

INSPECTION REPORT

**NEW LONGTON ALL SAINTS C OF E PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

New Longton

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119569

Head teacher: Mrs A J Goggin

Reporting inspector: Mr C Smith
25211

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th March 2002

Inspection number: 22261

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hugh Barn Lane New Longton Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR4 4XA
Telephone number:	01772 613470
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Hallam
Date of previous inspection:	March 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25211	Mr C Smith	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
			Music	The school results and pupils' achievements
			Design and technology	How well are pupils taught?
			Physical education	What should the school do to improve further?
9952	Mrs L Brock	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?
23887	Mr P Nettleship	Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed?
			Information and communication technology (ICT)	
			Art and design	
			English as an additional language	
			Special educational needs	
22545	Mrs V Hobson	Team inspector	Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Equal opportunities	
			Science	
			Geography	
			History	

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WC2B 6SE.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

New Longton All Saints C of E Primary is smaller than average in size and serves the needs of families who live in the village of New Longton, near Preston. The school enjoys close links with the church and the village community. There are 181 pupils on roll; 100 boys and 81 girls. 17 pupils have special educational needs (9 per cent) which is well below average. Of these, three pupils have statements and a very small number are from ethnic minority backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. Only five pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below the national average. There have been many staff changes over recent years, including the head teacher who has been in post for less than one year. Children's attainment on entry to school is above the levels typical for four-year olds.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Standards are high in reading and science and above average in several other subjects, including mathematics. Teaching is good and this enables pupils to achieve well, including those with special educational needs. The head teacher provides very good leadership and governors and staff work hard to ensure that pupils are cared for and strive to improve standards. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are high in science and reading and above average in music, history and art and design.
- Teaching is good and often very good in Years 2 and 5. This enables pupils to achieve well.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good and this is why standards are rising.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, behave well and their personal development is good.
- The school provides a well-planned curriculum that meets the needs of all of its pupils.
- The school benefits from the good partnership with parents and the community.

What could be improved

- There is scope to improve pupils' writing.
- Pupils achieve steadily in mathematics but standards are still not as high as in English or science.
- The assessment of children's learning in the foundation stage (reception) could be more effective.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress and recovered well from the serious weaknesses detected at the last inspection in March 2000. Her Majesty's Inspectors judged good progress to have been made when they visited the school one year later. The improvements have continued under the effective leadership of the head teacher, governors and senior staff. Standards had fallen to their lowest point at the time of the last inspection but have since improved in English, mathematics and science and they are still rising. Teaching is much better than it was and pupils are now achieving well. In particular, the marking of pupils' work is good and helps them to improve. Standards in science and information and communication technology (ICT) have improved, following effective staff training. Parents' confidence in the school has returned. The school continually evaluates its effectiveness and is in a strong position to move forward.

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	B	A	B
mathematics	A	D	B	C
science	A	D	A	B

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

Standards had been in decline but this was arrested soon after the last inspection. Since then standards have been rising throughout the school. Pupils' learning is now assessed regularly, which enables teachers to know more about their progress. As a result, more ambitious targets have been set and reached, and occasionally exceeded. In one or two classes, pupils' attainment is still suffering from weak teaching of the past and is lower than it should be. However, the catch up programmes are working well and the underachievement is being eliminated. Standards reached by pupils aged 11 this year are likely to be similar to those shown in chart above, except that pupils' writing is not as strong as their reading. Standards in science are high, largely because of the improvements in teaching the skills of scientific enquiry. Although standards in mathematics are above average and rising, they have not been as high as in English or science over the last two years. There is scope to improve standards further by raising the level of challenge and increasing the pace of learning.

The most dramatic improvements in standards are happening in the infant classes. Year 2 pupils are now attaining higher standards than at any time over the last four years. This is attributable to good teaching, particularly in Year 2. Infant pupils are achieving well and there are no signs of the underachievement of the past. In 2001, for example, Year 2 pupils' results in writing and mathematics were well below those obtained by pupils in similar schools. These results reflect an unusually high concentration of pupils with special educational needs. However, the current Year 2 class is more typical and they are reaching well above average standards in reading and above average standards in writing, mathematics and science. Most children enter school with knowledge and skills above what is typical for their age and leave the reception class with above average attainment in almost all areas of learning. Over the year, they make good progress in their personal development and in literacy and steady progress in all other areas of learning. In the reception class children's progress in literacy and numeracy is assessed well and this enables staff to identify the next learning steps accurately. However, assessment is not used as effectively in the other areas of learning and in these progress is satisfactory, but not as quick.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils listen carefully, most concentrate well and persevere when the task is difficult.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils are friendly, polite and helpful and they show respect and understanding towards others.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils work and play together harmoniously. They enjoy finding out for themselves and carrying out their duties.
Attendance	Well above average; pupils are punctual and enjoy coming to school.

New opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative, in projects such as the school council, are important factors in the improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

New members of staff have adjusted quickly to the needs of the school and the pupils. Well over half of the teaching in lessons seen during the inspection was good and this is supported by the work in pupils' books. The quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory, often very good in Year 2 and sometimes excellent in Year 5. Teaching in the reception class is satisfactory. Children's literacy skills and their personal development develop at a good rate because the teaching in these areas is good. A good range of worthwhile activities is provided in the reception class but children are not given enough opportunities to explore and learn for themselves in the knowledge and understanding of the world and the creative areas of learning. In the infant and junior classes, the basic skills of reading and mathematics are taught well. In mathematics, pupils strengthen their understanding of processes such as division and multiplication, by using these skills to solve numerical problems. Homework makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning because the basic literacy and numeracy skills are practised and reinforced. Teaching is good in reading, science, ICT, art and design and history. In these subjects, teachers have expertise and explain new ideas well. However, there is room for improvement in the teaching of writing. Teachers now expect more of the pupils and when lessons are planned, pupils' different learning needs are taken into account. However, the level of challenge in mathematics in some infant classes could be higher. Pupils are well managed, which ensures that most of them settle quickly and work with good concentration. The pace of learning in most classes is good but a small number of pupils take too long to complete their work in lower junior classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the planning of subjects is good to ensure that pupils build well on what they have learnt earlier. However, the school could do more to ensure that pupils understand the dangers of drugs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; pupils' needs are identified early and effective programmes of work are devised to help them to reach their targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory: these pupils are well supported and are making sufficient progress in learning English and in their social development but lack of bilingual support is limiting their overall development.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good; the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Teachers encourage pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues and to learn together. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory but more opportunities are needed to help them to understand cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the school is very caring with good procedures to ensure pupils' well being. Apart from some areas of the foundation stage, pupils' learning is carefully assessed and the targets set help them to improve.

The school benefits from an effective partnership with parents. The homework diaries enhance communications between home and school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very Good; the new head teacher is working very effectively with key members of staff to provide clear direction for the school and to build a committed team of teachers and support staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; governors have stood by the school through difficult times. They know the needs of the school well and play an important part in strategic planning and in evaluating the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; teaching and learning are rigorously monitored and evaluated and pupils' assessment results and the work in their books are analysed carefully to identify where improvements are needed.
The strategic use of resources	Good; parents and school advisers are consulted and information about how well the school compares with others is considered. Priorities are clearly identified and prudent financial management enables the school to provide best value.

The school benefits from enthusiastic and well-qualified teachers and effective support staff. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are adequate to teach all subjects, apart from the lack of a secure outdoor play area for reception children.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school, behave well and act responsibly. • Teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard. This enables pupils to make good progress. • The school is well led. Parents feel able to work closely with teachers and appreciate being kept well informed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents still have doubts about pupils' behaviour at lunchtime. • A few parents would like more homework and more out of school activities.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views and could find no evidence of poor behaviour at lunchtime. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided mainly for older pupils and the amount of homework increases effectively as pupils move through the school. Those parents who wanted more of these are generally parents of younger children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 At the time of the last inspection there were serious weaknesses in standards and pupils were judged to be underachieving. This is not the picture today. The determined effort made, initially by an acting head teacher with the good support of the local education authority, and more recently, the new head teacher, governors and teachers in the school, has made a significant difference to pupils' achievements. Pupils are now achieving well, standards are rising and have already reached above average levels in most subjects. Much more is known about how children achieve than was the case in the past. For example, pupils are tested regularly to find out what they know and where there are any difficulties. On the basis of these assessments, target setting has become more accurate and more ambitious. Challenging but realistic targets are now set and these are being reached, and in some subjects, exceeded.

2 The rate of improvement has picked up well since the last inspection in March 2000. Prior to that, standards had been falling and had reached their lowest point during the year of the inspection. Previous weaknesses in teaching are no longer present but their effects are still being felt in the school and standards in one or two classes are still lower than they should be. However, teachers, governors and parents are well aware of the need to target these specific groups and raise standards to the level that they should be. This is working particularly well in Year 5.

3 Most children's attainment, when they start school, is good for their age. The current Year 2 pupils are achieving above average standards in English, mathematics and science. This is a significant improvement on the results attained in 2001 when standards in writing were only average and were below average in mathematics. Although results in 2001 in reading matched those in similar schools, results in writing and mathematics were well below those attained by pupils from similar backgrounds. Much more is now expected of pupils in Year 2 and the work in their books shows that many are working at higher than expected levels.

4 The standards reached by the current Year 6 pupils are above average in mathematics and writing and are well above average in reading and science. These standards are not significantly different from the school's most recent national test results of 2001, except that standards in writing are lower because fewer of the current Year 6 pupils are working at higher levels. In 2001, in both English and science, the school's results were higher than those in similar schools and were a close match in mathematics.

