

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lytham St Annes

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119628

Head teacher: Mrs E M Kelly

Reporting inspector: Mr R S Moseley
16886

Dates of inspection: 14 - 17 January 2002

Inspection number: 198259

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Norfolk Road Lytham St Annes Lancashire
Postcode:	FY8 4JG
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father F Flynn
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16886	R Moseley	Registered inspector	Science	Characteristics of the school.
			Design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
				How well are pupils taught?
			Physical education	How well is the school led and managed.
			Equal opportunities	What should the school do to improve further?
13462	R Mothersdale	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18819	J Atkinson	Team inspector	English	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Geography	
			History	
			Art and design	
			Special Educational Needs	
21020	T Galvin	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Information and communication technology	
			Music	
			The Foundation Stage	

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London
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Peter's Catholic Primary school is about the same size as other primary schools with 204 pupils, 102 boys and 102 girls. Nearly eight per cent are entitled to free school meals. This is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average but in some years there is a widespread of ability with a number of higher attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. There are three pupils with English as an additional language but they do not require extra support. Sixteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. There are three pupils with a statement of special educational needs, which is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with a number of good and very good features. The school has developed a good and challenging climate for learning within a strong Christian ethos. The quality of teaching is largely good with a significant proportion of very good teaching. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to work are very good, as are relationships throughout the school. The school is well led and managed and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in English and mathematics are well above average by the time pupils leave the school.
- Effective teaching helps pupils learn well.
- The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, are well behaved and have very good relationships.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and their involvement in the work of the school is very good.
- The head teacher and deputy head teacher provide good leadership and a clear educational direction for the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Standards in science throughout the school.
- The use of computers to support learning in most subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997. It has overcome all of the weaknesses noted in the last inspection and has improved in a number of other ways. With reference to the key issues in the report, the school has developed its assessment procedures and their use, improved long-term curriculum planning, improved the format of the school development plan and the involvement of the governors in it. It has continued to develop the supportive role of the subject co-ordinators, improved the content of pupils' reports and the arrangements for the professional development of all staff.

In addition, the leadership has introduced other improvements. For example, there has been an increase in the number of classroom assistants and they have received specific training and support. Their contribution to learning is now good. Library facilities and the resources for information and communication technology have been improved. A new classroom has been built for children in the reception class and the provision for these children is now good. The Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been introduced well and by the time pupils leave the school, standards in these subjects, are well above average. The school is well placed to maintain these and other improvements and has a good capacity to further improve.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

In the National Curriculum tests in 2001, standards in English were well above average, in mathematics above average and in science average. When these results are compared to similar schools, based on the number of pupils claiming free school meals, the results are not as high. However, as attainment on entry to the school is broadly average, the results indicate very good achievement in English, good achievement in mathematics and sound achievement in science. Over the last three years, although the results in all three subjects have varied, they have been maintained mainly above or well above average.

The inspection findings indicate that for this year's pupils in Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are well above average and in science they are average. This shows a good improvement in mathematics since the National Curriculum tests in 2001. This improvement is mainly due to improved teaching and the monitoring and evaluation of the Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are now achieving very well in English and mathematics and soundly in science by the time they leave the school.

In art and design and in physical education, attainment is above the standards expected for their age by the time pupils leave the school and they are achieving well. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with nationally accepted levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In all other subjects, attainment matches expectations for pupils' ages and they are achieving soundly. Religious education was not inspected as this is subject to an inspection by the Diocese. The school has reached or exceeded almost all the targets it has set, with the exception of mathematics in 2001. Standards in literacy and numeracy are well above average by the time pupils leave the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils are eager to learn. They are responsive and show very good positive attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The behaviour of most pupils in lessons and around the school is good. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships at all levels are very good and make a major contribution to pupils' personal development.
Attendance	Good, however, a very small number of pupils often arrive late.

Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school. They are very proud of their school, care about each other and respect each other's views. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are beginning to show a great deal of confidence by the time they leave the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of very good teaching in Years 3 to 6. In the Foundation Stage, most of the teaching is good. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The best teaching is found in Years 3 to 6, where almost all the teaching is good or better. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The present level of teaching ensures that learning is mainly good in many areas as pupils successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in all the subjects they are studying.

Particular strengths are the effectiveness of the methods and ideas teachers use. These interest pupils and motivate them to the end of the lesson. The management of pupils is at least good and often very good. This ensures good behaviour in lessons and pupils develop very positive attitudes. The pace of lessons is usually good, resulting in pupils making a good, intellectual, physical or creative effort. In the more effective lessons, such as in English, throughout the school and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, teacher's planning is good and more successfully targets and challenges pupils with different needs and abilities. This results in good or very good progress in learning for all pupils. Where the teaching is not as effective, work planned for different abilities is less well developed and in some subjects like science, throughout the school, rarely planned, resulting in more moderate progress. The teachers' expectation of what pupils can achieve varies. In all classes, teachers have high expectations of pupils' work in English. Expectations of work in mathematics are high in Years 3 to 6 but could be higher on occasions in Years 1 and 2. This is partly due to a less effective use of pupils' assessment records. Computers are beginning to be used to support learning in some subjects but generally, this aspect is underdeveloped. The skills of literacy are taught well in Years 1 and 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6. The skills of numeracy are taught soundly in Years 1 and 2 and are strengthening.

Numeracy skills are taught very well in Years 3 to 6. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Educational visits out of school, extra-curricular activities and interesting visitors into school enhance learning well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support staff work very closely together. These pupils are very well integrated into the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are pupils with English as an additional language but they do not require extra support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for personal, spiritual, moral and social development is very good. The provision for cultural development is good, although there are at present only limited opportunities for pupils to appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school cares for its pupils very well.

Procedures for Child Protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is good. The use of this information to plan work in English is very good. Assessment procedures are not yet fully implemented in all subjects. There are very effective links with parents and the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. The information provided to parents about pupils' progress in their reports is occasionally unclear.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. Leadership and management by the head teacher are good. She is ably supported by the deputy head teacher. Some subject co-ordinators are fulfilling their roles well. Others are developing their roles further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors support the school well. The chair of the governing body works closely with the head teacher and a number of other governors are closely linked to subjects of the curriculum. The finance committee oversees financial spending very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The head teacher, staff and governors have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has enabled them to make the right decisions in the past and to plan well for the future.
The strategic use of	Good. The resources available are used well. All money available to

resources	the school is used wisely and carefully. The school applies the principles of getting best value for its pupils.
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Staff are deployed well and well qualified. Learning resources are mainly satisfactory. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. Rooms are spacious and wall displays effective. The leadership has developed an ethos where all pupils are included in all aspects of school life. The head teacher has been effective in identifying the school's priorities since her appointment four and a half years ago. Priorities identified for the future, both in this year and years ahead, are also very appropriate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes the school. • Their child is making good progress • The teaching is good. • They can approach the staff with any problems. • Their child is expected to work hard and do their best. • The school is well managed. • The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • Their child gets the right amount of work to do at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents felt that they were not well informed about how their child is getting on. • A few parents felt that the school does not work closely with parents. • A few parents felt that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

All parents' views expressed at the parents' meeting and in the questionnaire were brought to the attention of the head teacher. Inspectors support parents' positive views of the school. They also judged that the school does work closely with parents and that the provision of extra-curricular activities is very good. They agreed with parents that the pupils' annual reports do not always give a clear picture of how their child is getting on.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2001, pupils' attainment in reading was above average, in writing it was well above average and in mathematics it was average. Their attainment in science was above average. In the tests for 11-year-olds, in 2001, pupils' attainment in English was well above average, in mathematics, above average and in science, they were average. When the 2001 results are compared to similar schools, based on the numbers of pupils claiming free school meals, the comparisons are not as good. Attainment on entry into the reception class is broadly average, so the results for seven and 11-year-olds in English and mathematics demonstrates good or very good achievement. Achievement in science was satisfactory for 11-year-olds.

2 For this year's pupils, in Year 2, standards in writing and reading are now above average. Standards in reading have been maintained and standards in writing are slightly lower. Standards in mathematics and science are average. For pupils in Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are well above average and in science they are average. The improvements in mathematics in Year 6 are mainly due to improved teaching in numeracy and the setting of pupils into different ability groups in Years 5 and 6. These results indicate that from an average attainment on entry to the school, pupils are achieving well in writing and reading at age seven and very well in English at age 11. In mathematics, pupils are achieving soundly by Year 2 and very well by Year 6. In science they are achieving soundly by Year 2 and Year 6. The school has recognised that the achievement in mathematics for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and that in science for pupils throughout the school, is not as good as those for English and for mathematics for pupils in Years 3 to 6. It has targeted these areas for further development in its school development plan.

3 In English, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well above the national expectation. By the end of Year 2, the standards of reading are good and by the end of Year 6 are very good. By the time the pupils leave the school, most pupils are fully independent readers and read fluently and accurately with a good standard of expression. Attainment in writing is above the national expectation by Year 2 and well above by Year 6. Some of the written work in Years 3 to 6 is of a very high standard. For example, pupils responded to their work on "bullying" by demonstrating a very good use of descriptive writing with a powerful sense of emotion. Standards in literacy are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6.

