

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Peter's CE
Chorley

LEA area : Lancashire

Unique Reference Number :119806

Headteacher : Mrs. B. Mitchell

Reporting inspector : Mr John Gornall
21257

Dates of inspection : 11th – 14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707549

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
Type of control :	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils :	4 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Eaves Lane Chorley Lancashire PR6 ODX
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Appropriate authority :	Lancashire LEA
Name of chair of governors : [where appropriate]	Mrs. M.E.Heald
Date of previous inspection :	26 th Feb 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Gornall, Registered Inspector	Art	Main Findings
	Physical Education	Key Issues for Action
	Under Fives	Characteristics of the School
		Key Indicators
		Attainment and Progress
		Teaching
Terry Finn, Team Inspector	Music	Curriculum and Assessment
	History	Leadership and Management
	Geography	
Shirley Ziebicki, Team Inspector	English	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
		SEN provision
Richard Powell, Team Inspector	Science	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
	Information Technology	
Steve Birtwistle, Team Inspector	Mathematics	Efficiency of the School
	Design Technology	Equal Opportunities provision
Brenda Brown, Lay Inspector		Attendance
		Support guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community

[this table should list all team members and also indicate, in the subject column, the team member with responsibility for Under fives, Special educational needs, Equal opportunities and English as a second language]

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- provides a warm, caring and positive learning ethos for all pupils
- promotes an excellent response from pupils in their behaviour, attitudes to school life and relationships
 - ensures good teaching throughout the school
 - supports the progress of pupils very well in English, mathematics and science so that the number of them reaching the national standards is above average
 - enables higher attaining pupils to do well in mathematics and science
 - encourages pupils to do well in physical education, particularly dance and movement
 - provides very well for pupils with special educational needs who make good progress as a result
 - communicates very well with parents and has secured their confidence and support
 - provides excellent school administration and financial control
 - provides many extra-curricular activities for pupils to take part in

2. Where the school has weaknesses

- standards of attainment in information technology at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are below national expectations
- I. the strategic direction the school is taking in terms of improvement is insufficiently prioritised and evaluated
 - II. the school's curriculum is not managed well enough to ensure a progressive acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills as pupils move through the school. This results in variation in time, content and balance of subjects taught between different classes
 - III. learning resources for early years play, music, geography and the quality and range of books in the junior library are too limited

The school has many significant strengths and pupils are very well cared for in a happy and supportive community. However, the management of the school needs a more strategic approach to addressing school improvement. The weaknesses identified will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

3. How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues of the previous inspection. Progress has been hindered however by the lack of systematic evaluation and reporting of the school's efforts in relation to the previous inspection findings.

There have been improvements in curriculum planning to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school has maintained its generally good assessment and recording procedures. There has been a marked improvement in the quality and quantity of information technology equipment available but the school has not yet established a systematic teaching programme. The school development plan does now cover a longer period but it does not contain clearly identified priorities that have timescales evaluation criteria or resource implications. The school has improved its provision for cultural awareness amongst the pupils. There has been a significant improvement to the school's accommodation which is now described as good.

In terms of the quality of education the school has improved teaching and raised standards in English, mathematics and science. The leadership and management of the school has begun to develop self-evaluation strategies but these are underdeveloped compared to most schools. The school's ethos has strengthened further since the last inspection. The school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

4. Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	C	B
Mathematics	B	A
Science	B	A

4. Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The results from the 1998 National Curriculum tests show that attainment is above average in mathematics and science when compared to all schools nationally. It is broadly average in English. When compared to similar schools pupils' performance is well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 is similar to the national picture in English and mathematics but above in science.

The recent results for 1999 are commented upon in the Report and reflect an improvement in English so that it joins mathematics and science in being above average when compared to all schools against the 1998 figures. Data is not yet available to compare the most recent 1999 results with national comparisons for 1999.

5. Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	5. Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	Good *	Good	Good
Information technology	#	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Good	Good

* Knowledge and understanding of the world

5. # not applicable

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

6. Other aspects of the school

Aspect	6. Comment
Behaviour	Excellent throughout the school.
Attendance	Good and most pupils arrive for school and their lessons on time.
Ethos*	Very good. The school sets a positive climate for learning. It promotes excellent attitudes and relationships. There is a strong commitment to high standards in English, mathematics and science.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory overall. The direction the school is taking and why are not clear. The new headteacher has secured the confidence and support of staff but roles and responsibilities of senior managers and coordinators are underdeveloped.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. It is broad but insufficiently balanced. The time available and the content covered for some subjects is uneven.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision is made and pupils make good progress as a result.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall with spiritual and moral development being the strongest elements.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing levels are high and staff are well deployed. Resources are variable but satisfactory overall. Accommodation is good.
Value for money	The unit cost per pupil is high but the quality of education provided is satisfactory often good. On balance the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.

7. The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	7. What some parents are not happy about
IV. the positive ethos and the values and attitudes promoted by the staff V. the progress their children make generally and the standards they achieve VI. the quality of information about what is happening and how pupils are progressing VII. very good standards of behaviour VIII. wide variety of extra-curricular clubs and activities IX. they feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	X. a small number of parents made minor some classes, concerns regarding time devoted to

The percentage of questionnaires returned was high and reflected a very positive view of the school and what it has to offer. A few written comments were made either endorsing support for the school or offering suggestions. Those parents who attended the parents' meeting and many parents during the inspection spoke very positively about the commitment of the staff and the high level of care and provision for each and every child. The inspection team fully endorses the views and opinions of the parents. The partnership between the school and the parents is strong and supports the pupils in developing a positive attitude to school and what it has to offer.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

1. In order to move the school forward to its next stage of development the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

8. **Raise standards in information technology at both key stages by:**

- . creating a detailed scheme of work to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum Programme of Study are met;
- . ensuring teachers follow the guidance in the new scheme so that it is clear which skills of the various strands of information technology are to be taught in each year group and key stage;
- . equipping staff with the necessary knowledge and expertise to teach information technology through a planned in-service training programme;
- . identifying opportunities in other subjects of the curriculum for pupils to use and develop their information technology skills, for example, word processing in a range of writing contexts, data handling in mathematics or science, control technology in science or geography.

(Paragraphs 16, 20, 92, 110, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163)

? **Improve the strategic development of the school by:**

- . updating and prioritising the School Development Plan so that it clearly shows the focus of its current improvement work, the timescales for completion, the success criteria by which it will be measured and the costs involved;
- . establishing clear roles and responsibilities for the senior management team and other co-ordinators;
- . developing an agreed system for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the work the school does;
- . ensuring those statutory requirements currently not being met are put in place.

(Paragraphs 39, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 84, 134, 139, 143)

? **Improve the overall management and quality of the school's curriculum by:**

- . establishing whole school agreement on the content of the curriculum, the time allocated to teach subjects and the use of appropriate cross curricular links;
- . ensuring the art curriculum is broadened, particularly at Key Stage 2, to provide pupils with increased opportunities for 'investigating and making' using a range of materials and techniques;
- . ensuring that history, geography, music and design technology have adequate breadth, continuity and progression across the year groups;
- . providing early years children in both classroom settings with a less formal curriculum to encourage independence, investigation and the taking of responsibility for their own learning;
- . ensuring the school's overall curriculum is regularly monitored and evaluated.

(Paragraphs 32, 35, 36, 38, 39, 55, 71, 73, 94, 97, 122, 129, 131, 134, 136, 139, 143)

? **Improve resources for learning so that:**

- . early years children have access to outdoor play using a range of wheeled toys and large play equipment and within both early years classrooms improve resources so that sand, water and painting become regular features;
- . better use is made of the Key Stage 2 library by improving the quality, quantity and range of non-fiction books available;
- . increased learning resources are available for geography and music.

(Paragraphs 82, 87, 93, 104, 110, 134, 139, 143)

In addition to the key issues above the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- . improved consistency in the quality of pupils' handwriting at Key Stage 2.

(Paragraph 106)

? **INTRODUCTION**

? **Characteristics of the school**

1. St. Peter's C.E. Primary School serves a mixed urban area on the north eastern edge of Chorley. There are currently 312 pupils on roll and there are slightly more girls than boys. Most of the pupils who attend the school live in the immediate neighbourhood, but a small minority travel from the surrounding district. The school was formerly grant maintained and came back under the control of Lancashire Education Authority earlier this year.

2. Most of the housing from which the pupils come is owner occupied terraced or established semi-detached with a few coming from detached properties. Additionally a number of pupils come from a local council owned housing estate. Eighteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is similar to the national average for all schools. The attainment of children on entry to the school as recorded in the assessments which take place in the first half term, indicate a wide range of attainment but, overall, is broadly average when compared to schools nationally. Seventy-six pupils are identified on the school's register of special educational needs of whom five have full Statements of Special Educational Need. The total number of pupils with special educational needs at 24 percent is slightly higher than the national average for 1998 of 18 percent.

3. The standard admissions number per year is 44 children. The school operates a 'rising fives' admissions policy so that children start school in reception in the year they become five. At the time of the inspection the reception children had only been in school for about six weeks. They are accommodated in one dedicated reception class and one mixed reception/year one class. The admissions policy has a detailed set of criteria designed to promote a smooth entry into school for reception class children who are admitted as 'rising fives'. A system of priorities admits children if they are baptised and meet one or more of six sub-criteria. A second criterion refers to non-baptised children who meet a list of three sub-criteria.

4. The school has a nursery which accepts children aged four years, but at the time of the inspection it was closed. The headteacher explained that the nursery is only open in the spring and summer terms each year when the school receives additional funding to support the admission of children after their fourth birthday. The school is currently applying to the DfEE to change the status of the nursery to allow admissions for three year olds.

5. The school has a 'statement of intent' describing its main aims as: to realise the potential of each child in a supportive and caring environment; to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, Christian commitment and sensitivity; to encourage all positive aspects of education and social development together with high academic standards. This is further supported by a set of nine school objectives for each child.

6. The school's current educational priorities are taken from its school development plan and are described as 'developments for 1999'. These are to continue to monitor and support literacy hour implementation; to begin to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy; to continue to monitor and assist with the delivery of science at both key stages; to provide on-going support and monitoring of religious education throughout the school; to organise a suitable project in history connected with the millennium; to complete a new scheme of work for geography and to continue to monitor the teaching of geography; to make appropriate changes to the design technology curriculum; to improve early years links with parents and improved assessment procedures; to review and upgrade resources for music; to monitor and support art throughout the school; to update, revise and replace the school's physical education policy and guidelines; to continue to improve equipment levels for information technology; to continue work on nine objectives associated with special educational needs begun in 1998; to set targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science.

