year 6 because there are insufficient numbers of pupils achieving the higher level. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level should be similar to the national average, and this will be an improvement on the results in 2001, except for science where the picture is similar to last year. In reading, standards are average in Years 6 with a greater number of pupils likely to achieve above

expectations than in 2001. Pupils of higher attainment in Years 6 read texts that are intended for adults such as "The Lord of the Flies" by William Golding and explain succinctly the merits of this author. However, the writing of those of average attainment still suffers to some degree from the pupils' difficulties in using correct grammatical structures and in developing their ideas through the use of rich vocabulary. In mathematics, the current good organisation of classes, teaching and planning has improved standards. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the number system including the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They use the expected range of methods in their calculations but not all have achieved the speed they should or confidence in their own decisions. In science, pupils are not attaining the higher level in sufficient numbers, so as to match the results of other schools, because they have not had enough opportunities to establish strong links between causes and effects in the investigations that they carry out.

5. In the 2001 tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 in mathematics, the pupils attained a standard similar to the national average, as had been the case the year before. The attainment of those currently in Year 2 is of a similar standard. Mathematics is currently taught well in Years 1 and 2 and pupils' achievements are good. Those of higher attainment add and subtract numbers that cross the tens boundaries when working with numbers up to 100. Those of average attainment work successfully with numbers up to 20 although some rely too much on aids such as counters to help them with their calculations. When working with numbers up to 100, all have a well established understanding of the value of a digit according to its position in a number. Results in the national tests in 2001 in reading and writing were well below average. Reading results had been particularly weak for several years. The introduction of good methods to teach letter sounds, starting in reception year and continuing through to Year 2, have made a difference and the standard of pupils' reading now, virtually at the end of the year, is currently similar to the national average. The co-ordinators have helped teachers to look at areas of weakness in provision, and the resulting improvements have had a good effect, such as increasing opportunities for pupils to check their understanding of texts and more emphasis on reading to find out information. The good use of computers in literacy lessons has also helped pupils' reading. Pupil's handwriting is good. They use a joined hand by the end of Year 2 and letters are well shaped in the main. They often write lively pieces with a good choice of descriptive words. However, too few pupils write longer pieces developing their ideas using well-formed sentence structures because they are not confident in using a range of sentence structures in their speech. As a result, although pupils' achievements are satisfactory, the standard of writing is below average. In science in Years 1 and 2, pupils pose questions when, for instance, learning about the differences between plants and animals. They can see the reasons for testing their suppositions and they generally record their findings well. By the end of Year 2, the standard of pupils' work is similar to the national average, which is an improvement on the assessments made by teachers in 2001 when standards were below average.
6. Throughout the school pupils' speech is not at the standard expected for their age. Many of the younger pupils use shortened words and do not speak in full sentences. Older pupils are often aware of the need to express themselves more fully, but struggle to find the words that are appropriate. When speaking to the whole class, pupils lack confidence and their responses are often too quiet to be heard by the whole group.
7. There has been a good improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology since the previous inspection with the result that, by the time pupils are in Year 2, they have exceeded the expectations for their age. They confidently use computers to access information using the internet. They send e-mails, have good keyboard skills, and save and print their work. The pupils in the older classes have not

had the opportunity to build up their skills to the same extent, they are making good progress and those in Year 6 achieve a standard similar to national expectations. The standard of pupils' work in art is higher than expected because of the very good teaching throughout the school. Similarly pupils' work in dance is above average because this aspect of physical education is taught very well.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual education plans. In the nursery, children with special educational needs are identified as early as possible and receive very good support where their progress is monitored very carefully. Pupils' progress continues to be tracked, both by tests and by informal assessments, and the headteacher and the special educational needs' coordinator meet regularly to discuss individual progress against individual targets. As a result, the achievement for those pupils who attend school from nursery or reception onwards is good. The school looks closely at the different achievements of boys and girls. Overall boys achieve better than girls in mathematics, whilst girls do better than boys in English. In both subjects, teachers are including effective strategies to combat the differences. The pupils who speak English as an additional language and who transferred from a school that closed last July have been integrated very successfully and their records show that they have continued to build on their previous knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Their achievements over the current year have been good. The school has started to identify those pupils with special gifts and talents. Although this has not been established for long, a few outstanding pupils are given good recognition for their achievements in whichever subject they excel and work that is adapted well to their more advanced level of understanding is provided.

#### **Pupils' Attitudes Values and Personal Development.**

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. Their behaviour, relationships and personal development are good. This reflects an improvement to the standards seen at the time of the last inspection. All these factors have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
10. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers' instructions, maintain their concentration for appropriate periods of time and are keen and eager to contribute to classroom discussions. In those lessons where opportunities are provided, pupils work well co-operatively, for example, in a Year 3 and 4 dance lesson, they worked very well together in groups of four, sharing ideas and correcting each other when developing their dance routine. They therefore made very good progress in the lesson. Most pupils take a pride in their work. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to work and behave well in lessons and around the school.
11. In the majority of lessons, behaviour is good and on many occasions very good. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson on information and communication technology, pupils' interest, concentration and independence was very good for their age. They worked very well together, as each Year 1 pupil had a Year 2 'buddy' to help them. In a few lessons, there were instances of pupils being involved in inappropriate behaviour, and on almost all occasions this was when teaching lacked pace or challenge, and pupils lost interest in the lesson. Almost all pupils are aware of what is acceptable behaviour and readily accept the principle of sanctions as an appropriate response to poor behaviour. Generally, behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes is good. Most pupils get on well together, however, on occasions on the playground, there is some rough play including 'play fighting'. It is dealt with sensibly by staff and most pupils respond quickly. Pupils treat school equipment with care and respect.

12. Parents and pupils confirm that bullying is an occasional problem, however, the school has procedures to react quickly and effectively to known instances of bullying. There are a small number of recorded racist incidents, scrutiny of these records indicate that the school takes these incidents seriously, and takes proper action to maintain racial harmony. The number of pupils excluded in the last academic year is relatively low. There were no permanent exclusions, and four temporary exclusions involving two pupils.
13. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and so too are relationships between pupils. When asked to work in pairs or small groups, pupils take turns and share resources, and they listen to and respect the views of other members of the group. However, opportunities to make decisions and work as a group without adult direction are limited. The good relationships between teachers and pupils have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils say that they would readily ask their teachers for further information if they did not understand what was required of them. Pupils have a good understanding of other people's faiths and cultures. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson, where pupils were considering the concept of faith in different religions, almost all pupils made a contribution to the discussion and expressed views that showed good respect for the differences in people's beliefs.
14. Responsibilities are undertaken willingly. There is a range of duties for classroom monitors in all classes. Older pupils are involved in the junior school council, monitoring and reporting on pupils' behaviour in the hall and cloakrooms at lunchtimes, staffing the school office and operating a "Buddy" system for younger pupils. Pupils take a pride in undertaking these tasks and take their duties seriously. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not included in the council, which is a missed opportunity for them to take responsibility. In lessons, teachers often direct tasks without providing opportunities for pupils to take the initiative or lead. Whilst this is appropriate on many occasions, the school has not fully addressed the need for pupils to become more responsible for their own behaviour and take the lead in their learning.
15. Attendance is very good, and an improvement on the last inspection. The level of attendance is well above the national average and unauthorised attendance is below the national average. Registration is undertaken morning and afternoon.

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

16. Since the inspection in 1997, the quality of teaching has improved significantly. The school was asked to improve: teaching in the infants and the lower junior classes; the management of pupils; and the provision for those who learn more slowly than others. There are now good strategies in place to manage pupils' behaviour and the methods used to support those who learn more slowly than others are effective. Teaching in the infants and lower junior classes has improved as it has throughout the school.
17. Teaching is satisfactory or better in almost all lessons. In more than half of lessons, it is good or very good. Four lessons were excellent but the proportion of very good lessons was not high. There were a small number of unsatisfactory lessons in the junior classes, in physical education and geography, when planning was weak and pupils were not sufficiently challenged. This was not representative of the usual work in these subjects. The behaviour of pupils where teachers were new to the school was not always of the same high standard as in other classes, because the teachers had had little time to build up strong relationships. Teachers use the national strategies for numeracy and literacy well to plan their lessons. Teaching in English and mathematics is good overall, with some excellent teaching seen in mathematics. Good subject

knowledge in art and dance results in very good teaching in these subjects. The teaching in the nursery was never less than good and sometimes very good.

### Nursery and Reception classes

18. In the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse work very well together as a team to support children's learning. The teachers' knowledge of how to develop young children's understanding and skills through play activities is good. Activities are varied and stimulating. Children's achievements are assessed and these assessments are used effectively to inform the planning for their future learning. In the reception classes, teachers have good knowledge of how to develop children's understanding of letter sounds, and basic skills in mathematics. Staff use a good range of strategies to capture children's interest. Children learn to read at a good rate. Teachers and classroom assistants develop children's understanding well when working with them in focus groups or in whole class sessions. There is, however, insufficient structure to some play activities, and opportunities are missed to motivate and develop independent writing and mathematical learning through play activities. There are few opportunities for children to think about how to solve a problem using numbers or other mathematical ideas. For example, a small group of children playing with a toy castle with a variety of small model people and horses played individually, not talking productively to each other. They did not attempt the difficult challenge of building the castle together, perhaps to see how tall they could make it, because the teacher had not prompted them to do so. The writing areas are very small and lack sufficient resources and strategies to motivate pupils to write. Accommodation is cramped and resources are not accessible which limits teachers' planning, particularly in developing independence. Creative development is taught well in both the nursery and the reception classes. Children are given a range of good activities, to stimulate their imagination and to develop their skills and confidence through creativity.

### Years 1 and 2

19. Teachers plan effectively together as a group and, as a result, most lessons are successful at providing the next stage of learning for pupils. However, in one class good strategies and methods are used to develop pupils' speech whilst in the other two classes, this is sometimes missed. This lack of focus on developing pupils' skills in speaking results in pupils using limited vocabulary and sentence structures when they write. English teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the best lesson, speaking, reading and writing were all developed at a good rate and an effective balance was achieved. Questions were targeted at groups and individuals and the learning objectives were, not only shared with all the class, but used frequently to check how well learning was progressing. Pupils worked very productively and their rate of learning was very good. In English, all teachers share the objectives of the lesson with pupils at the start, and at the end help pupils understand how well they have achieved, which effectively spurs them on to succeed. In some lessons, however, the whole class reading session is too predictable with teachers reading and pupils joining in, sometimes with only partial enthusiasm. Teachers have insufficient strategies to let pupils take the initiative, or to engage an individual or group so as to maintain interest and assess reading skills. In one lesson, the text was too small for any but those sat at the front to see with ease. Mathematics is taught well in the main with tasks matched to pupils, individual needs very well. Mental arithmetic sessions are generally well organized, although in one lesson opportunities were missed to help pupils explain what they were doing in their own words and the session was not challenging enough.

20. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is good and on one occasion excellent. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve and lessons in the computer suite are organized so that the maximum use is made of the time there. Learning support assistants are knowledgeable and contribute effectively. Teachers make good use of computers in nearly all subjects.
21. Science teaching is generally good because it provides good opportunities for pupils to investigate, pose questions and come to their own conclusions. There is also good teaching in art marked by a good use of a wide range of media and, in dance, where lessons provide pupils with very good opportunities to explore their own creative ideas.
22. In the afternoon, the organization of the timetable is such that some pupils, particularly those in Year 1, become restless by the last session. This is because the sessions are often too long and on some occasions the range of activities is too narrow.