4 In mathematics, at the end of Year 2, standards in all aspects are in line with the expectations for pupils' ages but still lower when compared to similar schools. By age seven, most pupils use numbers up to 100 in a variety of situations. Average attaining pupils do so with developing confidence and accuracy. Pupils' skills of mental calculation are satisfactory. On occasions, however, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. This is mainly because the information obtained from assessment procedures are not yet used well enough to plan specific work for the range of abilities. The school is aware of this and has targeted mathematics within Key Stage 1 as an area for improvement and standards are beginning to rise. By Year 6, most pupils are proficient in arithmetic calculations and work quickly and accurately both mentally and in written form. Attainment is well above that expected for pupils' ages by the time they leave the school.

5 In science, attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 matches national expectations in all aspects. Pupils are therefore achieving soundly. For example, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of investigational and experimental science. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils were investigating the

requirements needed for seeds to germinate by placing seeds in compost and giving them different conditions. They were able to predict what might happen and fully understood the need to make the test fair. Pupils have a sound knowledge of materials and their properties, life processes and living things and physical processes. However, their ability to write up their work in a clear logical manner and present their results well and clearly is less well developed. Also, in some classes where there is a wide spread of ability, progress is slower as all pupils do the same work. This is sometimes too difficult for the less able and fails to challenge the more able pupils.

6 In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is in line with nationally expected standards in Year 2 and Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils gain a sound range of skills. In Year 1, pupils use the mouse and tools to work computer programs with increasing competence. Year 2 pupils, alter the font, size and colour when word-processing their work. By Year 4, pupils control equipment by giving a series of more complicated instructions. Year 6, pupils are able to devise their own web-site, which includes text, graphics and sound.

7 In art and design, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is in line with that expected of seven-year-olds and their achievement is sound. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above that expected of 11-year-olds and their achievement is good. For example, pupils confidently use a wide range of materials, including charcoal, pastel, fabric and paint. Pupils develop their artistic skills and techniques well. They are enthusiastic about the opportunities given to them and are able to explain the styles of different artists well.

8 In physical education, the attainment of most pupils is above the levels expected for their ages and pupils are achieving well. Pupils apply their various skills well to suit the activity, whether it is running with a ball or working out tactics in a game. When practising ball skills, pupils demonstrate precision, control and fluency beyond their years. Pupils swim well and in gymnastics demonstrate a good sequence of exercises on a mat or on climbing apparatus.

9 In the remaining subjects, attainment matches that expected for their ages and pupils achieve soundly. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in English, mathematics, art and design, and physical education. In music at age 11, attainment was above the national expectation at the end of Year 6, so standards are not quite as high as they were at the last inspection. However, the music curriculum is now much wider with less emphasis on the playing of instruments, which was not so in the last inspection.

10 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the teachers adapt tasks to challenge them at a level that is appropriate to their abilities. They use support staff to ensure that pupils are given help to enable them to understand the work set and complete the tasks.

11 Children in the Foundation Stage make good gains in their learning and are developing very good attitudes due to the mainly good teaching. By the time they reach Year 1 most children achieve well. They attain above the Early Learning Goals for children of this age in personal social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and mathematical development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, and creative development their attainment matches the standards expected for their age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They like coming to school. In discussions with pupils they said there were many activities and subjects they enjoyed and found very little to dislike. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and keep working right until the end of a lesson. For example, in a

science lesson, pupils were working in groups on forces and had to move from one experiment to another. These ranged from tug of war, water flotation and card games and they wasted no time in initiating each task. They kept up the impetus of the lesson without any interruption when changing tasks, and made the most effective use of their time. Pupils are responsive to their teachers. For example, in a physical education lesson, they made the best use of their time in the hall when exploring and combining movement ideas because they were prepared to listen to what they had to do. They followed examples when shown and persisted in trying to improve their own performances. Many pupils are willing to continue learning at the end of school time and attend out of school activities such as chess, art, golf and needlework clubs. Pupils are keen to volunteer for tasks, for example, talking to visitors, taking registers back to the office and helping put chairs away after hymn singing. Pupils' attitudes to learning progresses during a lesson as they begin to appreciate the pleasure they can derive from improving their work. For example, at the start of a hymn practice, many of the pupils did not look enthusiastic and were almost mechanical in their singing. By the end of the lesson, pupils were singing joyously and their performances and attitude had improved significantly because of the good teaching.

13 Pupils' behaviour is good and there were no exclusions in the previous school year. On the few occasions when pupils do display signs of poor behaviour, the other pupils in the class do not follow the example. Pupils who were interviewed, said that behaviour in the school is good and they do not have any serious concerns over bullying. Playground and lunchtime behaviour is good and pupils enjoy team and paired games at break times.

14 Pupil's personal development and the relationships in the school are very good. The school council is proving successful in giving pupils the opportunity to share opinions and ideas, and promote citizenship. Pupils enjoyed the selection process for membership. School council members not only identified the need for extra playground equipment, but also have ensured that the school has provided them with some. The house system in the school and the accountability of being a prefect or house captain, allows pupils the opportunity to be in a position where they must take a lead amongst their fellow pupils. They respond well to this challenge. Pupils enjoy taking responsibilities and each class has a list of jobs for each of them to carry out. For example, they keep the computer area tidy, get milk ready and tidy up the cloakroom. Older pupils enjoy looking after younger pupils when they have the opportunity. Pupils are active fundraisers for charity and have held sponsored events. They have raised funds for the Blue Peter charity, Children in Need, Cafod and the Catholic Caring Services.

15 Children's attitudes and behaviour in the Foundation Stage in the reception class are very good. This is because of the very good relationships that staff have with them. Staff manage their behaviour very well through lots of praise and encouragement and clearly established rules and routines. As a result, children have very good attitudes to their work and show good levels of concentration, initiative and independence for their age. Children share resources and work together as friends. During the inspection children worked well together in the imaginative play area that is set out as a travel agency. They took turns to act out a role as the travel agent, answering the phone and writing down messages or dealing with customers.

16 Attendance at the school is good and there are no unauthorised absences as the school can track the reasons behind each pupil absence from school. A small number of pupils are regularly late to school. This can disrupt the start of lessons for all pupils in the class at the start of the day. The school is concerned that the families of these children are not making sufficient effort to ensure the punctuality of their children for the start of the school day. The school has often notified parents about this problem. A few parents continue to take their children away from school for annual holidays during term time for more than the recognised time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17 The quality of teaching is mainly good with nearly four out of five lessons being good or better and nearly three out of ten lessons being very good. In Years 1 and 2, three out of five lessons are satisfactory and the rest are good or very good. In Years 3 to 6, just over half of the lessons are good and just over two out of five lessons are very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. This level of teaching shows a good improvement since the last inspection where just over half of the teaching was satisfactory and only two out of five lessons were good with a small amount of very good and unsatisfactory teaching. Although there is a proportion of good and very good teaching in Years 1 and 2, it is still better in Years 3 to 6. The leadership has recognised this and intends to intensify the programme of sharing good practice and targeting areas that need more support. All teachers have worked hard to improve their teaching. They have had good support from the head teacher, the deputy head teacher and some of the curriculum co-ordinators. The improvement in the quality of teaching has resulted in improvements in learning, particularly in English, throughout the school, in mathematics within Key Stage 2 and in the Foundation Stage.

18 Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is mainly good and this has a positive effect on their learning. Staff plan and work effectively together as a team. They manage children's behaviour very well through the very good relationships that they have and the frequent use of praise to reward children's efforts and achievements. As a result children grow in confidence and this underpins their good learning. Teaching is good in personal social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. In the other areas of the curriculum, teaching and learning are mainly satisfactory. The effective features of the teaching are that the teacher has high expectations of what children should achieve and is continually looking for ways to extend their learning, for instance in mathematical development. Staff teach basic skills well, such as work on initial sounds in communication language and literacy. They work purposefully with specific groups of children during the group work. They assess regularly what children achieve in their work and use this information to plan the next step in children's learning. However, staff do not always check and support the learning of groups of children who are working independently, for example in creative development.

19 The teaching of literacy has been a major focus for the school during the last two to three years and it is now well established. The quality of teaching in this area is mainly good and the basic skills are taught well. Written planning is well done and includes appropriate work for the varying needs of pupils. Teaching methods are good, ensuring pupils are well motivated and maintain concentration to the end of the lesson. This was seen in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 5 where pupils were writing about a dragon and describing its character, looks, special powers and its habits. The class teacher challenged the pupils to use their best descriptive writing and because of her enthusiasm and pace, pupils remained well focused to the end of the lesson. The quality of teaching in literacy has resulted in above average standards by the end of Year 2 and standards well above average at the end of Year 6. The teaching of numeracy has received specific attention also and a sound format for lessons has been established throughout the school. The quality of teaching is again largely good but the school has recognised that elements of numeracy teaching needs strengthening within Years 1 and 2. For example, the information available from the assessment procedures need to be used more effectively to plan work more closely linked to the individual needs of pupils. Also, the teachers' perception of what pupils are capable of is not always as high in some lessons. However, the quality of teaching has resulted in satisfactory standards by the end of Year 2 and very good standards by the time pupils leave the school.

20 Particular strengths are the effectiveness of the methods and ideas teachers use. These interest pupils and motivate them to the end of the lessons. Teachers have at least satisfactory subject

knowledge, sometimes good, within Years 1 and 2 and largely good subject knowledge, within Years 3 to 6. All subjects have good schemes of work and policies to guide teachers. Teachers have particularly good knowledge in English throughout the school, it is developing well in mathematics and in all other subjects. Teachers have had training in information and communication technology, to develop their confidence and this is now satisfactory and pupils are learning effectively.

