

INSPECTION REPORT

St James CE Primary School

Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119467

Headteacher: Mrs L Roberts

Reporting inspector: Mrs D Bell
16413

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 October 2000

Inspection number: 224384

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:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Devonport Way Chorley Lancashire
Postcode:	PR6 0TE
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Threlfall
Date of previous inspection:	10 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs D Bell	Registered Inspector 16413	Art	What sort of school is it?
		Music	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
			How good are the curricular opportunities offered to the pupils?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs J Smith	Lay Inspector 9649		How high are standards? 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?
Mrs J Golightly	Team member 22080	English	
		Information and communication technology	
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	
		Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
Mrs A Ellison	Team member 23392	Mathematics	
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		Geography	
		History	
		Equal Opportunities	

		English as an additional language	
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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St James' CE Primary School is a voluntary aided school situated in the east of Chorley in Lancashire. The school now has a total of 194 pupils on roll: 96 boys and 83 girls in the main school and, attending on a part-time basis, 9 boys and 22 girls in the nursery. Nursery children come from a much wider area than the school's own catchment and although the majority move into the main school in the September preceding their fifth birthday, a significant minority leave to attend schools nearer to their own homes. The attainment of the majority of children who do join the reception class is below that expected nationally for their age. Most pupils come from the two adjoining council housing estates and from local housing association rented houses. The level of unemployment in the area is high. The percentage of children known to be eligible for free school meals (22.5%) is slightly above the national average. The percentage of pupils on the register for special educational needs (21.78%) is broadly in line with that found nationally, as is the percentage of pupils with statements of special need (1.6%). The percentage of pupils who come from homes where English is not the first language spoken (6.6%) is higher than found in most schools. However, no pupil is at the early stage of English language acquisition. The school takes great pride in its close links with St James' church and the vicar regularly takes assemblies in the school. For the first time this year, there are single age classes throughout the school and to accommodate this, the school has rented the parish room from the church and refurbished it as a classroom for Year 6 pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has had a new headteacher and the interior of the building has been substantially altered to improve the learning environment. The school has set clear priorities to raise standards, improve the quality of teaching and learning, improve pupils' behaviour, establish a positive, purposeful, Christian ethos and promote better relationships within the school and with the community.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving and increasingly effective school in which, although standards are not yet as high as they could be, a very strong and committed headteacher, supported by the governors, is successfully leading the drive to improve pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well because of the very good teaching they receive. They behave well and develop very positive attitudes to school. In the rest of the school, while teaching is satisfactory overall, good teaching in Year 6 has brought about a noticeable improvement in pupils' achievement and behaviour since the beginning of this school year. The headteacher has worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour. However, all staff are not yet consistently implementing the behaviour policy in all lessons and where this happens, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The provision for children aged 3 to 5 is very good. They are taught and achieve very well.
- The headteacher's strong and effective leadership is moving the school forward and improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school's good process of self-evaluation has resulted in improvements in teaching, learning and attainment.
- Governors' involvement in the life of the school is good and the school has good links with the community.
- The school is successfully involving a greater number of parents in its work and in their children's learning. The quality of information given to parents is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school and the use of ICT in all subjects.
- The quality of writing throughout the school, the planned use of literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects and a consistent approach to implementing the National Numeracy Strategy.
- The management of pupils' behaviour and more positive attitudes to learning especially in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- The implementation of the school's assessment and marking policies in relation to whole school and individual pupils' targets.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn how to become more responsible for their own learning, and to learn about life in a culturally diverse Britain.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Improvement since then has been satisfactory overall but has accelerated since the appointment of the new headteacher two years ago, and particularly in the last year. Changes to the layout of the building have resulted in a better learning environment for pupils aged 7 to 11. School management has been considerably strengthened. The deputy head, key stage co-ordinators and subject co-ordinators all have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and the headteacher is checking that they are being fulfilled. The systematic and regular checking of the quality of teaching and learning has resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and educational provision since the last inspection. There are schemes of work for all subjects, based on national guidance. Teachers follow them as they plan their lessons. Subject co-ordinators check that they do so and report termly to the head. Standards have improved in art and in physical education and, although there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards in geography, teachers' planning and pupils' work confirm that pupils are provided with worthwhile experiences in that subject so that they can make progress. The provision and support for pupils with special educational needs is now satisfactory and the recent appointment of a new special educational needs co-ordinator at the beginning of this school year has already resulted in further improvements to the sound systems that were in place. These improvements are beginning to have the desired positive effect on pupils' achievement and on standards.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	E	D	C
Mathematics	B	E	E	D
Science	B	C	C	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

The standards seen in the work of pupils currently in Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally in English, mathematics and science. The standards seen in the work of pupils currently in Year 2 are in line with the national expectations for their age in reading and mathematics but below the nationally expected standards in writing. Writing is a weakness in the older age range also and it is not until Year 6 that a good range of writing is seen. Taken across the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the school's average score over the last three years was below the national trend, and although in English, attainment has risen, in mathematics and science it has fallen since 1997. For pupils aged 7, although the 1999 results for reading, writing and mathematics are higher than those attained in 1996, there has been a decline in attainment in reading and mathematics since 1997. The school has set challenging targets for eleven-year-olds for the next two years and the headteacher is driving the school forward to achieve them. The standards attained by pupils aged 11 are not as high as they could be because there has been and still is too much variation in the quality of teaching in the 7 to 11 age range. However, good quality teaching in Year 6 is now successfully raising pupils' achievement in that class. At the ages of both 7 and 11, standards are sound and pupils' achievement is satisfactory in art, history, music and physical education. Standards are below the national expectation in information and communication technology because the school did not have the relevant hardware to teach the subject until the beginning of this school year and teachers require more confidence and expertise to use it regularly and in all subjects. In geography and design and technology, there was insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on standards. These two subjects are taught alternately with history and art respectively and are not due to be taught until after half term.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Overall satisfactory but in a significant minority of lessons pupils stray off task and show an unwillingness to learn and make progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall satisfactory but a significant amount of low level disruptive behaviour accompanied by high noise levels impedes pupils' progress because they

	continue to talk while the teacher is talking and do not listen carefully to instructions
Personal development and relationships	Pupils respond appropriately to the opportunities provided by the School Council and when given the opportunity, willingly undertake a range of tasks in class. Relationships are mostly satisfactory but there are occasions when pupils do not show enough respect for others, including their teachers
Attendance	Below the national average. The majority of pupils arrive promptly for the start of the school day and all lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 90% of lessons. It is very good in 17%, good in 29% and unsatisfactory in 10%. The teaching of children in the nursery and reception classes (the Foundation Stage) is very good in over half of lessons. In all age groups, good and very good teaching occurs when the lessons have a clear structure and teachers have high expectations of pupils' work rate and behaviour. This makes pupils work hard and want to do well, and their learning moves on apace. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, noise levels are too high, teachers talk over the pupils, lessons lack structure and pace, pupils are uncertain of what they are supposed to be doing and even those pupils who want to, cannot produce the level or quantity of work of which they are capable. Most teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils gradually to take more control of their own learning. As a result, only a minority of pupils concentrate well when not under the direct supervision of the teacher and most pupils find difficulty when required to work independently. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory but teachers are not yet giving sufficient attention to the teaching of literacy and numeracy in other subjects. Teachers' planning is good and includes making provision for pupils with special educational needs by providing suitably modified work for pupils who need more time, or challenging extension work for pupils who complete basic tasks quickly or are faster at learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and provision is made for the teaching of religious education. There is very good provision for children in the nursery and reception classes. The taught time for pupils aged 7 to 11 is below the nationally recommended minimum, by 35 minutes each week. Good community links contribute well to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met. Most individual education plans have clear and measurable targets and pupils make satisfactory progress towards them. However, some teachers do not break the targets down sufficiently into the small steps in learning required to bring about good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The pupils are well integrated into school life and make sound progress as they move through the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory but inconsistent throughout the school. Insufficient attention is given to enabling pupils to take more charge of their own learning and to teaching pupils about the richness and diversity of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Most staff are sensitive to pupils' needs and the care and support provided for younger pupils is particularly good. Assessment procedures are sound. Pupils' progress is adequately recorded and the information gained is used to plan further learning.

Partnership with parents is good overall and particularly strong in the nursery and reception classes. Parents receive good quality information from the school and the good relationships between home and school have a

positive impact on pupils' learning. A small band of dedicated helpers assist the school on a regular basis and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong, decisive and effective leadership and gives the school a clear educational direction and purpose. The deputy is still adjusting to some relatively recent whole school responsibilities. There is strong leadership in the 3 to 5 age range and subject co-ordinators are now carrying out more effectively their responsibilities with regard to standards, teaching and learning. Overall leadership and management are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They do this well. The headteacher has successfully involved the governors in the life and work of the school. They in turn strongly support her clear vision and are becoming much more effective in their role as a 'critical friend'.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are working purposefully to improve the quality of education provided by the school so that all pupils can achieve well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Careful financial planning ensures that funding is allocated to agreed priorities and governors check that resources are being used effectively to raise standards.

Staffing and the accommodation are adequate and well used. The school benefits from a number of committed volunteer helpers, including parents and governors, who enhance the staffing in the school and contribute well to pupils' achievement. Resources are satisfactory for most subjects, but in information and communication technology, despite the recent purchase of new equipment, they remain unsatisfactory. Governors and the headteacher understand and apply the principles of best value as they make decisions about spending, staffing and the quality of provision. They are now comparing the school with other schools and challenging themselves to do better.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • Children are expected to work hard and they make good progress • Behaviour is good and children are expected to work hard • Teaching is good • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities offered to pupils outside of the school day • The school working more closely with parents • Information about how their children are getting on.