### Year 3 to Year 6

23. As in Years 1 and 2, year group planning continues to be a strength because teachers share ideas and resources and evaluate the learning that took place in previous lessons. The organisation of classes for English and mathematics in year groups according to attainment levels is an additional benefit. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and match work very closely to the next step in pupils' learning. Lessons are well structured and a range of good methods and strategies are used. Teachers explain to pupils what they are going to learn which helps them to be aware of their own achievements. Lessons are of interest and relevance to pupils. For instance, in a design and technology lesson, a visit by a local baker to explain his trade was a good impetus to the work on designing a biscuit for the Jubilee. Mathematics is taught well. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, the teacher's challenges to pupils in the mental arithmetic sessions were very well targeted and made use of the pupils' previous knowledge. Pupils responded by trying their best, and with obvious enjoyment in their own achievements. In nearly all classes, pupils are managed very well and relationships are good. In the less successful lessons, pupils' concentration was unsatisfactory for a significant proportion of the time.
24. The majority of teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities to develop pupils' skills and confidence in speaking. In some writing lessons, teachers do not encourage pupils to talk so as to lay the foundations of good vocabulary and sentence structures before writing begins. A conscious effort to model correct speech is sometimes lacking, as are strategies, such as going into a role, talking in pairs and groups for short but constructive periods. In mathematics lessons, mental arithmetic sessions are sometimes too short and have insufficient challenge or range of strategies to motivate, and so pupils' skills in calculating quickly are not sharpened enough. Some teachers do not focus on asking pupils to explain how they have arrived at their answer. Science teaching is often too carefully structured so that pupils all know the possible outcome of an investigation and they are not given the opportunity to think out their own predictions and to make conclusions at the end of a test.
25. Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs, and very good for pupils with statements. In general, care is taken by teachers to plan work that is achievable and to include all abilities in class lessons but there are variations in provision. Most teachers and teaching assistants, which include the bilingual support assistants and the learning mentor are skilled, enthusiastic and dedicated, often making their own specialised resources. In most lessons, careful attention is paid to seating arrangements and support assistants offer valuable and unobtrusive help to individuals. During literacy and



numeracy lessons, pupils are sometimes withdrawn to work in small groups. On a few occasions, teaching that is otherwise satisfactory does little to encourage the pupils' independence and awareness of how well they are achieving. This results in some pupils switching off in lessons. In general, however, teachers and support assistants are skilled and good practice is seen throughout the school. All of the groups experience a balance of whole class teaching and small group work. Most learning support assistants are skilled at offering the right blend of support and challenge, and relationships are often extremely good with pupils, with each other and with other staff. As a result, attitudes are very positive.

26. The pupils who speak English as an additional language joined their classes in August. They have been very well integrated and are confident class members. In a Year 5 lesson in science, where a group leader was needed, one group quickly chose a new classmate who smiled with pleasure at the compliment from the other pupils. Teachers have not had training in teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language but they have given good thought to these pupils' levels of attainment and work is generally well matched to their needs. On occasions, explanations are not precise enough and not all teachers are checking to see if a misunderstanding is being masked by a willingness to work hard. The school has begun to identify those pupils who are gifted and talented but it is at an early stage of provision for their needs. A few outstanding pupils are given work that is specially adapted to their advanced stage of learning. Higher attaining pupils are generally challenged well. However, in science and mathematical problems, teachers do not provide enough challenge in Years 3 and 6 to those pupils of higher attainment because pupils' thinking is not sufficiently challenged or extended. There is also insufficient challenge in the tasks planned for speaking for those of higher attainment.
27. In all classes, teachers provide a good range of work for pupils to do at home, but a significant number do not complete it. Teachers assess pupils' learning well when work is finished and during lessons as pupils carry out tasks. When marking, some teachers make perceptive comments that help pupils understand how to improve, but this is not done consistently and sometimes work is only marked to show if it is correct or incorrect.

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

28. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school, including those for children in the nursery and reception classes, is satisfactory and those aspects of the curriculum required by law are all in place.
29. Curricular planning has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. At that time there were few suitable schemes of work in place. Consequently the progress made by pupils as they passed through the school was not as smooth as it should have been. Appropriate schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, except for speaking. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy provide an effective structure for what is taught in English and mathematics. Nationally recommended schemes are also in place and used well for other subjects. These schemes are modified thoughtfully and supplemented with other materials and resources to ensure the particular needs of the school and its pupils are met. Teachers in the same year groups plan together well, overseen by the year group leaders. These arrangements do much to ensure that pupils' learning in each year builds effectively on their previous experiences. The teachers in the nursery and reception classes plan work using the nationally recommended guidance for children of this age. The reception class teachers effectively plan from the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Planning is relevant to the children's interest and attainment, but planning for developing writing and mathematics through play is limited. A programme of work to develop pupils' awareness of their health and personal and social issues has been recently established. It is comprehensive and includes teaching about drug misuse.
30. Currently there are not enough opportunities planned for pupils to improve their skills in speaking and listening. This applies during English lessons and during lessons in other subjects. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research and plan aspects of their own learning. For example, in science in Years 3 to 6, not enough opportunities are created for pupils to plan and undertake investigations. Consequently, their abilities in these aspects of their learning are not developed sufficiently well.
31. Provision for teaching the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are used well in all subjects and enhance pupils' learning effectively. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are also used well by teachers. This means that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from homes where English is not the first language spoken, achieve well in these areas of their learning.
32. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to access the provision made to learn and are included well in all activities. The needs of pupils with special educational needs, and pupils from ethnic minorities and other groups. Teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of these pupils and they are supported well during lessons and during other activities by learning support assistants and by other staff. Arrangements to ensure that pupils who are new to the school settle in smoothly and quickly are very effective. The school has made a start in planning for those who are gifted or talented in special ways, but as yet only a few pupils have been identified and supplied with work that is specific to their advanced stage of development.
33. The provision for extra curricular activities is very good. These activities are planned carefully and teachers ensure that they are linked appropriately to pupils' learning during lessons. Consequently these activities make a substantial contribution to enhancing the

quality of the pupils' learning. These activities include clubs for art, computing, library skills, mathematics and sewing. The provision made for extra curricular sporting activities is also very good. It includes clubs for country dancing, Association Football, gymnastics, netball and rounders. The activities are very well attended. They increase pupils' interest and motivation to succeed as well as providing good development of social skills.

34. The contribution made by the community, including educational visits and visitors, to the quality of education and to pupils' learning is good. Links with the local business community are developed very well. Pupils make visits into the town on numerous occasions to support their work in geography and history, drawing on its rich industrial heritage and considering its geographical location. The oldest pupils visit the Rossendale Water Treatment plant as part of their work in geography. Visitors to school include a theatre group, a provider of cycling proficiency training, the police and fire services. The school nurse visits regularly and contributes effectively to aspects of pupils' personal and social education and to their study of Florence Nightingale in history. The school has developed a good relationship with the local secondary school. Pupils are prepared well for their transfer to their next school by numerous projects. For instance, the music teacher from the secondary school teaches groups of Year 6 pupils to play the electronic keyboard each week in the summer term. Teachers liaise effectively so as to pass on information about pupils and the curriculum.
35. The school's provision for pupils with special education needs is good and there is effective organisation of the curriculum for them. The school has implemented the recent changes to the 'Code of Practice'. Pupils are identified as early as possible and receive very good provision in the nursery where their progress is monitored very carefully. From this good start planning for their needs is securely built on careful assessments. Clear objectives are established for the times when pupils are withdrawn from class, for instance, to catch up on the use of letter sounds in Year 1. A skilled Nursery Nurse intervenes when an individual is considered to be under-achieving in the younger classes and an outreach worker has been employed in a similar capacity by the school for the older pupils. Both have very good relationships with pupils and support them by counselling and offering challenge as appropriate. The intervention strategies are always carefully considered and often discussed with the pupils themselves. A good example of this is the rare use of a lunchtime or afternoon exclusion sanction, which has been used as a positive strategy for a limited period of time, to avoid a full exclusion. It is not seen as a punishment. Individual Education Plans are effective. They outline targets, success criteria, resources, and strategies for support assistants. Plans are sent to parents and carers and reviewed twice a year at parents' meetings. Individual pupils are also beginning to be encouraged to take some responsibility for their learning. Support assistants make notes about progress during learning and these are shared with the class teacher. Progress for the majority of pupils is better than the expectation when results are compared with their targets.
36. Spiritual development is satisfactory throughout the school. It features strongly in the nursery where the staff work hard to inspire the children. The element of mystery in human experience is not often explored in learning but individual pupils often displayed joy, patience, kindness and self-control towards each other. Year 6, in particular, showed spiritual maturity in the way they thought about the concepts of anger, blame, revenge and fairness and demonstrated their sensitivity and wisdom in discussion. There was a sense of spiritual growth as they reflected on their experiences and shared their feelings about the events that happened in New York on September 11<sup>th</sup>. School worship assemblies provide well for the pupils' spiritual development on some occasions, such as the Peace assemblies led by the head teacher. On other

occasions, there is little opportunity for pupils to reflect. There is an emphasis on the wonder of nature in some art units of work and there are some opportunities for contemplation in lessons. This was evident in a literacy lesson when Year 4 pupils listened to Michael Rosen reading aloud his poetry.

37. Pupils' moral development is good. The school's code of conduct is based on the Christian concept of everyone treating others as they would like to be treated and each class has developed its own set of class rules. The positive relationships between adults and pupils throughout the school set the tone. Many staff provide good role models by their dedication, hard work and respect for the individual. They help pupils relate well to each other and take account of others' feelings. Moral issues are included in curricular planning in religious education and personal and social health education and good attention is paid to them in assembly. The weekly Achievers' assembly is a good example of a joyous celebration of the values of individual talents, hard work and caring. A weekly theme is set for daily assembly, which helps to reinforce the values of the school. On the rare occasion when the moral code is infringed, incidents are dealt with sensitively and firmly, and the pupils concerned are explicitly helped to gain a clearer understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The pupils are always encouraged to explain their actions.
38. The development of social education is good. This is apparent during lunch times and indoor play times. A good example of this begins early in the school year when some of the oldest pupils accompany the youngest children into lunch and escort them into the playground. There are some good opportunities for paired work and group work, which supports the development of good social skills but this could be developed further. The scheme of work for Personal and Social Health Education has not yet been fully developed although many areas are already being taught effectively. The Sex Education and Relationships scheme is one area that has been planned and is being taught well, involving outside agencies in the teaching. The Junior Council ensures that pupils are given a voice. Pupils are motivated by the Good Citizenship and Dorothy Carthy Awards, both of which promote good social awareness. Racist incidents are monitored by the headteacher and the work of monitors is checked by senior teachers.
39. Cultural development is good and permeates many aspects of school life. All entrances to the school reflect the value placed on cultural heritage in its widest sense. The school actively promotes an appreciation of a multicultural society without losing a sense of British culture. One entrance has an eye-catching display to celebrate the Queen's golden jubilee and the infant library is welcoming, with multilingual phrases displayed on the wall. In one class the pupils answer the register in German. Music chosen for assembly and dance is drawn from a variety of cultures. During the week of the inspection there was a strong Celtic flavour. This was brought to life when one of the junior pupils displayed his considerable talents as an Irish dancer when he danced to the music from "Riverdance". Some of the younger pupils showed the infants a traditional country dance they had recently danced in the town square. Popular culture is also embraced. Two of the older boys gave a display of break dancing in a recent assembly and a trio of girls danced to 'S club seven'. This delight in celebrating the best of all cultures is apparent through the school in the array of extra-curricular activities on offer. The school's ethos and commitment to cultural development goes further than many schools. For instance, when the new pupils of Asian heritage from the closed primary school were integrated, the head teacher made the suggestion that the shalwar and kameez worn by some of the girls could be made up in the school colours of red and grey. Not only did this successfully highlight commitment to the school, but it helped to retain an important aspect of Muslim culture and sent a powerful message about the school's inclusive nature.