21 Teachers' short-term lesson planning is at least satisfactory and is often good. It is more effective in English throughout the school and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, where it is written carefully in structured learning steps with clear aims for learning and well thought out activities. In these areas, work is also planned more effectively to target and challenge pupils with different needs and abilities. This results in good or very good progress in learning for these pupils as they acquire skills, knowledge and understanding. In a number of areas, for example in science, work is rarely planned for pupils with differing abilities and progress is more moderate.

22 Another underdeveloped area in the teaching is the limited use of computers to support learning in different subjects. On occasions, this is done well. For example, it was used to good effect in a numeracy lesson for pupils in a Year 5/6 class. Pupils were working on new strategies to break up more complicated multiplication sums to make them easier. The computer programs available supported this learning well as pupils worked on multiples of numbers and developed their multiplication and table skills. However, computers are not always used in this way. The information and communication technology task is sometimes unrelated to the lesson taking place. On other occasions, it is not used at all. The school has already recognised this as an area for further improvement and is planning to address this issue shortly, as indicated in the development plan.

23 The management of pupils in lessons is at least good and often very good, throughout the school. This ensures good behaviour in all lessons and all pupils have developed very positive attitudes to their work, have a desire to improve and give of their best throughout the lesson. The pace of almost all lessons is good and so pupils make a good intellectual, physical or creative effort. For example, in a gymnastic lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher's high expectations of work rate and behaviour and the pace she had set resulted in a very productive lesson. Pupils sustained their physical effort very well and worked hard to improve their skills.

24 Teachers have sound knowledge of all pupils they teach and their day-to-day assessment of how well pupils are learning is usually accurate. However, longer-term assessment of pupils' progress is in the early stages of development in some subjects like science and information and communication technology and the school has yet to fully utilise this information. In English, assessment is good and used well. The quality of marking is satisfactory with some good, helpful comments on occasions. The amount and type of homework set is appropriate for this age of pupils.

25 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good in all classes. The head teacher provides additional support to Year 2 pupils in literacy and has high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Teachers take account of the different skills and abilities in the lessons. Support staff have a good level of expertise and are very committed to meeting pupils' needs and therefore pupils are fully included in all parts of all lessons.

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

26 Since the last inspection the school has improved its curriculum provision by using the national guidelines to ensure that all subjects are planned in a sequence that builds upon previous learning. A further improvement is that the governing body has approved a sex education policy,

which is taught sensitively through the science curriculum. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of the mis-use of drugs and the importance of health and fitness. The school continues to provide a rich and challenging curriculum that generates the pupils' interest and sustains their enthusiasm for learning. The pupils experience a relevant curriculum, and the impact of the overall provision is enhanced by the effective contribution of many subjects to the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and personal skills. The latter is reflected in the mature, confident and caring manner that pupils throughout the school display.

27 The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this has helped the school to maintain its high standards, particularly in the areas of writing and number. The broad curriculum admirably reflects the school's mission of creating a secure environment where everyone is valued and shows respect for each other. Setting targets for individual pupils ensures that the curriculum matches pupils' abilities and recognises and meets their personal needs. This is particularly strong in English and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.

28 Pupils engage in a wide range of lunchtime and after school activities leading to a sense of pride and community, which contributes to the very positive ethos of the school. These activities include a wide range of visits and the contribution made by the many visitors who come into the school to work with pupils; for example an artist worked with pupils on a specific project. Pupils take advantage of the many opportunities to work collaboratively and willingly undertake roles of responsibility, which develop their independence, encourage good relationships and promote their inclusion in the life of the school. The curriculum further enhances pupils' experiences with a visit to a residential outdoor education centre, helping to promote their team building skills. By the age of 11, pupils are fully prepared for the challenges of the next stage of their education and links with the high schools are very good.

29 Both the organisation and curriculum of the school promote equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The school's policy for special educational needs embraces the principles and practices of the Code of Practice and there are thorough arrangements for identifying and assessing pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a combination of withdrawal for individual and group support by a support assistant and in-class support with work set at the appropriate level by class teachers. This helps these pupils to make good progress. Individual and group education plans are detailed and set specific learning targets with careful attention to literacy and numeracy. These plans are closely monitored. There are good links with support services, reviews are held regularly and parents and pupils are kept informed of progress. As a result of this, these pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life and are valued members of the school community. The school is very effective in ensuring all pupils are fully included in the life of the school and benefit from what it offers. This is reflected in the attention it pays to identifying any possible underachievement and the additional provision given to groups of pupils to ensure that they achieve their very best. For example pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 have additional teacher support in literacy and numeracy.

30 The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It enables them to become sensitive and considerate young people with a good understanding of their role in the community; for example by raising money for local, national and international charitable causes. They have respect for other people's opinions, values and beliefs and give credit to the achievement of others, for example in assembly, where there is a regular celebration of pupils' achievements and improvements. Pupils treat the whole school environment with great respect. This is reflected in the way that they keep the school grounds litter and graffiti free.

31 Pupils' spiritual development is very good and achieved through carefully planned opportunities for pupils to consider how and why attitudes develop and how they can share with others as well as receive. Pupils are made aware of the plight of people from other communities who experience poverty and therefore are all the more appreciative of the opportunities that they have. Throughout the school there is a very strong sense of community, which actively supports regular reflection on issues that impinge upon the pupils' lives; new and younger pupils are always made to feel welcome by being involved in the life of the school. Pupils are provided with opportunities to celebrate their own and others' faiths and beliefs as they learn about Catholicism and other world religions such as Judaism and Islam. The school emphasises that pupils should be proud of their achievements and take advantage of every opportunity that they meet. This leads to pupils having confidence in their ambitions for the future and an appreciation of the richness of life around them.

32 The school's behaviour policy makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. It encourages respect, consideration and tolerance and is rooted in and supported by the very good quality of the relationships between adults and pupils. The staff provide very good examples to pupils. They consistently place a strong emphasis on personal responsibilities and take advantage of the opportunities to make pupils aware of the differences between right and wrong. Adults reinforce good behaviour through the effective use of rewards and consequences. Pupils are involved in making school and classroom rules and clearly follow them by demonstrating good standards of personal behaviour, honesty and courtesy. A major outcome of this is that pupils have a heightened sense of fairness and justice. For example, pupils in Year 4 wrote outstanding stories that demonstrated their understanding of the devastating effects that bullying can have on young children.

33 The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school nurtures the importance of sharing and caring in all of its activities. Therefore, pupils are sensitive and responsive to the needs of others and demonstrate this in the way that they look after and involve pupils with particular learning difficulties. As a result, the school is a very caring community where all pupils are valued and their self-esteem is high.

34 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. It is promoted through the range of visits that are well planned to support many subjects of the curriculum. These visits provide opportunities for pupils to learn about the heritage and cultures of this country and the local area of the school. Pupils visit museums, art galleries and enjoy the creative ability of authors, poets, musicians and theatre groups who work with the pupils to instill a love and enthusiasm for their particular artistic talents. Aspects of pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding are developed through music, art, geography and history. However, pupils all get limited opportunities to prepare them for living in a multicultural society.

35 The school makes good use of the immediate locality and the community to enhance curriculum studies. For example, pupils study nearby rivers and compare and contrast the St Anne's area to Parbold for geography work, and visit local museums to extend their knowledge of Victorian, Tudor and Egyptian times. There are good links to the churches in the parish, especially St Peter's and St Joseph's. The parishioners support the school and its activities well. The school is delighted to continue a historical tradition of being represented in the local club day walk. Sporting links with other schools in the area are well established and pupils benefit from local sports coaching, access to premier sports facilities in the area and sponsorship for football and other sports strip. Pupils benefit from good partnerships with other schools as they have access to visiting artists or performers by sharing these resources either at the performance or in the workshops.

36 The Foundation Stage curriculum for children in the reception class is mainly good. It covers the six areas of learning and the teacher has devised an effective system of lesson planning that is

based upon the national recommended guidance for children of this age. The teacher improves the curriculum by visits out, for example to a sea life centre and a museum. The provision for physical development is only satisfactory. This is because staff do not provide sufficiently for outdoor physical and imaginative play. This is partially compensated for by the teacher providing good physical education lessons in the school hall.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37 The school takes very good care of its pupils and there are very good procedures to ensure their well being, health and safety.

38 Staff in the school know their pupils very well and use this knowledge to good effect to monitor and guide pupils' personal development, both formally and informally. Pupil awards for achievement are monitored by each class teacher over the school year, and the school also refers to what pupils are doing out of school in order to celebrate any extra curricular achievements. Pupils' transfer to secondary school is well supported by the development programme in Year 6 and the strong links the school has fostered.

39 There are comprehensive procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety. Governors and staff regularly carry out health and safety audits of the school and the school caretaker makes a daily check of the premises. Fire drills are held on a regular basis and the school ensures that all the required safety procedures are carried out on fire fighting, electrical, alarm and physical education equipment on an annual basis. Most staff in the school have had first aid training.

40 Child protection procedures are very good. In addition, the designated personnel and the head teacher have received up to date training in local and national child protection procedures. All staff and voluntary helpers are aware of referral procedures and strategies for dealing with any child protection issues.

41 The school's procedures to monitor and promote pupils' attendance are very good. Registers are checked on a daily basis by the administrative staff, and regularly by the head teacher. The school maintains a 'late' book and a signing-in and signing-out book to keep track of whether pupils leave the school premises during lesson time. The education welfare service is informed where the school has concerns about any pupil's absence, but the head teacher contacts families personally where she has concerns over pupil's lateness.