14. **Key Indicators**

14. Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	28	18	46

National Curriculum Test/Task	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	22	22	24
Boys	22	22	24
Girls	16	17	17
Total	38	39	41
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	83	85	89
School	83	85	89
National	80	81	85

Teacher Assessments⁸	English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	22	24	24
Boys	22	24	24
Girls	17	17	16
Total	39	41	40
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	85	89	87
School	85	89	87
National	81	85	86

¹

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

16. Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	27	20	47

National Curriculum Test Results ^{9.}		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	16	25	23
	Girls	16	14	16
	Total	32	39	39
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	68	83	83
	National	65	58	69

Teacher Assessments ^{10.}		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	N/A	N/A	N/A
	National	N/A	N/A	N/A

18. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.7
	National comparative data	0.5

18. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	2
Permanent	0

18. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	32
Satisfactory or better	98
Less than satisfactory	2

18. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

18. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

18. **Attainment and progress**

1. When children first enter St Peter's, many display a 'readiness' for school and what it has to offer. The school meets this challenge well and provision for the under-fives is at least satisfactory and often good. The attainment of children on entry to the school as recorded in the assessments which take place in the first half term, is very wide but, overall, is broadly average when compared to other schools. With at least satisfactory and often good teaching coupled with the good level of well-directed adult support children make at least satisfactory and often good progress. By the time they reach their fifth birthday, the vast majority of children will meet, and some will surpass, the desirable outcomes associated with under-fives education. As a result, most children are ready to begin the National Curriculum by the time they reach their fifth birthday.

2. Attainment in school in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science is similar to the national average at Key Stage 1 and above at Key Stage 2 and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Standards in all of the other subjects of the National Curriculum, with the exception of information technology and physical education, are broadly similar to those found in other schools when compared to pupils of a similar age. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below the national expectation. Standards in physical education are above what might be expected in other schools and are particularly high in dance and movement.

3. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science and pupils make satisfactory progress. The National Curriculum test results for the school in 1998, in reading, writing and mathematics show that about four out of every five pupils are achieving level 2 which is similar to the national average for all schools. Teacher assessments in science for those pupils achieving level 2 in 1998 are also average when compared to all schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 3 in the 1998 tests, tasks and assessments for English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with the national averages for all schools. In comparison to similar schools however, pupils' performance in the 1998 tests are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The more recent results for 1999 show a similar picture to the previous year with reading, writing and mathematics being similar to the national average. There has been a significant improvement in the pupils' performance in spelling in 1999 and is now broadly average when compared to all schools. The teacher assessments for science in 1999 are lower than the previous year and slightly below the national average.

4. At the end of Key Stage 2, the attainment of pupils is above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils make good progress. The National Curriculum tests for 1998 in mathematics and science show the proportion of pupils reaching level 4 or above was above the national average. Results for English in 1998 were broadly similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 in 1998 in English and mathematics was in line with the national average for all schools and above in science. In comparison to similar schools, pupils' performance in the 1998 tests were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. In 1999 the results for English show improvement so that it now joins mathematics and science in being above the national average for those pupils achieving level 4. In terms of higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science the school does well. One in four pupils achieves the higher level 5 and this is a high proportion when compared to the 1998 national figures. The level 5 results for mathematics in 1999 reflect a marked improvement on the previous year. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 in English in 1999 is similar to the average for all school in 1998.

5. Both the results of National Curriculum tests and tasks at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 confirm inspection findings.

6. At both key stages pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology, history, geography and music and standards are broadly comparable to those found in other schools for pupils of a similar age. Pupils do better in physical education and they make good progress, as a result, standards are high, particularly in dance and movement. Pupils do not do as well as they should in information technology. Pupils' attainment in this subject is below the national expectation for their age and their overall progress is unsatisfactory. The progress of pupils in art at both key stages is satisfactory but the curriculum offered to pupils is rather narrow. Standards are broadly typical to

those found in other schools in the techniques of painting and drawing. In other aspects of 'investigating and making' and 'knowledge and understanding' in art, particularly at Key Stage 2, there are some weaknesses and pupils' progress is not as secure as it might be.

7. Generally, the progress of pupils in most subjects is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and at least satisfactory often good at Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils make good and in some cases very good progress and achieve high standards by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as the school analyses their needs at an early stage, sets realistic targets for improvement and reviews progress on a regular basis. The school has a high proportion of classroom support staff, both teaching and non-teaching, who make a positive contribution to the quality of education provided throughout the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this is a strength of the school. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are very well supported and fully integrated into school life. Other pupils identified on the school's special needs register also receive good support and they make good progress. Many such pupils receive individual adult support at some time during their school day. There is no discernible difference between the progress made by boys and that by girls.

22. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

9. Pupils' attitudes to work are excellent. Pupils in both key stages listen attentively to their teachers, follow instructions painstakingly and co-operate with their peers in supporting each other's work. They are very happy in school, are eager to learn and able to sustain concentration for long periods of time. They generally take pride in the presentation of their work and handle books and equipment sensibly. Pupils are able to work independently in lessons when required to do so. Homework is completed promptly and diligently by the majority of pupils.

10. The behaviour of pupils is excellent in the classroom, on the playground and around the school. Pupils are courteous, well-mannered and helpful to each other, their teachers and visitors. They take turns, wait patiently and show considerable concern for anyone who is feeling unwell. Pupils are aware of the school's code of conduct and observe it in all aspects of their life and work at school. Parents agree that the consistently high standards of behaviour within the school are one of its greatest strengths. There is no racial intolerance or insensitivity.

11. Pupils' personal development is good. In Key Stage 2 pupils co-operate in the preparation and distribution of harvest baskets within the locality. They raise money for various charities and for a local hospital radiography department, with whom a positive relationship has been built involving a member of staff being welcomed into the school to talk about X-rays. Whilst older pupils are willing to take on responsibilities within classrooms they do not have sufficient opportunities to take on specific roles outside lessons.

12. Pupils develop conversational skills within and beyond classrooms. Reception children talk eagerly over lunch about their work and interests. Their table manners are good and they understand turn-taking in speech. Where pupils are presented with opportunities to take on responsibility, such as in the highly regarded school productions, they do so conscientiously and reliably. Exclusion is an extremely unusual event in the life of the school.

26. **Attendance**

13. Overall attendance at the school is good and broadly in line with the national average. Although not a statutory requirement, the attendance of children under five is good.

14. Registration is carried out quickly and efficiently. Registers are marked at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions in accordance with legal requirements. They are then returned to the office where lateness is recorded by office staff as pupils enter school. Registers are returned later to class teachers who take responsibility in the afternoons. Appropriate notations for absence are recorded in registers and are later classified when reasons for absence are identified.

15. Records indicate that a number of authorised absences during the first part of the autumn term were due to family

holidays; the majority being for genuine medical reasons. Unauthorised absences are few. The school has procedures in place to investigate these and, where such absences are persistent, takes necessary action in liaison with referral services. Rates of absence are reported to parents in governors' reports.

16. During the inspection some lateness was observed of a small minority of pupils. The school is quick to identify problems related to punctuality, particularly when this occasionally disrupts the start of lessons. Parents are notified when this occurs. In addition, a home-school agreement has been introduced which includes a contract with parents, and at Key Stage 2 with children and parents, to attend school regularly and on time.

30. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

30. Teaching

17. The quality of teaching is good and this is a strength of the school's overall educational provision. In 32 per cent of lessons, teaching is very good or better, including seven per cent which is excellent. Thirty nine per cent of teaching is good and twenty seven per cent is satisfactory. Only two per cent of teaching is deemed unsatisfactory. The quality and standard of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.

18. The quality of teaching for the under-fives ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Teaching is purposeful, well planned for and appropriately based on the six areas of learning associated with the under-fives. A high proportion of teaching is formally structured and devoted to language and mathematical learning and children make good progress as a result. At times however, there is an inappropriate balance between activities directed by the teacher and those which the children choose for themselves. Although children are encouraged to be independent within a supportive environment, opportunities to investigate their classroom environment and take responsibility in some small way for their own learning are less well developed. Children with special educational needs are well supported both within and outside the classroom. There is a good level of well-directed adult support within the classroom.

19. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is never less than satisfactory and is good overall. Teachers' relationships with their pupils are very good and they know their pupils well. Where teaching is good, all pupils in the classroom are provided with appropriate learning experiences that build upon their prior attainment and are well matched to their needs. Planning for lessons is of a good quality, having clear learning objectives, well matched learning activities and appropriate assessment identified. Teaching benefits from good levels of well directed in-class support from additional staff. Teachers have adopted the objectives and methods of the National Literacy Strategy. Their teaching is underpinned by high expectations of pupil performance and enthusiasm for language and literature.

20. The quality of teaching overall at Key Stage 2 is good. The positive relationship between teaching staff and their pupils are a particular strength. Most lessons proceed at a good pace and teachers use resources for learning well. Weekly lesson planning is of good quality and linked to the detailed medium term curriculum plans. Objectives for lessons are clear and often appropriately shared with pupils to secure their active involvement at the start of lessons. Most teachers are skilled in the use of effective questioning techniques. Activities are carefully matched to the attainment of pupils and learning is supported by timely intervention strategies.

21. Within the curriculum, the time devoted to teaching individual subjects is not as well balanced as it might be. The school has a high proportion of classroom support staff, both teaching and non-teaching, who make a positive contribution to the quality of education provided throughout the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this is a strength of the school. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are very well supported and fully integrated into school life. Other pupils identified on the school's special needs register also receive good support and they make good progress.

35. The curriculum and assessment

22. The school meets the statutory requirements to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious

education. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and all children make sound or better progress. The planning and content of the early years curriculum is appropriately based on the six areas of learning associated with under-fives education. Whilst planning and delivery of language and mathematical learning is good, other areas are a little over-directed at times with insufficient opportunity for child initiated activities. Within the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 curriculum, the time devoted to teaching individual subjects is insufficiently balanced. For example, in most classes teaching time is heavily weighted towards English and to a lesser extent mathematics. Within this broad time allocation there is some variability amongst different classes particularly in the time devoted to English. Additionally many numeracy lessons are much lengthier than the time recommended by the National Numeracy Strategy. As a result, the time made available for the teaching of some other subjects in some classes is limited and this narrows the curriculum content offered. Sex education is taught according to the Governing Body's policy. There is limited provision for pupils' wider health education, for example drugs awareness and personal safety.

23.The provision for pupils with special educational needs in the early years and at both key stages is very good. The school has an effective policy which takes account of the Code of Practice and also reflects the needs of higher attaining pupils. Individual Education Plans are detailed and teachers take account of individual needs within their planning and methods and style of teaching. Pupils as a consequence are not withdrawn to be taught in isolation but integrated successfully into mainstream lessons. Progress is recorded and work modified as appropriate and liaison with parents and other professionals is well managed. The school's dedicated support for special needs pupils, with additional sessions offered over lunchtimes, ensures they make good or better progress.