Inspectors found, in discussions with pupils, that they do like school and that, in most lessons, they are expected to work hard. Inspectors also agree that the school is well led and managed. However, they found that behaviour is satisfactory, not good, and there are too many occasions when pupils do not do as they are told and therefore disrupt learning for others in their classes. Inspectors also found that teaching and children's achievements are satisfactory. Inspection findings support the parents' view that the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school is limited. However, inspectors found that the school does have a close partnership with parents and provides a satisfactory range of information for them as to how well their children are doing.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 were below the national average in English and in mathematics and in line with the national average in science. When compared with similar schools, the results were in line with the average for English, below the average for mathematics and above the average for science. Attainment in English has improved since the last inspection, mainly due to the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. This is because the strategy has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching, particularly on the structure of the lessons and in the use of time. Attainment in mathematics has declined over the same period. The National Numeracy Strategy has not been implemented with the same level of success as the National Literacy Strategy and there are several lessons in which insufficient time is spent developing pupils' mental skills. In science, the results have fluctuated since the last inspection but overall, have fallen from above average to average in that time. Taken across all three subjects, the school's average score from 1996 to 1999 was below the national trend. In 1999, in both English and mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was well below the national average. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for both English and mathematics show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels has fallen but that the percentage reaching the higher level has risen. In science, the 2000 results are similar to the 1999 results at both the expected level and the higher level. **The standards seen in pupils' work show that the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 are working at the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science.** For the first time, Year 6 pupils are being taught as a single age group and a teacher new to the school is taking the class. Overall, pupils between the ages of 7 and 10 are achieving satisfactorily. In Year 6, their achievement is good and their progress is being accelerated by good quality teaching, effective management of their behaviour and a consequent improvement in their attitudes to learning.
2. In 1999, the National Curriculum test results for pupils aged 7 were below the national average in reading and mathematics and well below the national average in writing. In reading and writing, the percentage attaining the higher levels was well below the national average. In mathematics, it was close to the national average. The reading and mathematics results are in line with those found in similar schools, and the writing results are below those of similar schools. In science, teacher assessments show that pupils' attainment was well below the national average in 1999 and no pupil reached the higher level in this subject. For pupils aged 7, although the 1999 results for reading, writing and mathematics are higher than those attained in 1996, there has been a decline in attainment in reading and mathematics since 1997. This is due in part to the decline in the attainment of pupils on entry to the reception class, documented over the last three years, and in part to the variable quality of teaching in the Year 2 class evident in the written monitoring of teaching between February 1998 and July 2000. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels has dropped further in 2000 although in English, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in the tests has improved. In writing and in science, as in 1999, no pupil reached the higher level. In mathematics, there has been a decline in the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level, further highlighting the variations referred to in the older age range, between the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In the teacher assessments for science, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels has also declined. **The standards seen in the work of pupils currently in Year 2 are in line with the national expectations for pupils of that age in reading, writing, mathematics and science.** Better quality teaching and a clear focus on raising standards are the major contributors to this improvement.
3. The range of attainment on entry to the nursery is as expected for three-year-olds. However, children come to the nursery from a much wider area of Chorley, including the outlying villages and do not follow on into the reception class because they go to schools nearer to their homes. The results of the baseline assessment carried out on entry to the reception class show that the attainment of the majority of children is below the expectation for four-year-olds nationally. The good work started in the nursery is continued in the reception class. The majority of children achieve well and by the time they enter Year 1, have reached the standards expected nationally for five-year-olds. Particular emphasis is placed on pupils' personal, social and emotional skills in the nursery and by the time they are in the reception class, most mix well, share the resources

available to them and listen attentively to each other and to the adults who work with them. They achieve well in all six areas of learning because they are very well taught and supported in their work.

4. Pupil aged 7 and 11 reach satisfactory standards of speaking and listening and achieve appropriately. By the age of 7 they are keen to answer questions; they explain themselves clearly, listen to each other and await their turn to speak without interrupting. Most pupils in Years 3 to 5 remain interested and listen constructively during lessons. However, when lessons are not well structured and when they are expected to work independently of the teacher, a significant minority often demonstrate poor listening skills and are easily distracted. This happens in some lessons in all three year groups. Speaking and listening skills are much improved in the Year 6 class. Here, because of regularly timetabled opportunities to present topics of interest to the whole class, they gain confidence in public speaking and in the use of resources to illustrate the points they are making. Pupils use their speaking and listening skills satisfactorily in subjects such as history and personal, social and health education, where they learn to speak out clearly and listen respectfully to each other.
5. In reading, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils readily participate in shared reading and guided group reading sessions, where they learn to enjoy reading and experience an appropriate range of texts. However, the amount of reading they do as individuals varies. Higher attaining pupils in the 5 to 7 age range read fluently and with confidence and are able to discuss plot and characters and make sensible predictions about what will happen next. Lower attaining pupils in this age group can discuss the text in simple terms but are often hesitant when reading aloud. The majority of seven-year-old pupils can use either pictures or phonics to decode unfamiliar words. In the 7 to 11 age range, improvements in the quality of pupils' reading are closely related to how well the teachers model reading, demonstrating standards of fluency, pace and expression. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 6, for example, follow the good examples set by their teachers and imitate the style when reading independently. The majority of pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of the different styles of written language and respond accordingly when reading aloud. Discussions with them demonstrate that they know and understand how to find and select information. When given the opportunity, pupils aged 7 to 11 use their reading skills appropriately in other subjects. However, they are not required often enough to find things out for themselves by researching and making notes because most of their work is very teacher directed.
6. Standards in writing, and pupils' achievement in this aspect of English, are unsatisfactory from Year 1 to Year 5. Standards and achievement are satisfactory in Year 6. Throughout the school pupils write on a daily basis during the independent section of the literacy hour but in many classes they find it difficult to work without adult support and seem satisfied with a little amount that is not always of good quality or well presented. Pupils learn to spell appropriately but their use of punctuation is restricted and not always accurate. The school has timetabled on a weekly basis a period for extended writing outside of the literacy hour. With the exception of Year 6, there is insufficient evidence that pupils are covering a range of different writing formats or suitably challenging writing activities. Their style is immature. They write using simple sentences and their choice of vocabulary, including the use of adjectives and adverbs, is limited. Many are unable to write for a sustained length of time. In Year 6, pupils experience a variety of writing styles. Work on autobiographies and biographies is well presented and there is greater indication that English skills are being used in other subjects, for example, in Harvest prayers. The presentation of writing is inconsistent across the school but is good at Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a fluent and legible handwriting style with letters that are well formed. They take pride in their work and their books are neat and well presented. In Years 3 to 5 there is a confusion of handwriting styles and some pupils are printing while others use a joined script. In addition, some pupils write in pencil and others in pen. When writing on whiteboards and in pupils' books teachers do not always provide a suitable model for pupils to emulate. Pupils do use their writing skills appropriately in other subjects, but there are many missed opportunities to encourage them to write at length. The use of literacy skills is not explicitly planned into work in other subjects.
7. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in mathematics throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, because the work builds on the very good experiences the pupils have in the nursery and reception classes, pupils become increasingly confident in their use of number. By the age of 7, they can sequence numbers to 100 and most can read the words of numbers and relate them to the digit they represent. Pupils know that doubling means to add the same number again and use correct mathematical vocabulary such as faces, edges, and base as they confidently discuss the properties of three-dimensional shapes. They respond well

to the teachers' good questioning and as a result they extend their thinking and understanding of mathematical concepts. By the age of 11 pupils are able to work with numbers to a thousand and to carry out addition, subtraction, and some multiplication and division. However, they do not have instant recall of multiplication tables and their ability to use different methods of calculation and explain how they have arrived at their answers is limited. Work seen in pupils' books shows that between the ages of 7 and 11 they cover an appropriate range of work in this subject and have an appropriate knowledge of shape, space and measure. Number work remains very traditional, however, and only in Year 6 is there evidence of pupils using techniques such as partitioning to multiply decimals. Pupils' achievements and their rate of progress improve in Years 5 and 6 where the pace of lessons is faster and the range of activities is varied to maintain interest and motivation. In these two classes, pupils quickly revise their earlier learning and move on to related activities such as fractions and data handling. There is very limited evidence of pupils using their numeracy skills in other subjects and there are no explicit plans for doing so.

8. Achievement is also satisfactory in science. Pupils between the ages of 5 and 7 learn about themselves and how they have changed since they were babies. They also learn to describe the properties of different materials and to record their findings in appropriate ways, for example in grids. Pupils' recording of their knowledge at this age is good and is well presented. Pupils in Year 3 show they understand how to carry out an investigative activity as they explore which materials let light through and which do not and therefore form a shadow. They make sensible suggestions as to how to carry out the investigation and are kept on course by the teacher's timely reminders of the process of predict, investigate and conclude. Investigative activities are not always suitable for higher attaining pupils. For example, in the Year 4 class, when pupils are being asked to separate paperclips from rice, they are presented with a limited range of resources that direct their thinking rather than enable them to think for themselves how best to carry out the investigation. Pupils in Year 5 are able to explain the effects of gravity and know that objects are pulled down because of gravitational attraction. They can explain air resistance and understand that friction slows things down. At this age, they understand the requirements of a fair test and some are able to identify aspects that can be varied. However, the majority of pupils are unable to record how to conduct a fair test without a substantial amount of support from the class teacher and have not yet begun to set up and carry out experiments for themselves. In Year 6 pupils know that micro-organisms are living organisms and that hygiene is important for people because some micro-organisms are harmful. They are able to display their findings in a range of interesting ways that indicate increased independence.
9. In design and technology and geography there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards. This is because these two subjects are taught alternately with art and history respectively and were not being taught in a sufficient number of classes during the inspection. Nor was there enough work available at this early stage in the school year. However, when their work is discussed with them, pupils speak with enthusiasm about the appropriate range of activities in which they have been involved in earlier years. Standards are satisfactory in art, history, music and physical education. Standards are below the national expectation in information and communication technology because the school did not have the relevant hardware to teach the subject until the beginning of this school year and teachers require more confidence and expertise to use it regularly in all subjects. The use of ICT skills is not yet an explicit part of planning in other subjects although there are clear plans to do this as part of the move to full implementation of the revised National Curriculum for 2000.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the mostly clear and measurable targets set in their individual education plans. However, some targets are not broken down sufficiently into the small steps in learning that these pupils require to make sustained progress. They receive good support in English and mathematics and support staff also work effectively with those who have behaviour targets. This helps to increase the progress that these pupils make. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also make sound progress as they move through the school. Although some enter nursery without fluent English their good progress in the nursery year means that they enter the reception class with communication, language and literacy skills appropriate to their age. The school's analysis of the pupils' test results show that they often achieve the higher levels and do at least as well as their classmates.
11. The school sets itself challenging targets based on the comprehensive analysis of national and in-school test and assessment results and is now working hard to achieve them. This analysis includes comparing the achievements of different groups of pupils in the school, for example, boys and girls, and pupils from ethnic minorities and the progress of higher and lower attaining pupils. There are no significant differences