42 The school uses a range of very good procedures and strategies to monitor and promote good behaviour. Staff monitor good conduct through the weekly award ceremonies and on a broader basis by the analysis of personal development targets and behavioural plans. Classroom and playground rules and charters are effective in setting out the framework of behavioural expectations in the school. The school's house system promotes the discipline of teamwork and recognises that good behaviour deserves extra house points, and that inappropriate behaviour will lose points. Circle time offers opportunities for pupils to bring their worries about, for example, bullying to the notice of staff and other pupils. Any behavioural concerns of pupils feature in weekly staff meetings and meetings of the school's lunchtime supervisory staff.

43 Staff in the Foundation Stage have very good relationships, know the children very well and are caring, sensitive and supportive. For example, an adult shared a book in the quiet area with a child who felt unwell whilst the teacher talked to the whole class.

44 The school has made good improvements in its assessment systems since the previous inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. In the Foundation Stage the school has good systems for assessing children's achievement. Staff carry out an initial assessment of children's achievements when they start school in the reception class and this is discussed with parents or carers. It is used to group children by ability for some of their work, for example, in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. This results in pupils' learning appropriate to their needs. Staff make regular assessments of children's work in lessons and use these successfully to plan the next step in children's learning.

45 The school has mainly good procedures for assessing pupils' achievements from Years 1 to 6. These procedures are very good in English and satisfactory in mathematics; for example, the school undertakes a range of assessments in these subjects in each year group. The subject co-ordinators keep impressive portfolios of the standard of work that pupils achieve, for instance, in problem solving in mathematics. In these subjects teachers make good use of this information, for instance to group pupils by ability and to provide suitable work for them. However, in mathematics in Years 2 and 3 teachers do not use sufficiently the assessments they have of what pupils can do to provide work that is sufficiently challenging. In other subjects of the curriculum, assessment procedures and the use that teachers make of them are satisfactory. In science, there are some very good assessment procedures being produced but these are not yet used to plan specific work for the different abilities. Co-ordinators of most subjects are beginning to assemble portfolios of work like the ones that have been established in English and mathematics.

46 There are good induction arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage and these ensure that they settle quickly into school routines. The teacher involves parents well in the initial procedures for assessing children's achievements.

47 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development and academic progress are good. The school has rightly placed emphasis upon developing comprehensive methods of monitoring and tracking pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. The head teacher analyses carefully the information and it is used to identify pupils who are underachieving and to give them the support they need. The school has a good system for tracking pupils' achievements in personal development, such as attitudes to their work. The procedures for setting targets for pupils to achieve in literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets and these are shared with parents and reviewed each term. Teachers of younger pupils sometimes use technical words that are not easy for the pupils to understand and this limits their effectiveness. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show that they find the targets useful because they enable them to take responsibility for the direction of their own learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48 Parents' views of the school are very good and they are very supportive of the work of the school. They like the family atmosphere and appreciate the pastoral care that the school has in place to look after its pupils. Parents can talk to staff on a daily basis and if they want, communicate either through home/school reading books, or through homework diaries for older pupils. Parents rightly feel that the school caters very well for differing abilities of pupils and that it is open to moving their children to a different group in order to improve their progress. Parents and friends of the school are very active in organising social and fund raising events. These help the school and enable parents and staff to build closer links. Pupils have benefited from funds raised for example, for extra computers, a sound speaker system and new library furniture. In the Millennium year, parents and friends of the school paid for a trip for many of the pupils to the Millennium Dome, and they are supporting the establishment of a Millennium Garden in the school grounds.

49 The quality of information provided for parents is good. Frequent newsletters go home to parents with day to day news of the school, and parents are welcome to speak to staff at the end of the school day whenever they need any follow up information. For example, in the newsletters the school identifies any staff changes to parents, forthcoming fund raising events and useful information on education welfare benefits. The school is keen to seek feedback from parents and has instigated its own questionnaire to parents to identify strengths and weaknesses. The school provides a detailed breakdown of the curriculum plan for each class, and parents appreciate knowing what work their children are doing and how they can help them at home. Very little information on the Foundation Stage is given to parents in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents, and some parents may be unaware of all the procedures. In addition to two consultation evenings held during the school year, parents have the option of discussing their child's annual written report in the summer term. These written reports continue to be inconsistent in their reporting of the progress and attainment of each pupil, but they have improved since the previous inspection and are now personal to each pupil, explain the set targets and provide more information of what pupils can and cannot do. The information that the teacher provides for parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum is mainly informal, for instance through curriculum meetings and consultation meetings. The teacher uses effectively a homework diary to communicate with parents.

50 The school appreciates the active support of a number of parents as classroom helpers, and the collaboration of most parents with the school's homework policy and home school agreement. The school actively follows up families where support for homework is felt to be waning and those families who do not consistently support the school's demand for pupil's punctual attendance at school. Most parents are happy with the homework provision made by the school, but a few parents continue to hold differing views on there being too much, or too little, homework.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51 Leadership and management are good. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. The head teacher gives effective leadership. She has provided a clear vision and a distinct educational direction for the school and she has been successful in developing an agreed sense of purpose amongst the staff. All the key issues from the last inspection have been resolved and she has introduced a number of other improvements. She is well supported by the deputy head teacher and, together, with all other staff and governors, they have created a good school. She has ensured that the school's priorities for development are very appropriate. The successful implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching in English and mathematics and an improvement in the efficient way the school is run, are all successful examples of these priorities, which have had an impact on standards and achievement.

52 The governing body is supportive in many ways. The chair of the governors is fully committed to the school. He is involved in the life of the school, visits often, talks and encourages the teachers and engages in regular dialogue with the head teacher. A number of other governors visit the school and support aspects of the curriculum. The support from the governors with a responsibility for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy is good and they converse often with the co-ordinators of these areas. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are involved in the production and evaluation of the yearly development plan. They also have a good longer-term vision for the school. They are well supported in this by the chair of the governors financial committee. For example, the number of pupils in the school is slowly falling, owing to a decline in the number of catholic families in the area. The financial governor is aware that this will produce less money for the school and has a useful contingency plan to govern this and the governors are determined to keep the present favourable pupil/teacher ratio if they can. All of the governors' statutory duties are fulfilled well.

53 The head teacher and deputy head teacher have been involved in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching. There has been an agreed timetable of observations set against an established range of criteria. Written feedback has been provided and the outcome of the observation is discussed with teachers. This has been effective, as the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers' planning is also examined on a regular basis and pupils' work analysed.

54 The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is only partly developed. The school has concentrated on the development of literacy, numeracy, and investigational work in science and on information and communication technology. Other areas have only had limited development because of these other priorities. It is intended to give some urgency to these other areas as time allows.

55 The aims of the school, set within a Christian context and set out in its mission statement, its values and policies, are implemented very well. The leadership has developed a very good ethos in the school where pupils have developed very good attitudes to their learning. There are very good relationships and a commitment by the leadership to raise educational standards for all and provide equal opportunities within a climate of including all pupils within all aspects of school life.

56 The yearly school development plan effectively supports management. It is carefully costed. Funding is very well linked to educational priorities, such as the maintenance of smaller class sizes. There are sufficient and well qualified teaching staff to teach the National Curriculum. Support staff are very effective and work very closely with all teachers.

57 Accommodation in the school makes a satisfactory contribution to the needs of the curriculum and there have been a number of improvements since the previous inspection. The school now has a small information and communication technology suite. A modification to the corridors in the school now means that all classes can be accessed from a corridor, and not through a classroom. All the pupils' toilets in the school have been retiled to meet health and safety requirements. The surrounding wooded area to the school enhances pupils' studies of the environment. Staff are addressing the limitation on the availability of discrete changing facilities for older pupils and although there is not a medical room in the school, the school's staff room doubles as a first aid base.

58 Resources in the school are satisfactory to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Since the previous inspection the school has re-introduced a library area and increased the range of reading materials and listening centres. Resources are centrally organised in two storage rooms, but there is insufficient storage area to house the physical education equipment. Resources for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

59 The leadership of special educational needs is good and all money available is spent wisely. The school is effective in identifying pupils at an early stage if they are experiencing difficulties. Parents are invited to work closely with the school and there is also very good involvement of other agencies, who bring their expertise in addition to the staff of the school. As a result, pupils with statements of special educational needs are meeting their targets as set out in their individual educational plans and taking part in the full life of the school.