24.The school has policies for all subjects of the curriculum but these vary in quality. Whilst some subject co-ordinators are currently reviewing and updating their curriculum policies, planning and schemes of work this is being done largely in isolation. Planning for English, mathematics and science is generally of a good quality. Teachers' short term planning is generally good and the work in subjects is sufficiently differentiated to allow access for all pupils. However, the lack of clarity in long term planning, coupled with some variability in medium term planning is leading to unevenness in the continuity and progression of the curriculum. There is a need for senior managers to review their roles and responsibilities to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to the development of the curriculum as a whole. At present there is no whole school agreement on subject coverage, the time to be allocated to and the balance between subjects to guide coordinators in developing, monitoring and evaluating their subject.

25.The monitoring and evaluation of the whole curriculum and individual subjects is at an early stage of development. Some planning is evaluated by coordinators but the implementation of these plans, including teachers' timetables, weekly planning and curriculum outcomes are not systematically monitored. Consequently the school does not yet possess the means of evaluating its effectiveness in providing a balanced and coherent curriculum in which each year's work builds on previous learning.

26.The curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities covering sporting, musical and artistic activities for many pupils. There is a good range of sports activities including traditional team games. Pupils benefit from the services of a peripatetic music teacher. In addition the school arranges a variety of educational visits to places of interest, for example Astley Hall and Wigan Pier. The choir makes significant contributions to the pupils' social and musical skills by performing at local venues. Pupils benefit from regular homework provided by the school and this is appreciated by parents.

27.Overall the quality of assessment is good for the under-fives and satisfactory for both key stages. The quality of day to day assessment is often good, and within short term planning teachers identify opportunities to assess their pupils. However though the quality of marking of pupils' work is generally satisfactory, there is some variation between classes and subjects. Procedures for formally assessing pupils' attainment are very good. In addition to using the statutory national curriculum tests, the school also monitors progress by using assessment tests at Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupil records are well kept and reports to parents are outstanding and a credit to the hardworking teachers in school. Parents rightly expressed delight with the quality of these reports. The school has begun to develop a useful tracking system for individuals and groups of pupils using teacher predictions and the results of statutory tests. This information has been used to set targets in literacy, numeracy and science in the year 2000. The pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education by visits to the secondary school in their final term.

41. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

28.The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good throughout the school. Many parents commented on this as being a strength of the school's overall provision and this is supported by the inspection team's findings. Teachers and other staff provide excellent role models for pupils in this aspect of the school's life.

29.Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is very good. The ethos of the school, shared by staff and pupils, is apparent within high quality collective worship where pupils reflect upon the nature of the universe and give thanks for their own lives. They contemplate the symbolism of candles and consider how they might themselves be positive examples to others. They write prayers and poems of thanks for harvests, friends and families. During lessons opportunities are planned for pupils' further spiritual growth sometimes including references to the themes developed during assembly. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate classical music and its sources of inspiration. Older pupils read poetry encompassing spiritual themes and discuss its meanings.

30.The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good and is rightly perceived by parents as a significant strength of the school. The school's code of conduct, emphasising caring relationships, is prominently displayed in classrooms and is respected by everyone. Pupils are involved in discussions about right and wrong in various situations. Their reading includes moral tales and fables whose meanings are considered within contemporary contexts. In upper Key Stage 2, pupils reflect on the morality of behaviour of characters such as Macbeth and discuss the potential effects of alternative actions.

31.Courtesy and helpfulness are celebrated through the annual award of a major trophy, the recipient of which is decided by the pupils themselves. The school makes regular donations to selected national and international charities. Pupils show their care and compassion within the local community through the distribution of harvest baskets.

32.Provision for social development is good. Pupils are encouraged to help their teachers by undertaking simple tasks such as tidying resources and providing assistance with younger pupils during wet break times. Pupils are encouraged to show their initiative through participation in wide-ranging extra-curricular activities including drama, music and sport. Opportunities are provided within some lessons for pupils to work collaboratively. For instance pupils in science co-operate during investigative work and provide feedback on their findings about friction. When pupils select roles, such as in the filming of a short play based on *Treasure Island*, provision for their social interaction and decision-making is enhanced. There are, however, comparatively few structured opportunities for pupils to take on specific roles and responsibilities in order to develop their personal skills outside lessons.

33.Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have opportunities to study the lifestyles and belief systems of some non-western cultures. A Moslem guest has visited Key Stage 2 to talk about his culture. Pupils have also studied Eid and the Chinese New Year and have had opportunities to make comparisons between different festivals. Pupils read texts celebrating different cultures during their English lessons. A significant example is *Handa's Surprise* in which a young girl gives up her harvest for the benefit of others. Children's work in response to this book is prominently displayed and used as a reference point in other lessons.

34.Pupils in Key Stage 2 read the work of poets and authors from diverse cultural origins. They visit the theatre and also capitalise on opportunities to explore other cultures through talking to their visitors, who have recently included a West Indian cricket coach.

35.Cultural development is enhanced by the school's array of extra-curricular activities including participation in the JC2000 project, which celebrates the millennium through music. Provision for pupils' awareness of cultures beyond western Europe through engagement with the visual and performing arts is less well developed.

49. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

36. Overall the school's provision for the effective support, guidance and welfare of its pupils is good.

37. Children who are under five are well cared for and are integrated fully into the life of the school. Strong emphasis is placed on promoting positive attitudes, developing good behaviour and caring relationships. Pupils benefit from well established classroom routines. The school provides a caring, secure and happy environment in which children are encouraged to develop personal and social as well as academic skills.

38. The school provides care and a good level of support for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress as a result. Links with external agencies and services include: education welfare, social services, educational psychologists, speech and occupational therapists, health and social services, ethnic support services and the Co-ordinated Service for Learning Support. Pupils are helped to make progress through the clear objectives set out in their individual education plans.

39. There are effective child protection measures in place which meet statutory requirements. These have been put in place and developed since the school's last inspection. The school's policy follows the recommendations of the local education authority's Child Protection Committee and has adopted the guidance on the development of procedures in school. All staff (teaching and non teaching) are aware of policy and procedures and have received training. There is also a named governor responsible for child protection.

40. The school has one member of staff fully qualified in First Aid and has plans to increase this number. Accidents are recorded in the Accident Book and parents are always informed of any incidents or injuries. The school makes suitable provision for the supervision of children at all times. A register has been introduced to record and monitor incidents which occur at breaks and lunchtimes. This allows the school to identify whether any particular children are involved in repeated incidents or accidents and to establish if any bullying, even of a minor nature, is taking place.

41. The health, safety and general well-being of pupils is mainly promoted through the school's general ethos of care and support rather than by planned curriculum-based programmes dealing with, for example, drugs awareness, health or personal safety. Since the last inspection the school has adopted a sex education policy. The home-school agreement commits the school to support and reinforce road user behaviour through classroom-based activities. The school nurse contributes to health education in school. The governing body has an active health and safety committee which focuses on issues relating to premises, security, first aid and health and safety generally.

42. Procedures in place to monitor and assess pupils' attainment are very good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at both key stages. The involvement of pupils in evaluating their own progress through guidance offered by teachers in the marking of their work is inconsistent across classes and underdeveloped generally. All pupils have Records of Achievement. Parents are impressed with the annual reports they receive and feel that they reflect the skills, attitudes and achievements of the individual child.

56. **Partnership with parents and the community**

43. The school has developed good relationships with parents who find it to be welcoming and responsive. Parents are kept well informed about the life of the school, activities and events and receive regular written communication. Parents regard the school's caring ethos as a positive feature. A high proportion of parents returned their questionnaires prior to the inspection and the results show a very positive response in support of the school and what it has to offer. Parents also endorsed and commended the work of the school during the parents' meeting held just before the inspection took place.

44. The school has an induction programme which fosters good links between home and school before children start. Parents have access to pre-school activity boxes, story time sessions, home loan books, pre-school visits and meetings for parents/carers. The school makes visits to pre-school groups and nurseries to smooth the transfer of

children. Parents of children who transfer from other schools feel that they are made welcome and are pleased with their children's progress.

45. Annual reports are of very good quality and focus on the individual child's overall progress and development. Their style and content is much appreciated by parents. Other opportunities to receive information about the curriculum are through parents' days and evenings held in school. Pupils take home their reading records to which parents contribute. In Year 5 individual targets are sent home fortnightly to keep parents informed about pupils' progress. Regular reviews are established to discuss the needs and progress of pupils with special educational needs.

46. A home-school agreement has recently been introduced to parents. At Key Stage 2 this has also involved gaining the support and involvement of pupils. Commitments are made by all three parties to areas such as: a balanced curriculum, high standards and safety (school); attendance and punctuality, support for school policies, support for homework and other opportunities for home learning (parents); equipment, classwork and homework, rules and behaviour (pupils). 50% of parents across the whole school have already been willing or able to sign home-school agreements.

47. Parental involvement in children's learning is good. This support is often supplemented by other members of the family such as grandparents. The school has produced a variety of guidance notes for parents including a leaflet called 'Recipe for Success' which helps parents with supporting their children's literacy development. The school has a homework policy which focuses on the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Newsletters and other information are on display in the school's reception area.

48. The school has a Parent Teacher Association with an active core group of parents who organise lots of social and fund-raising events as well as activities of interest. There are many events jointly organised by school and church. Events are well attended by the wider community. From the funds of the PTA tape recorders and headphones have been purchased for each classroom in order to enhance pupils' listening skills. Additionally, revision booklets for literacy and numeracy have been purchased and overhead projectors have been provided for the school which prove extremely beneficial within literacy lessons.

49. Two former governors of the school have donated money in trust for the 'Oversby Award'. The shield is presented each year to the most courteous boy and girl in Year 5. The children themselves elect the award's recipients nominating those who have shown most consideration and kindness to others.

50. The school has an extensive menu of extra-curricular activities and clubs which are well attended. Included are: sports and athletics clubs, swimming, cycling proficiency, silver band and recorder groups, art, French and science clubs, book club and school productions. The staff contribute much of their time to activities outside school hours.

51. Parents are encouraged to assist with the life of the school and contribute in many ways. For instance they assist with pupils' reading, sew costumes for school productions and accompany pupils during swimming lessons and other activities. Several parents who started to assist in school as volunteers are now paid ancillary staff. Parents' workshops are held on Monday afternoons. The school, together with a number of parents, is exploring the Parents as Educators programme linked to a local College course. Some parents are keen to establish after school groups and the school intends to contact the Education Extra organisation to achieve this.

52. The school has strong links with its parish church. The vicar regularly leads assemblies and takes an active part in the life of the school. The school choir is heavily involved in performances in the local community and some further afield.

53. The school has close links with Chorley's high schools. There are Year 6/7 liaison links with local high schools. From St. Michael's CE High School, with which the school is a main partner, there has been liaison related to the Literacy Strategy. Visits to high schools are arranged for Year 6 pupils to aid their transition and progress. The school provides placements for college and university students as well as secondary school pupils on work experience.