between the attainment of boys and girls and the school's analysis of the test results for pupils whose first language is not English, shows that they often achieve the higher levels and do at least as well as their classmates. However, while teachers plan modified work for lower attaining pupils and extension work for higher attainers, it is not always as well matched to pupils' needs as it could be. The tracking of pupils' individual progress is new to the school this year and although files have now been set up for every year group, the systems are too new to be producing any real improvement in the curriculum or in pupils' achievements. This is, however, the intention and is being closely monitored by the head. Targets for English, mathematics and behaviour are set for individual pupils. However, all staff are not using the targets when marking pupils' work and it is clear that all staff do not fully understand the purpose behind setting targets for individual pupils. In discussion, the pupils were also vague about the targets. Although some could recall one or two of them, others could not. No pupil spoken to could remember all three targets and all were unaware of whether they were making progress towards them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour since the last inspection. However, although these are now satisfactory, they vary considerably across the school. When lessons proceed at a good pace and challenging and interesting tasks are provided pupils respond well and behaviour is good. Good attitudes and behaviour were seen in the nursery and reception classes, in some Year 1 and 2 lessons and in all Year 6 lessons. In these lessons pupils are keen to work and show an interest in their learning. They concentrate well, listen attentively, share resources sensibly and help each other. In other classes when lessons lack challenge and pace and when behaviour is not well managed, pupils do not concentrate properly on their work. They shuffle about, talk to each other and do not always respond to their teachers' attempts to make them remain on task. The level of noise in many lessons makes it difficult for pupils to listen to the teacher or to each other and this impedes the progress of all pupils. Pupils throughout the school do not always take sufficient pride in their written work and standards of presentation, including handwriting are very variable. Where opportunities are provided for pupils to be involved in activities outside of lessons such as school trips and after school clubs they show keen interest. For example, a group of Year 5 pupils talked with great enthusiasm about their visit to Helmsore Mill and what they had learnt while there.
13. Children make very good progress in personal development in the nursery and reception classes. They sit and listen well to their teacher and are keen to talk about events in their lives. They are proud to take on responsibilities such as carrying the register and acting as milk monitors. In the nursery, children work and play together very well. They show a good level of independence for their age, for example, when they put on their own overalls before playing with sand and water and when as a group they devise a game of horse riding using long wooden blocks and hard hats.
14. In the rest of the school pupils' personal development is satisfactory. When pupils are given responsibilities such as keeping the cloakrooms tidy or being responsible for the tidying and distribution of equipment, they fulfil their tasks sensibly and well. When opportunities are provided that give pupils a higher level of responsibility their response is good. The establishment of a School Council earlier in the year gives pupils a real sense of ownership and responsibility and has a positive impact on their personal development. Classes democratically elect their own representatives and meetings take place on a half termly basis. Through the School Council pupils have helped to decide on the attractive new school uniform, which they now wear with real pride. The School Council also decided to re-establish the house team system and this is motivating many pupils to achieve and behave well. Relationships are satisfactory overall. Most staff have good relationships with pupils and provide good role models for them and most pupils relate satisfactorily to each other. When pupils are given the opportunity to work in pairs or groups most show that they can collaborate successfully. For example Year 3 pupils worked well in pairs in a science lesson. However such opportunities are limited. Opportunities that encourage pupils to work on their own and become increasingly independent in their learning are also limited.
15. Pupils play together in the playground in a good-natured way, but they do not always show consideration for each other. For example, older boys playing football in the playground are not as considerate as they might be of the needs of pupils who want to play more quietly. Pupils acknowledge that bullying does occasionally occur and most see the headteacher as the person to whom they would be most likely to report such behaviour to ensure that effective action is taken. There was no evidence of bullying or other

oppressive behaviour during the inspection. In lessons pupils sometimes show insufficient respect for each other as well as for their teachers. In particular many pupils show a lack of understanding of how their poor behaviour impedes the progress of others. On other occasions pupils show a good level of sympathy for the needs of other people. For example, following a talk given about the plight of Romanian street children pupils organised cake sales, a sponsored silence and a sponsored dance to raise funds for them.

16. Attendance is unsatisfactory; the attendance rate for the last school year was below the national average. This was mainly due to the irregular attendance of a very few pupils who have now left the school and this term the overall attendance has improved. Most pupils are keen to come to school. Punctuality is generally good. Registration is taken promptly and lessons get off to a prompt start. Although the level of exclusions in the last school year rose to 5 fixed term, these related to two boys, one of whom has since left the school and another who, though still on the school's roll, is at present attending a pupil referral unit. The number of exclusions is usually small and static.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. It is now satisfactory or better in 90 per cent of lessons, compared with 73 per cent last time. In 29 per cent of lessons, it is good; in 17 per cent of lessons it is very good; in 44 per cent of lessons it is satisfactory and in 10 per cent of lessons it is unsatisfactory.
18. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes). The staff have a very good understanding of the needs of children in this age group. Thorough planning takes full account of the recently introduced Early Learning Goals for the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage, and of the steps in learning outlined in the national guidance. Children's progress is already being effectively assessed against these. Well prepared resources result in very well presented activities that foster the children's personal, social and emotional development, develop the basic skills of communication, language, literacy and mathematics and encourage independent learning. Where teaching is very good in the nursery, for example, all three adults talk to the children and encourage them to reply throughout all activities. The class teacher ensures they know how to use scissors safely to cut out shapes and the support assistant uses the opportunity to talk about number and shape as they then carry out the planned activity and one child even reminds the teacher to be careful not to cut her finger off! The staff also establish very good routines with which the children are very familiar, explaining, for example, which aprons they have to use for which activity. Where teaching is very good in the reception class, the teacher presents a very good role model of how to read from a text and the emphasis on initial letter sounds is dealt with very well during the text work and the subsequent sound game activity. The use of different voices for different characters, emphasised in the reading, is then consolidated in role play activities, where the children make up appropriate voices for different characters. The teacher has high expectations of how well the children can achieve and the stimulating activities motivate them to work hard to improve their reading, speaking and listening skills.
19. In the 5 to 7 age range, teaching is satisfactory. It is very good in 13 per cent of lessons, good in a further 13 per cent, satisfactory in 67 per cent and unsatisfactory in 7 per cent of lessons. All lessons are well planned and most take account of the different levels of prior attainment in the class. Where teaching is good or very good, the structure of the lessons and the pace of the activities ensure that pupils concentrate well and work hard. In a very good Year 1 mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher motivates the pupils well, using clapping and action activities to encourage them to count accurately and explain how their answers are reached by counting on or recognising patterns and repeats. The very small but incremental steps in learning enable all pupils to achieve very well in the lesson and the skilful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs is fostered through the use of techniques such as 'thinking time' and appropriate worksheets that enable lower attaining pupils to continue patterns while higher attaining pupils are challenged to find their own patterns. Similarly, in a good Year 2 literacy lesson, the very good attention to ensuring that work is appropriately matched to pupils' prior attainment leads to pupils gaining a good understanding of the language of instructions. This is facilitated by the use of 'home-produced' instructional booklets for higher attaining pupils to follow, while lower attainers 'play' instructional games to foster their better understanding of the required language. Occasionally, in subjects outside of literacy and numeracy, insufficient attention is given to the needs of pupils of differing levels of prior attainment. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson, the progress of lower attaining pupils is hindered because they are not guided sufficiently on how to extend or repeat a pattern. Occasionally, as in a Year 1 music lesson,

introductions are too long, insufficient time is then available for pupils to practise their work, and final whole class sessions are rushed and unhelpful as time for evaluation and reflection on what has been learned is lost. However, in most lessons, teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils' work rate and behaviour and the pupils usually respond accordingly. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 2, the lesson was well prepared and presented and the teacher lost no time ensuring that the lesson objectives were clear to the pupils. However, although the lesson was classed as ICT, insufficient access to the one computer in the classroom meant that only two pupils did any ICT. Most pupils were unsure of what they were learning and there was a confusion between literacy and ICT teaching. Evidence from talking to pupils and looking at examples of their work indicate that the teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory throughout the school.

20. Teaching is satisfactory in the 7 to 11 age range. It is very good in 8 per cent of lessons, good in 38 per cent, satisfactory in a further 38 per cent and unsatisfactory in 16 per cent. Teaching is always at least satisfactory in Year 6 and in most lessons it is good. In Years 3, 4 and 5, teaching is variable and there is some unsatisfactory teaching in each year group.
21. Where teaching is good, the teachers' secure planning and preparation leads to well structured lessons. In these, a good range of activities, matched to pupils' prior levels of knowledge and understanding, keeps lessons moving and pupils motivated and working hard. Lesson objectives are constantly re-visited and reinforced during different parts of the lesson. In several lessons with pupils in Year 6, for example, the teacher's high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate and the constant assessment of how well they are progressing not only gives the teacher valuable information that she uses to adapt their work to help them achieve even more but also enables pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. In a music lesson, the very good management of a group of girls who were refusing to work together minimised the effect of their immature behaviour and ensured that they achieved what the teacher had planned they should learn in that lesson, namely to prepare a composition and rehearse its performance. The good structure and effective use of time and time limited activities in a Year 3 science lesson and in a Year 5 mathematics lesson elicit good responses from pupils who understand what they are doing and rise to the expectation that they are in school to learn and to work hard.
22. Where unsatisfactory teaching occurs, as it does at times in Years 3, 4 and 5, it is related to difficulties in managing behaviour or ineffectual control of the class. In these lessons, the teachers do not always ensure that all pupils are facing the front and listening during whole class sessions; the pupils hold conversations amongst themselves while the teacher is talking and do not pay attention to what they are being told. This impedes their progress and when spoken to, many did not know what they were supposed to be doing. In addition, teacher questioning is sometimes mechanical due to insecure subject knowledge, with little follow up to pupils' answers to help extend their thinking and improve their understanding. Much time is wasted in such lessons and too many pupils produce too little work.
23. Shared good features in teaching are: good planning, well prepared lessons and the good use of resources. In most lessons, teachers pay careful attention to the targets set in the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and prepare extension work for those who learn more quickly and modified work for those who need more time, or smaller learning steps to make progress. In most lessons, good emphasis is placed on using the correct vocabulary for each subject being studied. However, there is no planned approach to the use of literacy skills in other subjects and opportunities are missed to develop, in particular, pupils' reading and writing skills. The teachers are making appropriate use of the National Literacy Strategy and the teaching of English is satisfactory overall. While the teaching of mathematics is also satisfactory, all teachers are not yet making effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy content or structure. For example, not all sessions begin with a mental mathematics session and pupils' learning suffers because they are not regularly introduced to different approaches to finding answers. As at the last inspection, there is still a tendency for the emphasis to be placed on giving the correct answer rather than on explaining the method used. This weakness is common in the teaching of pupils up to the age of ten.
24. The marking of pupils' work does not consistently follow the good guidelines laid down in the marking policy and insufficient attention is paid to pupils' individual targets and to ensuring good presentational skills. In several classes, teachers do not present good models of handwriting or presentation when they write on the board or on flipcharts for the pupils. The amount and type of homework set is satisfactory but

again, there are inconsistencies in different year groups and, as in mathematics, the homework is not always clearly related to what pupils are doing in class and does not help to extend their learning.

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

25. Curricular provision is satisfactory and the curriculum meets statutory requirements. All subjects now have clear policies and schemes of work and the headteacher and subject co-ordinators check that teachers are making effective use of them in their planning. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The school is working towards marrying the schemes of work with the national guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the requirements of the revised National Curriculum that came into place in September 2000. There are weaknesses in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) that the school is only now able to address with the new equipment that has recently arrived in school for that subject. Taught time each week is 35 minutes below the nationally recommended minimum of 23.5 hours in the 7 to 11 age range. The subject that suffers most from this is physical education. Although pupils are taught two physical education lessons each week, the length of time allocated for each (just over half an hour in most cases) is insufficient to allow pupils a reasonable length of time to get changed, practice, develop and improve skills.
26. The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) is very good. The curriculum for these young children has already been adapted to take account of the recent national guidance and the Early Learning Goals. It is thoroughly planned to ensure access to the six areas of learning on a daily basis. Detailed daily plans include evaluation and are annotated to show where more repetition is required. Good emphasis is placed on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills and to their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills. In the reception class, the recommended structures of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adapted appropriately to meet the needs of the children. In addition, children who have difficulties with different aspects of learning are identified early and support is given to ensure they get the best possible start in their education.
27. Throughout the school, the National Literacy Strategy is used well to promote language and literacy skills. Its implementation is being monitored consistently by both the co-ordinator and the headteacher to ensure that it is having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. The school has timetabled on a weekly basis a period for extended writing outside of the literacy hour. However, this is not yet having the hoped-for positive impact on pupils' writing because, with the exception of Year 6, pupils are not yet covering a range of different writing formats or suitably challenging writing activities.
28. The school has also implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this has brought about some improvement in the teaching of mathematics. However, whilst the basic structure and format of the numeracy lesson has been adopted there is a lack of consistency in applying all elements of the strategy. Traditional methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are emphasised and pupils are not encouraged to explain how they arrived at their answers. There is little investigative mathematical work and problem solving is limited. The Local Education Authority has identified the school for intensive numeracy support and this is due to start immediately after the inspection.
29. There is satisfactory provision for sex education and for teaching about the dangers of drugs. Both are dealt with through the science curriculum and the pupils benefit each year from the visit of the Life Education team. The headteacher's determination to implement a successful programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) has led to the introduction of weekly 'circle time' and PSHE lessons in every class. The policy for this is still being drawn up and currently the school is trying out different schemes and approaches to ascertain which most closely matches the needs of the pupils.