60 Careful financial planning supports educational developments and the school uses any specific grant it gets very well. For example, extra money has been found to fund an extra teacher to improve the pupil teacher ratio in Years 5 and 6. This has been effective and pupils are now taught in ability groupings for English and mathematics, which has resulted in very good standards at the end of Year 6. The school uses the money at its disposal very wisely and the head teacher, chair of the governors financial committee and the school bursar are aware of the need to get the best value for

pupils. In this they are effective. The quality of financial control is very good. The school has a carry over figure of eight per cent but this is wise budgeting because of the school's falling roles situation and the desire to maintain the present class sizes. School administration by the head teacher and school secretary is also very effective. The management systems now in place, including the effective leadership of the head teacher, dedicated team of teachers, support staff and governors, have ensured a number of improvements since the last inspection. The school has a good capacity to maintain an effective school and introduce further improvements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61 To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, head teacher and staff should address the following issues:-

- (1) Continue to raise attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 1 by:
 - Increasing teacher expectations of what pupils can achieve in their work.
 - Ensuring that teachers make greater use of assessment information to plan work that more closely matches the needs of pupils.
(these are outlined in paragraphs 4, 45, 80)

- (2) Continue to raise attainment in science throughout the school by:
 - Implementing the good assessment procedures recently devised and use the information they provide to plan work more closely matched to the needs of pupils.
 - Ensuring that all pupils have a clear picture of the purpose and aims of every lesson.
 - Improving the written presentation of investigations by devising a more consistent and structured approach.
 - Providing opportunities, where appropriate, for pupils to set up and devise their own investigations.
(these are outlined in paragraphs 5, 45, 86, 87, 88)

- (3) Raise attainment further in information and communication technology by using computers more effectively and more often to support learning in all subjects.
(these are outlined in paragraphs 22, 84, 96, 107, 113)

In addition to the above issues, the following more minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Provide more opportunities to prepare pupils for living in a multicultural society.
- Improve the use of the outside play area for the Foundation Stage.
- Ensure that details of the Foundation Stage of education are included in the school prospectus.
(These are outlined in paragraphs 34, 62, 69, 49)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	24	10	0	0	0
Percentage	0	28	51	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.01
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	20	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	20	20	19
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	97% (93%)	97% (93%)	97% (87%)
	National	84% (83%)	86% (84%)	91% (90%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	20	18	20
	Total	30	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94% (93%)	88% (93%)	97% (93%)
	National	85% (84%)	89% (88%)	89% (88%)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	13	15
	Girls	16	12	16
	Total	30	25	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94% (83%)	78% (93%)	97% (90%)
	National	75% (75%)	71% (72%)	87% (85%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	16	15	16
	94	30	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94% (87%)	91% (93%)	97% (87%)
	National	72% (70%)	74% (72%)	82% (79%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	201
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	29.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	104

FTE means full-time equivalent

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	406,215
Total expenditure	410,227
Expenditure per pupil	1,909
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,164
Balance carried forward to next year	31,152

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	205
Number of questionnaires returned	114

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	30	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	40	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	41	8	0	1
The teaching is good.	60	37	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	44	9	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	25	4	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	38	10	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	33	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	32	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	40	9	8	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

62 The school has made good progress in the provision for the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. The curriculum has improved since then because staff provide a good curriculum that is based upon the national recommendation for children of this age. This is improved by staff planning together as a team and by careful lesson planning. The shortcoming is that the school has not made sufficient progress in improving the use of the outdoor play area and its resources.

63 Through good teaching and very good attitudes to their learning, children achieve well in some aspects from an average attainment on entry. By the time they reach Year 1 they attain above the Early Learning Goals for this age in personal social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, and creative development their attainment is in line with nationally expected standards.

64 Teaching and learning are mainly good. The good teaching is in personal social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. As a result, children achieve well in these parts of the curriculum. The effective features of this teaching are that staff plan carefully work that is challenging yet meets children's learning needs. They work purposefully with groups of children and monitor and assess their achievements regularly and use this information well to plan the next step in children's learning. In the other areas of learning, teaching and children's achievements are satisfactory in the main. Staff ensure that all children are included fully in the activities in all areas of learning. A shortcoming in this teaching is that staff do not always check and support sufficiently the learning of groups of children who are working independently.

Personal, social and emotional development

65 Staff promote children's personal, social and emotional development very effectively and children are achieving well. They are caring, supporting and encouraging, for instance in praising children's efforts and achievements. Staff set a very good example for children to follow; they listen with genuine interest to what children have to say and speak with courtesy and consideration. This leads to trusting relationships and helps children to understand other people's point of view. Staff encourage children to show initiative and to be increasingly independent. Children respond very well, work together as friends, share equipment with each other and take increasing responsibility for resources. They tidy equipment away, dress themselves independently after physical education lessons and settle readily into daily routines, such as milk time. Their behaviour is very good. The teacher gives children the opportunity to reflect upon their relationships with other children through short, purposeful acts of collective worship. She sets the scene by lighting a candle and seating children in a circle. As a result children are developing a reflective attitude towards their actions and are developing a good awareness that some actions are right and some are wrong. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

66 Staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills in all activities and children are achieving well. They give children many opportunities to discuss their work individually, in pairs and to speak in a larger group. This underpins children's good achievement. The teacher successfully teaches writing skills through a formal approach to handwriting. As a result, children of all abilities are beginning to form letters correctly and present their work neatly. Higher

and average attaining children confidently have a go at writing their own sentences. Children share books with adults and listen carefully to the stories that staff read to them, such as 'The Pirate Adventure'. Staff teach effectively the knowledge of letter sounds. Encouraged by staff, children use this knowledge successfully to help them to read and to write the unfamiliar words they meet. As a result, higher and average attaining children recognise a good range of words and lower attaining children are at the early stages of recognising words. The teacher makes good use of a homework diary to communicate with parents about the children's work and plans carefully the homework to support children's learning in the classroom. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

Mathematical development

67 Staff give children a variety of well-planned mathematical experiences. They use interesting methods that motivate children to learn, such as a variety of games, and these promote their good learning and they achieve well. The teacher's high expectations of what children can achieve are shown in the challenging work that she sets for them, for instance in mental mathematics activities. Children count forwards and backwards to 20. The higher attaining children count how many swings that 'Bertie bee' (a soft toy) makes and add this onto a number that they have chosen, such as 16. Children enjoy this challenging work and quickly calculate the answers. The teacher knows children's capabilities well and matches the work effectively to their learning needs. The nursery nurse supports the teacher effectively, for instance in the development of mathematical words. She helped lower attaining children to use accurately the terms 'behind' and 'in front' and to count up to five through acting out the song 'The wheels on the bus'. Staff promote children's learning successfully at other times during the day, for example through sand and water play. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68 Children achieve soundly in knowledge and understanding of the world because the teacher plans the work carefully around a specific topic and links well the different parts of the curriculum to this. Staff enhance the learning through visits out, for instance to a museum. In this term's topic on 'journeys' children talk about hot and cool places and sort clothes into those they will need for a holiday there. Through careful adult questioning and encouragement they give reasons for their decisions. In the topic about 'The Three Bears' children designed beds for the bears, for example with construction blocks or a variety of materials, made porridge and tasted it. The teacher uses information and communication technology well to support children's learning across the curriculum, for example, in work on letters in language and literacy and on numbers in mathematics. As a result, children use a variety of computer programs with confidence and increasing independence. They show developing control of the mouse. Children are on course to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

Physical development

69 Although the teacher does not use the outdoor play area sufficiently and resources for this are unsatisfactory, children's achievement in physical development is sound. This is because of the good teaching and learning that take place in the physical education lessons in the school hall. In a games lesson the teacher developed effectively children's awareness of space and each other and the skills of playing simple team games. This also promoted successfully children's skills of co-operation and collaboration. She used demonstrations and those of individual children to develop children's skills, for example, in jumping, and gave children time to practice and refine their movements. Resources for this element of the curriculum are unsatisfactory. In the classroom, staff teach successfully the skills

to help children gain safe control of finer movements, such as using glue spatulas, paintbrushes and cutting with scissors. Pupils are on course to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

Creative development

70 In creative development, children are achieving soundly and staff give them many interesting activities to promote children's imagination, and their speaking and listening skills, for example, in the imaginative play area that is set out as a travel agents. Children take turns as the travel agent, answering the phone and writing down messages or dealing with customers. The teacher works purposefully with specific groups of children, extending effectively their learning and monitoring their progress. Sometimes she does not give sufficient time to groups of children who are working independently in order to monitor, support and extend further their learning. As a result children's learning is satisfactory in the main. This strategy is difficult to implement effectively because most of these lessons take place in the afternoon when the teacher has no nursery nurse to help her. Children draw and paint pictures of their ideas and experiences, for instance of holiday resorts. Higher attaining children paint pictures of a good standard that show close attention to detail. Teaching and learning are good in music. As a result, children know the names of some percussion instruments, such as tambourine and maracas, and play them with a developing awareness of rhythm. They sing familiar songs with an increasing awareness of pitch, such as 'Oh Jack Frost'. Children are on course to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

ENGLISH

71 By the end of Year 6, attainment is well above national average and pupils' achievements are very good. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above the national average and pupils achievements are good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and very good progress in Years 3 to 6.

72 Since the last inspection there has been significant improvement in the standards achieved particularly by the pupils in Years 3 to 6. Standards are now high for a number of reasons. The literacy strategy is successfully implemented under the positive leadership of the English co-ordinator. Assessment procedures have improved and pupils' progress is monitored with targets being set to enable them to reach the next level of attainment. The school's focus on writing ensures that teachers provide many opportunities to encourage pupils to write for a wide range of audiences.

73 Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well above the national expectation and an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils express themselves confidently and clearly. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other, and contribute maturely to group and class discussions. In the literacy hour, pupils listen intently to stories, poems and biographical texts. They are very willing to ask and answer questions and are very enthusiastic about contributing their own ideas. Pupils' skills are developed through the planned opportunities for expressing opinions about events and characters. For example, Year 4 pupils speculated how they would feel if they encountered 'The Iron Woman'. These skills are particularly enhanced when there are appropriate links with other subjects; for example, Year 6 pupils discussed the locations of mountain ranges across the world in geography. A good level of subject specific language is displayed in many areas of the curriculum; for example, in Year 4 art and design, pupils discussed the intentions of the artists when watching slides of their work. There is good use of drama to support the development of speaking skills and this makes a very positive impact in pupils' confidence when discussing ideas and events.