5 Children achieve steadily in the reception class, in the foundation stage of their learning. By the end of the reception year, they exceed the levels expected for their age in the areas of literacy, numeracy and in their personal development. Their personal, social and emotional development is well catered for and children achieve well. Children soon settle into the warmth and friendliness of the reception class. They acquire good social skills and gain self confidence to reach higher levels than those expected for their age. They achieve well in language and literacy and communicate effectively with teachers and other children. Through good teaching, they learn to apply their letter building skills well to make a good start in reading and writing. Children achieve steadily in their mathematical development. Children use the correct mathematical vocabulary and count and sequence numbers reliably to 30. However, they are less sure of how to use their skills to solve problems. Children's creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world are suitably provided for and they achieve steadily to reach above average levels by the end of the reception year. Their

physical development is satisfactory but hindered by the lack of outdoor play facilities. In the knowledge and understanding and creative areas, children's learning is not as effectively assessed as it is in literacy and numeracy. As a result, the activities provided are not as well matched to their learning needs. Sometimes too much is expected of their readiness to record their work and this slows their progress in acquiring the practical skills and developing their powers of expression. However, their learning of skills in ICT is very effective.

6 Pupils achieve well in reading and standards are high throughout the school. Pupils become proficient in word building in the infant classes and read fluently by the age of seven. Good teaching continues in the junior classes, where pupils learn to read for information and for pleasure, with good understanding and expression. Standards in writing are above, rather than well above average, which represents only steady progress. Lingering weaknesses, from a time when the basic skills were not well grounded, are still evident in pupils' writing. For example, the speed and fluency of their writing, the accuracy of their work and the use of expressive language are under-developed. Whilst this is recognised by the school, there is more to do to bring writing up to the standard of reading and the well above average standards of speaking and listening.

7 Pupils achieve steadily in mathematics in infant and junior classes. Standards are rising because teaching has improved and the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully. However standards in mathematics are still not as high as they are in English and science. Average and below average pupils achieve well in the infant classes but the high level of challenge evident in the work completed by Year 2 pupils is less evident in Year 1. Similarly in Years 5 and 6 pupils achieve well but the pace of learning in Years 3 and 4 could be quicker. In all classes, pupils now learn to solve mathematical problems by discussing different methods and calculating mentally. These are important markers in the drive to raise standards.

8 Pupils achieve well in science to reach high standards by the age of 11. Much attention has been given to improving pupils' enquiry skills. Pupils are now confident in planning and carrying out their own investigations. This, in turn, deepens their understanding and significantly improves their ability to explain scientific ideas, such as evaporation.

9 Standards in ICT have risen from a below average point at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in the infant classes and reach above average standards. By the age of seven, they have acquired the important and basic skills, such as editing and saving their work. Pupils also achieve well in the junior classes but improvements are recent. They are catching up quickly and achieving the levels expected by the age of 11.

10 Pupils achieve well in a number of other subjects to reach standards that are higher than the levels expected at the ages of seven and 11. In art and design, for example, good teaching and opportunities to work with artists, promotes above average standards. Standards are also above average in music and are significantly enhanced by the good instrumental work provided in school. Pupils also achieve well in history to reach above average standards at seven and 11. Pupils talk confidently about the passage of time and how changes affect everyday life. In physical education, geography and design and technology, standards are at the levels expected, although in geography standards are higher by the age of seven.

11 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their learning needs are carefully assessed and good support from teachers and classroom assistants helps them to learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively. Their success in their learning is evident by the age of 11 when most of these pupils reach the standards expected for their age.

12 The very few pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. They benefit from the good support and encouragement provided by teachers and support staff. Over time they have made good progress in their social development and their ability to communicate with others. However, their learning of literacy and numeracy is hampered by the lack of bilingual support for which the school has been waiting a long time. With more support they could make good progress.

13 At the time of the last inspection more able pupils, particularly, were found to be underachieving. This now only happens in pockets because the school's tracking system is effective in measuring the progress of all pupils from one year to the next. Pupils, whose attainment falters, are given additional support in both literacy and numeracy. This frees the teacher to work with more able pupils and extend their learning. In the past, boys have achieved better than girls in the infant classes. It is interesting to note that since pupils' behaviour has improved, boys and girls are now achieving equally well throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards school. They behave well and develop good relationships with others. Such positive attitudes make a good contribution to pupils' learning and help to create a calm atmosphere within the school. This is an improvement on the previous inspection and according to pupils, parents and staff, there has been particular improvement in the behaviour and attitudes of pupils over the last 12 months.

15 The welcoming and pleasant atmosphere in the reception class helps less confident children to quickly overcome their reticence and they are soon involved enthusiastically in the activities prepared for them. They learn to share equipment, take their turn and develop good relationships with other children and adults. These good attitudes to learning were seen in a physical education lesson when children used their imagination well to create and recreate parts of a story using music as a stimulus to learning.

16 From the youngest upwards, pupils like attending school and arrive happily in the morning. They are keen to chat with staff about events that are important to them and are also enthusiastic about taking part in the variety of extra-curricular activities that are available. They proudly show off any work on display and are pleased to receive team points as a mark of praise for those who work hard and behave well. Most pupils settle well, show interest at the beginning of lessons and set to work with a will. However, a small number of pupils find it difficult to sustain their concentration for long periods and their attention begins to wander. This happens occasionally when lessons lack pace and challenge but mainly reflects the bad habits some pupils fell into in the past. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic about school. They enjoy the group work in which they develop their spoken English and recognise with pride the progress they are making. Pupils with special educational needs relate well to each other and to the adults working with them. Most contribute readily in lessons and enjoy being involved in activities with other pupils.

17 Most pupils behave well and respond positively to the school's high expectations. They move around the building in an orderly manner and behave well in assemblies, entering the hall very quietly and waiting patiently for other classes to arrive. In the playground, pupils generally play well together. Parents expressed a concern about the behaviour of pupils at lunchtime and although some of them get restless, no inappropriate or boisterous behaviour was observed during the inspection. Pupils are polite and helpful to adults as confirmed when they go on visits out of school. The school is strongly committed to the inclusion of all pupils. In the last academic year there had been five fixed period exclusions, involving three pupils. These incidents reflect the staff and governors unwillingness to accept aggressive and uncooperative behaviour. However, there has been only one further

exclusion, which reflects the school's determination that pupils should not be excluded and thereby miss out on their primary education. The good behaviour of pupils during a Year 6 booster class for mathematics helped them to concentrate well when looking at the way information can be extracted from charts and graphs.

18 Pupils respond well to the opportunities that they are given to take responsibility for aspects of the school community. School council members are positive role models for others. They take their duties seriously when following up decisions made at their meetings. Junior pupils compile an interesting school newspaper and these budding journalists write interesting reports for pupils, parents and staff to read. Relationships are good throughout the school, between pupils of different ages, ethnicity and ability and also between pupils and staff. Most pupils are helpful towards each other, are appreciative of each other's skills and they generally work well in pairs or small groups. Attendance at the school is very good and continues to be well above the national average. Unauthorised absence is very low. Most pupils arrive at school on time because they enjoy attending and want to learn.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19 The quality of teaching is good. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection when teaching gave cause for concern. During this inspection, the teaching in over half of the lessons seen was good. This is supported by the work in pupils' books, which also indicates good teaching over the school year. This is particularly true of teaching in Year 2, although the deputy head teacher, who takes this class, was absent through illness during the inspection week. The determined effort made to improve teaching has been successful. The many initiatives include much extra training, particularly in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT and close monitoring of teachers' work. Teachers have benefited from having their lessons observed by the head teacher, subject leaders and local education authority advisers. These sessions have helped teachers to reflect on what they do well and set targets to strengthen any areas considered weaker. There are two very clear examples of where training and reflection have had a strong impact on teaching and learning. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, explaining what provision they intend to make for pupils' different learning needs. Following from this, teachers are crystal clear about what pupils should learn and the objectives for the lesson are often displayed in the classroom, written into pupils' books and reflected on throughout the lesson. Pupils certainly understand now what is expected of them. This has created a much more positive climate for learning.

20 Teaching in the reception class, where pupils are in the foundation stage of their learning, is satisfactory. The climate for learning is positive and many worthwhile and interesting activities are provided. Children's personal and social development is well catered for. As a result, children settle quickly, develop good relationships with adults and each other and their curiosity is stimulated. The class teacher and support staff work hard to create these good conditions. The teaching of children's language and literacy skills is good and children make a good start in reading. The teaching of early mathematical experiences is satisfactory. Children learn to understand and handle numbers but they are not always encouraged to explore and discuss their own methods. The teaching of other areas of learning is satisfactory but not so well assessed. As a result, children are sometimes expected to understand and carry out tasks that the teacher has in mind but take too little account of the children's need to explore and learn for themselves.

21 Teachers manage pupils well. This is based on good relationships and firm but fair discipline. More is expected now of pupils' capacity to settle to work quickly and to concentrate and persevere when the task is difficult. In most lessons, pupils respond well, work hard, present their work carefully and enjoy the rewards that this brings. There are only traces of the bad habits of the past when pupils

were distracted. In Year 4, there are still occasions when pupils need reminding to concentrate but the work in their books shows that they have applied themselves well over the school year.

22 Discussions between teachers about the best way to teach have been profitable. This has improved teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, which is now good in many subjects. As a result, in almost all lessons, teachers select interesting and effective methods to introduce and explain new ideas. The teaching of science has radically changed. Pupils are now encouraged to plan and carry out their own investigations. This gives pupils a deeper understanding of scientific ideas and is the main reason why standards in science are high. In other subjects, such as history and geography, pupils are taught to apply their study skills. This includes using reference books and ICT. These approaches not only improve pupils' learning but also sharpen their literacy and ICT skills. Teachers are imaginative in their use of resources and they are painstaking in searching for ideas that engage pupils' interest. In music for example, pupils are encouraged to experiment with musical instruments and compose their own short pieces. This gives them more control over their own learning and leads to greater satisfaction when good results are achieved.