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

40. The school continues to provide a safe and caring environment, as at the time of the last inspection. The standard of individual care, support and guidance provided for pupils enables them to feel happy and confident. Staff and pupils are well known to each other and get on well together both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils are confident that they can approach their teachers should they have any problems either of a personal or academic nature, and that appropriate advice and guidance would be forthcoming. Overall, the school provide pupils with a good level of care and support that enables pupils to concentrate on their lessons and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
41. The school has adopted the Lancashire Education Authority health and safety policy, but has not developed a policy specific to the school which is recommended best practice. First aid provision is good, there are appropriate numbers of qualified first aiders and good records of accidents and injuries are maintained. Procedures for assessing risks relating to school trips are good, although procedures for general risk assessment are not sufficient. Staff with responsibilities for this aspect have not received appropriate training. A fire risk assessment has not been carried out. Overall, arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. There is a designated member of staff who has received appropriate training. However, the schools' child protection policy is very brief and does not contain sufficient guidance on the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow should allegations be made against staff. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Parents are advised of the need to notify the school if their child is absent for any reason. Staff monitor attendance on a daily and weekly basis and make first day contact with pupils with poor attendance records, parents are contacted in writing if reasons for absence are not forthcoming. The school awards certificates for good attendance and pupils value them.
42. The procedures for monitoring behaviour, and promoting good behaviour are effective. Policies clearly set out the school's expectation of good behaviour, and seek to reward good behaviour whilst holding pupils to account for poor behaviour. They are applied consistently and represent an improvement in the management of behaviour since the last inspection. The merit system is popular with pupils in all year groups. At the beginning of each term pupils are involved in developing their own class rules and this helps them appreciate the need for sensible behaviour. The school makes good use of weekly assemblies to award certificates for good work and behaviour, and pupils clearly value these awards. Records are maintained of any incidents of unacceptable behaviour and parents are notified if their child's behaviour is considered a matter of concern. Procedures to discourage bullying and oppressive behaviour, including racism are effective. The school maintains records correctly and takes these incidents seriously. It takes proper action to maintain racial harmony should an incident occur.
43. The formal procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievements are very good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has an effective policy for assessment that sets out principles and practice. A portfolio of work is being compiled which teachers have marked together to ensure that everyone works to consistent standards.
44. Pupils are assessed soon after entry to the school and the results are used to identify areas for further development. These assessments help to identify children who might have special educational needs in order to provide appropriate support. A file is begun, recording pupils' achievements cohort by cohort and this follows each child right through

the school. End of term tests are recorded and checked to see if pupils have made the progress expected of them. The school considers carefully the assessments of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and clearly takes into account their knowledge of English when assessing other work such as mathematics. However, the school does not have a specific test to identify how well they know and can use the English language. Without this assessment they have no way of judging how well these pupils improve their use of English year by year.

45. Data from the tests at the end of Year 2 is used to inform future planning and to ensure that work is set at a suitable level for each child. In Years 1 and 2 there are a range of records kept on pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematical skills. The school uses the national non-statutory assessment at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 and standardized reading tests. Teachers use this information well to judge what is needed to help each pupil make further progress. However, in Years 1 and 2 day-to-day assessment of how pupils read is not always carried out effectively or linked to other records to help judge what pupils need to do to improve further.
46. The use of assessment information to guide and inform curriculum planning is good overall. In the nursery and reception classes, the teachers assess children against the stepping-stones set out in the national guidance. In Years 1 to 6 each pupils' progress in English, and mathematics is assessed against the National Curriculum and the requirements of the national guidance for literacy and numeracy. In science, pupils are assessed when a unit of work is finished but this does not record all the elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. In other subjects teachers follow the general outcomes indicated in the nationally recognised schemes of work they follow. At the moment, a more detailed system is being piloted in Years 1 and 2 to give both pupils and teachers a more precise idea of how well progress is being made. Teachers provide short review sessions at the end of each lesson to assess the learning that has taken place, sometimes involving pupils in the assessment of their own progress. However, not all teachers use these sessions effectively, particularly in mathematics.
47. The school analyses its assessment data regularly. It has begun to involve pupils in understanding how well they are achieving. Pupils are given written targets that are reviewed each term. However, not all staff refer to these often enough to help motivate pupils. There is no whole-school marking policy, so some pupils have the benefit of more clearly focused supportive comments to guide them than do others. Pupils complete self-evaluation sheets where they note twice a year how well they think they are doing. Pupils also record what they consider to be significant achievements in their 'Record of Achievement' files and these are supported by the teachers' assessments of progress. This helps their personal as well as academic development.
48. The school has good systems to support and assess those pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are tracked, individually through both tests and assessments, throughout the school and the headteacher and the special educational needs' coordinator meet regularly to discuss individual progress against individual targets. Progress for those pupils who attend school from nursery or reception is good. This is because all staff consider many factors when they assess each individual and there is a concerted effort to cater for all pupils' needs in this inclusive school.

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

49. Whilst some parents have very positive views of the school's work, others are less supportive. Almost all parents are pleased with the progress their children are making in their learning, the quality of teaching, the good standard of behaviour and the expectation

that their children will work hard. Parents also indicated that their children enjoy coming to school, that the school is helping them to become more responsible and mature, and that they are well informed about their children's progress. The inspection supports almost all of these positive views of the school. A significant minority of parents expressed concerns in relation to the following areas: the amount of homework their children receive, that the school does not work closely with parents and a lack of extra curricular activities. Inspectors consider; that the school's use of homework is satisfactory and similar to other schools of this type; that there is a good range of extra curricular activities; and whilst few parents help in classrooms, that the school is making every effort to encourage parents to be involved in the life of the school.

50. Overall, parents' involvement in their children's learning is satisfactory. The Parents' Association are very active in organising social and fund raising events. They have raised substantial funds that have been used to provide additional learning resources that have had a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school works hard to involve parents in the life of the school, but their efforts are not always successful. For example, few parents attended the information evenings about the introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Only a few parents help in classrooms, however, those that do, make a good contribution to the learning of the pupils they work with. In an effort to increase parental involvement in the life of the school, it has established a weekly parents' group to make learning resources for literacy and numeracy lessons. Parents are invited to listen to pupils read in the reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. Both these initiatives attract the support of a small group of parents and provide effective support for the school.
51. The quality and the range of information provided for parents are good. The school brochure and annual governors' report are well presented and provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities. Parents receive regular newsletters that provide up-to-date information about school events, including information about what their children are studying. Parents are invited to a parents' meeting each term at which time they can discuss with teachers their child's progress, and in the summer term discuss their annual report. Attendance at these meetings is good. Overall, pupils' reports are satisfactory, however there are some inconsistencies. Whilst all reports contain good quality information about what pupils understand and can do, not all reports give guidance for improvement. The school actively seeks the views of parents, for example, when it was considering the introduction of computerised reports for pupils. In response to parents' concerns, an information evening was held on the importance of national tests in Year 6. The school has good arrangements to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in the development and review of their child's individual educational plans. When children start in the nursery and the reception classes, parents are given good opportunities to find out about the school, and there are good procedures to help children settle quickly in school and for parents to be involved in this process.

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

52. Overall, the leadership of the school is good. The headteacher has a strong vision for the school. She leads by example and takes responsibility for the outcomes of her decisions. Staff respond very well to her commitment. They are an effective team and have a strong desire to improve the school. The interest and involvement of the governing body, particularly in the identification and planning of the school's priorities, contributes effectively to the motivation of staff. However, the school has not always been successful in identifying what needs to be done in order to achieve the targets it has set itself. This is mainly because the senior management team are not fully

involved in monitoring and evaluating classroom practice in order to raise standards. Improvements since the inspection in March 1997 have been sound. In some aspects of leadership improvements have been good, particularly in the development of the role of subject leaders, which was identified as in need of improvement at the last inspection.

53. The headteacher has good knowledge and understanding of managing a large school such as this one, which is accommodated on virtually three sites. The management structure has been well designed to combat the difficulties and separations which arise in these circumstances. The acting deputy headteacher and teacher with responsibility for the infant and reception classes make a significant contribution to the cohesion of the staff team. Subjects are led by two co-ordinators so that each age range is represented and the team leaders role ensures consistency across the year groups. The different responsibilities of those with management roles are well demarcated. As a result, managers and subject leaders are effective in their work and some are very effective. The mathematics and English co-ordinators have been at the forefront of improvements and developments as the school has worked hard to identify ways to raise standards in these subjects. Although their work is not yet ratified by improved results in national tests, the good achievement of pupils, especially those who stay with the school throughout their primary education, reflects the improvements in teaching. For instance, the significant improvement in reading in the current Year 2 reflects the improvements in teaching basic skills that were introduced two years ago.
54. The management of special educational needs is good because of the shared workload between the head teacher and the coordinator, both of whom have clearly defined roles. The head teacher's role is to attend reviews for pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The co-ordinator manages the implementation of the new code of practice. She works effectively alongside teachers to monitor pupils' progress through their individual education plans. The headteacher and co-ordinator encourage all staff, including the learning support assistants, to have high expectations of these pupils. The co-ordinator for those pupils who speak English as an additional language has had this responsibility for a year, since the school learnt of the numbers of pupils to join in September. She has drawn up a useful action plan following a thorough audit of current provision. She has a clear overview of what needs to be improved, although this does not include an assessment to judge the stage of English acquisition for individual pupils which is needed.
55. The processes of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning are effective in the main, However, when weak learning has been identified, as for instance, when the school noticed that pupils were not quick enough in their skills of mental calculation, aspects of teaching are not always rigorously sought to explain the deficit. On some occasions, this is done well, as with the provision for more comprehension work to improve pupils' skills in understanding what they read. The good organization of the governing body into effective committees contributes well to the school's process of evaluation. Members of the governing body have observed lessons in their linked subject. For example, the chair of governors, as numeracy governor, has observed five lessons in the past year and improvements in planning have resulted. Written reports on governors' observations are made available to the full governing body and this enables all governors to gain a good insight into provision. The headteacher is strong in her identification of strengths and weaknesses through informal monitoring such as her frequent visits to classes and informal chats with pupils, teaching classes herself and in her discussions with staff. She carries out a programme of formal lesson observations and gives an evaluation to teachers on their work. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have also observed lessons as has the linked advisor and these have resulted in a good number of improvements in aspects of literacy, numeracy and the



use of information and communication technology in most subjects. However, year group leaders are not always effective in monitoring aspects of teaching so as to raise standards, for example, by ensuring that marking is of a consistently good quality.