74 By the end of Year 2 the standard of reading is good and the majority of pupils reach above the standards expected of seven-year-olds. The higher attaining pupils demonstrate a good degree of

technical skill and understanding but their fluency and expression is not as well developed. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. Teachers have a record of the books that pupils read and they are listened to regularly at home and at school. When reading, pupils use picture or contextual clues appropriately, build a comprehensive sight vocabulary and use their understanding of phonics to attempt unknown words. By the end of Year 6 the standard of reading is very good and most pupils read at levels well above those expected of 11-year-olds. Pupils read from a range of fiction and non-fiction books. By Year 6 most pupils are fully independent readers and most of these pupils read accurately and fluently with a good standard of expression. Pupils read for pleasure, can justify who is their favourite author and are able to review books critically, taking account of aspects such as character and plot. The school is very successful in sustaining the pupils' enthusiasm for reading.

75 Attainment in writing is above the national expectation at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils' writing shows clear structure and the appropriate use of adjectives. Pupils in Year 1 are able to re-tell a fairy tale and are imaginative in their ideas and use of words. Pupils are secure in their construction of sentences and write for a wide range of purposes. For example, Year 2 pupils wrote clear instructions about 'How to make shadow puppets'. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is very good, particularly in Year 4 and for the higher attaining pupils in Year 6. Pupils make good use of dictionaries to support their spelling. By the end of Year 6, many pupils are able to plan and redraft written work including stories, drama scripts, instructions, narrative, poetry and letters. Some of the work is of a very high standard, for example, the stories of Year 4 pupils responding to their work on 'bullying' showed a very good use of descriptive writing with a powerful sense of emotion. Pupils write in a range of styles, paying good attention to punctuation and employing specific techniques such as the use of similes and alliteration, for example, Year 6 pupils write their own fables on the theme of 'The boy who cried wolf'.

76 The quality of teaching is at least good throughout the school and often very good. All teachers have a secure subject knowledge, teach with enthusiasm and confidence and as a result the implementation of the literacy hour is good. This leads to pupils having very positive attitudes towards their work and an obvious enthusiasm for English. Very good teaching is seen in lessons, which are thoroughly prepared, and the teachers' enthusiasm is used to captivate pupils' interests and motivate them to work hard and concentrate for a sustained period. As a result, pupils show great interest in their lessons, behave very well and respond enthusiastically to every aspect of English. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils and pupils participate willingly in discussions. Teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and learning, give supportive feedback and set targets for pupils to help them make progress. Teaching has a good balance of class, group and individual work and whole class lessons are enhanced by skilful questioning, which encourages pupils to focus on the subject, clarify and extend their thinking and reinforce their knowledge. Most pupils are able to work both independently and collaboratively and leads to very good relationships with each other. A notable feature is teachers and support assistants collaborate effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all English activities.

77 The subject leader provides good leadership and management and has established clear priorities for the subject's future development. There are good formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating the teaching of English and literacy throughout the school. Further improvements can be made by providing opportunities for teachers to observe and model the best practice in and outside of the school.

MATHEMATICS

78 Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Year 2 standards are in line with the national average. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily from an average starting point. Through good teaching, standards are now rising in Year 1. These improvements have not yet had time to bring about significant higher standards by the end of Year 3 and therefore, pupils' achievement is only satisfactory. Teaching is good in the main from Years 4 to 6 and it is sometimes very good for higher attaining pupils in the Year 5/6 group. This, together with pupils' very good attitudes to work, ensures that they achieve well in lessons and very well by the end of Year 6. As a result, attainment of pupils in Year 6 is well above the national average. Throughout the school, staff support well pupils with special educational needs so they make good progress. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

79 Since the previous inspection standards have improved from above average to well above average by Year 6. This improvement is because of the good teaching in Years 4 to 6, the grouping together of Years 5 and 6 pupils for mathematics and then teaching them in classes according to their ability and the effective leadership and management of the co-ordinator. She has been influential in bringing about improvements, such as the assessment of pupils' work and this has improved from unsatisfactory to good. Through the school's monitoring systems she is aware that the teaching of mathematics is not as good as it could be in Years 2 and 3. The shortcoming in the management of mathematics is that the senior management team has not given the raising of standards in Year 2 a sharp enough focus in school development planning.

80 By Year 2, higher attaining pupils count, add and subtract accurately numbers to 100 and are beginning to understand the value of each digit in a number. Average attaining pupils do so with developing confidence and accuracy. Pupils' skills of mental calculation are satisfactory. Most pupils have a sound understanding of using standard and non-standard units to measure length. There are shortcomings within the satisfactory teaching in Year 2. The expectations of what average and higher attaining pupils should achieve are not always high enough, and the assessment information that teachers have is not always used as effectively as it could be to set work that matches pupils' needs. Pupils in Year 2 do not consistently date the work or set it out correctly. Through more effective teaching, Year 1 pupils of all abilities cover a good amount of work and present it neatly. They have a good understanding of their work. For example, they have a good understanding of the properties of three-dimensional shapes, such as a cube and sphere, addition and subtraction of money to 20 pence, and of patterns in mathematics, such as the pattern of odd and even numbers on a hundred square. In Years 1 and 2, staff give good additional support to lower attaining pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, so they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher effectively supported a pupil with special educational needs and this helped him to succeed in adding numbers to ten starting from the largest number.

81 By Year 6 most pupils are proficient in arithmetical calculations and work quickly and accurately both mentally and in written form. They have a good recall of number facts and manipulate number competently. For example, higher attaining pupils used good strategies and quickly calculated mentally, for example to multiply 9.5 by 15. Average and higher attaining pupils have a good knowledge of area, fractions (including decimals), negative numbers, percentages, probability and rotational symmetry. Pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve very well. For example, lower attaining pupils showed increasing confidence and accuracy in their work during the autumn term. For example, they progressed from simple multiplication, such as 7 by 6 to long multiplication, such as 763 by 3.

82 Teaching and learning are mainly satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good for pupils from Years 3 to 6. Throughout the school a strong feature of all the lessons seen is that teachers manage well the different parts of the numeracy lesson that is recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. They also provide good opportunities for speaking and listening and encourage

pupils to use mathematical vocabulary accurately. They make good use of classroom displays of mathematical work to support this. Teachers ensure pupils have a good grounding in basic mathematical skills. This helps pupils to use well their numeracy skills in all aspects of mathematics and within other subjects, such as science. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is satisfactory. All work is marked with effective use of praise. There is some good marking in the Years 5/6 classes where teachers make helpful comments to assist pupils in improving their work. Teachers use homework soundly to extend pupils' learning in the classroom.

83 In the most effective lessons, teachers match the work well to pupils' learning needs. In one Year 1 lesson, the teacher set challenging work for the higher and average attaining pupils. As a result, higher attaining pupils counted on from odd or even numbers in threes, fives and tens, and average-attaining pupils counted backwards and forwards in twos, for example from 72. Teachers encourage speed of thought by maintaining a brisk pace so pupils cover a good amount of work, for instance, during the mental calculation work at the start of the lesson. In Year 4 the teacher used successfully a stopwatch to time pupils and they tried to 'beat the clock'. The Year 3 teacher encouraged pupils to explain the short cuts they had made in their thinking and this promoted effectively the mental arithmetic strategies of the other pupils. Teachers use methods that interest and motivate pupils to learn, for instance the Year 5 teacher used very effectively a 'countdown' game to enthuse and promote pupils' good learning. They make good use of their evaluation of pupils' learning in previous lessons to group pupils and to identify what pupils need to do next in their work to extend pupils' learning further. In a very good Year 5/6 lesson the teacher used very well her knowledge of what pupils could do to set work that was challenging and the pace was brisk. This showed the teacher's high expectations of what she wanted pupils to attain. As a result pupils enjoyed the work, concentrated very well and made very good gains in strategies for long multiplication and division, such as partitioning and rounding up numbers.

84 The subject is well led by the coordinator, who has introduced a number of new initiatives. Throughout the school, teachers use effectively the good resources they have to promote pupils' learning through practical work. They provide a good balance between the different elements of the curriculum, except for graph work in Years 3 to 6. Although some work on graphs is evident in the other curriculum subjects, such as information and communication technology, teachers do not cover this sufficiently in mathematics. Assessment procedures developed by the coordinator have improved considerably since the previous inspection and they are now good. Some teachers plan and use effectively information and communication technology to support pupils' learning, for example, in a Year 5/6 lesson on multiplication with lower attaining pupils. However, this good practice is not sufficiently widespread throughout the school. The school should review the time it allocates to the teaching of numeracy in Years 1 to 2. This is set at the minimum time recommended by the National Numeracy Strategy and it is below the minimum time allocated by schools nationally.

SCIENCE

85 Standards of attainment in science are in line with those expected nationally for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs is sound. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. However, as the achievement of pupils is only satisfactory, the school has rightly targeted science as an area for further development.

86 Pupils in Years 1 and 2, have a satisfactory knowledge of all the components of science. For example, pupils in Year 2 were making a study of sound. They know that there are many different kinds of sound and that as sound travels away from its source, it gets fainter. They are beginning to understand why this is and are able to set up an experiment to prove it. Work seen in their books indicates that they identify accurately some of the differences between living and non-living

things. They have investigated living things like plants and know that they require certain things like water and light to remain alive. The quality of presentation of the results of their investigations in their books is, however, very variable as they get inconsistent guidance on its layout. This means that it is not always easy for pupils to look back in their books to revise and remember all they did.