23 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs. Teachers and support staff have a good understanding of pupils' individual needs and provide work at just the right level to move them on, without over-facing them. Teachers often make a point of involving them in answering questions and encourage them to explain their ideas to the whole class. Support staff shadow them and discuss their suggestions to give them the confidence to speak out to a wider audience.

24 The very few pupils with English as an additional language attract a lot of extra help from teachers and support staff and teaching is satisfactory. An examination of their records shows that they have made strides in their emotional and social development and are now able to speak English well enough to communicate. However, they also have special educational needs and are not fluent in their own language. The school does not have bilingual support and finds this element of provision more difficult.

25 Basic skills of reading and mathematics are taught well. Infant pupils learn effectively to blend letters to make new words and junior pupils benefit from good teaching of reading comprehension skills. This ensures that reading standards are high which in turn improves learning in many other subjects. Teachers are now more adept in teaching the basic skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division than they once were. Good mental mathematics sessions help pupils to acquire quick recall of basic number facts, such as multiplication tables. Good opportunities to investigate number patterns and relationships ensure that pupils' numeracy skills are improved further by using them to solve numerical problems. The teaching of writing skills is satisfactory but could be improved. Pupils acquired bad spelling habits in the past when they were not taught phonic skills well. This has improved, but more opportunities could be taken, for example, to point out spelling patterns when pupils read in literacy lessons. The school has introduced a well-planned homework programme. Pupils are expected to complete numeracy and the literacy reinforcement activities at home and find and gather information to help them in their learning in other subjects. There is a good response to homework because parents help their children and teachers mark the work carefully. The homework diary provides a very good form of communication between home and school.

26 Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment to find out what pupils already know and to identify the next learning steps. Assessment tasks are built into the planning and specific days are allocated, usually at the end of each half term, when pupils' learning is tested. This also provides teachers with a clear picture of how effective their teaching has been. In addition, teachers make good use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding, particularly at the end of lessons. The

information provided defines the starting point for the next lesson. The marking of pupils' work has improved immeasurably since the last inspection. Not only is pupils' work carefully and accurately marked, pupils are rewarded for making good efforts and teachers are quick to point out what pupils need to do to improve. Despite these improvements, the information that is gathered about pupils' learning is not used consistently to set the next level of challenge. Teachers know this and are continuing to refine the ways in which they evaluate pupils' learning to move them on.

27 There are far more strengths than weaknesses in teaching, however there is some scope for improvement. In lower junior classes, the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow when teachers wait too long for pupils to settle to work. Occasionally teachers spend too long listening to pupils explaining their ideas and allow them too long to complete their tasks. On these occasions, insufficient use is made of time targets which could help to pep up THE pace of learning. The challenge in the work provided is satisfactory overall and is good in some classes. However, more could be expected of the more able pupils in some infant classes.

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

28 A good curriculum is provided that is particularly well planned in all subjects and areas of learning. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection. Pupils benefit from a good range of well-organised first hand learning experiences. However, the provision for personal, social and health education is less effective. Although sex education is taught formally in Year 6 and healthy living is taught through the science curriculum in other years, pupils have insufficient knowledge and understanding of the dangers of drugs. The school has identified this as an area of weakness and it is part of the development planning. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular clubs, attended by a high number of pupils. These make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment in sport and music and to their social development as they learn the positive effects of teamwork.

29 The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils. Staff analyse test results to ensure boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum and they check the attainment of different groups of pupils to ensure sufficient progress is made. Particular attention is paid to the needs of the more able and gifted and talented pupils. For example, pupils who are advanced for their years, work with higher classes in literacy and numeracy.

30 Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory. They receive a good amount of support in several subjects and are making progress in their acquisition of English. However, their progress is limited by the lack of bilingual support.

31 Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. Well planned sessions both in and out of the classroom are effective because of the good teaching of basic skills by learning support assistants. Teachers plan effectively for pupils' individual needs in the classroom, often providing different work to meet their learning needs.

32 The foundation stage curriculum is still developing effectively. Reception staff have introduced a good range of practical activities and learning experiences. Provision for children's learning in the areas of literacy, language and communication, mathematical and personal and social development is good. However in other areas of learning activities are not always sufficiently well matched to their individual learning needs. Whilst the activities themselves are of good quality, children are not given enough encouragement to explore and learn for themselves. As a result, they do not gain self-reliance as quickly as they might. The lack of a secure and well-equipped outdoor play area limits

opportunities for children to extend their physical development. Provision for children's special educational needs is good and children receive appropriate activities to match their levels of skill.

33 Very effective planning for pupils in Years 1 to 6 enables teachers to know exactly what to teach every half-term and they are encouraged to evaluate their plans regularly. This, along with good teaching, leads to above average standards in several subjects and high standards in reading and science. The school has implemented the literacy strategy successfully and reading is well supported by the strong home-school reading link. Literacy is used well in other subjects of the curriculum such as in history where pupils write in the role of a historical figure. Other subjects are included in the literacy hour through the study of information texts. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and there is a consistent approach to the teaching of problem solving skills in all classes. Pupils explain their strategies for working out answers and try different methods. Teachers plan to use mathematics well in other subjects such as in science. For example, data handling skills are used very effectively to record and interpret results. Teachers make good provision for pupils to develop effective study skills in various subjects such as science, history, and geography. They use a wide range of resources including ICT, books, and artefacts. Pupils are becoming more skilled at asking appropriate questions to further their knowledge because of the consistent teaching of enquiry skills.

34 The school has strong links with the church and pupils visit for celebrations and to study the building. Good use is made of visits to enhance the curriculum in a range of subjects. Pupils in Year 1 go to a 'smithy' to observe and learn from animal sculptures while Year 5 pupils visit the Museum of Science and Industry. Visits are an important part of the curriculum which each year group enjoy and which gives them first hand experiences. Visitors to the school include the Vicar and a local historian who enrich pupils' learning experiences. The school has close links with the local playgroup and this ensures children have a good start in the reception class as children's individual needs are well known before they start at school. There are good links with local colleges and possible applicants for teacher training are encouraged to visit. The school is outward looking and takes part in community events at the local sheltered housing and by inviting senior citizens into school.

35 The previous inspection report judged the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to be satisfactory. The provision for these important aspects of pupils' personal development is now mainly good.

36 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. School and class assemblies provide ample opportunities for pupils to reflect on who they are, their place in the world and their self-esteem and worth. In some lessons, pupils are provided with opportunities to reflect on the quality of their work and effort they have made. For example, Year 1 pupils assembled an Easter Garden whilst retelling the Easter Story. They reflected on the wonder of new life and the changes in nature. Pupils write their own prayers as seen in the attractive wall displays. In a whole school assembly, pupils found their own way of "talking to God", in a spiritual, calm reflective atmosphere. Teachers provide an opportunity for prayer at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions giving pupils the chance to reflect on the events of the day.

37 Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Members of staff effectively promote high moral standards throughout the school. The school's 'Golden Rules' and 'Playground Promises' form the basis of the school's good behaviour policy. Attractive posters and notices around the school promote values of acceptance, fairness, honesty and respect. Adults in school provide good role models for pupils. There is a wide range of reward systems to promote good behaviour and to foster and recognise positive qualities. There are valuable opportunities in personal and social education

lessons to make moral decisions and discuss issues important to pupils like friendship and being kind to others.

38 The school works as a harmonious society in which every person is equally valued. The provision for pupils' social development is good and leads to positive relationships within the school, between pupils and adults. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to promote this development. A good example is the way in which junior pupils are encouraged to be involved in the school by being provided with jobs for which they need to apply formally. These responsibilities include being members of the school council, the school newspaper team and older pupils acting as "buddies" to younger pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils write a letter of welcome to children entering the reception class and Year 6 pupils write some very interesting stories for younger children setting them out in the form of an attractive booklet.

39 The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall but could be developed further. Pupils' understanding of their own culture and traditions is good. Visits to museums and places of cultural and historical interest like a Roman museum, Ribchester and Astley Hall all enhance pupils' awareness of life in bygone days. Culture heritage is explored well through English and history lessons, music and geography. For example, pupils have experienced a poetry afternoon and folk dancing. Whilst there are good opportunities in religious education to discuss faiths other than Christianity, there are insufficient planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to learn about and experience the diversity and richness of cultures other than their own.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40 Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of pupils are good. Members of staff work together well to create a nurturing environment in which pupils grow in confidence. By listening to pupils and showing them that they are valued, through their high expectations of behaviour and consistent application of rewards and sanctions, pupils are growing into effective learners.

41 The procedures to ensure health and safety and child protection are clear and effective. The school follows local guidelines for child protection and calls upon a range of support services on behalf of the pupils. There is a health and safety committee of the governing body who carry out risk assessments of the school premises and staff are vigilant on a daily basis. The local education authority also conduct health and safety audits thus ensuring that pupils work and play in a secure learning environment. The staff take good care of pupils who are feeling unwell and there is a procedure in place for administering medicines. These procedures along with staff qualified in first aid ensure that pupils are cared for well on a daily basis.

42 The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are good and an improvement since the previous inspection. Parents value the way the school has strengthened the procedures to promote discipline and good behaviour. Staff work hard to promote good behaviour and most are consistent in their praise and encouragement for work well done. House points are given for effort, work and behaviour. A team point board situated in the hall, shows the winning team. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own behaviour and the effect it has on others by completing a "Think" sheet and parental involvement is sought at an early stage when problems arise. The procedures for dealing with any incidents of unkind or inappropriate behaviour are good. Year 6 pupils confirmed that if they do occur, they will be dealt with well.

43 The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good and are successful as seen in the very good attendance of pupils. Parents confirm that pupils enjoy school, are

enthusiastic about their learning and want to attend regularly. Registrations periods are effective and provide an orderly start to the day because most pupils arrive at school on time.