56. The school analyses data from its own assessments and tests and from the pupils' performance in national tests. It has improved its assessment procedures considerably since the previous inspection and the school's own tests provide a good system of checking how well each pupil is achieving year on year. However, although teachers use these assessments well to plan for future learning, they are not collated into a clear overview to provide information about provision year on year. As a consequence, the school has sometimes been slow to respond to problems. For instance, in the development plan for 2001 to 2002, it is noted the some pupils, especially in older year-groups lack of confidence and speed with using multiplication tables. Whilst the planned action to address this was appropriate. The shortcomings were evident in previous years' tests and action should have been taken to remedy them sooner.
57. In common with many schools, the school faces some staff absences and shortages in acquiring temporary staff. The year group leaders are effective in their work of supporting new staff members and the school has very good systems in place to help new staff settle quickly. This is an improvement on the situation at the time of the previous inspection when temporary staff were not well supported. The two teachers who had only arrived in the school a few weeks before the start of the inspection both felt very much part of the school team and their teaching was effective in the main. The school has attained the Investors in People standard, and provides a good level of formal and informal training for staff members, including those who are new to the school, such as some of the classroom assistants and the bilingual support assistant. Staff who move up to senior management positions, and who change roles are given support and time to assess their new situation. The introduction and implementation of performance management has been good with the process well embedded into the systems of school improvement planning. As a consequence, there is a unified approach, together with appropriate targets that teachers appreciate as a benefit to their particular interests and needs for development.
58. The governors and headteacher have a very good understanding of the need to respond to the recent requirements to ensure that the school includes all groups of pupils in its provision and helps them to gain awareness of life in a multi ethnic society. The arrangements for the pupils transferring from the school that closed in the town were exceptionally good. It was done sensitively and effectively so that the new pupils all felt welcome and every child spoken to confirmed their enjoyment in their new school. They had no difficulty in making new friends. The role of the new bilingual assistant, employed because of the admission of pupils who speak English as an additional language, has been well defined and judicious use is made of her time so that those most in need are given support.
59. The finances of the school are well managed. The responsibilities of the governing body, its committees, including the finance committee are clearly defined and limits of delegated authority have been established. The governing body works closely with the headteacher to identify financial priorities, linked to the school development plan, and almost all of which are intended to raise standards in the school by providing additional classroom support and improving the learning environment. For example, by increasing the number of classroom assistants in the junior department. Members of the finance committee have been involved in researching the predicted number of pupils likely to enter the school in the next four academic years. This is based on the number of children born in the local area and the percentage of these children who are likely to

enter the school. Based on this research the school have reliable predictions of income and available balances over the next four years. However, detailed budget planning is mostly limited to a year ahead. Governors have a good understanding of the need to look for the best value when considering purchases and have made a good start to checking whether their spending decisions have been well-judged. The yard stick of comparison against school's in similar circumstances is used to evaluate test results. The governors have provided some opportunities for parents to be involved in school decisions through a system of consultation, but this could be developed.

60. The headteacher and the school's financial secretary work well together to ensure effective financial procedures are in place. The financial secretary ensures that up-to-date financial information is readily available to the governors and headteacher. Specific grants are clearly identified in the budget and there are effective procedures to ensure that these grants are used for their specific purposes. The school has effective administrative systems and makes adequate use of information and communication technology. The administrative systems work smoothly and staff are committed to providing a good level of support to teaching staff. This allows teaching staff to concentrate on their teaching and managerial roles.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to raise standards, the headteacher, governors and staff should:
1. Increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard of work by the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science by ensuring that:
    - in mathematics lessons, there is sufficient time given to mental calculations and that the teaching and learning in these sessions are of consistently good quality; and that there is a good focus on asking pupils to explain their methods of calculation; (Paragraphs: 4,24,85,86)
    - in science investigations, pupils are given good opportunities to decide how to find answers, think out what might happen, draw conclusions and decide whether these agree with any predictions made. (Paragraphs: 4,24,30,94)
  2. Increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard of written work by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 by ensuring that:
    - lessons link the development of pupils' skills in speech to their written work so that they gain a varied vocabulary and can use an increasing range of complex sentences; (Paragraphs: 4,5,19,24,77,79)
    - the quality of marking matches that of the best practice in the school. (Paragraphs: 27,47,55,86,94)
  3. Improve pupils' confidence and skills in speaking both in informal and formal situations by:
    - planning for speaking and listening, drama and role play activities that are appropriate for the age of pupils in all classes\*; (Paragraphs: 30,75,79)
  4. Improve the opportunities for children to develop writing and mathematical skills through play activities in the reception year. (Paragraphs: 18,29,69,70)

*In addition to the key issues above, the following minor areas for improvement should be considered by the governors for inclusion in the action plan:*

- The school has not carried out a full formal risk assessment. (Paragraph: 41)
- The school does not have a system to identify the stages of English acquisition for those pupils who speak English as an additional language. (Paragraphs: 44,54)

\*This had already been identified by the school as an area for development.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	51

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	7	35	28	3	0	0
Percentage	5	9	45	36	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	18	380
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	64

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	131

English as an additional language	No. of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	33

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	25	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	17	25
	Girls	21	21	23
	Total	40	38	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (87)	73(85)	92(92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	23	24
	Girls	21	22	22
	Total	40	45	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (87)	87 (88)	88 (90)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (89)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	34	24	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	17	29
	Girls	19	8	21
	Total	38	25	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (67)	43 (61)	86 (84)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	27
	Girls	18	13	21
	Total	36	31	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (71)	53(65)	83 (84)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	28
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	332
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	27

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	226

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	695,842
Total expenditure	669,491
Expenditure per pupil	1,805
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,648
Balance carried forward to next year	48,999

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	380
Number of questionnaires returned	132

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	37	8	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	42	5	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	39	7	6	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	43	19	8	2
The teaching is good.	50	41	5	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	45	5	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	36	5	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	39	2	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	45	10	9	1
The school is well led and managed.	35	42	8	8	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	45	6	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	34	15	4	9



## **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**

62. Children start in the nursery when they are three and attend for either the morning or the afternoon session. Only about half the children transfer from the nursery to the schools' reception classes; the rest of the children entering the reception classes enter the school with either no pre-school experience or transfer from a variety of pre-school settings. Children enter the nursery with skills below those in most schools. The attainment of those who enter the reception without having been to the nursery is of a similar standard. Children often make very good progress in the nursery. In the reception classes, those children who have not been to the nursery make good progress and the progress of others is always satisfactory and sometimes good. By the end of the reception year, children meet the standards required for their age, except in the areas of speaking, writing and mathematical development. Children with special educational needs are quickly identified and provided with the support they need to learn alongside others. These children make good progress in both nursery and reception classes. The school's increasing number of pupils who have little English when they join the school receive sensitive support. This enables them to make good progress in learning the language and in using it to communicate.
63. The nursery makes good provision for the children's all round development and education. The quality of teaching in the nursery is consistently good in all the areas of learning and sometimes it is very good. Consequently, children achieve well in their personal development, in learning the basics of literacy and numeracy, in gaining knowledge and understanding of the world and in acquiring physical and creative skills. Very positive features of the teaching in the nursery are the constructive manner in which staff interact with children while they play, the good questions they ask to promote children's thinking, and the knowledge they exhibit of how young children learn best.
64. Teaching in the reception classes is at least satisfactory and often good in all the areas of learning listed in the paragraph above and children make steady progress towards the national targets for the age group. The teaching is sometimes better in one class than the other because the play activities provide better opportunities for children to learn, and the management of the class is more effective. Teachers prepare lessons effectively and work hard to create and hold children's interest, particularly in oral work where the class sits together on the carpet. They use a range of stimulating resources they know will appeal to and enthuse the children. Teachers use good questioning skills to reinforce previous learning and to help children think hard. The work planned is based on the recommended guidance for children of this age and staff plan for what they want children to learn in each area of learning. However, play activities are not always well organised or resourced; to a large extent this is because the accommodation is cramped and doesn't help the planning of structured play activities, particularly for those requiring larger equipment. Inspection findings are similar to those of the last inspection in the nursery but are not quite as good in the reception classes because provision for structured play is not as good. Teachers assess what children are learning well, for example, in the nursery, staff record what each child has learned during the lesson and in reception learning is assessed after each lesson. Teachers make effective use of the information from their assessments to plan for the next stage of learning for each child.

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

65. Children make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills in the nursery, and good progress in the reception classes. The nursery is particularly well

organised to develop children's independence and routines are very well established. Children feel secure in them and very quickly learn to select activities, play sensibly with each other, work at a task until they have finished it and tidy things away when asked. For instance, whilst playing together in the sand to find hidden 'bugs' and identifying what they had found through reference to a book, children maintained their interest and application for over 20 minutes, a good period for children of this age. The teacher provides a very good role model and sensitively makes timely reminders of the rules.

66. In the reception classes, routines are well established and children know what they have to do for themselves at different times of the day, for example, they take responsibility for their own registration. This develops good levels of independence. Teachers have good expectations of children behaving well and this is communicated to them effectively. As a consequence, they usually play and work together well. Reception children take turns in role-play activities, sharing resources such as clothes for dressing up very well. They are considerate when others join them at play, for example, finding a role and appropriate resources for newcomers in the 'castle'. They are encouraged to tidy up after themselves and do so readily. Snack time provides good opportunities for children to develop their social skills when talking to their friends and playmates. Teachers and support staff make every effort to promote children's self-esteem and confidence by regularly rewarding children with praise. Occasionally, teachers do not insist children listen carefully and, as a result, their attention wanders. This means opportunities for learning are lost. Most children meet the expected standards by the end of their year in reception.
67. The teacher in the nursery makes very good provision for children with special educational needs and ensures that any problems with behaviour are sensitively managed. The monitoring of children's personal development is very good and the teacher keeps careful records of individual progress. Provision in the reception classes is good and difficulties are identified early on and action is taken quickly to address them. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported by all adults, including the bi-lingual assistant who often encourages children by speaking to them in their home language. In both the nursery and reception classes, this member of staff provides a good link with those parents having difficulty speaking English and this is a good support to children's confidence and well-being.

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

68. The curriculum for the development of children's language and literacy skills is good in the nursery and satisfactory overall in the reception classes. Children have poor communication skills on entry to the nursery, particularly in their early speaking and literacy. In the nursery, children are regularly reminded to write their name on their work. Children are encouraged to write freely in areas such as 'the vets', where they are keen to make 'appointments' when pretending to be the receptionist. Many children can write their name by the time they leave the nursery. Adults interact with children all the time and work hard to encourage children to speak and respond. In the nursery, books play an important part in all the areas of learning and children look at books to find information on animals and small creatures (the current project) and, as a consequence, children are keen to 'read' and know that print goes from left to right.
69. In the reception classes, children reach the expected standards in reading because the staff place a good emphasis on the teaching of letters and the sounds they make. Children develop their reading well through the group activities where the teachers use a good level of questioning so that children learn new vocabulary and develop a greater understanding of what the book is about. Teachers use a variety of stimulating resources, such as large 'ventriloquist' puppets when they are practising what sounds such as 'oi', 'oo' and 'sh' make. The use of these novel resources together with the

quick changing activities sustains children's interest well. They are interested and keen to learn. Many children are able to read simple texts and higher attaining children read these with some fluency. Staff put great emphasis on children forming their letters correctly and lower attaining children especially, improve their handwriting in lessons when they practise writing letters in the sand, or in the air with an adult. A few higher attaining children can write a couple of sentences independently but many pupils are not able to write as well as others of the same age. This is because writing is not as well promoted as it might be in all lessons or in some of the play activities. Teachers provide adequate opportunities for children to write independently but the writing area in both classes is small and lacks sufficient stimulating resources to encourage children to write independently. As a result, few children choose the writing area, and many need encouragement by an adult to write, because they lack confidence in their own skills. Although a small number of higher attaining children speak clearly, the majority do not speak naturally in sentences and many have a limited vocabulary and find it difficult to express themselves clearly. This limits their response to the teachers' questions and creates problems when they want to put forward ideas. Although staff value children's contributions, and provide activities like a puppet theatre to promote children's speech, they do not encourage children enough to speak at length, nor place enough emphasis on clear expression. Children often listen carefully in lessons and to each other but more so in one class than the other. This is because, in one class, expectations of good listening are higher. Many children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year in speaking skills.