87 By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of life processes and living things, physical processes and materials and their properties. For example, pupils sorted through a range of materials to make a shadow puppet. They were able to classify them and state whether they were transparent, translucent or opaque and therefore which would create the sharpest shadow. By the end of Year 6, many pupils have good knowledge of many components of science. For example, one boy was heard explaining the requirement of seed germination and another could explain the place of carbon dioxide within the process of photosynthesis. Pupils' understanding of investigational and experimental science is sound. For example, they investigate electrical circuits and explain why some work and others don't and find out which materials conduct electricity well and others don't, making them good insulators. They understand the need to set up a fair test and the importance of making predictions. However, their ability to set up and devise their own investigations, less directed by the teacher, is less well developed. Also, the quality of presentation of experimental work is variable, making it more difficult for some pupils to understand fully their previous work. Pupils' use of basic numeracy skills in science is good and their use of an appropriate scientific vocabulary is very good.

88 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, often good, with a few very good lessons. Particular strengths are found in the way teachers have developed their approach to experimental and investigational science. This was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. Investigation work now forms a major part of science teaching and teachers emphasise the importance of predicting what might happen and the need to make the test fair. For example, pupils in Year 6 followed these procedures carefully when setting up a range of pots containing compost, soil and seeds to investigate the germination needs of a seed. However, at times, investigations can be a little over directed by the teacher. This has been good practice over the last two or three years when many aspects of experimental work were new. Now, however, a few pupils have the skills to set up and devise their own investigations, which raises the challenge for these pupils. Another strength is the way teachers insist on the use of a suitable scientific language. This makes a major contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Teachers also constantly link their science teaching to examples in everyday life. For example, pupils study of electricity is linked to the dangers of the misuse of electricity in the home. Where the teaching is not as strong, the main purpose and objectives of the lesson are not clarified enough at the start and pupils are not always clear about what they have to do and why. This can limit their understanding and their contribution to any discussion. Also, although teachers' lesson planning has a number of strengths, such as demonstrating a good range of well thought out ideas, it often lacks different work for the large range of abilities there are in most classes. On occasions, therefore, the higher attaining pupils can find the work less challenging and not make the progress they could. Also, the less able can find aspects of the lesson more difficult to understand. However, the good assessment procedure, recently devised, is only just being implemented and teachers have not yet been able to use these records to plan more appropriate work to meet differing needs. Guidance given to pupils when writing up their investigations is variable throughout the school.

89 The co-ordinator is supporting the subject well. She has worked well with other teachers to improve investigational and experimental science, revised the scheme of work and re-written the science policy. Both of these are of good quality. She is also devising a range of good assessment systems, which are just being implemented at present. Resources are satisfactory. However, the number of visits out of school or visitors in to enhance the science curriculum are limited. The Science and Industry Museum in Manchester is visited occasionally, as well as the Sea-Life Centre. The school grounds are used on occasions for the study of living things.

ART AND DESIGN

90 It was only possible to observe one lesson of art and design. However, evidence was available through the analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, an evaluation of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers.

91 By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above that expected of 11-year-olds and their achievement is good. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected of seven-year-olds and their achievement is sound. An improvement since the last inspection is that teachers now plan the curriculum to build upon pupils' previous experiences and skills and as a result standards of attainment in Years 3 to 6 have risen.

92 By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to mix a range of primary colours and draw and paint well from direct observation. Pupils use a range of media to represent their ideas and observations and pay good attention to detail in shape and colour, as seen in Year 1 when pupils painted self-portraits. Pupils gain inspiration from examples of famous artists and they successfully experiment with pencil. For example, Year 2 pupils took a piece of work by M.C. Escher and extended it themselves using pencils only. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to confidently use a wide range of materials, including charcoal, pastel, fabric and paint. Pupils benefited from the expertise of a visiting specialist teacher who worked with them to develop their artistic skills and techniques. Year 6 pupils produce good sketches to represent with movement in their drawings by using the technique of overlapping and blurring lines. Pupils in Year 4 drew very good portraits of the wives of Henry VIII using charcoal and chalk. They contained a very good level of detail and made effective use of contrasting colours.

93 Teachers' planning is good and resources and objects are well used to stimulate and sustain pupils' interest. In the one observed lesson the teaching was very good because the teacher had very good subject knowledge and excellent relationships with the pupils. An inspiring slide show of the work of different artists on the theme of 'dreams' led to the pupils sketching, printing and using information technology to develop their own representations of 'dreams'. Pupils spoke very positively about their art and design lessons and many felt that it was a lesson that gave them great enjoyment and satisfaction. They are enthusiastic about the opportunities given to them and are able to explain the styles of different artists well and which they prefer. Resources are good and easily accessible. The school takes pride in the pupils' achievements and their work is celebrated throughout the school in imaginative displays that reflect the school's ethos and commitment to share the achievements of pupils. The role of the coordinator for art and design is developing well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94 Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs are achieving soundly. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

95 By age seven, pupils study an appropriate range of work, often linked to topics or other subjects. They plan a design and make simple decisions on the resources they intend to use. They will often make the construction using card or paper as a trial run before moderating their work and producing the final product from more expensive materials. For example, pupils in Year 2 designed and made a wheeled cart for "Brakespear" who is the imaginary dog belonging to "Mrs Armitage", who is a character in a story the class is reading. They used card and paper to work out the best method and in future lessons the cart will be constructed in wood. Pupils are also able to explore the

sensory qualities of materials. Pupils in Year 1 dissected fruit and vegetables to evaluate their structure and texture. This was linked to a science topic on healthy food and the class are planning to design and combine a variety of fruits to make fruit salad.

96 By age 11, pupils gain further skills in designing, making and evaluating their products. No lessons were seen in Years 4, 5 and 6 but constructions and design sheets displayed in the Year 6 classroom indicated that they are able to work with a variety of materials and components with some accuracy, paying attention to quality of finish and to function. Pupils had selected a range of materials to construct futuristic houses. They had tested the strength of different designs, such as a pyramid shape and made conservatories from transparent plastic. The structures were designed carefully using labelled sketches showing that pupils are aware of constraints. There was no evidence to show that computers were used in the preparation, although the constructions demonstrate that careful measurement had taken place. Words such as strength, weight and pressure were used at the design stage, showing that pupils are developing appropriate terminology linked to design.

97 The quality of teaching is largely satisfactory, with teachers taking into account pupils' previous learning. Teachers try to link the work to other subjects if they can. For example, pupils in Year 3 are shortly to construct shadow puppets and during their science lesson they were analysing transparent, translucent and opaque materials to evaluate their properties and their suitability for the task. Teachers display their pupils' work well and celebrate their successes in assemblies for others to see.

98 The subject is soundly led by the co-ordinator. There is a good scheme of work and policy for design and technology. Simple assessment procedures have been devised but these are very new and their impact has not yet been evaluated. Resources are good and the subject is enhanced by a visit to a Liverpool museum. There are links with the secondary school where a teacher works with Year 6 pupils on the construction of boxes.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

99 It was only possible during the inspection to see two lessons of history and three lessons of geography. However, evidence was available through the analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, an evaluation of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. The evidence indicates that by the ages of seven and 11, pupils are working at a level that is expected for their age and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving soundly. It was a similar picture in the last inspection.

100 In history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand the difference between past and present and old and new. For example, Year 2 pupils were able to place three pictures of Blackpool promenade in correct historical order and explain their reasons for doing so. Year 1 pupils were fascinated by looking at toys from a long time ago and comparing the differences with the toys they play with now. By Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge about the periods in the past that they have studied and, for example, are able to explain the similarities and differences between the experiences of school children in Ancient Greece with that of their own. Pupils are aware of how sources of evidence inform them of the past and are able to organise, evaluate and present information derived from historical sources. For example, pupils in Year 4 compared and contrasted the lives of the rich and poor in Tudor times. A good feature of the history curriculum is the opportunities provided for pupils to practise their writing skills.

101 In geography, pupils in Year 1 are able to identify the main buildings on their route to school and are conscious of the importance of the amenities that are provided in the environment such as the

local park. Pupils in Year 2 become aware of other countries and where they are located on a world atlas by following the travels of a puppet bear. Pupils in Year 6 have a secure knowledge of mountain ranges across the world and they are able to comment on the impact of tourism and compare it with their own locality. Pupils in Year 4 investigate the main features of life in a village in India and thoughtfully evaluate statements about the village to decide if they are true or stereotypical. Pupils in Year 3 are able to determine whether settlements are Roman, Anglo-Saxon or Viking in origin. They are then able to offer good suggestions as to why people settled in such places, such as the proximity of water or shelter to help with survival.

102 Teaching in history and geography is good because teachers plan and prepare lessons well, making effective use of resources, including artefacts, and have a secure knowledge about the topics being taught. In the best lessons, teachers place an emphasis on looking for evidence, in books and on the internet, to justify opinions and written statements. As a result, pupils are well motivated, able to take responsibility for their own learning and enthusiastic about participating in discussions about their findings. This helps their confidence in speaking and increases their use of appropriate geographical and historical vocabulary. Where teaching is satisfactory, tasks do not always challenge the higher attaining pupils and, consequently, a minority of pupils have lapses in concentration and in the standard of presentation of their work.