44 The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory with room for improvement. Because there is no whole school formalised programme of activities for personal, social and health education, including citizenship, teachers find it difficult to monitor the progress pupils make from one year to the next. Older pupils have sex education lessons with the approval of parents. There is a discrete lesson each week for personal, social and health education but it is left to the teacher to deliver topics as and when considered necessary. Education in the abuse of drugs is not included. Teachers do record their comments on personal development in the annual reports to parents on pupils' progress and these show that teachers know their pupils well.

45 The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Baseline assessment is used effectively in the reception class to identify children's individual levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy and personal and social development. However, there are insufficient detailed assessments of children's individual needs in other areas of learning. This sometimes leads to a mismatch between the activities provided and the levels of learning required by the children. There is limited recording of children's small steps of achievement and this makes it difficult to build securely on the children's skills and knowledge.

46 The school uses a wide range of tests from Year 1 to Year 6 to test pupils' attainment particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teachers have detailed information to plan appropriately for the groups of differing abilities in their classes. As a result, more able pupils generally receive sufficiently challenging work in most classes. However, the information gained from the assessment of pupils' attainment in mathematics, in some infant classes, is not used well enough to provide sufficiently demanding work. This is why standards in mathematics are not as high as in English and science.

47 Assessments made of pupils' learning at the end of each school year and the end of completed science and ICT topics are carefully analysed to find out what pupils have found easy and where any problems lie. This information is used effectively to guide future planning and there is evidence to show gaps are plugged and weaknesses remedied. Teachers mark work carefully and provide helpful comments to help pupils to improve. These measures ensure that pupils achieve well in several subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48 Parents now view the school as good, which their children enjoy attending. The information for parents, their involvement in their children's learning and the effectiveness of their links with the school are very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when the school was reported to have been letting parents down.

49 Since the previous inspection, real efforts have been made to involve parents in the decisions made by the school. Parents' opinions have been sought on issues like school uniform, behaviour, anti-bullying and setting up an After School Club. As a result, parents feel ownership of some of the initiatives, which have begun in school. For example, a group of parents have been given training in special educational needs and have shared their expertise with other parents by starting a learning library. Parents are also invited to the review meetings of their children who have a special educational need. There are good written guidelines to support a group of parents who help in classes, listen to children read and assist in the school office. The school opens its doors each Wednesday to pre-school children. A good range of activities is offered. Parents confirm that the initiative helps their children to settle down quickly when they enter the reception class. The After School Club is a

service offered by the school and one which is very much appreciated by parents. All these good initiatives help parents to feel valued and as a result, they take more interest in the school and are happy that their children attend there.

50 The information that parents receive is very good. There is an interesting range of newsletters for parents, which gives them advance information about events in the school and about what children are learning. The prospectus is written in straightforward language and there is a good range of information for parents when their children are about to enter school. There is ease of access to school policies, which are set out near the main entrance for parents to peruse as necessary. Workshops on numeracy and spelling have been provided. These measures encourage parents to find out about the school and ensure that they are kept well informed. There is an attractive homework diary, which is providing a good two-way communication between the school and home. There is a "Meet the Teacher" evening in September in addition to two formal consultation evenings each year. Reports to parents on children's progress are good and give specific information on progress made in subjects. They also contain targets for future development. This constant dialogue between the school and the home is having a positive impact on the image of the school in the local community. Parents express their confidence in the head teacher and staff and consider that they can approach the school with suggestions or complaints.

51 The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is good. Most parents listen to children read, help them with their homework and projects. They attend concerts and assemblies and offer support on special occasions. Parents appreciate the workshops in literacy and numeracy. These have raised their awareness of how to help their children at home. The Parent Teacher Association is a vibrant group of parents who have raised large sums of money to help purchase resources for the school. For example, over £4,000 has been raised by this group to fund equipment for the computer suite. The groups also offer opportunities for families to meet together for social occasions and this is improving parental involvement in the life of the school. The majority of parents agree that teachers work well together, the school is positive on all fronts and their confidence in it has been restored.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52 There is a strong sense of purpose at all levels of leadership. People are clear about their roles and carry them out with commitment and effectiveness. As a result of the very effective management structure, the school has recovered well since the last inspection. Parents are appreciative of the good leadership that has helped to raise standards.

53 The leadership and management of the head teacher and key staff are very good. The temporary acting head teacher, the deputy head teacher and the local education authority all played important roles in this. However, the good progress has been taken forward very successfully by the present head teacher since her appointment. She is highly aware of the importance and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. This has enabled her to gain a very clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, she has been able to set ambitious but realistic targets and to establish well-structured systems to check that they are achieved. For example, a monitoring timetable ensures that every subject is periodically reviewed and standards of teaching and learning are assessed. Following many changes of staff, the head teacher has been very successful in establishing a good team ethos and a strong commitment to driving up standards. She has demonstrated very high levels of managerial expertise in the process. The senior management team provides very strong, positive leadership in monitoring standards, supporting staff new to the school and in influencing change.

54 There is good management by subject leaders, especially in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Subject leaders play a very important role in monitoring planning and in the development of staff. For example, the subject leader for ICT holds ‘surgeries’ whenever teachers need any extra help in a particular aspect of the subject. The school’s special educational needs provision is well managed. In the other subjects, leadership is at least sound. Good strategies help all subject leaders to monitor the standards in their individual curriculum areas. Teachers’ lesson plans are examined, lessons are observed and pupils’ work is scrutinised. This enables an annual review to be drawn-up for each subject. Identified weaknesses are then addressed, with plans drawn-up to remedy them.

55 The governors give good support to the school. They have shown commitment and loyalty in helping it to recover from a difficult period. They addressed the key issues from the last inspection systematically and thoroughly. This process enabled them to gain a very clear understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. They retain a good strategic overview of the school and, together with the head teacher, are strongly committed to driving up standards still further.

56 The school keeps a good check on how effective it is. There are good arrangements for keeping track of pupils’ progress. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is good. It is now regarded as a whole school challenge, with teachers, subject leaders and the senior management team all having an active part to play. There are very good strategies for appraisal and performance management. They are closely linked to pupil progress to ensure that improved levels of teaching are reflected in better learning opportunities for pupils. Teachers arriving at the school, including those just entering the profession, are given very good support. This enables them to settle quickly and to espouse the school’s strong, Christian aims and values in their own work.

57 Staff are aware of the needs of different groups of pupils and meet them well. For example, since the last inspection there have been improvements in the identification of more able pupils. Their needs are now recognised in the teachers’ daily plans. Pupils with special needs receive the help they need to make good progress. The school works very closely with parents to maximise the learning opportunities that they receive.

58 The school’s priorities for development have rightly been focused upon issues arising from the previous inspection. However, the drive to raise standards in key areas has not compromised the pupils’ opportunities to benefit from a rich and varied curriculum. Action taken to meet the school’s targets has been good. They have been taken during a time of considerable change, both in pupil numbers and in staff movement. However, through well-selected staff appointments and much dedicated team endeavour, new initiatives for improvement have raised standards in all key areas.

59 The school uses its financial resources well, targeting funds to its educational priorities. For example, the homework diaries have had a very positive impact on the links between teachers and parents. They ensure that learning that takes place in school can be extended by extra practice at home. They also foster better levels of communication, to the benefit of the child. The school improvement plan is drawn up in close consultation with staff and governors. A budget surplus of seven per cent of the total arose when new staff were appointed last year. However, this has been well targeted to meet pupils’ needs and a surplus of only four per cent is projected by the end of the current financial year. The only specific grants that the school receives support initiatives for pupils having special educational needs and are spent effectively, mainly on the support staff.

60 Day-to-day administration and budgetary control are efficient and governors monitor spending regularly. The few recommendations of a successful financial audit have been fully implemented.

61 The school applies the principles of best value well. It takes into account the views of local education authority advisers and parents. Occasionally the pupils, themselves, are consulted, for example on aspects of the literacy hour lessons. Competitive tenders are systematically sought. Currently, different options are being considered on the appointment of an ICT technician that will soon be needed for the school. The school seeks to improve upon itself by making full use of national and local information. This puts the school in a very strong position to move forward.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62 The school has made good progress in overcoming the serious weaknesses. The head teacher, governors and staff should now:

- (1) Bring the standard of writing up to the levels of reading by;
 - improving pupils' spelling through greater emphasis on phonics patterns when using Big Books;
 - encouraging pupils to use their rich spoken vocabulary in their writing through critically evaluating their own work;
 - rectifying pupils' incorrect handwriting habits.
(Paragraphs 6, 25, 72, 74 and 75)

- (2) Continue the drive to improve standards in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that the level of challenge is consistently high in all classes;
 - ensuring that the pace of learning is equally good in all classes.
(Paragraphs 7, 27, 46, 81, 83 and 84)

- (3) Improve children's learning in the foundation stage by:
 - providing more opportunities for children to select their own activities and explore and learn for themselves;
 - making careful assessments of children's attainment in all areas of learning and using the information to plan the next learning steps.
(Paragraphs 5, 20, 32, 45, 63, 67, 68 and 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	18	23	0	0	0
Percentage	4	14	36	46	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 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)	181
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

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	17

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	16	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	15	15	14
	Total	25	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93% (94%)	89% (91%)	89% (97%)
	National	84% (83%)	86% (84%)	91% (90%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	24	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89% (97%)	93% (97%)	93% (100%)
	National	85% (84%)	89% (88%)	89% (88%)

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

Where the number of boys or girls is 10 or less, figures are omitted.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18	14	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	18
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	29	28	32
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	91% (85%)	88% (71%)	100% (91%)
	National	75% (75%)	71% (72%)	87% (85%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	17
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	31	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97% (82%)	91% (76%)	97% (88%)
	National	72% (70%)	74% (72%)	82% (79%)

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

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Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	152
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	25.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	101

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	421,779
Total expenditure	415,902
Expenditure per pupil	1,889
Balance brought forward from previous year	32,243

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	181
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.	51	44	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	3	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	63	9	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	48	13	1	2
The teaching is good.	52	46	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	48	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	33	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	54	41	4	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	66	32	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	49	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	53	12	4	2

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

63 Children begin in the reception class in the September of the year in which they become five years old. Their attainment on entry is generally above that typical for four year olds. During the year they achieve steadily and reach above the levels expected in most areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. They achieve well in the areas of communication, language and literacy. This is because of the good use of assessment that enables the teacher to focus on individual children's learning needs. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional skills. Staff create a calm learning atmosphere for the children. Children achieve steadily in their mathematical development. Children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. However, in these areas, assessment is not used well enough to ensure that all children have the opportunities to develop their own particular learning needs. Physical development is satisfactory but the lack of a secure outdoor learning area limits children's opportunities to develop their physical skills on large equipment such as climbing frames and wheeled toys. Children with special needs have good support from staff and they learn through individual games and activities prepared for their level of development.