### **Mathematical development**

70. The provision for children's mathematical development is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Children in the nursery enjoy using numbers in their play and staff try to include counting activities in other areas of learning. For example, children had good opportunities to practice counting and recognising numbers in their music lesson. They enjoyed counting the five 'Little Ducks' and finding the right number of musical instruments. Most children in the reception classes count to ten and some count to 20 and beyond competently. Higher attaining children are quick at subtracting numbers from ten but some children find it difficult to count out a number of objects accurately. Teachers build effectively on children's prior knowledge in the whole-class sessions and target questions to individual children to assess what they have learnt. In whole class sessions, resources including computers are effective and adults are all effectively deployed. When the teacher maintains a fast pace, children show high levels of interest and involvement. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce mathematical ideas and concepts through structured play or games. This means that children do not practise their skills enough when playing. Most children learn and can say simple number rhymes from memory. They recognise numbers, and know terms like 'full and empty' and the names of simple shapes. Good support by classroom assistants helps children with special educational needs to succeed. Children's learning is good in nursery and satisfactory in reception. Some children are likely to attain the expected standards by the end of the year but the majority will not.

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

71. This aspect is taught very well in the nursery class and often well in the reception classes. The very good planning of daily activities in the nursery, helps to ensure that children learn about the world around them in many incidental areas of play. For instance, three children were drawn to the display of real eggshells and awed by the size of the rhea's egg, in contrast to the size of some models of birds hatching from eggs. Children in the nursery develop an increasing awareness of the world in which

they live through a rich and exciting range of first hand experiences, and adults support them very well in investigating and questioning their surroundings. This is continued in the reception classes although occasionally activities could be better organised to promote learning, such as in sand and water. A group of children were using balls of plasticene to make into different shapes that would float but the container with water was too small and not placed so that children could easily gather round it. As a result, their initial interest waned too quickly as they could not talk to each other about what they had done. Children learn to use technological equipment well in all classes and they have a higher than average level of skill in using the computer. They are enthusiastic about using computers and are interested in the efforts of others. They use the computer to write simple sentences and illustrate their work with pictures. They know how their work is printed out and are competent in using the mouse and clicking on objects displayed on screen. Children construct models using construction kits to a good standard and can explain in simple terms what they have made. Teachers provide daily opportunities for children to learn about the weather and they teach children to appreciate the passing of time through stories and by building on pupils' own experiences. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use their imagination to act out stories that Jesus told, such as Noah's Ark. Children have regular chances to bake and staff emphasis the need for hygiene and safety. Children look forward to eating the results! Most children will meet the expected standards by the end of the reception year because of the good teaching.

### **Physical development**

72. Good teaching in the nursery and reception classes results in children making good progress in this area. Their skills and confidence increase as they participate in a well-planned range of practical activities, which help them develop their skills. The lack of large climbing apparatus in nursery restricts the range of activities but children have access to a wide variety of other equipment and the outdoor play area is well thought out. Children are encouraged to use a good range of wheeled toys and small apparatus such as bats and balls. The staff work with them to help them increase their confidence and try new ideas. Although opportunities for outdoor play are limited in the reception classes, because the outside area is not easily accessible, staff provide a good range of activities on the occasions when they are all able to go outside. Teachers provide regular lessons in the school hall and outside in the playground. Children build on their skills from the nursery when using wheeled toys and learn how to skip, catch, throw and roll a ball and other small apparatus with developing skill. Staff make timely interventions to take children's learning forward, for example, by showing them how to throw a ball properly. Children respond well to these lessons, listening to instructions and trying hard to improve their actions. They stop quickly on a signal and move to different activities in a controlled manner. They work together well in pairs, and help to tidy the equipment away. Children are taught how to handle paintbrushes, scissors and other small implements with confidence. While many children have been taught how to hold their pencils properly a number do not and have difficulty when mark making. Teachers do not place a high enough priority on getting children to hold their pencil correctly. Higher attaining children have very good physical skills, but a small proportion are unlikely to meet the expectations of the early learning goals.

### **Creative development**

73. This area of development is well provided for in the nursery and reception classes and the teaching is good. As a result, children's attainment at the end of reception is broadly at the level expected. Through a variety of carefully planned activities the children explore the properties and effects of colour and texture in paint and collage. Children in

the nursery enjoy experimenting with glue to represent the silvery trails of snails and produce good pastel drawings of daffodils. Children in the reception classes make paper collages and select from a wide range of different materials and decide where to stick them to best effect when creating pictures of people in the rain. Children are taught how to mix paints and know what colours they make. Nursery and reception children join together for some music and singing lessons and these sessions are well taught. Children sing in tune and with some gusto. They recognise the names and sounds of instruments such as the woodblock and drum and enthusiastically clap out a simple rhythm. Children in all classes enjoy the opportunities for role-play. They immerse themselves in the activities and use dressing up clothes, props and resources imaginatively. The quality of the role-play is better in one reception class because the resources provide more scope for children to use their imagination.

## ENGLISH

74. Standards by the end of Year 2 have improved since the national tests in 2001 when they were well below average for reading and writing. Currently in Year 2, pupils' reading is similar in standard to the national average although their written work is below average. This is because although the proportion of pupils reaching the national expectation is broadly typical, not as many pupils reach the higher level as in most schools. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading is average and in writing it is below average. As with the younger pupils, not enough attain the higher level. The high number of pupils with special needs contributes to this. Moreover, a large number of pupils joined the school in Years 5 and 6, having low standards in literacy on arrival and consequently little time to catch up fully. The current Year 5 in contrast has not been subject to such factors to the same extent and their attainment is broadly typical for their age. There has been a good response to the school's strategies to raise standards in reading, which are now broadly average throughout the school. Boys and girls of all abilities, including those with special needs, achieve well in most skills, showing much improvement in what they know, understand and can do during their time in school because they are well taught. Their standards in speaking, however, are less developed than they should be.
75. By the end of Year 2, pupils usually listen carefully, the higher attainers showing an awareness of listeners' needs by reference to appropriate details. On balance, however, most pupils lack confidence when speaking, in both formal and informal situations. Few possess the assurance to sustain a conversation at length. Some have a limited awareness of Standard English, which means that what they have to say can be difficult for others to follow. A higher attaining pupil spoke clearly, confidently and persuasively to recommend the stories of Tolkien, but an average attainer was not very forthcoming when asked to recall some facts of an experience. When eventually commenting he made an ambiguous observation. A lower attainer was very shy and was only drawn out by much prompting. In conversation in the playground, it was necessary to ask two boys in Year 3 to repeat several times what they were saying because they did not speak sufficiently clearly or use vocabulary that was easy for a visitor to grasp. By Year 6, although they concentrate satisfactorily on what is said, limitations in vocabulary and variety of expression mean that pupils do not describe or develop their own ideas as clearly and purposefully as they should. Higher attainers are confident, with good vocabulary, referring knowledgeably for example to a 'coda' as a musical term meaning an ending. Whilst average attainers show satisfactory levels of confidence and participate in response, they do not often initiate conversation and errors such as "in them days" instead of 'in those days' compromise the quality of what they have to say. Lower attainers do not speak with assurance and rarely volunteer full sentences.

76. The school has recently focused strongly on the development of comprehension skills and reading. This has been effective in raising pupils' attainment to match the national average, both by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By Year 2 lower attainers follow punctuation correctly when reading aloud, although hesitation is still not unusual. They are beginning to read the texts selected for them with expression. They understand most vocabulary appropriate to their age and recall basic features about the plot and main characters of the stories they have read. Average attainers are still sometimes hesitant but read largely accurately. As well as describing features of the plot and major events they are starting to offer opinions about what might happen next. Higher attainers read freely and expressively, and give reasons for their opinions for example about a character: "He's friendly because he helps people." Higher attainers know how to search for books by alphabetical order and have some grasp of a table of contents but average and lower attainers have no clear ideas about the techniques of locating information in a library. By Year 6 lower attainers read eagerly and with expression. They understand the main points and express their preferences, explaining clearly for example aspects of a Chinese story: "It's not a real dragon, it's a legend." Average attainers read a good range of books by authors such as Dahl, Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson, and make references to the text to support their opinions. Pupils with higher attainment read widely and fluently, both for enjoyment and for information. In a discussion on the merits of books by Stephen King, pupils were able to explain some of the reasons why his writing made such an impact, using expressions such as "powerful descriptive writing." All pupils know how to locate information in a library because the school makes regular visits to the public library. Pupils also described clearly how they located information on the Internet for research.
77. The handwriting of most pupils is legibly formed and joined by the end of Year 2. Throughout Years 1 and 2, handwriting develops well, the shapes, position and size of letters improving steadily in response to precise and regular guidance from teachers. Pupils with higher attainment vary their sentence structure well, for example "On Christmas morning I rushed downstairs. My Mummy always lets me open a present before breakfast." Fewer pupils than average succeed in developing and extending their ideas into longer sequences. Those of average attainment produce coherent sentences, with a satisfactory awareness of capital letters and full stops but spellings are often inaccurate. The limited vocabulary used by many pupils in speech also affects their writing. Higher attainers in Year 6 describe succinctly and with effective vocabulary the characters they have created for a play: "Will- talented, picks up things quickly. Bright, friendly, kind. A bit of a know it all. A bit of a geek." Average attainers are repetitive and lack precision. Those of lower attainment misspell common words such as "put(t)ing" "ban(n)ing" and write: "I thing if..." instead of "I think if .." By the end of Year 6 the proportion of pupils using the varied and complex language characteristic of higher level work is not as high as that found nationally.
78. Teaching is good throughout the school, so pupils learn well. When comparing what they could do on arrival and what they can do by the time they leave, pupils' achievement is good. Teachers have a good grasp of the National Literacy Strategy, which they adapt appropriately to suit the needs of their pupils. Classroom assistants are used well to give pupils more individual attention. This is especially effective for pupils with special needs who achieve as well as their peers in work tailored to their particular requirements. Through regular assessment teachers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the individuals in their classes and use this information well to set appropriate tasks. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are assessed well and given work that matches their needs. In marking, however, teachers do not all focus their comments and targets equally sharply to give pupils the most effective day-to-day guidance. Teachers give good models of

spoken English. However, they do not always ensure that pupils who make serious errors are encouraged to repeat the correct expression so as to reinforce their learning. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and pupils respond by working hard. Pupils want to learn and take delight not only in their own achievements but also in the success of others. A Year 3 class demonstrated this clearly by applauding their classmates' reading of their own stories.

79. Although lesson plans indicate that drama takes place, there was no evidence in English lessons during the inspection week of the use of such methods as role-play or "hot seating", (where pupils take turns to answer questions in character), to support the development of speaking. Not all teachers encourage pupils to formulate their ideas through speech before attempting to write. For instance, in a lesson in which the pupils were to imagine writing a letter of complaint, the teacher spoke most of the time, explaining the reasons for writing and occasionally asking for contributions from the class. The opportunity was missed to get pupils to go into role, pretending to complain to her in person and so start to construct the sentences they would later write down. The last part of the lesson is not always used effectively to give pupils an understanding of how well they have achieved the objectives for the lesson. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively to help pupils develop skills in editing their work through word-processing and developing their presentation skills by using a variety of fonts and sizes.
80. Pupils are given appropriate work to do at home and from reception year onwards take books and reading resources home to reinforce learning in the classroom. The school has promoted good initiatives to encourage parents to read with their child, such as the 'lads and dads club', but there are still significant numbers of parents who do not encourage their child by listening to them read. Literacy is reinforced in other subjects, especially by the emphasis on key vocabulary. For example technical terms are used in science, and vocabulary enlarged through subjects such as design technology and music. Opportunities to write at length feature prominently in history and geography. Key words such as "foreground", "proportion" and "perspective" help pupils discuss art with greater understanding. The extra-curricular library club attracts many eager readers.
81. Subject co-ordination is good, making a strong contribution to learning through careful analysis and well focused planning clearly linked to the school's needs. The rise in standards of pupils' reading in response to appropriate strategies bears testimony to its effectiveness. A programme of classroom observations and monitoring work has helped to develop teachers' skills. In the light of current evaluations, the co-ordinators have identified the need to increase its emphasis on the development of speaking skills. A programme of staff training is planned so teachers may complement their own skills with the most appropriate specialised techniques so that pupils may learn better. From their accomplishments so far, their capacity to succeed is good.