30. There is a satisfactory range of musical activities outside of the normal school day, with two recorder groups, a choir, and a small amount of instrumental tuition. There is also an appropriate range of sporting activities at different times in the school year. The school participates in competitive sport with local schools and is proud of its successes including coming second in the district schools sports league and in the cricket tournament. However, a significant minority of parents feel that the school offers only a limited range of extra-curricular activities and inspectors support this view.
31. Special educational needs (SEN) provision is satisfactory. The arrangements to meet the targets set in pupils' individual education plans are effective. However, the targets vary from class to class, some identifying the small steps required in learning more clearly than others. The requirements laid down in SEN statements are met and the school has due regard for the recommendations of the national Code of Practice for SEN. Pupils are mostly supported in class and withdrawn for specialised input only when absolutely necessary. Annual reviews for statements are in place and individual educational plans are reviewed termly. Support staff for pupils with SEN, both internal and external, are appropriately deployed and contribute well to the pupils' progress. The provision for SEN has improved since the last inspection.
32. The school has a sound policy for equality of opportunity, another improvement since the last inspection, and the headteacher is monitoring this aspect of the school's work. However, there are missed opportunities to raise pupils' awareness about equal opportunities issues as part of the curriculum. For example, in history no reference was made to the situation women have faced over time when a class was discussing women working down the mines in Victorian times. Additionally, although boys have an area of the playground to play football no comparable area is available for girls and they have commented upon the fact. All extra-curricular clubs and school-based activities are available for all pupils and the school has catered for girls from ethnic minority groups who need to swim in tights.
33. There is satisfactory provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Although some pupils enter nursery without fluent English their progress is such that there has never been a language problem when pupils enter the reception class. The school has never needed to call on the support that is available for these pupils and its analysis of their test results show that they often achieve the higher levels and do at least as well as their classmates.
34. The school has very good links with the church and the community around the school, including local high schools and other primary schools. For example, during the inspection week, Year 6 pupils visited one of the local high schools to participate in a science lecture. The school also has sound links with a teacher training institution from which it receives several students each year. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its links with the wider community and with industry. They are now good and an extensive range of visits out of school and visitors into school enhances the curriculum in all years and in all subjects, with the exception of information and communication technology.
35. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. These areas are fostered very well in both the nursery and reception classes.
36. Spiritual development is fostered very well in the daily acts of collective worship. It is very strong in the Foundation Stage. For example, as children were coming in from their outdoor activities, an aeroplane passed overhead and immediately the nursery teacher seized the opportunity to have the children listen not only to the sound of the plane, but also to other sounds around them and to experience the awe and wonder of the natural and man-made environment. In the rest of the school, there is no planned provision for spiritual development in the subjects of the curriculum. While appropriate opportunities are taken to reflect on works of art and music and to think about the artists' intentions or the mood the composer was trying to create, many opportunities are missed to promote spiritual development, for example, through literature.
37. The provision for moral development is satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. Pupils are taught right from wrong and respect for others and for property is duly fostered in most lessons. In a very good science lesson with pupils in Year 3, for example, the teachers' constant reminders of how pupils should share, listen and respect each other's opinions led to their making very good progress. In a mathematics lesson with the same class, the pupils did not respond as well because the constant reminders were not there. The school's good behaviour and discipline policy is not yet being implemented successfully in all classes and pupils are not consistently reminded of the class rules that they have been involved in drawing up. Consequently they

do not always achieve as well as they could. There are still examples of some pupils receiving unwarranted praise for work and conduct while inappropriate actions towards others remain unchecked.

38. The overall provision for social development is satisfactory and the school is working hard to improve this. The headteacher's drive and determination to secure a good approach to the teaching of personal, social and health education has led to its being taught in every year group. The School Council, set up in February 2000 meets twice per term and its first involvement in management issues was for pupils to participate in the decision about changing the school uniform. Parents agree that the council is enhancing pupils' personal development and enabling them to show initiative and take responsibility for some issues in the school. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and take responsibility other than undertaking general monitoring duties for various tasks in class. In the nursery and reception classes and in Year 6, pupils are encouraged to be independent, to take responsibility for their own actions and for their learning, and to work together in groups of different sizes. This is not as well developed in the rest of the school. In most lessons, learning is very teacher directed and pupils are not being encouraged, for example, to research issues for themselves in subjects such as history, and follow up activities to the teaching input are more often exercises in comprehension rather than the development of historical skills. Pupils readily respond to requests from different charities, such as Barnardo's, and the Romanian appeal, and contribute to the community through, for example, harvest gifts. This enhances their personal development.
39. Cultural development is satisfactory overall. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about the Western European culture in subjects such as art and music, and history topics introduce them to factual knowledge about different aspects of life in Britain at different times. Through geography, the school introduces pupils to different places around the world. As part of its multicultural week, it introduced pupils to African storytelling, music and art and Asian parents demonstrated aspects of Asian cookery. An Asian music workshop is planned. However, there is little opportunity for pupils to think about how people feel in relation to their environment or what is happening to them, or to understand what, for example, artists, musicians, writers and poets have tried to communicate about their culture through their work. In addition, although the school admits pupils from ethnic minority groups there is no representation of other cultures in the displays around the school and the representation of ethnic children in books in the library is limited. At the last inspection, the school was criticised for not teaching the pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of different cultures. It has gone some way to addressing this but does not yet adequately prepare its pupils for life in a culturally diverse Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school takes satisfactory care of its pupils and the support, welfare and guidance available to them is helping to improve their achievement as they move through the school. Staff are sensitive to pupils' needs and the care and support provided for younger pupils is particularly good. Non-teaching assistants have warm and supportive relationships with pupils. The quality of supervision at meal times and in the playground is also good. Overall, the quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is satisfactory.
41. The school has good arrangements to ensure pupils' health and safety. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and the head has appropriately sought the advice of the county's health and safety officer to check that all statutory guidelines are being met. In lessons staff show a good regard to issues of health and safety. The school has appropriate and clear child protection procedures. It has good link with outside agencies and involves them appropriately when necessary.
42. The school gives a high priority to personal social and health education (PSHE). A PSHE policy is not yet in place but the school is developing a whole school approach through the use of circle time, which is held for half an hour every week. Where this is organised well and pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on and talk about issues such as behaviour and attitudes circle time has a positive impact on personal development. However at present the quality of circle time is inconsistent. This is an area for development already included in the school improvement plan. The school promotes healthy living. Healthy snacks such as toast and fruit are available for pupils to buy for a small charge. The Life Education Centre visits for a few days each year and makes a useful contribution to pupils' health education. The school premises are well maintained and provide a bright clean environment for pupils.

43. Over the past two years the school has worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour. Through a process of discussion between staff and governors the school has drawn up a good behaviour policy that is firmly rooted in the positive reinforcement of good behaviour and the celebration of success. This is beginning to have a positive impact. Pupils are motivated by the reward system and where staff have high expectations and lessons proceed at a good pace they behave well. However the behaviour policy is not consistently applied in all classes. The variable skill with which teachers handle behaviour gives rise to a significant amount of low level disruptive behaviour in some lessons. The school has a draft bullying policy, which gives clear guidance to staff. Pupils are confident that if bullying occurs the school will deal with it promptly and effectively. The school monitors attendance closely and receives good help from the home school liaison officer in the few cases where attendance is poor. There are also some irregularities apparent in the completion of registers. The school encourages good attendance through the giving of certificates for 100% attendance. The monitoring of punctuality is unsatisfactory; the school does not use a signing in book for pupils who are late and this has implications for health and safety.
44. There are sound procedures for assessing pupils' progress and the school is starting to make satisfactory use of the information gained to improve the curriculum and to raise standards. Assessment files are now in place for each year group and although they are new this year, they provide a sound basis for tracking achievement over time. Children's work is thoroughly assessed in the Foundation Stage and the good information gained from this is used very effectively to plan their learning. The comprehensive planning and evaluation of lessons in Year 6 includes thorough assessment of pupils' work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and appropriate levels of assessment in the other subjects of the curriculum. In this class, the teacher also makes very good use of the targets set in the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. Their progress is recorded against their targets and this makes it easy to see how well they are doing and where they need further work.
45. In the rest of the school, assessment procedures are satisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also in geography, history and physical education. They are currently unsatisfactory in information and communication technology, art and music, and there is no evidence of any assessments taking place in design and technology. Reading records from Year 1 show appropriate progress in most cases. Half termly assessments in the core subjects help teachers keep track of how well pupils are doing and are being used to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed. Individual target setting is now in place with pupils having targets for literacy, numeracy and behaviour. These are signed by the pupil, the parent and the class teacher. Although this is a positive move towards improving pupils' achievements, two weaknesses are still apparent: many pupils could not recall all of their targets, though they could recall having had their parents sign them and having returned them to their teacher; and teachers are not yet systematically using them to track progress as is intended. For example, one teacher, when asked about marking not showing whether pupils were making progress towards their targets commented that each piece of work was marked against the objectives for that piece of work, and that pupils' individual targets were a different thing. This is against the marking policy, which clearly states that marking should refer to pupils' individual targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents strongly support the school. A large majority of parents who replied to the questionnaire and who attended the parents' meeting are positive about most aspects of the school's work including the quality of leadership, pupils' behaviour and the way in which the school expects pupils to work hard. Inspectors support parents' positive views on the good leadership of the school but consider pupils' behaviour to be satisfactory rather than good. In too many lessons pupils do not do as they are told and therefore disrupt learning for others in their class. A significant minority of parents disagree that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside the school day. Inspection findings support this view; the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school is limited.
47. The school provides parents with a wide range of good quality information. This is written in a clear, friendly informative style and includes the prospectus, regular newsletters, a helpful parents' information booklet suggesting ways in which parents can become involved in their children's learning and a booklet for parents of reception children. At the beginning of each term parents also receive a curriculum summary and a homework timetable. The school is responsive to parents' concerns. For example following a questionnaire in which some parents expressed concerns about the amount of homework their children received the school

reviewed its homework policy and then circulated it to all parents. However, inspectors found some inconsistencies in the setting of homework.