Personal, social and emotional development

64 Children settle quickly into the routines of the reception classroom. This is because of the good induction programme. Children are introduced to school before they start formally through activities such as the pre school sessions and events such as 'Teddy Bear's' picnics. They achieve well in this area of learning to reach above average levels because the teaching is good. Children are managed well and they are confident to answer in class sessions and join in activities well in small groups. Most children work for long periods without adult support and concentrate well on their activities in the purposeful working atmosphere which staff create. They are interested and show their work enthusiastically, explaining what they have written. Children play well together in the role-play area and use dressing up clothes to take on roles at the airport. Children with special educational needs have good opportunities to work alongside and play with other children. All children demonstrate their independence when changing for physical education lessons and collecting their coats for going outside. They are ready quickly and respond well to staff instructions.

Communication, language and literacy

65 Children achieve well and reach above the levels expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching in this area is good and literacy activities are planned effectively to show clearly what children will learn. Children use letter sounds well and they begin to write them correctly into their stories. The majority of the children include individual letters when they write their postcards from the moon or from the airport waiting room. More able children use recognisable words and appropriate sentences imaginatively to describe what they have seen. Children enjoy the writing activities provided and looking for words they know in displays incorporating them into their writing. However, there are limited displays of the more common words that they know from their reading, to help them to spell correctly. Children read in small groups guided by a member of staff and have a good knowledge of the punctuation used in texts and can identify repeating phrases in known stories. Their reading is well supported at home by parents and children enjoy taking their books home. Children enjoy talking with each other and adults and recount their experiences at length. They describe places they have been and events in their home life confidently and enjoy listening to others. In the well-planned role-play

area, currently set up as an airport, they develop their vocabulary well, for example, by talking about luggage and boarding cards.

Mathematical development

66 Children build steadily on their good attainment on entry into school to reach above the levels expected in this area of learning by end of the reception year. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. The teacher and support staff provide a wide range of activities and use the numeracy strategy framework well to plan interesting lessons. As a result, children count and sequence numbers to 30 and are beginning to count in tens. More able children are beginning to add numbers mentally and on paper. However, some children find this difficult when the lesson moves them on too quickly. Children's mathematical understanding develops well in other areas of the classroom. At the airport the children have scales to weigh their luggage and some children have a good understanding of reading the numbers when they stand on the scales. On a walk around the school staff pointed out the shapes of tiles on the roof and children identified hexagons and rectangles and became aware of the patterns. This built effectively on pattern work printing with shapes and regular two-dimensional shapes such as circles and triangles and rectangles and reinforced children's learning. Opportunities to encourage children to think for themselves are sometimes missed when staff set out the counters for them rather than asking the children to do it for themselves. The final session in the lesson is sometimes rushed which limits the children's opportunities to use mathematical language correctly in explaining their work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67 Most children have an above average understanding of the world when they start school. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Children achieve steadily in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world to reach above the levels expected by the end of the reception year. They are very confident using the computer and have good mouse control skills. Staff plan interesting activities to show how things move by using the children's own wheeled toys to practice pushing and pulling objects. The local environment provides children with good opportunities to make detailed observations of their surroundings and teachers use it effectively. Children notice patterns on roof tiles and watch quietly at the pond area looking for frogs. The huge stone in the school grounds is a talking point and helps children to understand ideas such as the past and the present. However, opportunities are missed to make links with children's previous learning. For example, children talked about a boulder, which allegedly had been brought by a glacier, but this was not followed up sufficiently in the classroom. Activities unrelated to the walk meant that children were unable to demonstrate their understanding and response to things that they had seen. Assessment of children's attainment in this area is limited and sometimes the level of the activities provided does not meet children's learning needs sufficiently. For example, children are asked to draw maps of a route taken by a toy car when their own learning needs require more practical activities to plan the route. The nursery assistant makes a valuable contribution to children's understanding. For example, she worked with a group devising a route through the school and recorded the children's instructions on a Dictaphone. Through this activity, they learned successfully to distinguish right from left and began to understand the language of direction. The reception class makes good use of visits to the supermarket and the park to enhance the curriculum.

Physical development

68 Children achieve steadily in the development of their physical skills to reach the levels expected by the time they enter Year 1. They work well together in hall times and show good negotiating skills when working in pairs to devise a simple dance sequence. Teaching in this area is

satisfactory. Well-planned lessons provide suitable opportunities for children to develop their imaginative work and they move with pleasure and confidence. They balance on different parts of their body well and are willing to experiment and be adventurous. However, the outdoor play area is inadequate because it lacks facilities. Children are provided with reasonable opportunities to use a range of small equipment. As a result, they build, arrange, draw and write with increasing control, although some children still have an awkward grasp of their pencils which makes it difficult for them to see what they have written. In this area of learning, the children's stage of development is not assessed sufficiently to ensure the activities provided match their learning needs.

Creative development

69 Children achieve steadily and build on the good skills they acquired before they started school to reach above the levels expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. They use clay imaginatively to make ladybirds and penguins and paint them carefully with the appropriate colours. They print carefully with shapes to create interesting patterns using primary colours. They show an increasing ability to cut accurately with scissors to make decorated flowers for the display on growing. In music they begin to develop a sound understanding of rhythm through the use of drums and tambourines and other percussion instruments. They join in enthusiastically to make transport rhythms and are mindful of the teacher's instructions of when to start and stop. In dance they listen carefully to music and respond with appropriate movements. There are however, limited opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves to encourage the development of independence in learning. Activities for art are well planned but rather prescriptive and focus on the activity rather than the learning needs of individuals or groups of children. Well-displayed children's work makes a good contribution to the classroom giving value to their efforts.

70 The foundation stage is currently an area of school development and extensive changes are being made to the provision of activities and the purpose for learning. Although there is still more to do, these developments represent significant improvements since the time of the last inspection.

ENGLISH

71 Infant pupils now achieve well to reach well above average standards in most aspects of English by the age of seven. This represents a much-improved picture since the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in reading and in speaking and listening. In these areas pupils achieve well. However, by the age of 11, standards in writing are above, rather than well above, average. Although pupils achieve steadily in writing, there is scope for improvement.

72 The main strengths in English are the very thorough planning, based on accurate assessment of pupils' learning; the relevance given to many lessons by linking literacy work with themes being studied in other subjects; and the homework provision that improves standards in both reading and writing. However, the quality of writing, both in its content and in its spelling could be improved. Weaknesses are most evident in the upper junior classes because pupils did not acquire basic skills earlier in their schooling. Through accurate analysis, the school has already identified the need to improve these areas. Much catching-up has already been achieved, though not enough to raise writing standards as high as those in reading. Improvements are largely due to good subject leadership. This has had a strong impact on identifying weaknesses and raising standards of both teaching and learning.

73 Standards of speaking and listening are well above average at the ages of seven and 11. In some literacy lessons, such as in Year 2, pupils are seated very well to enable the teacher to engage in discussions with the class, or directly with individuals. Sessions are well paced with a variety of questions asked to challenge pupils of all abilities. The quality of these interactions is generally of a

very high order, both in the language used and in the relative sophistication of ideas expressed. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke with great confidence, and used expressive vocabulary, when discussing the potential contents of an extra chapter to 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone'. In literacy lessons throughout the school, pupils pay close attention to instructions given, and questions posed, by the teacher. This much enhances the quality of their learning.

74 Standards in reading are well above average at the age(s) of seven and 11. A high proportion of pupils reach well-above average levels. Infant pupils are now taught a range of strategies to read difficult words that they encounter. For example, pupils in Year 1 were taught to look closely at the illustrations on the page for clues as to what the printed words might contain. The school is placing a greater emphasis on helping pupils to split unknown words into smaller, manageable parts. These are then blended together to identify the whole word. However, opportunities are not exploited sufficiently to analyse difficult words, for example, when the whole class reads 'big books'. It was the lack of such regular basic 'phonics' training, in past years, that continues to depress standards in spelling in upper junior classes. By the time they leave the school, the vast majority of pupils read with fluency and expression. They have a genuine love of books. They appreciate the capacity of literature to transport them to worlds and experiences beyond their own. As well as reading books for pleasure, they also develop good skills in locating and using information from reference books. For example, pupils in a Year 4 literacy lesson consulted a range of reference texts, when note-taking skills were extended, to provide biographical details about key royal figures of the Tudor period. There are now very good links between home and school using 'Homework Diaries'. Most parents play an active role in developing the skills of their children, by hearing them read books, helping them develop their spellings and by taking a regular interest in their schoolwork.