## **MATHEMATICS**

82. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average. By the end of Year 6 the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation is similar to that found in other schools. The proportion of pupils attaining at higher levels by the end of Year 6 is less than that found elsewhere, consequently standards overall are below average. However, throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from homes where English is not the most commonly spoken language, achieve well and make good progress. This is because the quality of teaching and the coverage of the mathematics curriculum are good. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning in the subject and

this makes a significant contribution to their achievement. Teachers and learning support assistants ensure that pupils from all backgrounds are included effectively in all aspects of provision made for the subject.

83. Standards by the end of Year 6 are not as high as those found at the time of the last inspection. However, improvement since that time is satisfactory. This is partly because there are far more pupils with special educational needs than at the time of the last inspection and they achieve well. There has also been an increased number of pupils who leave and join the school, especially in the last two years of their primary education. The school implemented improvements in teaching and planning with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy two years ago. However, the added improvement of teaching pupils in class groups reflecting their age and attainment that is now working very effectively in Years 3 to 6 was only implemented this August. In view of the fact that the school's results in 2000 were well below average, and it did not reach its target for the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001, insufficient urgency was given taking effective action in 2000.
84. Teachers apply the principles recommended by the national strategy for the subject well. This is reflected clearly in their planning and is linked closely to the recommendations for what should be taught to each year group. However, not all teachers are skilful enough in sharpening pupils' skills in mental calculations or in helping pupils develop a range of strategies to help them explain how they have arrived at an answer. As a result, not all pupils are quick enough in making calculations so that they can solve problems with confidence. In some lessons mental arithmetic is taught well in the first part of the lesson. However, on occasions this section is not long enough and pupils do not benefit to the extent they should from this generally effective aspect of the provision. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use mathematical language correctly and ensure that pupils do so as well. They also use questions well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, they do not ask pupils, frequently enough, to explain how they have calculated the answers they give, or ask if anyone has calculated the correct answer in a different way. As a result, pupils' skills are not improving fast enough in using mathematical language and understanding how to tackle problems.
85. Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 and many of the lower attaining pupils in Years 3 to 5 do not mentally add and subtract sufficiently well, and similarly in Years 3 and 5 multiplying and dividing is not done quickly enough. Many of these pupils rely heavily on the use of aids, such as a line of numbers, or 100 laid out in a square. When they do not have access to these aids they struggle to complete calculations. The reverse of this situation applies to some higher attaining pupils. In some lessons they are not challenged sufficiently and they find the work too easy. This is because they also have access to aids, which many could easily do without. In successful lessons in Year 4, pupils of lower attainment make very good progress in multiplication and division. In Year 6, pupils of all levels of attainment are challenged appropriately. More sustained use of mental calculations and challenges means that pupils' skills are good and they can decide quickly whether to use addition, subtraction, multiplication or division to solve a problem. The links between decimals, fractions and percentages are understood well by pupils and they are able to convert readily from one to the other at an appropriate level. Lower attaining pupils understand how the value of a number alters according to its position. For example, when their teacher uses a nine number dice pupils order the first five numbers shaken to create the largest possible number. When they do this they can explain the reasons for their choice correctly.



86. Teachers have high expectations for their pupils' learning and of how they will behave during lessons. Most pupils respond very well to these. What pupils are expected to learn is usually explained very clearly to them. Teachers use questions effectively and the final part of lessons well to assess the progress pupils have made. In the best lessons pupils are involved fully in this process when teachers ask them to explain the progress they feel they have made, and in some cases, what they might need to do next. However, this strategy is not used often enough and sometimes pupils are not clear about how much progress they have made. In Years 1 and 2 very good marking helps pupils to know how well they are doing and provides them with guidance about how they might improve further. In other parts of the school marking usually takes the form of ticks for completed and correct work but does not provide pupils with sufficiently helpful advice for improvement.
87. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are taught in classes based on their attainment in the subject. This arrangement works very well, enabling teachers to meet the needs of most pupils effectively. Within these classes pupils are taught for much of the time in smaller groups. These groups are also based on the teachers' assessments of pupils' understanding and help to ensure that work is matched well to their needs and to the stage they have reached. These arrangements serve the needs of the oldest pupils very well. From the Autumn term some of these pupils are taught, for part of the time, in an extra class to help give their learning a boost by having smaller numbers in the class. Their progress is monitored closely and accurately to ensure work is set at the right level. The lowest attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in this age group benefit from excellent teaching and they are achieving very well. Their response to the very high expectations of their teacher is excellent. In one lesson they began to work, without being asked to, before their teacher had arrived in the classroom. Their teacher's excellent subject knowledge means they make rapid progress and several are likely to attain the nationally expected level by the end of the year.
88. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance the quality of learning. Teachers select programs carefully to extend learning when possible or to help pupils develop their skills if they have fallen behind. Pupils use the computers with confidence, often working independently and sustaining their interest in the activities well. Teachers in all year groups make good use of homework to extend the pupils' learning in the subject. The homework set extends the work from lessons very effectively and is matched well to pupils' needs and level of attainment. For example, lower attaining pupils in Year 5 were asked to look for examples of percentages being used on the television. Pupils arrived in the school the next day and eagerly explained the use of percentages they had seen in advertisements and programmes.
89. The quality of leadership and management of the subject is good. The subject is managed jointly by two teachers, one from each stage. This means pupils progress smoothly from year to year and teaching builds effectively on their prior learning. Good arrangements are in place to assess the attainment and progress of pupils. Teachers' planning is based accurately on the outcomes of the assessments they make, consequently the needs of pupils are met well. Good arrangements are also in place to track the progress made by pupils as they pass through the school. The subject co-ordinators analyse very carefully the information they gain from the regular testing of pupils. This enables them to identify any areas for improvement. They prepare detailed annual action plans. These action plans show clearly how the areas identified for improvement will be addressed. The co-ordinators have successfully promoted the introduction of the national strategy for the subject and provided a range of very good materials and resources that support their colleagues' teaching effectively.

## SCIENCE

90. In the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2001 the number of pupils achieving the expected level was similar to the national average but insufficient numbers of pupils achieved the higher level. This was partly due to the fact that some pupils with low attainment joined this year group late in their primary education and partly because teaching in Years 3 to 6 does not pay sufficient attention to providing challenging opportunities for pupils to be fully involved in the experimental process. The current picture for pupils in Year 6 is similar. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has increased the number of pupils achieving the expected level significantly, but the comparison with the national average has stayed the same, that is below average and this is due to the fact that insufficient numbers of pupils achieve above the expected level.
91. In 2001, teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 indicate that pupils' attainment was below average. In the current Year 2, the standard of pupils' work is similar to the national average. This is an improvement and reflects the good planning and teaching that is taking place. In Years 1 and 2, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to explore and investigate, and to pose their own questions at the start of an investigation.
92. At the time of the previous inspection, some lessons were unsatisfactory resulting in some pupils making unsatisfactory progress. Currently, pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6 are never less than satisfactory and when opportunities are given for pupils to develop their skills in investigation, their achievements are good. In Years 1 and 2, their achievements are good. In all classes pupils with special educational needs work well with others and make similar progress. Those with significant needs are supported well by classroom assistants. All lessons provide pupils with opportunities to work together in pairs or groups as they carry out investigations, and teachers take great care to use correct scientific terms and to encourage pupils to do the same. The pupils who speak English as an additional language learn to use scientific terms and vocabulary well, and their achievements are good. Although nearly all are new to the school, they are all well integrated and included by other pupils in their discussions and group activities.
93. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good so that by the end of Year 2, many pupils have good skills in posing questions, recording observations and considering evidence. For instance, pupils' understanding of the need to make simple comparisons, and so identify patterns was promoted well in a lesson on measuring differences between humans in which the pupils were asked to measure their hand spans. They quickly saw the correlation between overall size and the size of the hand span. As one pupil noted to a friend, "I thought my hand span would be bigger than yours because I am taller." Their appreciation of this pattern was developed further by teachers by comparing the hand span size with the shoe size. Teachers provide a wide range of methods for recording results and findings and there is a good expectation that work should be well presented. Pupils respond by drawing on their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to produce labelled diagrams, lists and tally sheets, drawings and some written reports, some of a good standard. On occasions, higher attaining pupils are not given opportunities to attempt to record for themselves what has happened. For instance, in a topic on sound, all pupils identified and recorded in drawings and lists a wide range of sources of sound. They all took part in the investigation to discover what happens to sound as it travels away from sources but this was not recorded, which was a missed opportunity to provide a challenge to those of higher attainment. Teachers' good relationships with pupils, and the interesting well thought out tasks, ensure that pupils are interested and keen to learn. Teachers ask good questions to develop and challenge thinking, not only during lessons but when

work is marked. For instance when asked to draw up a list of differences between plants and animals, one higher attaining pupil, whose list was long, including the fact that plants don't have brains and don't have babies, also noted that plants did not live long. In marking this, the teacher asked the pupil to think about this further and explained the error carefully.

94. In Years 3 to 6 teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' knowledge systematically in each topic. Lessons and resources are well organized to provide investigations, but they do not always allow pupils enough opportunities to participate. For example, in an investigation on condensation in Year 5, pupils working in groups safely observed a candle heating up a small container of water until evaporation occurred. Pupils were very well behaved and were interested in the activity. However, their participation was limited. They observed the outcomes and recorded them. All learnt that condensation occurred when the steam from the boiling water was trapped and the scientific terms relating to the experiment were used accurately. For instance, one pupil who spoke English as an additional language later explained the meaning of condensation and that she did not know this word previously. However, the teacher missed some opportunities to involve the pupils in the process. For instance, none of the pupils were sure how long it would take for the water to boil. This would have been an ideal way to increase their motivation through prediction and presentation of the evidence by measurement of time. In the main, pupils are given investigations to carry out, but teachers often structure the experiment so that there is only one factor to change and so pupils generally predict the same outcomes. Teachers question pupils well and encourage them to use correct scientific terms. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, on testing the strengths of different magnets, a pupil discovered by chance an outcome that had not been planned for by the teacher. The teacher, seeing the opportunity to develop all the pupils understanding, wisely drew this to the attention of the others and suddenly there was an excited buzz in the room as others tried out this new phenomenon. However, this is an exception and much of the science work is very carefully structured so that pupils do not have the opportunity to think things out for themselves. Marking in Years 3 to 6 does little to challenge pupils' thinking. It generally consists of ticks or requests for better presentation. There are very few comments to challenge and develop thought. Computers are used effectively to encourage pupils to carry out research in science, especially into the uses of scientific processes in every day life. However, there is not sufficient work in using computers to measure and monitor scientific changes.
95. The leadership of the subject is sound. The curriculum is well-planned to ensure that the pupils develop their skills and knowledge systematically year on year. It takes careful account of the different expectations for the two year groups in each class. In Years 1 and 2 science is promoted well through links with other subjects in the role-play areas. For instance, in one class pupils could imagine working in a 'vets' and enjoyed taking care of sick 'animals'. In Years 3 to 6 the current school production has an environmental theme but this has not been exploited fully to develop an interest and excitement in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. Art continues to be a strength of the school. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations for Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were above average by the end of Year 6 but in line with average by the end of Year 2. Teaching and learning are consistently good and often very good in all classes so boys and girls of all levels of attainment build up their skills steadily and achieve well.