54. The enrichment of pupils' education through links with the community is satisfactory. The local greengrocer works with the school to provide fruit on a daily basis for the healthy eating tuck shop. Pupils in Years 3 and 4

made links with the radiography department of the local hospital which the pupils visited. Following this the class received x-rays to use as a resource in learning about bone structures as part of their science work. The school has developed links with local supermarket stores. Through links with the British Engineers, a West Indian cricket coach is currently contributing his skills to the games curriculum. The school intends to follow up this link in the future to enhance its design and technology programme and is also seeking a teacher placement into industry through LAWTEC.

68. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

68. Leadership and management

55.The overall management of the school is satisfactory. The school has a clear set of aims, values and policies which are reflected in the work of the school.

56.The recently appointed headteacher has secured the confidence of staff and governors and is beginning to establish a sense of purpose as she develops her role as a strategic manager. The headteacher and Chair of Governors have a good working relationship and there is a positive sense of team spirit amongst the staff. The school has a strong commitment to teaching and learning and to raising standards, particularly in the 3 core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Parents and pupils recognise and value the positive ethos of the school. This reflects the staff's commitment to good relationships and their effective management of the children's behaviour.

57.The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior managers provide good day to day management, with well established, smooth running routines in place. The deputy headteacher in his role as special educational needs co-ordinator, together with other senior managers with responsibility for early years and assessment provide a good level of support to the headteacher. The senior managers now meet more regularly, and the headteacher has begun to broaden their involvement in the decision-making processes within the school. However, at present they do not share a corporate view of the priorities for the strategic development of the school. This is partly due to weaknesses in the school development plan and the curriculum management structure.

58.The school development plan has been improved since the last inspection and now has a three year timescale and this has strengthened the school's overall direction. Within the plan, however, there are still weaknesses. It is insufficiently prioritised in terms of the work of the school, particularly in relation to what the school is trying to develop in any one term. This weakness was identified in the school's first inspection and has not been adequately addressed. Priorities for the year are not clearly broken down to manageable timescales and thus tasks are insufficiently costed and deadlines for completion are unclear. Additionally there are no clear evaluation strategies identified based on stated success criteria. This reduces its effectiveness as a management tool. The current plans for 1999 are only written in outline and need to be translated in to more detailed one-year action plans. The presentation of the current plan does not give the necessary information to enable the governing body and headteacher to monitor effectively its implementation and evaluate its effect on standards and quality.

59.The school development plan and the current curriculum management structure do not yet provide for an effective approach to curriculum development. This affects progress towards fulfilling the school's aims of providing a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Changes in class organisation and the current time allocations for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have not been fully evaluated in terms of their impact on balance and continuity of the whole curriculum. At present the school's senior management team has not adopted roles and responsibilities to allow for the overseeing of the curriculum as a whole. As a consequence there is no coherent and coordinated programme for the necessary developments in this area. Subject coordinators are very hardworking and conscientiously manage their responsibilities in relation to time and opportunity made available. Some coordinators support teachers in their planning and occasionally review teaching. Most have limited involvement in budget planning and in the allocation of resources.

60.Since the last inspection the roles of the headteacher and deputy headteacher with regard to the monitoring and evaluation of the standards pupils attain, and the quality of teaching have been partially implemented. However, no

planned and regular programme of monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness against specific targets and success criteria is in place. All teachers have been appraised but the school has no planned, systematic staff development programme to provide for their overall training needs in the context of the school development plan. The headteacher fully recognises the need to address these issues.

61.The governing body is very supportive and highly committed to the school's improved development. They have high expectations and are beginning to develop their role as a 'critical friend'. Governors pay regular visits to the school and have set up an effective committee and working party structure to enable it to carry out its duties. Governors responsible for literacy and numeracy have begun to observe lessons in these subjects. The governors have effectively promoted the development of the school since the last inspection in terms of staffing levels, the quality of teaching, accommodation improvements and increased resources. They have been less involved in the planning for the strategic development of the school through its school improvement plan and post OFSTED action plan. The governing body is beginning to recognise the need to broaden its focus to the school's overall educational provision, to enable it to hold the school to account for the quality of education it provides.

62.The Governing Body fulfils its statutory requirements in most of the work it undertakes. It has not, however, ensured all of the statutory requirements related to the reporting of information have been met. For example, the school has not reported annually to parents on its progress in relation to the action plan resulting from its first inspection. The school's capacity to make further improvement is satisfactory.

76. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

63.The teaching staff at St Peter's are suitably qualified and experienced. They have a good range of expertise to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and provide children under five and pupils with special educational needs with an appropriate education. Teachers are hardworking, conscientious and very caring. In service training for teachers has been undertaken but as yet there is no strategic programme linking staff development with the school development plan priorities. Recent well organised in service training for the introduction of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had a positive impact on mathematics teaching throughout the school. Teacher appraisal is up to date.

64.There are two newly qualified teachers who are well supported by the school's induction programme. Support for other new members of staff has also been improved. The good relationships between teachers also enables them to support each other in many informal ways.

65.The quality and number of support staff in classrooms is very good and this has a positive impact on standards particularly for pupils with special educational needs. Support staff are closely involved in planning and have a clear understanding of what pupils need to learn in activities and lessons. Support staff also have good relationships with pupils and make a valuable contribution to the day to day work of the school.

66.The school has experienced and able office staff who are responsible for managing the budget and a full range of administrative tasks. At St Peter's this is particularly demanding as the school administers all aspects of a school's life including salaries, school meals, cleaning, maintenance and all associated functions. The school meals staff and mid-day supervisors also provide support to the daily life of the school by promoting the good attitudes and behaviour of all pupils.

67.Overall the accommodation is good. The school building with its recent extensions allows for the appropriate range of educational activities. It is well maintained and the staff responsible for day to day cleaning and maintenance take great care and pride in ensuring the school is beautifully clean and tidy at all times. The school has a large hall which is used well for a range of activities including assemblies, singing, dance, physical education and school meals. The hall also has a stage which the school make good use of for a range of drama and musical productions. There is a large, well maintained field and three hard play areas, in good condition, with marking for a range of games. There is also an outdoor play area with the Nursery building. There have been significant improvements in accommodation since the last inspection and the Governors and management of the school have

worked hard and successfully to ensure these enhancements. However some of the older classrooms occupied by some of the Key Stage 2 pupils are rather cluttered and cramped, which hampers the provision of a range of possible activities, for example art and technology. On occasions the acoustics in these rooms also have a detrimental effect on pupils' learning.

68.Resources in the school are generally satisfactory. Most subjects are supported with sufficient resources which are well used in lessons. However, there are insufficient resources for early years play, geography and music. In all classes resources are clearly labelled and accessible. There is some central storage of resources, for example in science, but most resources are distributed in various locations throughout the school. Physical education benefits from a good range of large and small apparatus for use in the hall. Each class has a listening centre which is regularly used. Recent additional funding for the National Literacy Strategy has enhanced the quality and range of books throughout the school. All classes have a well organised class library or reading area and reference books are displayed to support learning in individual class themes such as Victorians, Vikings or Africa. The Key Stage 2 Library, however, is insufficiently stocked with an adequate range and quality of books. Many books are worn, in poor condition and out of date. Provision of hardware and software for information technology throughout the school is now good.

69.The school makes satisfactory use of a range of visits to support learning across the curriculum, for example a recent visit to Astley Hall has enhanced work in history in Key Stage 2. Additionally older pupils have visited the funfair in Southport to examine a practical contexts for their work on forces.

83. **The efficiency of the school**

70.The efficiency of the school is satisfactory overall. To a large extent, the procedures for setting the annual budget rely on previous patterns. Aspects of financial planning however, are weak. Financial planning needs to be more closely linked to educational developments in the school development plan. The effectiveness of spending decisions needs to be evaluated so that the school can identify the extent to which specific spending affects aspects of pupils' attainment. The role of the subject co-ordinators could be extended to further involve them in prioritising educational needs, and monitoring using clearly defined success criteria.

71.The deployment of teaching and other staff is good. There is a higher than average number of educational support staff and administrative staff compared to similar schools. The classroom assistants are well deployed, and make significant contributions to pupils' attainment and progress, particularly the good progress of low attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. Specific funding for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is spent wisely to ensure that the individual needs of pupils are fully met.

72.The procedures for day to day financial control and administration of the school are excellent. Roles and responsibilities are very clearly defined and effectively carried out. Detailed records are kept and rigorous controls are in place. The bursar and the secretary are both highly efficient. The most recent external audit complimented the school on its systems and practice, and found no aspects in need of improvement.

73.Overall the school uses its resources and accommodation well. Particularly good use is made of the school's hall for physical education lessons which are generally of a high quality. However the junior library is poorly stocked and not effectively used. Additionally some subjects such as music and geography would benefit from increased resources. Compared to most schools the financial balances held are high and although there are plans to spend some of these funds these are not related to the school's improvement plan. Whilst the unit cost per pupil is high, the quality of education provided is satisfactory and often good and pupils generally make satisfactory progress at both key stages, with good progress in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. On balance the school provides satisfactory value for money.

87. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

87. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

74. When children first enter St. Peter's, many display a 'readiness' for school and what it has to offer. The school meets this challenge adequately and provision for the under-fives is satisfactory overall. The attainment of children on entry to the school as recorded in the assessments which take place in the first half term, is wide but, overall, is broadly average when compared to other schools. With at least satisfactory and often good teaching coupled with the good level of well-directed adult support, children make at least satisfactory and often good progress. Two areas of learning-'language and literacy' and 'mathematical learning'-are given a high profile and the children make good progress as a result. By the time they reach their fifth birthday, the vast majority of children will meet, and some will surpass, the desirable outcomes associated with under-fives education. As a result, most children are ready to begin the National Curriculum by the time they reach their fifth birthday.

88. **Language and Literacy**

75. Children's attainment in language and learning is at least in line with that expected for their age and for many it is above. They make good progress mainly due to the high priority which language is given in both reception classrooms. Children can listen attentively in small and large groups and many have sufficient confidence to respond and talk about their own experiences. Good use is made of the listening station and the children enjoy listening to stories and nursery rhymes. The children respond enthusiastically to an adult reading a story and are able to talk about the characters and also predict what might happen next. Their vocabulary develops well and they are able to express their thoughts with increasing fluency. During a physical education lesson one child suggested the colour 'amber' to denote the middle colour of a traffic light. The majority of children are confident users of spoken language and are able to communicate effectively. The children are beginning to engage in developmental writing, using pictures, symbols and letters of the alphabet. Some children can write their own name and many can copy-write words and, in some cases, full sentences written by the teacher. Two children were observed accurately copy-writing a full sentence from that written on a display. All of the children understand that books convey meaning and many have begun to show an interest in what they might offer.