48. Parents value the two parents' evenings held each year and the opportunity to join in the school's celebration assembly held every Friday. They also appreciate the individual targets for their children, which are sent home at the beginning of each term. However, these targets are not always set out in language that parents can easily understand. The quality of the annual reports on pupils' progress is variable. Some reports, for example those for Year 2 pupils, give clear targets for improvement in the core subjects. Comments in most of the other reports seen are limited to what pupils can do and to the curriculum covered. They do not consistently describe pupils' strengths and weaknesses and the areas in which improvement is needed.
49. The school is successfully involving a greater number of parents in its work and in their children's learning and the majority of parents have signed the home/school agreement. However, although the school admits pupils from ethnic minority groups there is no representation of other cultures in the display about the school and similarly, there are no notices and signs around the school to cater for parents from other cultures, though these have been requested from the Local Education Authority. The parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN) are appropriately involved in the annual reviews of the statements. Parents are appropriately involved in the reviews of targets set in pupils' individual education plans and all parents are encouraged to be involved as soon as any cause for concern is identified.
50. The partnership between parents of nursery and reception children and the school is particularly strong and is having a positive impact on children's learning. There is a very good induction programme for both the nursery and the reception class that includes home visits, visits to the nursery and to school and a staggered start for children in the reception class. As part of the induction programme the school arranges a six-week course for parents on how children learn in the early years. Parents' response to this course has been very positive. The "storysack" initiative is equally successful. With help and guidance from nursery nurses, a group of parents meet each week to make items to accompany popular children's stories. This initiative helps to strengthen the partnership between school and parents and also provides a marvellous way of bringing stories alive for children.
51. The close partnership between the school and parents of nursery and reception children and the way in which the school encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning has a very positive impact on the children's achievements. The school also seeks to involve parents of other pupils by providing reading records and guidance for younger pupils and homework diaries for older pupils. However some parents are not sufficiently involved in their children's work, for example reading records are not always completed.
52. A small band of committed parents and governors provide regular and very effective help in the classrooms. The school greatly values this help and also the funds raised by the Parent, Teachers and Friends Association, which are used to buy additional resources and to subsidise trips and other events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership of the headteacher is strong, decisive and effective and gives the school a clear educational direction and sense of purpose. She took over from an externally appointed acting headteacher and in the two years since her appointment she has moved the school on apace. Her commitment and determination to improving every aspect of the school's work and to involve all staff and governors in doing so have resulted in a much-improved learning environment and better standards of work and behaviour. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The senior management team consists of the head and the deputy who, until recently, had no whole school responsibilities. As a result, the head is working hard to develop the skills and whole school overview needed in a deputy to enable him to provide the effective support that she needs in her drive to move the school forward. The deputy's role in school management and development is still evolving and is not yet as effective as it could be. In 1999, the head created a tier of middle management consisting of the Early Years co-ordinator and two key stage co-ordinators, all of whom have clear job descriptions outlining their roles and responsibilities in the school. The Early Years co-ordinator is very effective in her role. The very good systems that were already in place to promote the education of young children have been adapted very well to take on board the recent national changes to

the provision in nursery and reception classes and the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals for five-year-olds. The two key stage co-ordinators, one for the 5 to 7 age range (Key Stage 1) and one for the 7 to 11 age range (Key Stage 2), have not yet worked out how best to operate to support the school's drive to raise standards.

54. The role of the curriculum co-ordinator has improved considerably since the previous inspection. All co-ordinators now have designated non-contact time in which they check teachers' planning to make sure it matches the agreed schemes of work. They sample pupils' work, give advice and support to teachers, and some co-ordinators, for example, the literacy, numeracy, music and physical education co-ordinators, have been able to check teaching and support teachers in the classroom. All co-ordinators have attended relevant courses to enhance their subject knowledge and their subject leadership expertise. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and most have a clear view of what needs to be improved. Co-ordinators meet with the headteacher once each term to review developments in their subjects and to report on pupils' standards and levels of achievement. This is proving effective in developing their role and is having a positive impact on the quality of education in the school.
55. The headteacher regularly monitors teaching and is supported in this from time to time by the Local Education Authority adviser. Verbal and written feedback is given to teachers and clear targets are set for them to work on to improve their teaching. There is clear evidence in the written outcomes of the monitoring that in most cases, teaching is improving. In February 1998 when it began, many of the targets were to do with basic classroom management skills and while such targets still appear in some of the more recent monitoring, most have moved on to more focused targets to do with the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Teachers' performance is evaluated well and, from inspection findings, very accurately, showing that the head has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers and sets effective targets to bring about improvement. Staff development reviews take place regularly and provide yet another way of checking on teachers' performance against their targets throughout the year.
56. The governing body meets all statutory responsibilities and is very supportive of the headteacher. Governors have a good grasp of the issues facing the school and acknowledge how well the head has raised their expectations of what can be achieved. They are fully involved in school improvement planning. Each governor is linked to a class in the school and visits the class to get to know the pupils and the teacher. Governors monitor the work of the school through classroom visits and the reports of the different governing body committees presented at full governing body meetings. They ask for, and receive, good quality feedback from the headteacher on all areas of the school's work. The governor with responsibility for literacy and special educational needs (SEN) provides valuable support in the classroom on a daily basis that contributes to pupils' learning and achievement. Other governors are also involved in supporting pupils' work in the classroom. Governors have attended performance management training and the policy for this is to be approved at this term's governing body meeting. Governors set targets for the headteacher last year and are looking forward to reviewing them later this term as part of the new statutory arrangements.
57. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) took up her appointment at the beginning of this school year. She brings with her considerable expertise in the field of SEN. Several improvements have already been made to the school's systems and procedures to make them more manageable for teachers. For example, the re-organisation of the information in the SEN files makes them more easily accessible for teachers and reviews of the targets set in pupils' individual education plans are to be carried out more frequently. The funding for SEN is carefully managed. The money allocated for pupils with statements is used effectively to provide support to meet the provision required in the statements. The school adds to this by providing extra support in the classroom for pupils with SEN and, because there was no SENCO for a full year, to purchase additional external support to help assess pupils who were giving cause for concern. The SENCO has so far made good use of the non-contact time allocated to her to review the systems in place and to visit all classes to get to know the pupils involved. She has a clear plan of action to improve the systems further.
58. Staffing is adequate. The governing body made a conscious decision to increase the number of hours that support staff work to more than would be expected in a school of this size. Pupils benefit from the greater amount of adult contact they have and as a result they achieve better. All staff are well deployed to make the best use of their experience and expertise. The increase in the number of pupils attending the school together with teachers taking retirement have enabled the school to appoint new staff and for the first time to

have separate classes for each year group. There is good support for staff new to the school but the increase in pupil numbers has put strain on the accommodation. The school has overcome this in the short term by renting the parish room from the church and refurbishing it as a classroom. This, and the re-organisation and refurbishment of other areas in the school, has led to good use of all available space. However, the two libraries are still not well used, one being in a classroom and the other being used regularly for additional literacy support groups. The restricted use of the library was also commented upon in the previous inspection. While the quality of display is satisfactory throughout the school, there is not enough pupils' work to raise self esteem, to act as a stimulus for other pupils or to generate discussion about pupils' different approaches to their work. The exception is the Year 6 classroom, where examples of pupils' writing are displayed for others to see and the Year 2 classroom where there are imaginative displays of pupils' textiles and artwork. Resources are satisfactory for most subjects and are mostly well used. However, even with the recent purchase of new computers, there is not enough information and communication technology equipment to enable all pupils to have regular and frequent access to ICT as an integral part of their learning in the subject itself or in other subjects. In design and technology, there is an insufficient quantity of good quality resources for pupils to use.

59. As at the last inspection, financial control and management are good. Day to day routines are well established and minor issues raised in the most recent audit report have been satisfactorily addressed. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately and accounted for satisfactorily, for example, the Standards Fund Grant and money from the National Grid for Learning. Governors are beginning to check more thoroughly on the effect that spending has on the standards that the school achieves. The governors and headteacher have a good understanding of the principles of best value. They apply these well in the decisions they make about spending, staffing and the quality of provision. They are now comparing the school with other schools, challenging themselves to do better and are becoming more aware of how the school is perceived in the community through, for example, questionnaires to parents. They have set challenging targets for English, mathematics and science and are taking effective action to attain them. A remaining area of weakness is that because of the shortage of resources, the school is not yet making the best use of new technology in all of its work. However, the school is beginning to demonstrate that it is committed to improving all aspects of its work and has the capacity to do so.
60. As at the last inspection, there is high quality provision in the nursery and now also in the reception class. However, considering the strengths and weaknesses in the rest of the school, overall, it is giving satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to raise standards further and to provide a higher quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- i) Improve standards in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school by:
 - finding ways of increasing the level of hardware and software resources so that more pupils can have frequent and regular access to the computers to support their learning
 - providing the training necessary to improve teachers' expertise in ICT
 - planning how ICT is to be explicitly used in all other subjects as required by the revised National Curriculum for 2000 and checking that this is happening.

(Paragraphs: 9, 19, 25, 34, 45, 58, 80, 89, 97, 100, 102, 105, 110, 111 – 114, 115, 117)
- ii) Check that the extra time allocated to writing is being used effectively to improve standards in all classes and show in the planning for all subjects how literacy skills, including writing, are to be successfully promoted.

(Paragraphs: 2, 6, 22, 23, 27, 74, 78, 111)
- iii) Adopt a consistent approach to how the National Numeracy Strategy is to be used in order to raise standards in mathematics and show in the planning for other subjects how numeracy skills are to be successfully promoted in them.

(Paragraphs: 1, 2, 7, 23, 28, 65, 84, 91)
- iv) Further improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes in all classes by:
 - rigorously checking that all teachers are effectively implementing the school's behaviour and discipline policy;
 - providing opportunities for teachers who still show weaknesses in behaviour management to observe how more effective teachers manage pupils' behaviour and foster good attitudes to learning.

(Paragraphs: 12, 15, 21, 22, 37, 42, 43, 46, 88, 95, 108, 116, 119)
- v) In order to improve pupils' progress and their achievement, make more effective use of the marking policy and of the individual targets now in place for all pupils by:
 - ensuring that targets are written in straightforward language, that pupils are constantly reminded of them and that they are clear about how well they are progressing towards them;
 - checking that all teachers use the targets regularly when assessing and marking pupils' work and recording their progress;
 - checking that all teachers are implementing the school's good marking policy so that pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further.

(Paragraphs: 11, 24, 45, 48, 90)
- vi) Build on the good examples seen in the early years and in Year 6 to provide more opportunities for pupils in the rest of the school to become more responsible for their learning and for themselves. Also, prepare them better for life beyond the school by teaching them about the rich and culturally diverse Britain in which they live. Check that all of these areas are being given sufficient attention throughout the school and in all subjects.

(Paragraphs: 37, 38, 39, 49, 80, 98, 115)

All issues identified above are already included in the school improvement plan.