97. By the end of Year 2, the quality of pupils' draughtsmanship is good. Their pencil and pastel drawings of plants, shells, bark, and fir-cones reveal good eyes for detail. Most pupils have a good sense of proportion and higher attainers have an emerging appreciation of perspective. Lower attainers tend to press harder than is strictly necessary, so do not blend colours or achieve effects of light and shade as effectively as their classmates. None the less, their shells are unmistakably shells, clearly reflecting what they have seen. Pupils' sketchbooks show that they have explored ideas of colour, for example in strong contrasts, and examples of different textures through rubbings and collage. Lower attainers have made few notes to explain their preferences but average and higher attainers justify their choices competently, despite errors of language. The large quantity of artwork displayed demonstrates that after adaptations and improvements virtually everyone has created, in its final version, something worthy of exhibition.
98. By the end of Year 6, observational drawings are increasingly well executed. The representation of light and shade, both in colour and monochrome is effective, and includes such techniques as pointillism. Pupils adopt methods to suit specific purposes. Lower attainers for example use bold colour contrasts to support the effectiveness of posters about firework safety. Average and higher attainers make use of more subtle shades, at times answering the challenge of a deliberately limited palette, to explore and evoke moods and emotions. Working in groups, pupils regularly share and discuss each other's ideas in order to refine their approaches and better express their meaning.
99. Pupils show great interest in their tasks and behave well. They work well with one another and handle equipment maturely because teachers have high expectations of them. In one class the teacher reminded pupils of the need to use materials carefully, explaining the need for many artists to consider the cost of their equipment and resources. Pupils listened well and responded by taking care of the materials they used.
100. Teaching is good, and often very good because teachers are knowledgeable, so pupils develop their own knowledge, skills and understanding well. Work is well planned and builds on pupils' skills year by year: for example, techniques of basic colour blending are well understood by pupils starting in Year 1 and they are developed and extended as pupils move up the school. In the best lessons, teachers share their enthusiasm well so pupils are engaged, and motivated by their experiences. Personal insights into the work of Kandinsky, Klee and Lowry, for example, make the work of great artists more accessible, helping pupils to appreciate their approaches and not simply engage in wholesale copying. Sketchbooks are used well because teachers value pupils' ideas and encourage them to experiment. Teachers focus their questions well, to make pupils think hard about their intentions and how their methods relate to the work in hand. Pupils with special needs learn well because teachers make sure they have suitable support to undertake tasks which are broadly the same as those of their classmates.
101. Subject co-ordination is good because, as practising artists themselves the co-ordinators have good vision to broaden pupils' horizons and the practical skills to support colleagues. Resources are good. A wide range of plates and prints of work by famous artists gives pupils the inspiration of good models. Information and communication technology is suitably employed to support work in pattern, shape and colour. There is currently limited three-dimensional work, except the simple sculptures done in the popular extra-curricular art club. Many pupils have entered a competition organised by a major regional newspaper to produce a card to celebrate the Queen's jubilee. This is open to children throughout Lancashire. It is a mark of the quality of its art that on the final shortlist of 28, this school has two candidates.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards are similar to national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and show satisfactory improvement since 1997, when the school was last inspected. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. There is appropriate scope for creativity in the designing stage, which is clearly evident in the high quality of design plans, which results in good achievement in this aspect for pupils. Making skills are satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils' evaluations of their work are often too brief. Teachers have not helped pupils gain a good understanding of how to consider different elements of their work in their evaluations.
103. In Years 1 and 2, pupils explored slider and lever mechanisms in moving pictures. Useful experimentation with the technological aspect was expanded in earlier lessons when pupils experimented with joins, and the quality and finish were good, with attention paid to detail. When making their playground structures, pupils used models, pictures and words to describe their designs. Evaluations show that pupils recognise the steps they have taken but do not show evidence of full consideration of ideas for improvement. In general, the evaluating and improving aspect are not consolidated throughout projects. Evaluations tend to rely heavily on the final presentation of the product and insufficiently on the process. Pupils generate ideas and make realistic plans. The storage of materials and equipment limits independent access to a full range of components and tools.
104. In Years 3 to 6, pupils design and make simple products. The time allocated to evaluation is in general rather short and pupils are not always given appropriate ideas of changes that they might attempt. Making skills are good and pupils make products to a good standard. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils explore packaging, using knowledge from their mathematics lessons. The level of accuracy in the quality and finish is good and pupils have considered their function. In exploring pneumatics, they apply knowledge acquired in science lessons when they make their moving monsters. Year 5 and 6 plan a biscuit 'fit for a queen' to celebrate the Queen's golden jubilee and collaborate extremely well when planning their designs. There are good opportunities for developing persuasive arguments. Pupils challenge, present arguments, persuade, appease and defend their point of view when discussing their team plan. Pupils respond to the challenge set by the teachers. They display positive attitudes to the subject and report that they enjoy the lessons. They pay good attention to the quality and finish of products.
105. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers prepare pupils well for planning sessions by engaging their interest and sparking off lots of ideas through an initial discussion and through an interesting array of audio-visual aids. Preparations for lessons are often very good. A very successful lesson, with pupils in Years 3 and 4, explored the effects of operating a foot pump, which had been placed underneath various items. The teacher engaged the pupils by asking them to predict the likely outcomes. This lesson was a very good example of the teacher using a range of strategies to facilitate learning, such as integrating activities into homework tasks. The link to other subjects is emphasised in the choice of topics for the infant pupils but this is not a strong feature of the junior curriculum. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils study 'Homes' in history and geography when studying that topic in design technology. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, however, do not link the unit of work related to sandwich making whilst studying healthy eating in science. Some pupils have opportunities to use computers in the design process but

this practice is not established through the school. The sound standards are a direct result of sound teaching in all aspects of the subject.

106. Subject leadership and management are sound. The coordinators have worked hard to develop a policy and a scheme of work that is rooted in the National Curriculum. This matches government guidelines and allows scope for individual creativity, retaining those elements that have proved to be successful in terms of skill development, standards and engaging pupils' interest. Natural links with other subjects are not fully exploited. Pupils are making sound gains in knowledge and understanding of the designing and making processes. Achievement is being checked at the end of each unit of study but the information gained is not being used systematically to promote higher standards. Resources are vastly improved since the last inspection. There are now sinks in every classroom and the number of electric sockets has increased. There is a suitably equipped trolley in the junior building but the storage arrangements make it difficult for pupils to access tools and materials independently.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. Pupils' achievement in geography is better than that found at the time of the last inspection. The school is adapting the government's guidance for the subject and has schemes of work that teachers follow, and ensure that pupils' build on the knowledge and understanding gained from one year to the next. This has led to a greater consistency in achievement across the school. Pupils attain levels that match national expectations for pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in lessons because they are supported well.
108. Pupils in Year 2 have a clear understanding of their local environment. They know that they live in a town and can identify significant differences between town and country. When studying how to make the school a safer place, most pupils are able to make good suggestions. All pupils know that their world can be represented as a two-dimensional map and are able to use this knowledge to draw recognisable maps of their journey to school. Pupils of higher attainment include good detail and they understand the purpose of a map. Teachers plan activities carefully to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge of the physical and man made features of the locality in which they live. For example, pupils undertake traffic surveys and consider the parking problems in the school's immediate neighbourhood. Skills learned in numeracy lessons are used well in these surveys. Pupils have a good knowledge of the features that enhance pedestrians' safety.
109. Pupils in Year 6 have developed knowledge and understanding of contrasting localities, such as Barrow-in-Furness and Appleby, and are able to explain how and why the lifestyle of the people who live there differ. Pupils competently use the Internet to find out what amenities the town of Barrow-in-Furness has to attract new businesses. Project folders, produced by Year 6 for homework, are very good and indicate that pupils have studied in depth different mountain ranges. These are often very well presented with many pupils including evidence of a good level of research, often from the Internet. This level of commitment by pupils completing work at home greatly contributes to their learning. Pupils are keen to use atlases and maps and demonstrate how quickly they can locate places on a map. Pupils of higher attainment have a good understanding of co-ordinates and how to read the different scales of maps and plans. Those of lower attainment are sometimes unsure how to use the scale of maps to work out distances. Although higher attaining pupils can talk knowledgeably about rivers and erosion they have not heard of the term 'contour'. When working in geography, pupils use their skills

in literacy and in information and communication technology to carry out research and to present their work as a written account or explanation.

110. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall, though one lesson was unsatisfactory. Teachers work from well-structured lesson plans to present stimulating and interesting lessons. Pupils show a good level of interest in the physical world around them, how it was formed and why it is continually changing. They appreciate how mountains and volcanoes were formed and how certain events can have a significant impact on the lives of different people. Teachers find imaginative ways to give pupils practical demonstrations of difficult ideas such as the eruption of volcanoes. Lessons are well prepared, with well-chosen materials and resources. Pupils are usually given clear instructions about what they have to do and teachers question pupils well. However, they do not always insist on pupils' full attention which wastes time. At the end of the lesson, time is not always set aside to assess pupils' understanding. This is a missed opportunity for pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. In the unsatisfactory lesson pupils' wasted too much time through inattention and not being clear about the task. The teacher did not monitor pupils' work thoroughly enough to ensure all pupils understood what they had to do.
111. The leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinators have raised teachers' interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers' plans are monitored and samples of pupils' work are scrutinised so that changes can be made to the programme of work, if necessary. Good plans are in place to develop the subject further

## **HISTORY**

112. The standard of pupils' work is similar to that expected nationally for those in Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the findings of the inspection in 1997. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress from one year to the next.
113. Teachers use resources well to help pupils gain an understanding of the passing of time. In particular, pupils are shown videos of life in times past which help them to visualize what life must have been like. Domestic artefacts, which the pupils have brought to school, help pupils understand the life of ordinary people one hundred years ago. By the end of Year 2, pupils recall the causes and effects of important historical events such as The Great Fire of London and understand the importance of famous people in the past such as Samuel Pepys. Pupils are keen to talk about and explain the differences they have noticed in old and new houses. Those of higher attainment can identify a number of differences and use technical language to describe old-fashioned windows, such as 'sash'. All pupils including those of lower attainment understand that we find out about the past in a variety of ways. They explain, for example, that older people have memories of the past and that museums keep objects that were used long ago.
114. By the end of Year 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding of history and their skills in finding out about the past are as expected for eleven year olds. Their achievements are satisfactory. Pupils are able to compare the value of different sources of evidence such as archaeology, pictures, living memory and the Internet. Pupils of average and higher attainment recall a good amount of detail about Ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman civilisations. Those of lower attainment know some of the features of these periods. Year 3 and 4 pupils develop their understanding of the legacy the Romans left behind and enjoy researching and locating place names with a Roman origin. Older pupils recall with pleasure the long project they undertook at home, studying the Victorians and

researching for information from the Internet or books. They describe well what life was like for children and families in these times. Pupils in some year groups have a good knowledge of what they learn and complete an evaluation sheet at the end of each topic saying what they have enjoyed most and what, if any aspect, they did not. Teachers gain from this evaluation a good idea of their teaching and as a consequence are making changes in their planning when they discover that pupils are not so interested in an aspect. At present this practice is still being trialed.