89. **Mathematical development**

76. In mathematical learning, children make good progress overall. They are beginning to explore everyday materials and equipment, developing an appropriate understanding of mathematical language to support their understanding. Children are familiar with number rhymes, songs, stories, counting games and activities. In one lesson the oldest reception children were observed counting and clapping numbers up to nine accurately. They can represent small numbers by accurately holding up their hands and showing corresponding fingers. Children can recognise by sight numbers up to five. The higher attaining children can draw pictures of objects and shapes to represent totals up to five. Most children can sort, match and colour shapes to simple numbers. Children have too few opportunities to use sand, and particularly water, to explore capacity and weight.

90. **Personal and social development**

77. The children settle quickly and happily into school and respond very well to the teacher. They make good progress. Behaviour and relationships within both reception classes are very good. The children are friendly towards each other, co-operate well and understand class rules and routines. They enjoy undertaking simple jobs such as 'milk' or 'register' and act sensibly in doing so. Both classrooms are bright, warm and welcoming. The children demonstrate respect for property and will help to tidy away after activities. They enjoy beneficial role play activities such as the 'doctor's surgery' although on some days access to such experiences is limited. Most children are able to sustain concentration and they listen very well to instructions. This was particularly noticeable during a physical education lesson during which the children related very well to each other and to the teacher in the large school hall. The level of additional adult support in classrooms is good and this supports and encourages child/adult interaction on a regular basis throughout the day.

91. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

78.Children are beginning to explore a range of activities in order to develop their understanding. They make satisfactory progress and levels of attainment are broadly average. They are learning about the names given to parts of their body. They have constructed simple kites for a window display. As part of a mini food technology project the children made biscuits and, when asked, two children could explain how they mixed the ingredients. Children enjoy listening to recorded tapes with headphones and a few are confident enough to press the correct buttons on the tape machine. The children use small and medium sized construction kits successfully. During the inspection few opportunities were observed for children use the two classroom computers. Those that do have access to the computer are confident and are developing early keyboard skills. A few demonstrated that they could use the 'mouse' to input commands, enabling them to take part in an interactive language program. Some thought needs to be given to the position and level of the computer monitors which at present are too high.

92. **Physical development**

79.The physical development of the children is good and above average so early in the school year. Children can use fine motor skills well, handling a range of tools, objects and small equipment with increasing skill and precision. For example, they make good progress in developing their fine control of pencils, crayons and small construction materials. In gymnastics and dance lessons in the hall the majority of the children are able to move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination. The children enjoy vigorous exercise but remain sensible throughout. They can jump, hop, run and change direction whilst being aware of other people around them. They respond very well when provided with increasingly difficult movement sequences, for example, crawling or using only 'one hand and two feet'. The children do not get access to outdoor play facilities such as wheeled toys to help with balance and co-ordination and this is unsatisfactory.

93. **Creative development**

80.Children's creative development is not as strong as other areas of under-fives learning. Many of the children can, however, accurately identify the primary colours and a few can recognise other colours. A few can use scissors to cut felt and wool and then use glue sticks to create effective paper plate portraits. The children can draw simple pictures using chalks on black paper. When colouring pictures the children are very careful to stay within lines and borders and have good hand-eye co-ordination. Opportunities to develop creativity and dexterity through a wide range of art, music and imaginative play activities are rather limited when compared to the time devoted to other areas of learning. Resources are not readily available in the classroom so that children can, when given the opportunity, explore for themselves colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions. For example, reception classes do not have painting stands or easels and this limits the children's opportunity to create pictures using paints or crayons. Insufficient opportunities are provided for imaginative and structured play and this limits the children's ability to respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, taste and touch.

81.The children behave well, are tolerant of each other and are willing to share equipment. Their response in lessons is very good and relationships are excellent. They listen very well and are willing to make contributions during class discussions. They concentrate very well considering that this is still the first half-term of their life in school.

82.The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. For all areas of learning, the teaching staff plan the children's work very well. There is a good level of effective teaching and non-teaching support within the early years department. The classrooms are inviting and colourful. The teachers have a gentle and positive manner with the children and as a result the children respond very well. Praise is used considerably by the teachers and the support staff to build children's self-esteem and confidence. They use good questioning techniques to ascertain children's understanding and progress. The staff develop positive relationships with the children from the time they start in reception, promoting a feeling of security, friendliness and trust. Lessons move at good pace, particularly in language and mathematical learning, capturing children's interest through enthusiastic and lively teaching of the whole class, small groups and individuals. The teaching of early numeracy skills is good and teachers are able to use imaginative ways to capture and stimulate the children's interest. For example, one teacher was observed using a 'surprise bag' to reveal objects to the children so they could suggest a number based rhyme. The appropriate

language of number is introduced at an early stage, highlighting such words and phrases as ‘more than’, ‘less than’ and ‘zero’.

83. Accommodation is adequate and used well by staff. Most of the areas of learning are well supported and encouraged by facilities such as a writing table, a reading corner, a listening station, computers and imaginative role-play corner. The absence of a dedicated art and craft area and a water area adversely affects children’s opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills in related activities. The structure of the current timetable for reception is too formal and does not lend itself easily to promoting under-fives education, particularly at such an early stage in the reception calendar. This results in an inappropriate balance between activities which are directed by the teacher and those which the children choose for themselves. Although children are encouraged to be independent within a supportive environment, opportunities to investigate their classroom environment and take responsibility in some small way for their own learning are less well developed. Children with special educational needs are well supported both within and outside the classroom.

97. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

97. English

84. Standards of attainment in English at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. The 1998 national assessment tests show that in all areas of English pupils’ attainment was broadly similar to that which was found on average in schools nationally. Furthermore, attainment was good in comparison with similar schools. In the more recent 1999 tests at Key Stage 1, attainment of pupils was broadly similar to that of 1998 and reflective of the national average for all schools. However, at Key Stage 2 standards in English have risen and the proportion of pupils achieving level 4 has increased and is now above the national average.

85. For higher attaining pupils, standards in Key Stage 1 in reading and spelling improved in 1999 and results are now higher than the national average for 1998. Improvement is particularly apparent in spelling at Key Stage 1, with approximately one in four pupils securing level 3. Attainment of the more able in writing is lower in comparison with spelling and reading test results, a pattern which reflects the national trend. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1.

86. 1999 test results indicate improvement in pupils’ attainment in English at Key Stage 2, where a greater proportion of pupils attained level 4 than in 1998. The proportion of pupils gaining level 5 remained similar to that in 1998 when performance at the higher level reflected the national average. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils’ present attainment levels are similar to national test results. Levels of achievement in speaking and listening exceed national expectations and are good in both key stages. At Key Stage 2 pupils generally make good progress.

87. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils’ speaking and listening skills are above the national average. Pupils are confident speakers who express clear views on various topics. They listen attentively and have good recall of stories read aloud to them. They conscientiously undertake individual and group listening tasks using taped stories. During the plenary sessions of literacy lessons, most are keen to take a turn in presenting their work to peers and describing how they have completed tasks. Their social conversation at lunchtime is friendly and interesting.

88. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are able to use some subject specific vocabulary when discussing their work, especially in science where they are encouraged to define terms closely. They willingly participate in discussions, supporting and challenging each other’s views thoughtfully. Older pupils write and record playscripts, a complex task which heightens their awareness of the differences between spoken and written language.

89. Enjoyment of reading is given a very high profile throughout the school. Children enter school with widely ranging language skills and make good progress in reading in Key Stage 1. By the age of seven many can read simple texts accurately and will attempt to read unfamiliar words aloud. They make predictions about stories, invent speech and thought bubbles for characters such as Preston Pig, recognise and build on rhyme patterns and relish encountering new books. They are able to use simple dictionaries and understand how a contents page can be used to locate information. Some pupils use the “Home Loan” facility, borrowing books to read outside school. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in book selection and reading and this interaction motivates pupils.

90. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read fluently and expressively from narrative texts. They can hypothesise about the behaviour of characters and select the words and phrases which are particularly powerful indicators of moods and feelings. Pupils in Year 5 have developed good decoding skills and can differentiate between contemporary and archaic vocabulary when studying the legend of Beth Gellert. Pupils use a variety of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and are generally able to discuss the literal meanings of words and whole texts. Many pupils can give considered reasons for their preferences for particular authors. They are less confident in using information texts and cannot readily skim pages to extract meaning. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 are unfamiliar with the texts available in the school's reference library and unclear as to how they would set about independent research on a topic. Pupils' reading logs indicate considerable variation in coverage of books.

91. Pupils' writing skills are in line with the national average and generally less well developed than their reading skills. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can write simple stories and accounts having discussed significant words and concepts with their teacher beforehand. They construct poems following a specific structure. Most are able to write simple sentences and use capital letters and full stops with reasonable regularity and accuracy. They confidently attempt to spell new words independently before asking the teacher for help. Children's handwriting is legible and shows increasing control of orientation.

92. In Key Stage 2 pupils' writing skills are satisfactory. The majority of pupils construct stories with sequenced events and are willing to experiment with increasingly varied vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils use different clause structures and tenses consistently. They understand narrative viewpoint and include paragraphs to organise their work. Most pupils can recognise and correct errors in their writing and are developing the skills of planning and drafting. Pupils write letters, sometimes in response to their reading such as in the composition of letters from the viewpoint of Macbeth. When writing poetry, their choices of rhyme scheme are appropriately dependent on the seriousness of their subject. There is rather less evidence of pupils writing extended reports or balancing viewpoints in discursive contexts. The focus of their work is frequently on narrative both in reading and writing and their repertoire of skills is strongest in this genre. Pupils lack independence in composing non-narrative texts, for example, scientific reports. They tend to be over-reliant on notes provided by their teachers. Whilst pupils achieve good results in their spelling tests, they do not always transfer these successes into sustained written work. There is considerable variation in standards of handwriting within Key Stage 2, with many pupils in Year 4 preferring to print rather than adopt a cursive style. There is also considerable variability between classes in pupils' use of pen or pencil for their written work.

93. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets. They interact very well with those who teach and support them and they regard their own achievements positively.

94. Pupils take pride in their work and enjoy the success of their peers at both key stages. They complete tasks conscientiously and act upon suggestions for the improvement of their work. They behave extremely well, listening attentively and sharing resources sensibly. They have confidence to ask questions if they do not immediately understand the demands of a task.

95. The teaching of English is generally good throughout the school. Evidence from the inspection shows that teaching is rarely less than satisfactory and is very good or excellent in around two fifths of lessons. English teaching carries a high profile throughout the school. Teachers have adopted the objectives and methods of the National Literacy Strategy and generally plan well for the elements of word, sentence and text level work. Their teaching is underpinned by high expectations of pupil performance and enthusiasm for both language and literature.

96. Resources are of satisfactory quality and quantity except for non-fiction texts at Key Stage 2. The library is ill-equipped and many reference texts are outdated. Pupils make little use of the library for research purposes and have limited awareness of how to find the specific information they might require. Comparatively little evidence is seen of computers being used in English, except for supporting pupils' learning of spelling patterns and alphabetical ordering in Key Stage 1. There is, for example, little evidence of pupils using computers to word process, edit or publish their work or to retrieve information or communicate with others.