In addition to the above, governors should consider including the following more minor issues in their action plan – paragraph numbers are given in brackets:

The amount of taught time in the 7 to 11 age group (25); consistency in the provision of homework (24, 47, 90); provision for extra-curricular activities (30, 46, 120)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	29	44	10	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	179
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	34

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		39

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	13	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	24	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (91)	79 (96)	82 (96)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	11	11	8
	Total	22	23	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (92)	82 (92)	71 (96)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	8	16	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	11	10	13
	Total	16	15	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (48)	63 (44)	79 (72)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	6	6
	Girls	10	9	8
	Total	15	15	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (64)	63 (68)	58 (68)
	National	68 (63)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	6
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	144
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	22.4
Average class size	25.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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Total income	355161
Total expenditure	368841
Expenditure per pupil	2096
Balance brought forward from previous year	14143
Balance carried forward to next year	11643

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 34.7%

Number of questionnaires sent out	190
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	27	3	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	55	35	2	0	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	52	6	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	48	8	2	6
The teaching is good.	68	24	2	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	36	14	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	21	5	2	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	21	3	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	55	27	15	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	59	35	0	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	48	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	47	12	8	17

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

62. The provision for children in the nursery and reception class is very good. Most children attend the nursery for one full year and move into reception class in the September preceding their fifth birthday. With the introduction of the new Foundation Stage of Learning, the nursery and reception class teachers and support staff are united in ensuring that the curriculum is appropriate to the age of the children and matches the levels of ability. Teaching for pupils aged 3 to 5 is very good. They achieve very well and their attainment is satisfactory.
63. During the first six weeks of entry to the reception class a nationally approved assessment programme takes place. The results of the tests indicate that the attainment of the majority of children is below the expectation for their age. Attainment on entry to reception has declined over the last three years. This is clearly shown in the school's records of the results of baseline assessments. Although the majority achieve very well and attain at least satisfactory standards at the end of their year in the nursery, a significant minority do not continue into the reception class. This is because the children who attend the nursery come from a much wider area of Chorley, including its outlying districts, than the school's own catchment area. These children leave the nursery to attend schools nearer to their own homes. At the end of the reception year as pupils prepare for entry to Year 1, the test is repeated. The 1999 results indicate that by the age of 5, 82 per cent of the children attained standards at or beyond the expectation for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make very good progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children make good progress in this area of learning. The good induction process and very effective teaching ensure that children quickly settle into the routines of the nursery and reception classes. In both classes teaching and support staff regularly reinforce good behaviour and children respond accordingly. During this, the first half-term of a new school year, staff in each class are already encouraging children to make choices and increase their level of independence. The attitude of the children to their work is very good. They are very interested, highly motivated and can sustain concentration in order to carry an activity through from start to finish. The organisation of the day enables pupils to initiate some of their own work. Children in both classes can access equipment and materials independently. They handle resources with care and discussions with them demonstrate that they know and understand why this is important. Their social skills develop well and when working with other children, for example, in the sand or water, they can take turns and share equipment. In the nursery, children are successfully introduced to the need to converse quietly with each other and there is a calm and purposeful working atmosphere.

Communication, language and literacy

65. Language and literacy receives high priority for children aged 3 to 5. Teaching is very good and standards are satisfactory. The majority of children achieve very well in the nursery and continue to achieve well in the reception class. In both classes, the children speak with growing self-confidence. The interest and encouragement displayed by nursery staff encourages the children to retell their weekend experiences to the collected group. In the reception class children have sufficient confidence to retell aloud and with expression the story of The Three Bears. Children aged from 3 to 5 show great interest in books and they listen attentively to stories. In the nursery children learn to share books, talk about pictures and know that print carries meaning. They are taught to handle books carefully and the weekly library session when parents and children choose books together to take home is very popular. In the reception class children participate as a whole class in the shared text and phonic sections of the National Literacy Strategy, planned appropriately for the reception age. Higher attaining children in the reception class are beginning to recognise the key words in the school's reading scheme and can read a book saying most of the words correctly. Other children are able to tell a story accurately and in their own words using pictures. They know how to handle a book correctly and that they follow the text from left to right. The reception teacher uses imaginative methods to teach and reinforce initial sounds and children work with enormous enthusiasm during these sessions. In the reception class a variety of activities are provided to reinforce the learning objectives and

children work at these at their own pace and level. Teaching and support staff involve children in group activities such as sound matching games to extend children's learning. Both the nursery and reception classes provide opportunities for children to write independently on a daily basis. Writing areas are provided and these contain a variety of papers, invitations and writing materials. Not all reception children can yet write their names. Mark making and initial sounds illustrate the emerging writing skills. However, in both classes there are few opportunities for children to practise their writing skills through other areas of learning.

Mathematical development

66. Through the range of mathematical experiences provided and the very good teaching they receive, children achieve very well and reach satisfactory standards. Strategies to reinforce counting are effectively used in the nursery where items in the red shop are clearly marked with a number of spots and children pay with the equivalent number of counters. Most children can sort by the colours red, blue and yellow and can say which set has the most and which has the least. In the reception class children experience the mental calculation and whole class work of the National Numeracy Strategy appropriate to the reception age. The teacher skilfully uses rhymes and resources to add interest to the mathematical activities. Children are very keen to answer and sustain their concentration throughout. Children can count aloud to 10 and can accurately count the number of, for example, yellow balls even though they are interspersed across a cane. Most can recognise the numbers 1 to 5 in the written form. The teacher uses a very expressive voice to introduce the mathematical terms 'compare', 'longer' and 'shorter'. In the practical activity the majority of children can order two items by length and this is further reflected in the group tasks carried out by the teacher and nursery nurse. In the reception class there are few opportunities for children to extend their numeracy skills through other areas of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Achievement is very good in knowledge and understanding of the world and standards are satisfactory. The quality of teaching is very good. Children in the nursery are excited by baking buns and proudly take their finished products home. In the reception class children can talk about seeds inside fruit. They plant bulbs for Christmas excited by the knowledge that the bulbs will grow and produce flowers. Local seasonal walks, traffic surveys and visits to, for example, a farm, local businesses, Blackpool, the Sea Life Centre and Manchester Airport and a very wide range of visitors extends and enhances the children's knowledge of their own and the wider environment, and begins to build their scientific and geographical knowledge and understanding. In both classes, children can select and use materials. Some children in the nursery are at the early stages of acquiring scissors control but by the time children are in the reception class they confidently cut and stick for a variety of purposes and require little supervision. The nursery has recently acquired a computer that some children use but most are drawn to other areas of provision. In the reception class some pupils skilfully manipulate the mouse as they select from a computer program the game that they want to play. Higher attaining pupils with well-developed skills in this area are keen to assist less confident children in their class.

Creative development

68. The children achieve well in this area also. Again, standards are satisfactory and teaching is very good. Children learn to explore colour, to sing and to play simple musical instruments. The activities are often related to speaking and listening and mathematics as, for example, children make red patterns using different shapes while they explore different materials such as foil, crepe paper, tissue paper and card, and describe how the materials feel. The organisation of creative activities is particularly good because it provides structure as well as opportunities for children to work at their own pace and follow their own interests. In the nursery the staff model the activity for children, setting them a good example of how to organise and carry it out. Children respond well to this and learn to work independently. This good practice means that by the time the children are in the reception class, they can carry out creative tasks with little adult supervision. In the nursery children's work is very well displayed and this reinforces the expectations that children will take care and pride in their achievements.

Physical development

69. During the inspection week very bad weather restricted outdoor play. However, the one session observed demonstrated that children in the nursery have regular access to a range of well-planned outdoor activities. Very good adult intervention ensures that children use the equipment correctly. Staff boost the confidence of the more reluctant children by helping them to climb ladder rungs safely. Safety mats are placed appropriately around the equipment. Language and literacy and numeracy skills are developed through use of vocabulary such as 'in', 'out', 'over', 'under', 'higher' and 'lower'. Personal and social development is well promoted in physical development activities. In both classes children are provided with sufficient space to play with large and small equipment. They are imaginative in their constructions and enjoy adult participation in the activities. The reception class does not have its own outdoor enclosed area and has access to the nursery outdoor area only once per week. However, it does have regular, timetabled access to the school hall for physical education and overall, pupils in the 3 to 5 age range achieve appropriately in this area of learning.

Teaching and curriculum

70. Teaching is very good in the 3 to 5 age range. The curriculum is thoroughly planned ensuring access to the six areas of learning on a daily basis. Detailed daily plans include evaluation and are annotated to show where more repetition is required. Children's progress and their achievement are both methodically assessed according to the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals and portfolios of work are established in the nursery. The commitment of and the very good teamwork between the teachers and support staff result in high expectations of the children's work and behaviour. All adults work hard to ensure that the children achieve what is expected of them. They know the children very well and very good relationships are evident between staff and between staff and children. Nursery provision continues to be very good. The strengthened teamwork between nursery and reception staff, brought about by the recent national changes in the curriculum for children aged 3 to 5, is also improving the good provision in the reception class.
71. Induction procedures to both the nursery and reception classes are very good. Parents and children receive good information, staff undertake home visits and parents are invited to spend time in the classes prior to their children starting in the September. The school is very committed to involving parents in their child's education from an early age. A well-attended six week playing and learning course for parents, managed by the co-ordinator for Early Years, informs parents about how young children learn. The Storysacks workshops for parents that are organised by the nursery nurses are also popular and well attended and involve parents very effectively in their children's learning.
72. Management of the Early Years is very good. The co-ordinator has very clear ideas of how to improve teaching and provision. Her very effective work has ensured that the nursery and reception staff have prepared well for, and have fully embraced the new national initiatives for children aged 3 to 5. The action plan is specific and correctly identifies as an area for further development, the necessity to ensure that pupils' learning is continuous and progressive as they move from the nursery into reception and then into Year 1. The quality and quantity of resources, good overall, are better in the nursery than in the reception class.