115. Pupils respond well to history topics. They have a thoughtful interest in the past and clear memories of the key points of each topic they have recently studied, particularly when they have been on visits linked to their study or participated in role-play, for example, when they played beings Vikings and the teachers were slaves! The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen in Years 3 and 4 was good. The teacher built well on pupils' previous understanding. For example, the teacher asked "What did the Romans do to keep the invaders out" and helped pupils to think of answers by inviting them to put themselves in the Romans place. With judicious prompting the teacher elicited a variety of sensible and thoughtful answers. Pupils were enthusiastic about looking at the differences in place names on a map of England and were engrossed in finding the names of places with such endings as 'caster' and 'eter'. This work linked well to improving pupils' skills in geography as well as giving pupils some idea of the effects of Roman settlement. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language made as good progress as their peers because of the good level of help and support from the teacher, when it was required. Although teachers use worksheets, there is not the same heavy emphasis on their use as at the time of the last inspection; they are of good quality and work is now better matched to pupils' prior attainment.
116. The management of the subject is good which is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinators have put a great deal of effort in producing comprehensive files which contain lesson plans, details of monitoring and good evaluations of what needs to be done to improve the subject further. It is clear from the information in the files that staff are in a good position to further develop the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

117. Since the last inspection, there have been good improvements in this subject in all of its aspects. Standards have improved and are continuing to rise; teachers are more confident in delivering an enriched curriculum; resources are vastly improved and put to good use; and leadership and management of the subject are good. By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment match national expectations. Pupils from Year 3 to 6, including those with special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. By the end of Year 2, standards exceed national expectations and achievement is good. Throughout the school, there is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls and between pupils from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
118. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' achievement is good for those in Year 2 and very good for those in Year 1. Pupils' confidence is better than that seen in many schools. As a matter of course, pupils use CD-ROMs and the Internet as key tools in their work. They are used to looking in 'Favourites', that is the most frequently chosen programs and using Internet search engines for children when they find information about Samuel Pepys in their history topic or about the Loch Ness monster following a creative writing session. They regularly complete activities from websites and one pupil of higher attainment has her own web site. Pupils learn to send e-mails and to use hyperlinks to navigate their way



around the screen. Their mouse control is good. Those of higher and average attainment are becoming independent in their use of different tools to create pictures and are beginning to import images from clipart, whilst those of lower attainment do this with support. They also use the computer for data handling, linking it to other subjects such as mathematics and geography. A good example is when pupils carried out a survey of the parked cars in nearby roads. Word processing shows good progression, from simple messages in Year 1 to more complex text in Year 2, which is saved and printed.

119. Standards in Years 3 to 6 have risen since the last inspection and there are positive signs that standards are beginning to rise even higher. The information and communication technology suite is in constant use and because it is often used well, most pupils make good progress. Unfortunately, many pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have not experienced good provision earlier in their school life and their new learning cannot build easily on previous learning. Throughout the school teachers' planning is now good and allows pupils to build up their skills consistently. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 are becoming adept at producing posters and using the Internet for research. Many of the pupils in Year 6 have experience of setting up or interrogating databases and using spreadsheet data for modelling. Those of higher attainment make decisions about the best way to present information and the importance of entering information in the correct way in order to achieve the required outcome. Desktop-publishing skills are well developed and these are being further developed in the extra-curricular computer club. Research skills using the Internet are developing well and there are many good examples of using information and communication technology in other subjects. In a very good Year 3 and 4 geography lesson, pupils were very well motivated by the activity of visiting the website for the town they were studying. The lesson was structured well by the teacher so that pupils were learning independently and helping each other and the teacher was able to give good support to those of lower attainment who needed extra explanations. Similarly, elements of the art and design curriculum are taught well.
120. Pupils' behaviour and care for equipment is good. Well-motivated pupils work with enthusiasm. They want to succeed, and are determined to master the skills they need. They work very well together and keep each other achieving. The pairing of more experienced pupils with less experienced pupils is helping to raise attainment throughout the school. This use of this 'buddy' system is ideally suited to classes containing two age groups.
121. Teaching is good overall, and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Teaching is well organised and learning support assistants are always well deployed. The strongest teaching provides clear explanations, introduces new tools at an appropriate pace, reminds pupils about important learning points and gives pupils time to practise their skills. A good example of teaching at its best was seen in an excellent Year 1 and 2 lesson that focused on using hyperlinks as a navigational tool in research. The teacher had paired Year 2 pupils with Year 1 pupils, which benefited all pupils. Year 2 pupils were able to consolidate their learning through explanation and demonstration and to improve their confidence. Year 1 pupils were able to learn at a faster rate because they had an individual peer tutor. The teacher had also thought about individual learning styles and personality and some pupils were working alone.
122. The subject is well led and coordinated. The two coordinators have a clear-sighted view of how the subject needs to develop in order to raise standards. The school has successfully improved resources over the last four years. There is a network of computers in the suite, which provides pupils with access to independent learning programs and teachers are beginning to make good use of this facility for integrating

information and communication technology into literacy or numeracy lessons. Additional equipment and the computers in classrooms are used well in lessons. A uniform system of assessment is not used throughout the school, but there are good plans to address this in the current year.

## **MUSIC**

123. Music plays a good part in the life of the school. There are several teachers with instrumental skills and they use these in lessons to inspire pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to study different instruments from visiting specialist teachers, including the flute and violin. Pupils attain standards that are similar to expectations in Year 2. No judgement was made on the attainment of pupils in Year 6 because there were no lessons for them during the week of the inspection. At this time of the year the pupils participate in a project with the linked high school to learn electronic keyboard skills in preparation for their transfer to secondary school. Pupils enjoy music and sing well in assemblies.
124. In a good lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils learnt an informal method of recording the volume of sound. They listened with interest to the explanation of how the shape of the line indicated the amount of sound and successfully reproduced it using the shakers they had made in school. In their own compositions, they clearly showed an understanding of musical patterns and that the sounds could be made to reflect a mood or feeling. One pupil named her piece “waves on the beach” depicting the rise and fall of the sounds she wished to create. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress in learning to sing songs in unison and in two parts. In a Year 5 lesson pupils sang a two-part song without accompaniment. It was a challenging piece and pupils had to concentrate hard to maintain the pitch. The group added rhythmic accompaniment to the singing and pupils tried hard to improve their performance which was intended for the school production at the end of the year.
125. Teaching is generally good, with lessons providing a good mix of musical experiences, together with knowledge of notation and technical vocabulary, for instance the pupils in Years 1 and 2 learnt the terms ‘piano’ and ‘forte’ for loud and soft and were interested in the origin of the word piano. The subject leaders are knowledgeable and have devised a satisfactory programme of work that teachers of all levels of skill can address. The school’s participation in local music festivals and in entertainment for older citizens in the town encourages pupils to perform to a good standard, as do the productions that are staged in school at the end of the summer term and at Christmas time.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

126. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those expected for pupils of these ages nationally. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress. In some classes, the quality of teaching is exceptionally good for particular aspects of physical education, for instance, dance is taught very well and pupils achieve a high standard in dance by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, this is not sustained in each class or in each aspect of the subject. Pupils’, throughout the school, show good attitudes to their learning. Those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, participate fully in lessons and their progress is similar to others
127. Improvement since the time of the previous inspection is good. This is because at that time standards by the end of Year 6 were not as high as expected and a significant proportion of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. At that time, teachers’ planning

and arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress were unsatisfactory. Both these issues have been addressed effectively by the school.

128. Throughout the school standards in dance are well above those expected for pupils' ages. This is because of the excellent quality of teaching made for this aspect of the provision. One teacher in Years 1 and 2 is a skilful pianist. He accompanies the children in dance lessons, making immediate adaptations to the music. This helps pupils to respond very effectively to the stimulus provided by the music and inspires them to produce work of very high quality. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 also achieve very high standards in dance. They work very well together, in groups, to produce their 'Monster dance', responding superbly to their teacher's excellent selection of music. Her thoughtful use of questioning enables pupils to draw on their emotions and helped them to interpret the music and to fit their movements to it appropriately as their monster emerges from its egg and begins to move.
129. During less successful lessons in athletics, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 responded well during activities to warm up the body. They worked hard and clearly understand the importance of this part of the lesson in preparing their bodies for exercise. However, in the main part of the lessons, pupils were not challenged sufficiently. This is because the activities they were asked to do were too easy for their age. For example, they aimed beanbags into hoops from very short distances. This and similar activities do not provide a sufficiently challenging test for their physical abilities.
130. In athletics pupils assess their success and improvement by timing and measuring. They do this accurately and understand the improvements they have made. In dance they respond well to the skilful questioning of their teachers that helps them to evaluate the quality of their work accurately. However, in some lessons, there are not enough opportunities for them to evaluate the success of their work or that of other pupils or to make suggestions about how they might improve in the future.
131. The provision made for the subject by the school meets the requirements for the curriculum well. For example, all pupils in Years 3 to 6 have ten sessions of swimming during each year. Consequently pupils achieve well in this aspect of the subject. There is a very good range of extra curricular clubs, including country dancing, football, netball and a gymnastics club at which pupils achieve a high standard of work. These are very popular amongst pupils and are attended by large numbers. They make a very positive contribution to pupils' achievements and enable the school to provide good support for those pupils who are gifted and talented in this area of their learning.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

132. By Year 6, pupils' standards match those expected for their age as set out in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, as they do for pupils at the end of Year 2. The school has maintained the standards found during the last inspection. A good variety of topics and activities develop pupils' interest well, most notably the pattern of visits and visitors. These help to make the subject come to life for pupils who show in discussion that their knowledge and understanding is often greater than can be seen in their written work. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
133. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about the importance of major festivals and celebrations. They make books about 'The Birth of Jesus' and retell parables such as 'The Good Samaritan' and 'The Prodigal Son', in their own words. One pupil had written, "he had to eat the pig food with the pigs." They record their understanding of Shabbat as 'a

special day for the Jewish people' and know that a mezuzah is attached to the door in a Jewish home. Pupils show good understanding of stories but have limited insight into the deeper, underlying meanings. One of the strengths of teaching is the sensitivity shown by teachers when they include all pupils in lessons. This results in positive attitudes to the subject. Following discussions, the teachers work hard to reinforce understanding through enjoyable and practically-based activities such as when the bilingual assistant made pakora for all the children and staff to celebrate Eid.

134. Year 3 and 4 pupils benefit from the opportunity to define their ideas about faith and its expression when they discuss Sikhism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. They are knowledgeable about the Bible and have a wide-ranging knowledge about symbols used in world faiths. One pupil explained the importance of prayer times to the Muslims and described how this would often lead to traffic jams in Qatar where he had been living. Pupils are very interested in the beautifully decorated prayer mat that is shown to them by the teacher and understand the importance of fasting and cleanliness before prayer. By Year 6, pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs of Islam and Christianity. They can explain the importance to Christians of the Gospels; the Ten Commandments; The Creation story; and The Crucifixion and Resurrection. They can relate beliefs to their every day lives and show a mature understanding of the need for people to learn from their mistakes and to understand the nature of forgiveness. One pupil quoted Rudyard Kipling's poem, 'If' and another pupil related the story of 'Beth Gelert' when explaining the importance of forgiveness. Year 5 pupils reveal that their knowledge about Islam is deeper when they show that they have remembered a lot from their previous study.
135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory although teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. Learning is accelerated when teachers engage pupils in discussion by skilful questioning and bring the subject to life with a range of authentic resources. Learning is hindered when teachers do not engage pupils' interest or where pupils' unsatisfactory attention or behaviour is allowed to dominate. A good example of a stimulating lesson was seen in a Year 3 and 4 class when the teacher produced an unusual jug and asked pupils what it was they saw. This gave rise to lots of thoughts and ideas. Literacy skills, and speaking and listening skills in particular, are reinforced well. Year 6 pupils listen carefully to assemblies and can relate to the themes discussed. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' personal and social development and to their own sense of self in the world.
136. There have been recent changes in the leadership and management of the subject, which is satisfactory with areas for development. The newly appointed coordinator is extremely well qualified but has not had time to influence the development of the subject. The scheme of work does not incorporate elements of the locally agreed syllabus sufficiently to enable teachers to provide a more reflective approach to the work of pupils in Years 3 to 6. There are inconsistencies in the quality of provision and the co-ordinator has identified that a whole-school approach to assessment and the monitoring of teaching and learning will be useful to improve this. There are some good quality books and resources, which are used well in most lessons.