97. There are good procedures for assessing and reporting pupils' attainment and progress in English. Teachers have established profiles of pupils' skills through marking, dialogue and tests. Writing has been recognised as a school

priority and extra time has been earmarked for extended writing lessons. However, the scheme of work for these periods of time is currently unclear and there are significant inconsistencies in the amount of time devoted to English teaching in each class. The English co-ordinator, who has provided useful training for all staff regarding the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, is now producing guidance on writing for different purposes and audiences so as to ensure a more structured approach to lesson planning and teaching within extended writing sessions. Useful and valued information has been provided to parents of Key Stage 1 pupils to support them in helping their children's development of early literacy skills.

98. Some monitoring of the National Literacy Strategy has been undertaken by the headteacher in consultation with the school's designated literacy governor. Teachers have had some opportunities to observe each other's lessons and this has been a useful exercise for stimulating professional dialogue. However, there is no clear action plan for the raising of standards in literacy and no consensus as to how literacy skills are to be promoted across the curriculum.

112. Mathematics

99. Results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the number of pupils attaining Level 2 or higher is slightly above the national average. These results are confirmed by the teachers' assessments of their pupils. The number of pupils achieving Level 3, both in the tests and as assessed by their teachers, is close to the national average. When compared to other schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the results are above average. The results of this year's tests indicate that these standards are being maintained, and this is verified by inspection evidence.

100. The older pupils in Key Stage 1 can name a range of two dimensional shapes and describe them in terms of the number and length of their sides, and the number of corners. Many can confidently count on and backwards in ones, and in steps of twos, fives and tens. Others can accurately use comparative language to identify heavier or lighter objects, or taller and shorter characters. Most can add pairs of two digit numbers less than 20, and some can accurately calculate change from for example 15p, for example. Pupils of different abilities correctly use measures of length, time and money in appropriately demanding contexts.

101. The Key Stage 1 pupils make sound progress in lessons and throughout the key stage. Teaching is frequently good. Planning is thorough and detailed, and caters fully for pupils of different abilities. Teachers share their objectives for the lesson with pupils. They effectively use direct teaching and individual or group activities to introduce, develop and consolidate the intended key ideas and mental strategies. Lessons typically end with a short review of the objectives, when teachers and pupils can recognise how much progress has been made. The pupils' good response is also crucial to the success of these lessons. They listen carefully and, on occasions, intently. They are keen to offer answers and explain their thinking and are confident that incorrect answers are treated sensitively and so do not fear being wrong. They generally follow instructions well and try hard to complete the tasks set.

102. Results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the number of pupils reaching Level 4 or higher is above the national average, and the number attaining Level 5 is close to the national average. Key Stage 2 results are also above average when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The 1999 results indicate that these standards are being maintained and the number of pupils reaching level 5 is higher. Observations of lessons, scrutiny of work and conversations with pupils during the inspection confirm that the majority of pupils are meeting the expected standard towards the end of Key Stage 2, and that a significant proportion are attaining higher than the national average.

103. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 show a good range of mental skills, carrying out both simple and more complex calculations with speed and precision. Work in books shows that mathematical operations are set out and used accurately. Brackets are used correctly to demarcate number sentences and equations. Many pupils can collect data through experimentation, show a sound grasp of the probabilities in games, and can express probability as a fraction. Some pupils can measure pulse rate and calculate averages, and handle the data in producing tally charts and bar graphs. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils also handle data confidently when identifying the mode and calculating averages. Pupils in the earlier years of the key stage can work out totals and calculate change in shopping activities,

handling sums up to £1.00. Many are developing the confidence to do these calculations mentally. Others can measure objects and lines with accuracy. Throughout Key Stage 2 progress is good, and for some pupils it is very good. They are developing their mental skills and recall of number facts at a good pace, and show a growing understanding of number and measures. Pupils are building a strong repertoire of computational skills which they can apply to solve mathematical problems.

104. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 lessons is never less than satisfactory, usually good or very good, and on one occasion was judged to be excellent. Lessons are well planned, and make high demands on the pupils, who respond consistently well. This is the recipe for good progress. Teachers are skilled in the use of questioning, and they combine this with direct teaching to help pupils of all abilities to grasp the main points of the lesson. Follow-up activities are carefully matched to the abilities of pupils, and learning is supported by effective intervention by teachers, and by classroom assistants who are well deployed, often to give positive support to the lower attaining pupils.

105. In the first few weeks of the school year, good progress has been made in introducing the National Numeracy Strategy, with effective guidance from the mathematics co-ordinator. The three part structure of the daily numeracy lesson is evident. Lessons open with a few minutes of oral and mental work which tends to have a high tempo, is challenging, and is greatly enjoyed. Teachers expertly involve all children, by directing questions to individuals at appropriate levels of demand.

106. The main part of the lesson is planned from the key objectives in the Numeracy Framework. Teachers have collaborated in their planning, which has encouraged a consistency of approach and a shared understanding of the Numeracy Strategy. Teachers carefully cater for the full range of ages and abilities in each class. In addition, joint planning ensures that where children of the same age are taught in different classes, they are equally well planned for. A high proportion of direct teaching for the whole class is a feature of numeracy lessons, where the emphasis is effectively placed on explaining and illustrating mathematical ideas. Children are frequently asked to explain their own methods so that different approaches can be shared and explored. The correct use of mathematical language is also given strong emphasis. Worksheets and text books are used selectively to practise and reinforce key mathematical ideas or skills.

107. Lessons are drawn together well in short plenary sessions, and teachers take this opportunity both to check progress and further consolidate specific points. This allows the assessments made to influence plans for future lessons. Teachers have also shown themselves to be skilled at assessing where individuals or groups of pupils have difficulties, and providing immediate feedback and instruction to clarify problems. Summative judgements are made and recorded annually, and senior managers and teachers liaise both formally and informally to set appropriately demanding targets for pupils.

108. The time and effort devoted to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has been well spent. In-service training has been effectively shared, and many of the key aspects of the strategy are in place. However the length of the daily numeracy lesson, as recommended in the Framework, does not easily fit with the current pattern of the school timetable. Lessons observed were typically much longer than the recommended duration. The school should consider whether this extra time devoted to numeracy is the most effective use of the curriculum time available.

109. Resources are adequate and of appropriate quality, and are well used. Classroom assistants make a very positive contribution in mathematics lessons, when working with groups of pupils. Some appropriate use of calculators was observed. Where possible, teachers try to use computers to reinforce or extend mathematical learning, and a good range of mathematics software has been made available. Some teachers make good use of information technology to produce worksheets for use in lessons. Opportunities are also taken to make links between mathematics and other subjects of the curriculum. For example, measurements of pulse rate taken in a science investigation, and records of daily sales in the school's tuck shop, provide the raw data for lessons in data handling. Links are made in one class between the work of an abstract artist and shapes and angles in mathematics, and in another where Shakespearean language such as 'thrice' is briefly explored.

123. Science

110. The attainment of pupils in science at both key stages is in line with the national expectation. In 1998 standards in Key Stage 1 were broadly in line with the national averages both in attainment at Level 2 and Level 3. In Key Stage 2 in 1998 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 was above the national average. Of note, however, is that a significant percentage of pupils attain at the higher standard of Level 5, and when the school is compared with similar schools the pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 are well above average. The standards achieved by boys and girls have been very similar and are again above the national average. The provisional results for 1999 indicate that this high standard has been maintained at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, however, teacher assessments for science are lower than the previous year and also below the national average.

111. The inspection found standards in Key Stage 1 to meet with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to understand that sound can travel through materials. They know that some materials change when they are heated or cooled. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand that some changes are irreversible, for example when an omelette is cooked from an egg. Pupils in Year 2 understand that the season of Autumn brings changes to the environment and are developing their knowledge of living things. All pupils are developing their skills in observation and recording. They are able to bring their literacy skills into their written observations. Pupils are also able to record their observations on charts and record temperature as part of their observations of the weather. They are also beginning to use an appropriate range of scientific terms both in their written and oral work. Progress for pupils of all abilities in Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by differentiated activities and worksheets as well as skilful help from support staff.

112. Pupils' response in science lessons is generally good and they clearly enjoy their activities. They listen well, both to the teacher and other pupils who are always eager to offer ideas, suggestions and observations. They work well together and are highly involved in what they are doing. The involvement of all pupils and their good progress is due to skilful teaching which is never less than satisfactory and often good. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Activities are well resourced and appropriately differentiated. Explanations are clear and good questioning is used to assess and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

113. In Key Stage 2 all pupils make good progress and the planning and teaching enables higher attaining pupils to make very good progress. A breadth of scientific knowledge is developed and consolidated, and pupils continue to test ideas, further developing their investigative skills and applying them with increasing confidence. In Year 3 pupils are studying teeth and dental care. Pupils in Year 4 know that sounds are caused by vibrations and travel through the air. Pupils are beginning to conduct investigations and record their observations. They are aware of the need for a "fair test". By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have covered a wide range of scientific knowledge and skills. They know about the major organs of the human body, properties of living things, food chains, forces, magnets, gears and levers.

114. The quality of teaching in Key Stages 2 is good, with effective planning, clear lesson objectives and skilfully organised investigations which are differentiated to appropriately challenge and support pupils. This approach is very successful in enabling pupils to participate fully in lessons, organise the elements and resources of the investigation, control variables and take responsibility for the various recording and observation tasks. For example, a group of higher attaining Year 5 pupils investigated friction as a stopping force and were able to change the surfaces that a ball rolled down and measure the various times taken using stopwatches. The pupils were then able to calculate averages and speeds. In Year 6 pupils gained understanding of unbalanced forces, air resistance and gravity by conducting investigations with spinners, changing variables and measuring time taken. Pupils are able to record their observations and measurements and draw appropriate conclusions. Pupils' response in lessons and during investigations is good. They listen well, are keen to offer ideas and work well together during investigations. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their numeracy skills, for example in calculating mean averages, but there are insufficient opportunities to use information technology as a way of recording and interrogating data generated by investigations.

115. Science is well planned by all teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 and short term planning clearly identifies assessment opportunities and methods. However the school's scheme of work needs to be reviewed and updated and

should also take into account the recent reorganisation of class groupings within the school. The subject has been well developed and promoted by the Headteacher in her previous role as class teacher, she also offers pupils the opportunity to develop their interest and enthusiasm for science in an after school club. The Science Club enables some pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to complete science projects and qualify for Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards from the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

129. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

129. History

116.From discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work, teachers' planning documents and the observation of a limited number of lessons pupils standards at the end of both key stages are similar to those of most pupils of the same age. By the age of seven the majority of pupils are beginning to develop a strong sense of time. In their topic on 'Toys and Games' Year 2 pupils speak of 'old' and 'oldest', 'old fashioned', 'brand new' and 'clockwork trains' as they sequence their toys in order of age. They learn about family trees and produce a time line of their life from babyhood. They know that people in the past lived in a different way, used different tools and dressed in different ways from themselves. By the time pupils are eleven they learn about chronology through studying different periods of time. Year 3 pupils learn about the Vikings and explore how they lived and give reasons why they acted as they did. They produce Viking jewellery and sew Viking shoes. They can place the Viking period and their own time period on the time line leading to the millennium. They can describe 'long ships' and talk about 'Viking runes' alphabet. Year 5 children study maps of the Victorian period comparing the historical landscape then and now. They identify cotton mills and bleach works, land use and buildings using grid references. Year 6 pupils study the Greeks, comparing and contrasting lifestyles. They can locate periods on a time line using BC and AD and Jesus Christ's birth as a point of reference. They demonstrate very good knowledge of all the Prime Ministers from 1945 onwards. They research information through the central library, or through CD ROM Education software. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall at both key stages.