ENGLISH

73. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum English tests for pupils aged 11 were below the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was well below the national average. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for English show that while the percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels has fallen by 7 percentage points, the percentage reaching the higher level has risen by 13 percentage points. Attainment in English has improved since the last inspection, mainly due to the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. **The standards seen in the work of the majority of pupils in the current Year 6 class are in line with the national expectation for pupils of this age and their achievement is satisfactory.**
74. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for pupils aged 7 were below the national average in reading and well below the national average in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in reading and writing was also well below the national average. The reading results were in line with those found in similar schools and the writing results were below those of similar schools. Although standards have improved in

reading and writing since the last inspection, the improvements between 1996 and 1998 have been followed by a decline between 1998 and 1999. The school attributes this to the documented fall in the attainment of pupils on entry to the reception class and to variations in the quality of teaching in Year 2, documented in the written evaluation of teaching up to July 2000. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level in reading has declined further in 2000, although the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in the tests has increased from 14 to 20 per cent. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels in the 2000 tests is similar to that seen in 1999, and as in 1999, no pupil reached the higher level. **For the majority of pupils now in Year 2, standards in reading are in line with the national expectation for pupils of this age but standards in writing are below the national expectation. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.**

75. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. The targets in the individual education plans for pupils with SEN are usually clear and measurable and the pupils receive good support from teachers and support staff, both internal and external.
76. Achievement in speaking and listening in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 are keen to contribute to discussion and speak out more confidently when the teacher supports them. When identifying how they will improve a moving picture they are making in design and technology, some pupils can explain themselves clearly. Pupils listen to each other, share information and await their turn to speak without interrupting. As pupils move into Year 2 some have the confidence to read out a piece of work in an assembly. During the literacy hour pupils in this class listen attentively to the shared text work and are keen to answer questions. Most pupils in Years 3 to 5 remain interested and listen constructively during lessons but there is a significant minority who have poor listening skills and are easily distracted. This is most evident in lessons that are not well structured or when pupils are expected to work independently. When teaching is good and enthusiastic, as in a history lesson, the attention of the pupils is held and they are keen to participate by reading dialogue aloud with expression. Their efforts to contribute to questioning are much improved. The development of speaking and listening skills is much improved in Year 6 when pupils have regular timetabled opportunities to deliver a presentation to their peers and respond to questions. Year 6 pupils understand that increased confidence is a useful tool when preparing for secondary education. One pupil delivered a satisfactory presentation on her hobby using resources to illustrate the points. Circle time within the personal and social education programme is also used effectively to encourage pupils to speak out clearly and listen respectfully to each other. Pupils use their speaking and listening skills appropriately in other subjects.
77. Pupils' achievement in reading is satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils readily participate in shared reading and guided group reading sessions. They learn to enjoy reading and experience an appropriate range of texts, carefully selected by their teachers to be both interesting to the pupils and suited to developing reading and writing skills. During the literacy hour, most pupils in the 5 to 7 age range are attentive, enjoy reading and are keen to improve their skills. However, the amount of reading actually done by individual pupils varies and for some pupils, the text chosen for guided reading sessions is inappropriate. In some sessions, the focus on comprehension skills means that pupils who require teacher support do not achieve as well as they could because reading skills and strategies are not taught sufficiently well. Teachers also listen to pupils read independently and here, good emphasis is placed on the learning of key vocabulary and on the acquisition of phonic skills. Parents are encouraged to listen to their children read at home and home/school reading diaries are in place. Teachers in this age range do not use these diaries sufficiently well to provide information for parents about the skills their child needs to practise. When reading aloud independently, higher attaining pupils read with confidence and fluency. They discuss the plot and characters and make a sensible prediction of what will happen next in the story. Lower attaining pupils are hesitant and discuss the text in simple terms. Most pupils use either pictures or phonics to decode unknown words. The majority of pupils like to choose library books and look forward to taking these books home after half-term. Pupils aged 7 to 11 continue to express interest in reading. Improvements in the quality of their reading are more apparent when teachers first demonstrate good standards of fluency, pace and expression. This is evident in Year 4 and Year 6 when the pupils follow the good examples set by their teachers. In these classes the guided reading sessions are used well to improve pupils' reading skills. By the time pupils reach Year 5 most have acquired the confidence to read aloud during whole class sessions. Older pupils in Year 6 are provided with challenging texts and can deduce information. Most Year 6 pupils have a sound understanding of the different styles of written language and respond accordingly when reading aloud. The newly introduced reading diary is not yet consistently used across the older age range. Records of pupils'

progress in reading are maintained as a record of progress through the reading scheme and there is little evidence of pupils' acquisition of reading skills. During the inspection no pupils were observed using research and retrieval skills. However, discussions with Year 6 pupils reveal that they know and understand how to find and select information. Throughout the school, there are few opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other subjects.

78. Standards in writing are unsatisfactory and only in Year 6 are standards close to the expectation for pupils' ages. Throughout the school pupils write on a daily basis during the independent section of the literacy hour but in many classes pupils find it difficult to work without adult support and a significant number of pupils find it very difficult to sustain concentration. They talk constantly and seem satisfied with a little amount of writing, which is not always of good quality or well presented. In some lessons, the task provided for pupils with special educational needs is too difficult and pupils make little progress in the acquisition of English skills. Pupils are taught to spell from an early age and spelling development is sound. Punctuation is restricted and not always accurate and pupils are not confident in their use of it. The school has timetabled on a weekly basis a period for extended writing outside of the literacy hour. Apart from Year 6, there is insufficient evidence that pupils are covering a range of different writing formats or suitably challenging writing activities. Pupils in Year 3 are simply reporting weekend news. In Year 5 most pupils are unable to write for a sustained length of time. They need persuading by the teacher to set to work and most do not complete the exercises set by the end of the session. Many pupils use an immature style. They write simple sentences and their choice of vocabulary, including use of adjectives and adverbs, is limited. By contrast, in Year 6 there is evidence of a wide range of writing including, for example, well presented autobiographies and biographies and there is greater indication that English skills are being used across the curriculum, for example, in Harvest prayers. Pupils in this class talk confidently about different styles and are able to explain the word of the week. As part of the action being taken to raise standards, teachers are providing appropriate support strategies to improve writing, such as lists of key words, good ideas for starting stories and how to use grammar correctly. However, discussions with pupils reveal that some do not know how to use the strategies correctly and during the inspection few pupils were observed using them. In the Year 1 class, there is no evidence of pupils' writing on display. Pupils in Year 3 are keen to use the 'Pirate Adventures' writing area and display more enthusiasm for writing when busy in this area than at other times. The presentation of writing is inconsistent across the school but is good at Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 regularly practise handwriting and some pupils in Year 2 are developing a fluent and legible handwriting style with letters that are well formed. They take pride in their work and their books are neat and well presented. The school has recently changed the style of handwriting taught and the new style is not yet evident throughout the school. In the 7 to 11 age range there is a confusion of handwriting styles. Some pupils are printing and others are using a joined script; some write in pencil and others in pen. When writing on whiteboards and in pupils' books teachers do not always provide a suitable model for pupils to emulate. Many opportunities are missed to consolidate or extend pupils' writing skills in other subjects.
79. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school but is better when teachers follow the structured framework of the National Literacy Strategy. Where they do this, the pace of the lesson is good, their expectations of what the pupils can achieve are higher and consequently learning is better. Planning is satisfactory. It takes good account of the strategy and learning objectives are very specific. These are regularly shared with pupils at the start of the lesson. With the exception of Year 6, marking is not sufficiently well used to tell pupils how to improve their work. Most pupils are interested in their work. In all classes there is a small group of pupils who need firm and constant encouragement and focused support to make satisfactory progress and stop them interfering with the learning of others in the class.
80. The school has made satisfactory progress in the development of English since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator for English has recently joined the school and has already begun to influence practice. She has introduced a short term planning format and guided reading/writing sheets that have been adopted throughout the school. The co-ordinator has monitored the quality of literacy display in order to support staff in working towards a literacy rich environment. The development of English is a continued priority within the school improvement plan. The subject has been rigorously audited by the headteacher and areas for action by both the headteacher and co-ordinator have been identified. The literacy governor is committed to the drive to raise standards and each week she assists throughout the school during literacy lessons. The school is determined to improve standards in writing by providing a much wider and more effective range of opportunities for pupils to engage in shared writing and in guided writing. In-service training is planned for teachers on these aspects of writing and how to teach it effectively. Insufficient use is made of information

and communication technology to improve pupils' reading, writing and research skills. English makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, opportunities are missed to promote social development because pupils are not consistently taught how best to organise their own work, to learn for themselves and to co-operate and collaborate with others in different groupings.

81. Resources are satisfactory. However, in all classes, reading areas are underdeveloped and do not entice pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure and interest. The school libraries are small and the library for the younger pupils is situated in a classroom, causing some problems with access. The library for the older pupils is not sufficiently resourced or organised to make it a valuable learning resource and is often used as a teaching area, again limiting its use for the furtherance of reading and library skills. Improvements to the organisation of the library are identified within the school improvement plan for English.

MATHEMATICS

82. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in mathematics for pupils aged 11 were well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was well below the national average. In 1996 and 1997 pupils' performance was above the national average but fell well below in 1998 and 1999, representing a decline in attainment since the previous inspection. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Although national figures are not yet available for comparison this year, pupils' results in the 2000 tests show a further decline of 18 percentage points at the expected level but a rise of 18 percentage points at the higher level. **The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is in line with the national expectation and their achievement is satisfactory.**
83. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for pupils aged 7 were below the national average but in line with the average for similar schools. The trend from 1996 to 1999 indicates a sharp increase in attainment in 1997 that led to the pupils' performance being above the national average but since that time attainment has declined to below the national average. Although national figures are not available for 2000 the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was lower than in 1999. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was in line with national average in 1999 but this percentage too, has declined in 2000, from 21 per cent to 12 per cent. As in English, the school attributes this in part to the documented decline in attainment on entry over the last three years and in part to the variable quality of teaching in the Year 2 class evident in the written monitoring of teaching between February 1998 and July 2000. In 1999 boys aged 7 were close to the national average but girls were well below it. However, no significant differences were noted during the inspection. **The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 is in line with the national expectation and their achievement is satisfactory.**
84. Since the last inspection the school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this has brought about some improvement in the provision for mathematics. However, whilst the basic structure and format of the numeracy lesson has been adopted there is a lack of consistency in its application. For example, the mental mathematics sessions that are recommended for the beginning of each lesson are not yet an integral part of every lesson. There is also a tendency to emphasise traditional methods in the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and pupils are unable to benefit from an understanding of different approaches. Teachers miss opportunities to ask pupils how they reach an answer and therefore pupils do not have the opportunity to share alternative methods and learn from each other. As identified in the previous inspection there is still a tendency for the emphasis to be on giving the correct answer rather than on explaining the method used. There is little investigative mathematics and problem solving is limited. These factors also contribute to the lower attainment in mathematics.
85. A weakness identified in the previous inspection was the over reliance on a commercial scheme but this has been improved by more direct teaching and the acquisition of a new scheme that is being used with greater discretion. Resources have been increased following an audit of the subject and the governing body has shown support in its allocation of funding. The governing body has appointed a governor for numeracy and he is aware of the need to increase his involvement in the school and be able to offer help to the staff. The co-ordinator keeps the governor informed of issues relating to mathematics on an informal basis.
86. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are reaching the expected standards for their age because the work they are given to do builds effectively on the very good experiences they have in their nursery and reception years. In Year 1

pupils become confident in dealing with numbers to 20. Effective mental mathematics sessions enable them to understand the sequence of numbers and they can count forwards and back from any starting point. In Year 2 pupils are able to sequence numbers to 100 and can identify smaller and larger values. They are increasingly able to read the words of numbers to a hundred and to relate them in digital form. They are less secure in recognising number patterns. Pupils are familiar with the properties of three-dimensional shapes. They identify them accurately and can discuss attributes such as faces, edges and base shapes. Good teaching reinforces mathematical vocabulary. The teacher is aware of the knowledge of individual pupils and asks direct and specific questions to assess their learning in a tactful and sensitive manner.