75 Writing standards are now above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 6, standards are not rising as quickly as reading. Written work is presented neatly. This is seen in the good displays throughout the school. However, the school has accurately identified key areas to raise the quality of pupils' writing, both in the fluency of its production and in its content. Programmes, already established, have improved basic skills in the infant classes and are beginning to compensate those in the juniors who did not benefit from the same early training. However, there is still a need, especially in the upper juniors, to raise standards in writing further. There are inconsistencies in adopting good postures, pencil grips and angling paper correctly, for right and left-handed pupils. In Year 5, self-correcting and re-drafting procedures are being developed particularly well, but they are not routinely used to this high degree in other classes. As a result, the speed and fluency of the pupils' writing, the accuracy of the work and the use of expressive language remain underdeveloped. When given opportunities to analyse and improve upon their first drafts, more striking use of language is seen. For example, a Year 5 pupil vividly summed up the personality of a character in one of his stories by writing, "Simon was a big show-off and a girl magnet ... Simon's parents were loaded. Everything he asked for, he got"! Similar high quality use of expressive language is seen in many of the poems produced. However, improving writing by re-drafting it, is not done as well as this in all classes.

76 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. They are given structured, individual programmes of work that help them to improve in all areas of the subject. Support assistants work skilfully, in regular, small-group sessions, to help them acquire the basic skills of literacy. The best levels of achievement, seen in pupils of all abilities, are in Years 2, 5 and 6. This is because the challenges set are more closely matched to the abilities and needs of the pupils.

77 Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Teachers and support assistants are aware of the need to ensure that they understand new words and instructions. Once they begin their tasks, they are given much individual support to ensure that they are on the right

track. However, the absence of bilingual support means that their communication skills are not developing as quickly as the school would like.

78 The quality of teaching is good and is particularly strong in Year 2, 5 and 6. Teaching is now better than at the time of the previous inspection. Planning throughout the school is detailed and work is prepared for pupils of all abilities. However, occasionally the challenges set do not match pupils' attainment levels. New learning, undertaken in each lesson, is carefully explained to the pupils. This helps them gain a very good awareness of the context and systematic development of new skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils are well managed and show good attitudes to their work. Teachers question pupils well to find out how much they know and how well they understand new ideas. Specific questions are asked of different pupils to take account of their level of attainment. These approaches are effective because they help teachers to assess pupils' learning and progress. Pupils are often asked to explain more clearly or answer the question more precisely. This helps them to extend their thinking. Teachers make good evaluations of lessons and of pupils' work to note those areas that need to be further developed and to identify those pupils who require extra help in future lessons. By the upper junior classes, pupils are expected to take some responsibility for assessing their own learning. As a result, they set themselves realistic targets for improvement, for example with their writing. Tests are analysed well to note which specific areas are weak and in need of development. As a result of these assessments, pupils are selected for extra help to enable them to reach the level expected for their age. These pupils are taught well in small groups and most eventually reach the standards expected.

79 Skills developed in literacy are extended well in other subjects. The use of ICT increasingly promotes good learning. Word-processing skills are well developed and the use of tape recorders adds variety to lessons. For example, two Year 6 pupils taped an imaginary interview with the unfortunate record producer who turned down a lucrative contract with 'The Beatles'. He struggled to give a plausible explanation to justify his decision but was adamant to the last when concluding, "In ten years time, who will have heard of 'The Beatles'?"

MATHEMATICS

80 Pupils enter school with above average knowledge and understanding of numbers. At the age of 11 and they leave school having attained above average standards in mathematics. This indicates that they achieve steadily throughout the school. However, there have been many changes in staffing, teaching and leadership over recent years, which have impacted on standards and how well pupils achieve. The picture is better now than it has been in the past. Standards are improving in all classes, although there is still room for further improvement.

81 At the time of the last inspection, pupils were underachieving, particularly in the infant classes. School trends show that mathematics has been slower to improve than other subjects. Results of tests at the age of seven indicate that standards in mathematics have remained below the national average and well below those of similar schools for the last three years. However, pupils' work in Year 2, this year, shows considerable improvement. These pupils have benefited from good teaching and are now achieving above average standards. In addition, a good proportion of pupils are reaching higher levels than has been the case in recent years. However, the demanding work which pupils have responded to so well in Year 2 now needs to be extended to Year 1 pupils, if standards are to rise further.

82 Standards by the age of 11 initially fell to a low point in the Year 2000 when results were below the national average. However in 2001, results began to rise and the improving trend is continuing. Standards are now above the national average and match those of similar schools. The

improvements at seven and 11 are attributable to a determined effort on the part of the head teacher and staff to raise standards and the good work of the subject leader in driving through the changes. To achieve this, the subject leader prepares a very detailed analysis of tests results obtained by pupils, not only in Years 2 and 6, but also in other classes. Any questions which pupils fall down on are quickly and accurately identified and remedied. For example, last year, pupils found great difficulty in extracting information from charts, tables and graphs and struggled to understand problems in written form. As a result, pupils are now taught how to solve mathematical problems methodically, including regular practice of interpreting numerical information. In addition, teachers have benefited from extensive training in the National Numeracy Strategy. Its successful implementation is reflected in the way pupils discuss the merits of different methods of calculation and have the confidence to explain how they have worked out the answers. That said, more could be done to increase the pace of learning in the lower junior classes.

83 Pupils now achieve steadily in the infant classes and the underachievement, noted at the time of the last inspection has disappeared. In Year 1, average and below average attaining pupils achieve well. They respond enthusiastically to solving number problems within a 100 square. For example, when calculating the missing number one pupil explained, 'The missing number is between 72 and 92 so it must be 82'. However, over the year as a whole, the learning of the more able pupils is not sufficiently extended to levels of which they are capable. In Year 2, all pupils have received a good deal so far this year. Much has been expected of these pupils and they have risen well to the challenge. Many of the pupils are now working at higher than average levels, which is important if the school is to improve upon pupils' good attainment on entry. As a result, most pupils add and subtract numbers to 50 and multiply and divide numbers to 20, competently. Most Year 2 pupils have a good grasp of plane and solid shapes and more able pupils understand symmetry.

84 Pupils also achieve steadily in Years 3 and 4 and their progress increases rapidly in Years 5 and 6. Standards in Year 3 are low because of the unusually high number of pupils with learning difficulties. It is difficult for the teacher to teach at a pace that suits all of the pupils. The school is experimenting with different ways to teach mathematics to these pupils so that the rate of learning of the average pupils can be increased. Pupils do handle larger numbers, for example to find the difference between 39 and 157 by counting on from the smallest to the largest. There is a big difference in the standards achieved by the average and below average pupils and the more able ones who understand numbers to a 1000 and find fractions of whole numbers by dividing. In Year 4, the pace of learning is not quick enough yet, although it is improving each day. These pupils slipped into bad habits in the past and still tend to take too long to complete their work. The level of challenge in Year 5 is noticeably high and this continues in Year 6. Pupils in these classes achieve well and respond positively to the teachers' high expectations. In lessons and in pupils' books, there is plenty of evidence of high productivity. Even pupils who do not find learning of mathematics easy are making good progress and achieving levels appropriate for their age. By Year 6, pupils confidently, convert decimals into fractions and percentages. They have a good understanding of the properties of shapes and angular measure. Furthermore, the skills acquired are used effectively to solve mathematical problems.

85 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in most lessons. They are provided with work at the right level to move their learning on. Teachers give them attention and encourage them to answer questions. Support staff work closely with them to help them to understand new ideas. These factors enable them to make good progress.

86 Pupils with English as an additional language are often given individual help to understand the language used and the tasks they are expected to complete. They do not find learning easy and

despite the school's best efforts their achievement is limited. This is largely because there is no bilingual support.

87 The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the evidence from pupils' work in their books indicates that teaching is continuing to improve as new teachers learn more about their pupils. All lessons are carefully planned and work is invariably provided for pupils with different learning needs. Where this is most effective, such as in Year 5, the challenge is also very high and the pace of learning swift. There have been many improvements in teaching since the time of the last inspection. Notably, teachers explain the purpose of the lesson very clearly and often ask pupils to write this in their books. This ensures that pupils know exactly what they are expected to do and they are encouraged to ask questions if they are not certain. During the lessons, teachers explain new ideas skilfully, using resources imaginatively to engage pupils' interests. For example in Year 1, the teacher made use of puppets and asked pupils to help the puppet characters to count different quantities of cubes. The teachers avoid telling children answers but continually ask 'What shall I do now – how shall I organise the information?' When the pupils answer, the teacher expresses amazement at their good thinking. Such approaches are common throughout the school and are effective in motivating pupils to have a go.

88 A common and important factor in pupils' learning is the way teachers encourage them to estimate, approximate and calculate mentally. Teachers frequently ask pupils to explain how they have worked out the answer. This enables teachers to assess how pupils think and provides important insights into how to move their learning on. Effective use is made of ICT in almost all mathematics lessons to provide valuable reinforcement of the ideas learned. For example, by entering data into the computer, Year 3 pupils were able to see a graph forming before their eyes. In Year 5 the teaching is excellent. Every minute of the lesson is action packed and pupils are swept along from one task to the next. For example during the mental starter, three different activities were introduced, all in the form of a mathematics game. Pupils had to think quickly, answer accurately and concentrate hard to avoid missing their turn. Teachers' good subject knowledge is beginning to be reflected in the pupils' growing confidence and enjoyment of the subject.

SCIENCE

89 Standards in science are above average at seven and well above average at 11. The high standards are the result of a consistent approach to the teaching of the subject, which has enabled all pupils, and in particular, the more able ones to achieve well. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

90 Pupils achieve well in the infant classes. By the age of seven, they have a good understanding of the properties of different materials and describe their qualities accurately in terms of texture and appearance. They learn successfully how to test whether shiny materials can be seen in the dark and they test the melting times of water and other substances. They classify living things accurately into different categories and decide on the criteria to use. They have a good understanding of circuits and experiment to see what happens with wires and batteries of differing sizes.