117.The overall history curriculum is satisfactory but the lack of whole school agreement on the balance of time given to this subject and some variability in planning is leading to unevenness in continuity and progression across the school. By the time they reach Year 6 many children in the same class have experienced different history curriculums. Some may have studied the Tudors first hand through a visit to Astley Hall, some will have studied the Aztecs through more indirect study. This makes for difficulties in monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress over time. The development of study skills is a weaker element of the history curriculum and is not sufficiently well supported by organisation, access and range of books in the junior library. The school recognises the need for audit and review of the history curriculum and its resources.

118.Pupils make at least sound and often good progress in the lessons seen. Progress is very closely tied to the quality of teaching and where teaching is good, progress is also good. Pupil's attitudes to history are good. They are interested in their work especially when given exciting tasks which motivate them to learn. They listen well, work enthusiastically and become thoroughly absorbed in tasks. Discussions on the Vikings at Year 3 are animated and insightful; children are quick to use their observational skills and pick up on ideas presented by the teacher or other children. Older pupils work well in pairs.

119.In the lessons seen, teaching is satisfactory and often good. Where it is good teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. This results in a confident delivery of the facts and searching questions which challenge pupils' thinking. Weaker elements of teaching occur when children are insufficiently or overly challenged by the task provided.

120.The recently appointed history coordinator is enthusiastic about the development of the subject in school. There are some interesting historical displays in classrooms, such as time lines, close observational drawings of Greek pottery and models and pictures of Astley Hall. However, more could be done to celebrate pupils achievements as well as providing information and opportunities for interaction. The current coordinator has had no opportunity to monitor or evaluate the quality of the history curriculum or its delivery within the school. The school recognises the need to update the scheme of work to ensure continuity and progression in learning across all classes. Resources are generally adequate. However, many encyclopaedias are out of date and there is a need to update reference books in

the library.

134. **Geography**

121.From discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work, teachers' planning documents, and the observation of a limited number of lessons pupils standards at the end of both key stages are similar to those attained in other schools.

At Key Stage 1 pupils learn to talk about their locality looking at the different types of houses and recording their observations from these first hand experiences. They make plans, trace their routes to school and record the weather changes using appropriate symbols each day. Year 2 pupils learn about Africa, are able to identify its place on a world map, know that it is hot and wet, and can share their knowledge about the growing of cocoa pods. Within their project 'Harvests' pupils map the origin of tinned fruits on a world map from information on product labels. They can share knowledge of growing, harvesting and transporting bananas. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils are able to identify a variety of countries within Africa. Pupils can identify similarities and differences between Africa and England by sorting photographs and explaining their answers. By Year 6 pupils are able to complete a treasure map identifying locations using four figures and higher attaining pupils using six figure coordinates.

122.The lack of a clear overview of the school curriculum is leading to unevenness in continuity and progression within the geography curriculum. This is further compounded by the organisation of mixed year classes. By Year 6 many pupils within the same class do not share the same knowledge and experiences and as a consequence pupils' mapping skills, knowledge of the globe and use of atlases are inconsistent and insufficiently developed.

123.Pupil's progress within lessons is satisfactory and sometimes good. Progress over time reflected in previously recorded work and discussions held with pupils is however less secure. Pupils have very positive attitudes to geography. They are willing to learn and keen to demonstrate their knowledge. They behave well in classes and settle well to tasks, particularly when these are challenging.

124.Of the limited number of lessons observed at both key stages teaching was satisfactory and occasionally good. Lessons are generally well planned and often conducted at a good pace. Good teaching is related to secure subject knowledge, clear learning objectives, and provision of opportunities for pupils to report back to the rest of the class. Teaching is weaker where groups of children are not set sufficiently challenging work.

125.The enthusiastic recently appointed geography coordinator is confident and knowledgeable and has recognised the need to respond to the unevenness in the curriculum by updating and rewriting the scheme of work. She has had limited time to monitor and evaluate teaching but supports teachers in their planning. Reference books in the library are barely adequate. The school needs to consider increasing the number of globes, providing more up to date atlases and a greater range of Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photographs.

139. **Music**

126.Music is a popular subject and makes an important contribution to the life of the school. Overall standards in music are generally similar to those attained by pupils of the same age in other schools. By the age of seven most pupils are confident singers and know by heart a number of songs sung in school. Children in Year 2 are able to clap rhythms and begin to recognise patterns in sounds. They have begun to establish a basic understanding of composition and are able to match rhythms to words in creating musical questions and awareness for each other using glockenspiels. Key Stage 2 pupils sing in two and three parts confidently. They demonstrate good breathing control and clear enunciation. Older pupils listen to the music of Carmina Burana 'O' Fortuna and are able to identify changes in tempo and volume and pick out a variety of musical instruments. During hymn practice and choir practice pupils achieve high standards of singing. They show good listening skills and have a sense of performance.

127.Pupils' overall progress is satisfactory but is good in singing and they enjoy their music. They are able to maintain their concentration when difficult concepts are being taught. Progress in the other areas appraising and composing is satisfactory. A significant number of pupils have taken up brass instruments and are involved in after school music sessions and the Chorley Silver Band. Many sing in the choir and play in the recorder clubs. The choir

performs at local venues and in school productions.

128. During the course of the inspection insufficient lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 to make a judgement on the quality of teaching overall. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good. Several teachers including the headteacher have good subject knowledge. Music is used well to introduce assemblies and is effectively used in dance and in the JC2000 performance. The lively pace of lessons and teachers' enthusiasm for the subject has a highly motivating effect on the pupils.

129. Two members of staff skilled in music are currently developing the subject. The breadth and continuity of music provision across both key stages has improved but requires further monitoring and evaluation. A new scheme of work has been produced and this will support continuity and progression of the music curriculum. As yet there have been few opportunities for monitoring the quality of planning, teaching or standards of attainment in the subject. Music resources are just adequate, although there are insufficient keyboards. Given the high level of staff with good music knowledge this would be an area where improved resources would have an impact on standards.

143. Art

130. The progress of pupils in art at both key stages is satisfactory but the curriculum offered to pupils is rather narrow. Standards are broadly typical to those found in other schools in the techniques of 'painting and drawing'. In other aspects of 'investigating and making' and 'knowledge and understanding' in art, particularly at Key Stage 2, there are some weaknesses and pupils' progress is not as secure as it might be. At both key stages the amount and quality of artwork produced is variable amongst year groups. Additionally compared to most subjects art is under-represented on the timetable in some classes. As a result, it was difficult to observe some year groups taking part in art activities during the week of the inspection.

131. At Key Stage 1, pupils show satisfactory levels of skill in early drawing, painting and printing. Pupils can use a range of drawing materials such as chalk, pastel, pencil and crayon to communicate their feelings through art. For example, using a selection of collected leaves pupils were able to paint and print them on to paper to create an autumn picture. Examples of pupils' work on display indicate they are developing their understanding of primary colour mixing and colour matching using paints. One classroom display depicts an effective under-sea scene using wax crayon to resist a painted colour wash.

132. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their drawing and painting skills. Younger pupils can use drawing and painting techniques to reproduce their work in the style of Picasso. They can cut, shape and stick materials using a variety of tools and methods. Older pupils can explore line and texture using various grades of pencil and pastels, recording their observations of pattern and texture in natural forms. Pupils develop their observational skills satisfactorily and this is reflected in the drawings and paintings they produce, for example, those that refer to their visit to Astley Hall. They are becoming aware of the work of other artists such as Mondrian and William Morris and some pupils interpret works of art in mature and sensitive ways. Pupils can, for example, create pictures using pastels and paint in the style of Monet paying particular attention to line and shade. Older pupils' knowledge of famous artists past and present is insecure. Work in materials other than paint or pastel is less well developed.

133. Art is used appropriately to support other areas of the school curriculum, particularly in history. For example, in a study of the Greeks, artefacts were made and colour pictures created to represent Greek urns.

134. The quality of teaching in both key stages is broadly satisfactory overall. In some classes, however, it is very good. Lessons are effectively organised and appropriate resources are provided to support and stimulate the work that pupils do. In the better lessons pupils' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of art is developed alongside the investigating and making aspects. For example, in a lesson where pupils were creating imaginative portraits based on the work of a famous artist, they had the opportunity to appraise both the artist's work and their own work.

135. Pupils' attitudes are consistently good throughout the school. They are excited by the activities they undertake and take pride in their work. They are keen to explore and work with available materials and, for the most part, they work with sufficient care and concentration, using tools and equipment safely. Resources for art whilst adequate, require extending in order to support, for example, three dimensional media to create artefacts and images.

136. Curriculum planning in art is variable in quality. The quality of teachers' medium term planning for art varies from unsatisfactory to very good. It is unsatisfactory when the identified learning objectives are too vague and broadly focused. The best planning is detailed, has clear and specific learning objectives and identifies opportunities for cross-curricular links. The present scheme of work is being updated but is not fully established in the work of the school. As a result, pupils' learning in art, other than in painting and drawing, lacks sufficient breadth and continuity. Pupils' knowledge and understanding, investigating and making skills in art, do not develop as well as they might. Their use of a range of materials and techniques is limited. The after-school art club makes a positive contribution to developing a wider appreciation of art techniques and methods for those pupils who are able to attend.

150. **Physical Education**

137. Standards in physical education are high, particularly in aspects of movement such as dance. The quality of some of the dance lessons were of a very high standard. Throughout the school pupils generally make good, and in some cases, very good progress.

138. At Key Stage 1 pupils are developing their basic co-ordination skills well, for example, running, turning, jumping, balancing and they are beginning to appreciate the importance of space and control in linking physical movements. Working in pairs, individual pupils can produce mirrored movements corresponding to their partner's. Pupils taking part in dance lessons are able to show innovation and critical awareness in what they are doing. Pupils can interpret music well in developing their own sequences of movement or when co-operating in small groups to produce a collective effort. They can sequence a series of movements together whilst counting out 'beats' to a rhythm. In gymnastics pupils handle large equipment sensibly with due care and attention.