103 The subjects are competently led by coordinators who are beginning to monitor the planning and pupils' standards of achievement across the school. Both subjects are well planned by adapting a national scheme of work to the particular needs of the school and sound progress has been made since the last inspection. This ensures that activities are planned in an appropriate sequence to build upon pupils' previous experiences and skills. There is an adequate range of resources to support teaching. A strength of these subjects is the very good use made of the local area and visits to places of interest to develop pupils' understanding and extend their knowledge. In history, for example, pupils in Year 5 visit the Judge's Lodgings in Lancaster to experience, through re-enactment, what life was like for children in the Victorian age. In geography, for example, pupils in Year 4 visit a town in Derbyshire to contrast its environment and needs with their own.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104 Pupils' attainment is in line with nationally expected standards in Years 2 and 6. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is sound by Year 2 and by the time they leave the school in Year 6. However, pupils are beginning to make good progress in lessons in Years 3 to 6. The reasons for this are that the school has invested a considerable amount of money in the subject in the past two years. Recent training has raised teacher confidence and skill, and, as a result, teachers and pupils are now more confident and competent working with computers. Teaching and learning are good and standards are now rising rapidly, particularly in Years 5 and 6, although these improvements have not yet had time to raise standards further by the end of Year 6. The co-ordinator has started to compile an impressive portfolio containing samples of the assessments that teachers make of pupils' achievements. This helps to guide teachers in making accurate assessments of pupils' work. Older pupils are involved in monitoring and evaluating their work.

105 The difference in progress between Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 is because of some shortcomings in accommodation. The school has provided new computers for the Years 3 to 6 classrooms. The computer suite is not large enough to accommodate a whole class of pupils. Older pupils work independently in it but throughout the school younger pupils require adult support in order to use the suite. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 also use the suite regularly at lunchtime so they have greater use of computers than younger pupils do and their achievement is better.

106 Throughout the school, pupils gain a sound range of skills because of the good curriculum that teachers provide. Year 1 pupils know about the different ways of communicating information. They use the mouse and tools to work computer programs with increasing competence. Year 2 pupils confidently alter the font size and colour when word-processing their work. They correctly access programs, save and print their work. Pupils are less confident in using the alphabet keys on the keyboard and technical terms, such as delete and cursor. From Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement becomes increasingly better as they grow older. Year 4 pupils control equipment by giving a series of instructions. They input data to produce graphs and pie charts. Year 5 pupils use effectively a drawing program to make attractive designs for improving the playground. Year 6 pupils access relevant information from the Internet. They devise their own web-sites that include text, graphics and sound.

107 In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were mainly good. Teachers successfully manage pupils' behaviour through a firm yet friendly approach. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good in the main, learning is not interrupted and the pace of the lesson is good. Pupils are enthusiastic, quickly settle to the work in hand and concentrate well. This was abundantly clear when talking to Year 2 and 6 pupils about their work. During their work in pairs pupils co-operate well, share out activities fairly, readily help others and persevere when they encounter difficulties. This was evident in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were using the 'search' facility in their work on databases. Teachers plan lessons carefully and teach basic skills effectively. For instance, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher planned the work so that it was purposeful and interesting for all pupils, including those not working on the computers. She successfully demonstrated to pupils the need to spell accurately in order to achieve accurate answers from the database. As a result, pupils made good gains in questioning a database and were motivated to spell their work correctly. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate and explain the work clearly and this raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence, for instance in lessons in Year 1 and Year 6. Teachers promote pupils' literacy skills successfully, for example, through encouraging pupils to read instructions. Some teachers use effectively information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects, for instance in science in Year 2 and mathematics in Year 5, but this good practice is not sufficiently widespread across the school.

108 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has clear plans for the subject's further development, together with the ability, support and commitment to implement them successfully. She has implemented recently good systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' work but these have not been in place long enough to raise standards.

MUSIC

109 Pupils' attainment is in line with the standards expected for pupils by Years 2 and 6 and their achievement is sound. In the last inspection, attainment was in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 but above at the end of Year 6. However, the music curriculum is now much broader and there is less emphasis on the skills of playing instruments. Most pupils achieve well in singing and the substantial number of pupils who play the recorder also achieve well. For example, almost all pupils in Years 3 and 4 play the recorder and the standard is above average. The school has made good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection. Teaching has improved from mainly good to very good. The good standards in singing and in playing the recorder have been maintained.

110 Throughout the school, pupils sing with clear diction, good expression and control of the dynamics of their voices, pitch and rhythm. The teaching was very good in the hymn singing for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The teacher's very good expertise and high expectations of performance led to pupils very good gains in singing hymns, such as 'Sing of the Lord's goodness'. The school improved learning of one third of pupils from Years 3 to 6 by providing additional tuition in string, brass and

piano. The performances of visiting musicians, such as ‘Travelling by Tuba’, and the concerts that pupils give for parents each year contribute positively to pupils’ learning.

111 Most Year 2 pupils listen carefully to the performance of others and sing songs with sound control of pitch, for example ‘Good morning to you’. They play percussion instruments with a sound awareness of rhythm and pulse. From Years 3 to 6 the teacher builds successfully upon pupils’ composing and performing skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to play the recorder and musical notation with increasing accuracy. The teacher maintains a brisk pace in lessons so no time is wasted and pupils cover a good amount of work. In the five minutes allocated to them a group of Year 3 pupils wrote a simple graphic score and composed a pattern that portrayed well Roman soldiers marching. The teacher promotes effectively pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills, for example, through the reading of music and time signatures in Year 3. Pupils’ learning is made considerably more effective through the good links that the teacher makes with work in other subjects, such as geography and history. Year 6 pupils produce suitable graphic scores and use effectively a variety of percussion instruments to create evocative music pictures of a river’s journey (linked to their work on the River Ribble). They show a good awareness of rhythm and dynamics, good discipline and control of instruments.

112 Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were mainly very good. This is because the specialist teacher has very good subject expertise and high expectations of pupils’ work and behaviour. She encourages pupils to use the correct subject vocabulary and to practice and improve their performance. For example, Year 5 pupils used a good music vocabulary to describe well the different sounds made by the same instrument. The teacher manages pupils’ behaviour very well through using lots of praise and encouragement, such as the star player award. Pupils respond very well and their behaviour and attitudes to music are very good. They are enthusiastic, motivated to learn, and genuinely enjoy their music making activities.

113 The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils’ personal, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. For example, the teacher gives pupils many opportunities to work together in a group. This promotes very positively pupils’ social skills of co-operation and collaboration as well as their skills in music. She encourages pupils to show respect for the performance of others so pupils make positive comments when they evaluate the work of others and suggest how they might improve it. The teacher ensures that all groups of pupils are included fully in the activities. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning in relation to their prior attainment. Information and communication technology is not used to support pupils’ learning in music and the co-ordinator plans to develop this.

114 The subject is effectively led and managed by the subject co-ordinator who is in the school for one day a week. She teaches music to all the classes in the school and a class teacher teaches hymn singing each week.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115 It was not possible during the inspection to see all aspects of physical education. Nor was it possible to make a judgement on attainment over the full range of the curriculum. However, in the lessons seen, attainment is above the expectation for the age of pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement, including those with special education needs, is good. This is an improvement on the last inspection where attainment was in line with expectation by the time the pupils left the school. These improvements are mainly due to a new scheme of work, improved teaching and a stronger focus on sporting links in the community.

116 In games, pupils demonstrate good standards. For example, most pupils handle a ball with precision, good control and fluency above the level expected for their ages. They play competitively and most demonstrate that they can sustain physical activity for long periods of time. Many have a high degree of body control, using techniques, such as running and passing the ball with accuracy. In gymnastics, pupils demonstrate standards above those expected for their ages. For example in a lesson for pupils in Year 2, pupils performed a variety of movements on apparatus and floor mats with good co-ordination and control. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrated greater control and fluency and were able to link a variety of turning movements well whilst varying their speed. In swimming, almost all pupils swim 25 metres and some much further. Pupils in Year 5 used a variety of swimming strokes well.

117 The quality of teaching is good with a high proportion of very good teaching. Teachers' planning is good and often very good and teachers have a good understanding of the skills they intend pupils to learn and improve. Each lesson starts with a good quality warming up exercise. The lesson is then well developed in logical structured steps with increasing complexity. This ensures that all pupils cope with the skill required and build on previous skills. Teachers set good examples as they demonstrate a good level of competency themselves, when they demonstrate techniques. This helps the less able pupils to see what they have to do to improve. Teachers encourage pupils to demonstrate to others what they can do and they are often asked to judge and evaluate their own and other's performance. This develops their confidence and interest. Teachers have very good class control and manage pupils very well. This ensures that behaviour is very good in physical education lessons.

118 The co-ordinator for physical education is effective and is developing the subject well. He has utilised the availability of local resources very well. For example, the school uses the facilities of a nearby YMCA hall for games when the field is wet. The school has obtained money and equipment through the local Borough Council and through this has a strong link with other schools. It uses the skills of outside coaches on occasions. For example, a local tennis coach. Some parents have specialist skills in areas like football, swimming and rugby and they are encouraged to make a very positive and valuable contribution. Players from Preston North End Football Club come into school on occasions to give demonstrations. The pupils participate in a number of extra-curricular activities and competitions with other schools, such as netball, athletics, tennis, golf, quick cricket and seven-a-side football. An 11-a-side football team is practising at the moment to go up to Scotland to play another school. The school has been awarded "Charter School" status by the Football Association. Pupils in Year 6 visit Borreaton Park and sometimes the Lake District for a residential experience where they participate in outdoor and adventurous activities.