91 Pupils achieve well in junior classes. By the age of 11, they investigate circuits in depth using scientific diagrams to show, for example, how switches and bulbs are used in their circuits. They have a good understanding of how to measure forces in Newtons and measure evaporation from liquids. They learn well about healthy living and how lack of exercise and poor diet affects the major organs of the body.

92 The development of the curriculum has been a major influence in the standards pupils achieve. In the previous inspection scientific enquiry was used insufficiently to develop pupils' understanding. Sweeping changes have been made and from Year 1 to Year 6 all pupils now learn to ask scientific questions and design experiments. Pupils learn effectively how to identify the variables in an experiment and make choices to design a fair test. They know how to measure accurately, using a range of standard measures, and make intelligent choices about which apparatus to use. Scientific vocabulary is emphasised and all pupils are encouraged to use it in their explanations. Work is well presented in a scientific format. Pupils write out their experiments clearly and draw sensible conclusions from their work. The use of numeracy and data handling is good throughout the year groups. Younger pupils make simple tables and Carroll diagrams to record their findings while older pupils draw graphs and bar charts to show their accurate measurements over time of changes in weight or temperature. The development of investigations has made a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development as they frequently express their wonder at what they see in their experiments. For example, Year 2 pupils were fascinated by the patterns in the ice balloons while pupils in Year 3 were enthused by the magic of different kinds of magnets.

93 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and prepare very challenging activities. Pupils respond very well and have positive attitudes to the subject. They work conscientiously to solve problems that arise in planning experiments. The teaching methods used are very effective. Year 5 and 6 pupils are shown how to devise their own questions whereas younger pupils are helped to see the kinds of questions they could ask. Pupils have a high level of independence because the strategies enable them to develop their skills at their own rate. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support and often work in mixed ability groups. This enables them to take a full part in activities and make good progress. Teachers manage their pupils well and time is used effectively in the majority of lessons. Where the pace slows pupils have less opportunity to reflect on their own learning and review their work. Homework is effective in every year group to support pupils' learning in school but in Years 5 and 6 it is used particularly well to provide valuable revision of work completed earlier. Pupils' learning is assessed well. Assessments at the end of each unit of work provide teachers with a continual picture of pupils' progress. These are used well to plan the next stage of learning. The data from tests is used to check the attainment of different groups of pupils.

94 Pupils with English as an additional language are given additional support to enable them to take part in experiments and methods of recording their work are well planned to ensure they achieve steadily.

95 Leadership of the subject has been very good. As a result of additional training for teachers in the teaching of scientific enquiry the school has been able to raise standards further due to the commitment of all the staff. There has been good monitoring of the subject and appropriate plans made for developing it further. Teachers and pupils make effective use of ICT, for example, to research about planets and stars.

ART AND DESIGN

96 Standards are above the levels expected by the ages of seven and 11 and higher than at the time of the last inspection. Very good work is produced in Year 2. Pupils' work in art is greatly valued by teachers. This is evident in the high quality displays throughout the school. The thorough planning and the hard work of pupils and staff, creates an atmosphere in which pupils of all abilities are able to express themselves confidently in all aspects of art and design. Pupils with English as an additional language are given good support to develop their artistic skills. Visits into the locality and farther afield stimulate pupils' interests and improve their powers of observation. Visiting artists and

craftsmen inspire pupils to develop new ways of seeing their world. They teach them the skills to express these new insights on paper, in models and in clay.

97 By the age of seven, pupils have benefited from a range of stimulating experiences. For example, they sketch pencil designs that develop outwards from a central motif. The patterns created are sophisticated and are produced with levels of concentration and technique more often seen in the work of older pupils. They make careful observational drawings around the school to create patterns. These are then transferred on to clay tiles. Good links are made between two and three-dimensional work. This enables pupils to work with freedom, creativity and flair. However, the need to concentrate on the basic skills and raising standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 has limited opportunities for expressive art. As a result, the good art and design skills, gained lower down the school, have not been extended as fully as they might have been.

98 The quality of teaching in art and design is good. Much of the vitality of the subject arises from links with local industries. For example, three-dimensional work is very well taught in Year 1, following a visit to a sculptor's forge. In Year 4, precise observational drawings of chairs arose from the visit of a craftsman chair-maker. Pupils gain much pleasure as well as creative satisfaction from the work they undertake. For example, there was an air of sheer delight when the teacher in Year 5 produced the pupils' tiles and rock-pools, which had been fired by the potter. Teachers guide pupils well in understanding the styles of different artists and this good teaching is reflected in pupils' work. For example, in Year 5 pupils used the computer to create images based on the style of Matisse. Skills developed in art are also used well to illustrate work in other subjects, such as history, geography, design and technology and religious education. Subject leadership is good. Teachers' plans are checked, lessons are observed and good examples of pupils' work are attractively displayed. Despite the many good features, more could be done to promote the art of different cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99 Standards in design and technology are at the levels expected at the ages of seven and 11 as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in their designing and in their evaluating of their finished work but standards of making products are typical of pupils of primary school age.

100 Pupils achieve particularly well in Year 1. The good ratio of adults to pupils makes a very big difference to their finished work. For example, adults ensure that pupils understand the importance of hygiene and safety when working with food and help them to work carefully. Pupils make a good start in designing. This is helped by using ICT programs to enable pupils to sort and label the materials they need. Pupils have learnt effectively to plan ahead and picture what the finished item will be like. This good planning resulted in Year 1 pupils producing well presented and tasty fruit salads. Pupils also make good progress in evaluating their work. This is helped by the imaginative use of booklets, which motivate pupils to illustrate and write about their work. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support. This ensures that they have good opportunities to talk about their work and make the right choices. This helps them to make good progress.

101 Pupils achieve steadily in the junior classes. Very helpful design sheets are introduced, which encourage pupils to consider the step-by-step instructions for making their products. Involving parents in helping to select and supply the ingredients and help in the classroom, enabled Year 3 pupils to make good quality sandwiches with almost no mess. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported with their making and recording of activities. They are asked to draw a series of pictures to show the teachers that they have understood the process. This improves their reasoning skills and extends their vocabulary. Pupils benefit from links with manufacturers. This gives their

work an air of authenticity and reality and greatly improves their appreciation of how designing influences the purchaser and the finished product. For example, in Year 4, a local craftsman brought samples of chairs for pupils to examine. This had a marked effect on their designs and encouraged them to consider special features, such as reclining, extending and rotating. Some pupils drew very detailed three-dimensional sketches of chairs, as a basis for their designs. The experience also improved their capacity to evaluate the finished product. However, their own models of chairs did not reflect the high standards of designing. The teaching of cutting, trimming and joining techniques is not as good as the teaching of designing. The subject leader has made a sound start in ensuring that the well planned curriculum is followed but has not yet had time to identify the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

102 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned and well organised to ensure that pupils work safely and purposefully. Designing is taught well and pupils produce increasingly elaborate designs from year to year. By Year 6, these include several different sketches, dimensions, instructions for making and specific notes to show how movement can be incorporated into their models. A good feature in Year 6 is the use of prototypes and blueprints, which help pupils to test how their designs work on cheaper materials before moving on to the real thing. Another good feature is the way that teachers bring examples of products already made, such as hats and shoes, to widen pupils' understanding of design features. Because of this, Year 6 pupils understand that designs need to allow extra material where the seam is to be hemmed, to avoid making a shoe too small. In this class, more able pupils are particularly well catered for because they are encouraged to tackle more challenging tasks, such as in designing and making a boot. Pupils are imaginative in their work. For example, a Year 4 pupil designed an Easter card showing a gravestone that falls down when a lever is pulled, to reveal a pop up Easter egg. Creative thinking is encouraged and greatly assisted when teachers ask questions such as, 'Do you like the look of it – can you improve it?'

GEOGRAPHY

103 Standards in geography are above the level expected for pupils aged seven and at the level expected for pupils aged 11. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The subject leader effectively manages and promotes the subject. For example, she has identified the key areas for development and set realistic targets to make improvements.

104 Pupils achieve well in the infant classes and learn to find information for themselves efficiently. For example, they know how to locate and use supplementary information contained in atlases to find out about the character of different places. As a result, they have a good understanding of the relationship between climate and the clothing worn in different countries. They understand how to make maps of imaginary islands and more able pupils include keys to show man-made and natural features. Pupils achieve steadily in the junior classes and their understanding of how climate and natural features affects the way of life deepens. For example, they explain the effects of erosion on the coastlines correctly and identify where erosion has damaged the landscape. However, pupils have only limited knowledge of continents such as Africa. Discussions with Year 6 pupils reveal that they assume that the whole of Africa is a poor country and do not realise that diversity exists.

105 The quality of teaching is satisfactory although evidence from pupils' books shows that elements of the subject are taught well, particularly in the infant classes. Work is well planned and learning objectives are clearly identified. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and their completed work is well presented. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to research their own topics, which develops their interest and independence in learning successfully. The strategy of beginning by listing what the pupils already know is effective in getting pupils to set themselves more

challenging questions for research. Teachers and pupils use geographical vocabulary well. Assessment is satisfactory and teachers record pupils' attainment at the end of each topic.

106 The subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' cultural development through their study of an Indian village and Africa. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Where there is no additional adult support, pupils often work with partners or in small mixed ability groups. This ensures that they can learn from each other. Teachers include data handling skills in a number of topics. This improves their geographical knowledge and also supports their learning of mathematics and ICT. For example, pupils in Year 4 investigated the noisy areas around the school and displayed their results in tally charts and graphs. Literacy skills are used effectively to design questionnaires when doing research about recreational activities and pupils debate "can anyone own water?", showing an appropriate level of argument.