139. At Key Stage 2 pupils move with confidence and an appropriate degree of control. They use space well, both indoors and outdoors. Pupils can express themselves well. For example, in one lesson they were able to make convincing large, cumbersome body movements to represent the theme of 'monsters'. They respond well to music and sounds. In one lesson pupils were able to stretch their bodies and rub their hands to a specific beat. In the same lesson pupils convincingly passed an imaginary ball between each other. The pupils are skilful in finding imaginative solutions and expressing creative thoughts using their skills in movement. They are particularly good at evaluating their own performance and that of others in a mature and sensible way. Older pupils are developing their footballing skills learning how to receive and pass a football accurately.

140. Pupils' response to physical education is consistently very good. They enjoy all aspects of physical education and respond well to the teachers enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils behave well and are keen to improve their skills. Both younger and older pupils work effectively together in small or large groups when required to do so.

141. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, often good and occasionally very good at both key stages. The best lessons are well planned, move along at a good pace, and the teacher uses language effectively to encourage and prompt pupils. The teacher uses demonstration well and encourages pupils to evaluate their own and other pupils' performance. Teachers' good subject knowledge and generally high levels of confidence have a direct influence on the quality of lessons and pupils' response. Teachers make very effective choices in the selection of pieces of music to support physical education lessons enabling the creation of mood and atmosphere. In one lesson the sounds of 'heavy monsters' were created to stimulate pupils' responses. It was also noted that all staff, including support staff, get changed into appropriate clothing for physical education setting a very good example to the pupils. Every observed lesson began with an appropriate 'warm-up' activity and a suitable 'cooling-down' period at the end of lessons. As a result, pupils are developing a healthy respect for exercise and the benefits it can bring.

142. The quality of curriculum planning is variable but overall is satisfactory. In some classes the medium term planning is of a very high standard. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons. For example, a child with a Statement of Special Educational Need benefited from adult support throughout the lesson on a one-to-one basis, both adult and pupil joining in with the class activities in full.

143. Resources for physical education are good. For example there are sufficient good quality floor mats to engage a

whole class at any one time in the hall. The school hall is spacious and benefits from an excellent sprung wooden floor. There is a satisfactory level of equipment and the external hard-play areas and playing fields are spacious and of good quality. All pupils have the opportunity to go swimming at some stage. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum through participation in extra-curricular activities are very good.

157. Information Technology

144. During the inspection pupils were observed using information technology equipment. However, the number of occasions when it was possible to observe direct teaching of information technology was extremely limited. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions held with pupils shows that the attainment of pupils at the end of both key stages is below national expectations and they make unsatisfactory progress.

145. In the last inspection, in 1996, the school was asked to extend the range, quantity and quality of information technology resources to support learning across the curriculum. This has been achieved and all classes are sufficiently resourced with PCs, printers and a range of software which is well used to support learning in a range of subjects across the curriculum. For example "Gadgets and Gizmos" provides Key Stage 2 pupils with science and maths challenges in a game environment; "Letter Hunter" gives Key Stage 1 pupils practice at recognising letters; "Jumping Frogs" tests Key Stage 2 pupils' multiplication knowledge. Pupils enjoy using these various games, are motivated and concentrate well. Other CD ROMs, for example Encarta, the Human Body, Oxford Reading Tree, Vikings and Greeks are used in many classrooms to provide stimulating support for pupils' learning.

146. Pupils at both key stages display very good attitudes to information technology. They behave sensibly and sustain concentration over time. They work responsibly when not directly supervised and share the resources sensibly. There is no systematic, planned teaching of the strands of Information Technology. There is evidence of the use of word processing to write "Water" and "Metaphor Man" poems or describe a visit to Astley Hall, but pupils have only limited skills. By the end of Key Stage 2 they can create pieces of text with correct punctuation, use the keyboard or a mouse to move around the text and they know how to print their work. Pupils are not confident about saving and retrieving text. They have little opportunity to combine text and pictures and do not know how to cut and paste or cut and copy either text or pictures. Therefore pupils do not have sufficient skills to be able to combine different forms of information. The elements of word processing are not developed through both key stages either sequentially or thoroughly and not every pupil receives the same exposure to learning in this area. It is a similar story for the other strands of Information Technology; data handling, measurement and control, and applications and effects. Pupils gain some understanding of modelling through their use of games style programs.

147. Although computers are in frequent use pupils are rarely developing their information technology skills in relation to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. When teachers directly teach these skills and then give pupils the opportunity to practice and develop their understanding, pupils make good progress. For example in Year 2 pupils were shown how to use the "My World": "Blocks" program using the mouse to move the blocks and other keys to print their work. Pupils were then given the opportunity in later lessons to practice their newly acquired skills. In Year 3 pupils have been taught to use "Storymaker" and are applying these skills in their work on the Vikings. In Year 4 pupils have been given the opportunity to create a block graph representing the amount of sugar in various foods and drinks. This activity was linked well into the pupils' science work. In Year 5 there were several good opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills. Data about pupils was being collected and stored on a spreadsheet and data about the tuck shop had been used to generate graphs. There was also evidence of good work using a Logo programme to generate repeated abstract patterns as part of a cross curricular theme involving maths and art. In the same class a special needs pupil was using an individualised spelling program with his concentration enhanced by the use of headphones. In Year 6 pupils were shown how data can be used by a computer to generate bar charts.

148. However these examples of good practice are not replicated throughout the school. The programme for information technology is inadequately defined. Elements of the subject are taught spasmodically and skills and knowledge are not systematically developed. The school is not ensuring that every pupil receives his or her entitlement to the National Curriculum and this is having an adverse effect on attainment and progress. The unsatisfactory attainment is not a result of any deficiency in teaching rather the lack of an overall curriculum plan. The co-ordinator for information technology is a support member of staff, who used to teach at the school and has

enthusiastically developed the quality and range of hardware and software, she offers good support to members of staff on an informal basis.

149. Staff vary in their competence with ICT and some have good skills. The school benefited from the Beta Laptop programme which has provided two laptops, access to the Internet, a digital camera and a range of software. One laptop is well used by the school bursar to support her financial and administrative work. The other laptop is used in class by Year 3 pupils and by the Assessment Co-ordinator to record a range of pupil performance data. This is then used effectively for pupil tracking and target setting. The digital camera is used by various members of staff to record the work of the school. Most of the school staff are keen to develop their own ICT skills and utilised their own word processing skills in producing last year's excellent pupils reports on their computers. Teachers also make good use of the word processor to generate labels to enhance their classroom displays and the wider school environment.

163. Design and Technology

150. Whilst it was not possible to observe any Key Stage 1 design and technology lessons, evidence from teachers' planning, completed work and from discussions with pupils suggests that an appropriate breadth of experience is provided for pupils in Key Stage 1. However timetables indicate that insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of design and technology. The recent introduction of a new scheme of work to reinforce the current plans will help to clarify how much time is recommended for the subject in each term, as well as providing a structured set of medium term plans to encourage a greater consistency in approach.

151. Standards of attainment towards the end of Key Stage 2 are similar to those expected at this age. Pupils can produce clear, labelled design drawings, sometimes showing details of their intended product from more than one angle. Some pupils include dimensions on their design drawings. They can plan the sequence of making and identify the materials they could will need. These pupils are then able to turn their ideas into reality, and their vehicles are very similar to the original specifications. The pupils have employed sound making skills in their construction. At the time of the inspection, they evaluate their vehicles against agreed success criteria before considering ways of powering the vehicles.

152. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 2 produce simple design drawings, before using an appropriate range of sheet materials and other resources to make 'Disco Specs'. They can discuss their work, and explain what they will do first and then next. They cut and join materials with care, and are beginning to evaluate in terms of how well things work as well as how pleased they are with the appearance of their products. Other pupils in this same class can experiment with, and evaluate, different hinged joints, comparing them to joints in the human body.

153. Pupils' response to design and technology is good. They work well together and share resources sensibly. They listen to their teachers and to each other, and are keen to suggest ideas. Key Stage 2 pupils make sound progress, steadily developing skills of designing and planning, making and evaluating. However, conversations with older pupils in Key Stage 2 suggest some significant gaps in their technological knowledge and understanding. In particular they show only limited awareness of mechanisms such as gears, cams and pulleys, or of electrical circuits and components. Here again, the introduction of the new scheme of work will help to broaden the range of technological activities covered in Key Stage 2. This scheme will combine with and reinforce the good guidance on progression which is provided in the school's existing scheme of work.

154. Teaching in Key Stage 2 ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons, skilful questioning and clear explanations are used to focus pupils on the key technological points of the lesson, and strong emphasis is placed on the correct use of technical vocabulary. In all lessons, teachers manage whole class activities effectively and ensure sufficient and appropriate resources are made available. There is consistently good use of praise and encouragement, and appropriate support is given to individual pupils when necessary. Generally pupils are encouraged to show a suitable degree of independence in their work.

168. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

168. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

155.The inspection was undertaken by a team of five inspectors and a lay inspector who between them spent a total of twenty-one days in school. Inspectors observed a total of 81 lessons or part lessons, amounting to over 55 hours of lesson observation. Assemblies, registration periods, lunch and break times and after school clubs were also observed. Discussions were held with a variety of pupils and a sample of readers was heard from every class. These additional activities amounted to a further 15 hours of inspection time.

156.Discussions were held with members of senior staff, subject co-ordinators and governors. Inspectors also formally examined the work of pupils from each year. In addition they looked at much more work during lesson observations. These activities amounted to well over 12 hours of inspection time.

157.All documentation provided by the school was carefully analysed. This included all policies and schemes of work, the school development plan, attendance registers, pupils' reports, the school prospectus, teachers' planning as well as minutes of key meetings including those of the governing body.

158.A parents' meeting was held and attended by 21 parents. A small number of written comments and questionnaires from 113 parents were analysed and the results helped to inform the inspection.

172. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

173. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
REC - Y6	312	5	76	56
Nursery Unit/School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

173. **Teachers and classes**

Qualified teachers (REC – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	13.05
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

173. **Education support staff (REC – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked each week	183.5

173. **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

173. **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked each week	N/A

Average class size:	28.4
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173. Financial data

Financial year:

98/99

	£
Total Income	655,696
Total Expenditure	687,096
Expenditure per pupil	2,290
Balance brought forward from previous year	119,469
Balance carried forward to next year	88,069

173. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

176

Number of questionnaires returned:

113

173. Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	37	57	4	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	51	41	4	4	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	24	57	15	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	29	58	9	4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	38	48	9	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	41	55	3	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	45	39	14	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	30	53	10	7	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	34	57	6	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33	58	7	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	55	40	4	1	0

173. Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents made minor criticisms concerning the lack of homework provided on a few occasions, concerns regarding the time devoted to school productions and the quality of school meals. In contrast, an equal number of pupils wrote very supportive comments.

173. Summary of responses

Via the questionnaire, parents indicated that they were very supportive of the school and no significant issues were raised.