HISTORY

107 Standards in history are above the levels expected at the ages of seven and 11 and are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. This is because of good teaching and the well-planned curriculum, which informs teachers of exactly what to teach and how best to approach it. Teachers provide well-structured lessons that build effectively on pupils' previous knowledge. Pupils achieve well. By the age of seven, pupils have a good knowledge of the passing of time and talk confidently about the past and modern day. They learn enthusiastically about Victorian washday equipment and enjoy role-play using artefacts. Through their study of Grace Darling, pupils identify the qualities in her character, which made her a heroine. This makes a good contribution to their social and spiritual development. Pupils in Year 6 evaluate their own knowledge of different periods of history effectively and set themselves challenges to answer questions. They write sensitively showing empathy with people who suffered the Blitz while learning about the life and times during the 1940s. They investigate inventions of the 20th century in depth and chart changes that have occurred over short periods of time such as the development of 'gameboys' and telephones. They recognise the social effects which some changes have had on people's lives such as mobile phones.

108 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan effective lessons that identify the skills pupils need for understanding history and researching different topics. Pupils' literacy skills develop well as they conduct independent research using a range of materials, including the Internet. For example in Year 5, pupils use encyclopaedias and texts and the Internet to research the Ancient Olympic games. They write interesting pieces of work in the role of historical characters. Teachers have high expectations of the amount of work pupils do and pupils generally work conscientiously to present their work well. Teachers ensure that pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn and remind them of their goals during lessons. There are many planned opportunities for pupils to work together and develop their skills of listening to each other. This contributes well to their social development and their understanding of teamwork. Pupils work well in mixed ability groups to share skills and knowledge. This raises self-esteem and ensures all pupils are fully involved in the lessons, including those with special educational needs. The use of artefacts and illustrations also provides pupils with English as an additional language good visual prompts to promote their understanding.

109 The subject is well led. Lesson observations are used effectively by the subject leader to identify areas where teachers may need advice or additional resources. Resources are used well to support lessons. For example, tapes of Tudor music, artefacts from different eras and visits into the local area provide good first hand experiences.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110 Standards are above the levels expected by the time pupils reach the age of at seven and are at the level expected by 11. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were below average. They have improved significantly, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are now achieving well throughout the school. By the age of seven, basic ICT skills, such as saving and editing work, are well developed in all aspects of the subject. However, pupils in the upper junior classes are still catching up from weaker provision in the past. In particular, when these pupils were younger, the basic skills were not sufficiently established. Much has been achieved to enable most pupils to reach average standards but very few pupils are working at higher levels in all areas of the subject. Skills in ICT are now developed effectively in other subjects.

111 Strengths in ICT considerably outnumber the weaknesses. A good scheme of work guides teachers in their planning and recent training has improved teachers' confidence in the subject. More recently appointed teachers have good knowledge of how to teach the subject. The subject leader provides very good support for those teachers who have needed to extend their skills. A feature, throughout the school, is the responsibility which pupils assume for assessing and developing their own skills. This helps them to be largely independent when working on computers. There is scope for improvement in specific areas, such as control technology and e-mailing in the junior classes, but these have been well identified. Work is already planned to ensure that they have been fully covered by the time the present Year 6 pupils leave the school.

112 Pupils in infant classes achieve well. Year 2 pupils use their computer skills imaginatively in a wide range of applications. For example, they create pictures and text, varying the size, lettering and colours to achieve maximum impact. Year 2 pupils also show competency in operating remote controlled toys by carefully programming them with specific instructions. Year 3 pupils have a good understanding of how to access a safe version of the Internet, for example, to research life in Anglo-Saxon times. They work with confidence to compile, correct and print out their work.

113 Pupils in junior classes are also achieving well now. By Year 6, they design a spreadsheet formula effectively to work out the costs of a holiday abroad for different families. They appreciate the power of the Internet, for example by communicating with children in the USA to learn about 'Thanksgiving Day' celebrations. They have sound command of basic ICT skills, such as editing and copying-and-pasting techniques. Using these, they combine text and graphics to develop multi-media presentations. Keyboard skills are satisfactory but vary depending on the extent to which pupils use computers at home.

114 Computers, as well as other ICT hardware, are used creatively across the school. In Year 1, for example, pupils discover the potential of a digital camera to record and recall their experiences. In Year 3 good use is made of ICT to compose musical patterns. In Year 5 spreadsheets and graphs extend pupils' work in mathematics and science.

115 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are fully included in all ICT activities. For example, they are selected, on occasions, to be reporters for the 'Termly Times', the school newspaper produced by a small group of pupils from every class. However, programs are not yet sufficiently linked to their individual action plan targets to allow regular practice in developing basic skills.

116 Pupils having English as an additional language also benefit from regular access to a computer, though this could be extended in the periods when they are withdrawn from the class. They benefit from much individual support provided by the school.

117 The quality of teaching is now good and is very good in Years 2, 5 and 6. Thorough planning ensures that skills are taught progressively. Early in the week, teachers make a good job of introducing the ICT work for the week. Junior age pupils write, in the ICT notebooks, the exact sequence of instructions needed to develop each new skill. This works well and enables pupils to check their notes later in the week when it is their turn to use the computer. Teachers and pupils are well prepared for the forthcoming installation of a computer suite. Teaching skills are of a sufficiently high order, and good systems are already in place, to enable effective use of the new facility to be made, once it is installed.

MUSIC

118 Standards are higher than the levels expected at the ages of seven and 11. This was the picture at the time of the last inspection. Although the school no longer has a specialist music teacher, good planning and many opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments ensure that the high standards continue. During a period of change the head teacher is overseeing the subject. This sound leadership ensures that the subject continues to have a high profile until a permanent subject leader is found. Pupils sing and play well and talk enthusiastically about their end of year performances.

119 Pupils achieve well in the infant classes. In Year 1, they acquire a good sense of rhythm. After hearing one short demonstration by the teacher, pupils copy the rhythm almost perfectly. They use these skills well to accompanying their own singing of songs such as 'Little Raindrops'. In Year 2, pupils extend these skills well. For example, they select instruments which best represent the sounds made by different characters in a story. This helps them to make a good start with composing. Classroom support assistants work well with pupils with special educational needs. They ensure that these pupils understand how their individual singing or playing fits into the class performance. This helps them to make good progress.

120 Pupils achieve well in the junior classes. In Year 3, they make good use of standard notation to record the pieces they compose. They compose individual patterns of sounds using long and short beats. Then, in pairs and in groups of four, the individual patterns are played at the same time to create a layered effect. For their age, pupils are able to synchronise their playing very well, without being put off by the others. In Year 4, pupils acquire a good understanding of different types of music. They learn to listen critically and produce impressive sketches of what the music reminds them of. For example, when listening to Tchaikovsky's Russian Dance, pupils envisaged pictures of people dancing and rushing around doing their shopping. Their good drawing skills helped them to express their creative ideas. Pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the help they receive to express their ideas and make steady progress. For example in a Year 3 lesson, the teacher helped them to explain what they liked about another group's composition.

121 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are very aware of the importance of providing regular opportunities for pupils to sing and to play instruments. These skills are taught well, for example, pupils are often reminded to adopt a good singing posture and to play the instruments correctly. Lessons are well prepared to ensure that all the resources needed are available. This ensures that pupils learn at a good pace with no interruptions. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to compose their own music. This is greatly enhanced by drawing on the knowledge that many pupils have in reading music and using ICT to select, record and replay different patterns of sound. Many teachers are confident in teaching the subject. Some play instruments themselves, which helps them to select pieces of music that the pupils find interesting. In Year 1, the teacher frequently asked pupils to listen to others when they performed a song or an instrumental piece. She asked, 'what did you hear - what do you think about it?' One pupil replied, 'I thought they used the pauses well.' This

approach is successful in helping pupils to develop their listening skills and to know how they can improve their work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122 Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and are at the levels expected at the ages of seven and 11. Standards in swimming are good and, by the age of nine, almost all pupils achieve the 25 metre distance award and many achieve higher proficiency levels, such as life-saving awards.

123 Pupils in the infant classes achieve steadily. They behave well in lessons, work safely and use the space available sensibly. Physical education lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal, social and health education. For example, they learn about the purpose of warming up before physical activity and understand the benefits of healthy exercise. In dance, pupils show sensitivity to the mood of the music. For example, using gesture and facial expression, they create effective movements to express 'kindness' and 'friendship' suggested by the musical piece 'Illumination' by Mike Oldfield. Pupils with special educational needs are observed carefully and often shadowed by learning support staff. This ensures that they understand what to do and take a full part in lessons, which helps them to make good progress.

124 Pupils in the junior classes also achieve steadily. The good range of extra-curricular sporting activities enhances the development of their skills. The new subject leader has made a sound start in promoting these activities and has ambitious ideas to extend the work in physical education. For example, he has begun a football training club for younger pupils (and) as well as those who play in teams regularly. The participation rate is high with over 50 per cent of pupils joining in one activity or another. This enables pupils to appreciate teamwork and gain new skills. Boys and girls acquire similar skills in controlling the ball using their hands or feet and show a good awareness of other players. For example, they automatically search for players to pass to before throwing or kicking the ball. By the age of 11 pupils have a good awareness of the rules and attacking and defending strategies needed to play team games such as football, netball and rugby.

125 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well organised and pupils are managed effectively. This ensures that the time available is used well and pupils can concentrate on improving their skills. For example in Year 2, the teacher whispers instructions so quietly that pupils have to concentrate hard to listen. The coaching of skills is good. Teachers understand the coaching points well and explain these carefully. For example, in a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher set three groups the task of practising their netball attacking and defending skills whilst she worked with individuals to improve their accuracy in shooting. Teachers are observant and seize on opportunities to stop the lesson to correct errors and avoid pupils acquiring incorrect techniques. However, in the lessons seen, pupils were very seldom asked to comment on what they had observed, for example, to point out what they thought was good and what could be improved. This aspect of teaching could be improved to ensure that pupils reflect on their learning and assess their own progress. The subject leader is aware of this and has made plans to introduce a system of self-assessment.