87. By the age of 11 pupils are able to work with numbers to a thousand and to carry out addition, subtraction, some multiplication and division. They do not have instant recall of multiplication tables and generally use traditional methods to operate numbers. Pupils aged between 7 and 11 do not have sufficient experience of partitioning or alternative methods of division. They are not asked their methods of calculation and are not challenged to find alternative ways of reaching an answer. When teachers have clear objectives to the lesson, such as understanding the difference between mean, mode, range and median, achievements can be good. Where objectives are not appropriate, such as writing analogue and digital time when not all pupils can tell the time, achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils' achievements improve in Years 5 and 6 where the pace of the lesson is fast and the range of activities is varied to maintain interest and motivation.
88. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The quality of teaching seen in lessons during the inspection was very good in Years 1 and 2 but evidence from pupils' previous work shows that over time, teaching is satisfactory. The quality of teaching varies from good to unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In Year 1, pupils' learning is moved on apace as they count from one to twenty and learn the patterns of shapes. This fosters an enjoyment of mathematics and helps them to gain confidence in number work. Teaching is better in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4 because in the top two classes, expectations of pupils' work rate and behaviour are high but tasks are within their capabilities. In these lessons pupils quickly revise earlier learning, such as multiples of 8 and mathematical definitions, and move on to related activities such as fractions and data handling using discrete data. When teaching is most effective, teachers demonstrate a good understanding of the subject and provide challenging work for all groups of pupils. Consequently pupils are well motivated and they achieve well. Teachers' introductions at the beginning of a lesson are usually clear and encourage mathematical understanding. In all lessons, objectives are shared with the pupils and, on occasions referred to at the end of the lesson to ascertain whether they have been met. This practice provides a focus for the pupils who are then clear about what is expected of them. This is particularly evident in Years 1 and 2 where explanations involve good questioning techniques to move forward pupils' thinking and understanding. In Year 5, a good introduction involving improper fractions enables pupils to convert them to mixed numbers with confidence by the end of the lesson. In Years 3 and 4, weaknesses in teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and in the management of their behaviour, leads to unsatisfactory intellectual effort, insufficient productivity and pace of working and a loss of interest and concentration. In such lessons, the clear lesson objectives are not met and pupils' attainment and achievement are unsatisfactory.
89. Different groups of pupils are appropriately catered for with different activities and pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are well supported by the non-teaching support staff. These members of staff have good relations with the pupils with whom they work and are able to offer appropriate help and advice with sensitivity while enabling the pupils to maintain some independence. SEN support is particularly good in Year 6 where pupils with SEN are required to use information and communication technology (ICT) to convert data into graph form with a non-teaching member of staff present to supervise. More able pupils are able to interpret data from a textbook and then move to an extension task by predicting probability and devising their own record of the data. ICT is not well used in mathematics and there is a lack of software appropriate to pupils' needs.
90. There is a range of satisfactory resources within the school and central storage is appropriately placed and well organised. Marking is often not focused enough and does not make points for improvement. Individual targets are set for each child on a termly basis. However, these targets are not readily available to pupils and in some, the language is too complicated to be effective in helping pupils and parents understand what is to be achieved. Homework is limited and does not always relate to class work. In Year 6 appropriate work sheets ensure reinforcement of class learning. In other year groups of older pupils, homework is often minimal and undemanding. Homework does not require parents' participation or involvement for completion and frequently does not reinforce or challenge learning.

91. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress over time are sound. The school has recently established a system of testing pupils aged 7 to 11 at the end of each year and then analysing the test results. The results have been used appropriately to identify areas where further work is required and a sound action plan has been drawn up to bring about improvement. Action includes staff training, links with the Basic Skills Agency and the involvement of the Local Education Authority to give intensive support to the school. The co-ordinator's leadership and management of the subject, under the clear direction of the headteacher, are satisfactory. The headteacher is checking the teaching and development of mathematics by observing lessons, monitoring planning and working with the co-ordinator on analysing test results. However, this is not yet having the desired effect of improving teaching and raising standards throughout the school. In addition, the school has not yet adopted a planned approach to how pupils' numeracy skills can be applied, extended or reinforced in other subjects.

SCIENCE

92. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 were close to the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the percentage reaching the expected levels was above average. The percentage of pupils attaining both the expected level and the higher level has remained similar in 2000. Science results have declined over the last three years and since the previous inspection. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. **The standards seen in the work of pupils currently in Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally and their achievement is satisfactory.**
93. Teacher assessments in 1999 place pupils' performance at the age of 7 below the national average for all schools and well below the average for similar schools. In this age group, there has been a considerable decline in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in science in 2000 and as in 1999, no pupil reached the higher level. The previous inspection noted that no child did particularly well in the subject at the age of 7 and this remains the case. However, **the standards seen in the work of the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 is in line with the national expectation for their age and their achievement is satisfactory.**
94. In Year 1, they can describe how they have changed since they were babies but their recording strategies are weak even when the required method is drawing. However, by the age of 7 pupils are able to identify the properties of materials and can use their senses of sight and touch to recognise similarities and differences. They are able to group materials according to their roughness, shine and transparency and know that materials can have more than one property. They can categorise and name common materials such as cloth, wood and plastic and their work is well displayed within the classroom. Pupils in Year 3 can offer sensible suggestions as to how they might investigate which materials will let light pass through and which will not and therefore cast a shadow. They learn appropriate vocabulary such as transparent, opaque and translucent and use them to describe the properties of the material. Because the teacher constantly reminds them, they record their findings accurately in grid form, showing that they know the process of predicting, investigating and recording the findings. Pupils in Year 5 understand the requirements of a fair test and some are able to identify aspects that can be varied. However, the majority of pupils are unable to record how to conduct a fair test without a substantial amount of support from the class teacher and the pupils' capacity for independent learning is not sufficiently developed. Year 5 pupils are able to explain the effects of gravity and know that objects are pulled down because of gravitational attraction. They can explain air resistance and understand that friction slows things down. In Year 6 pupils can explain that micro-organisms are living organisms and that hygiene is important for people, as some micro-organisms are harmful. They are able to display their findings in a range of appropriate and interesting ways that indicate increased independence.
95. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. One example of very good teaching was seen in Year 3. Teaching has less impact on pupils' learning when noise levels are high and pupils' restlessness remains unchecked. When pupils are managed well they show interest in the tasks set and are motivated and enthusiastic. In Year 2, those tasks meet the needs of all pupils and pupils with special educational needs are well supported by non-teaching staff and volunteer helpers. However, higher attaining pupils demonstrate their capabilities in methods of recording rather than in using better developed science skills because their learning is not extended by participating in additional or more complex investigations. Pupils' recording of their knowledge at this age is good and is well presented. Where teaching is very good pupils are well

motivated and able to make sensible predictions based on prior knowledge. Effective questioning techniques are used to extend pupils' learning and practical activities ensure the secure development of scientific understanding. However, in most lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils' independence and abilities are often too low, as when they provide a limited range of equipment from which pupils have to choose or information is too readily available and does not give pupils enough opportunities to investigate for themselves. In the 7 to 11 age group, higher attaining pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to extend their learning through investigative work. The pace in lessons is often variable and the use of scientific vocabulary is sometimes limited. As at the last inspection, pupils' attitudes to the subject are variable and high noise levels and inattention affect learning. Teachers sometimes use undeserved praise and pupils ignore instructions and talk over the teacher who then tries to talk over them. Poor collaboration by some pupils in group situations occasionally impairs learning but the teacher usually deals this with promptly. Lessons with pace and good management of pupils, such as in Year 3 when pupils use torches to investigate shadows, have a higher level of impact on pupils' learning and understanding.

96. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate tasks and the support they receive from non-teaching staff is effective. Most teachers provide a range of methods of recording to meet pupils' different learning needs, but investigations are not always appropriate for more able pupils. This is evident, for example, in Year 4, when all pupils are given the same limited range of resources with which to carry out an investigation. This directs their thinking too much. It does not encourage them to think for themselves and limits the opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their learning further.
97. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Curricular planning is soundly based on the school's scheme of work and the headteacher ensures that planning is checked at all stages to confirm this. Procedures for monitoring the teaching of science are now satisfactory and the development of investigative skills has been identified in the subject action plan. The headteacher meets with the co-ordinator each term to check on the development of the subject and ensures that regular assessments of pupils' learning are carried out and analysed to inform future planning. This has led to the improvement in pupils' attainment as seen in the standards of work in the school. Information and communication technology is not yet used sufficiently in this subject.

ART

98. Pupils aged 7 and 11 attain satisfactory standards. By Year 6, their good understanding of the purpose and use of their sketchbooks enables them to practise different techniques prior to working on a completed piece of art. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 proudly show the sound progress they have made since they were in Year 3. They demonstrate a growing understanding of the use of different lines, how to mix and match different shades and tones of colour and to undertake shading with different kinds of pencils. Sketchbooks include observational drawings of trees, sketches of designs for Tudor jewellery, Celtic designs using autumn colours, portrait work and labelled designs for masks. Pupils in Year 6, working on the realisation of their mask designs, show that they have the necessary practical skills to turn the design into a reality, using balloons, papier-mache, paint and a range of collage materials to create the masks. Further examples of the sound development of sketchbook work into works of art are evident in the school's art portfolio. Pupils are also taught to use the correct art vocabulary relating to the stage they are at and the work they are doing, for example, related to pattern. In Year 2 they describe pattern by the types of line carried on from one repeat to the next using words such as 'swirly', 'curly', 'dotted', 'thick', 'thin'; in Year 3 they use the terms 'repeated pattern' and 'symmetry'; by Year 5 they talk about and use reflective symmetry in their repeats. Art makes a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, though many opportunities are missed to foster these areas and to develop an understanding of art in other cultures. Pupils use their numeracy skills and their speaking and listening skills appropriately in art but are not given enough opportunity to use their writing skills in this subject.
99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It has improved considerably since the previous inspection and in several lessons, good direct instruction helps pupils to improve their work and exercises their imagination and creativity. For example, in a lesson with Year 5 pupils, the teacher's good use of a viewfinder to observe closely the different sections of a William Morris pattern leads pupils to a greater understanding of how Morris created the repeats in his work and enables the pupils to use their own ideas to create similar patterns using different lines of symmetry. The pupils are highly motivated by this exercise and concentrate very well

on their work, sharing coloured pencils and helping each other to match the colours and shapes they see. In Year 2, however, the use of wax crayons to match the colours in Morris designs inhibits pupils' artistic development because they are not of a quality that will mix and match easily and cause pupils to become frustrated at having to choose a similar but different colour. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well in art lessons. Very good classroom and pupil management is evident in Year 6 where the teacher constantly reinforces good organisational skills and helps pupils to order their work, learn the need to follow a sequence in their activities and the importance of being well prepared and then tidying up after themselves. This contributes greatly to their learning and to their personal and social development.

100. Curricular planning has moved forward a long way since the last inspection. Leadership is sound and there is evidence of good improvement in the management and organisation of art. Planning for all areas of artistic activity is now sound and the co-ordinator knows what needs to be done next to move the subject on and to raise standards. She provides a range of good ideas and advice to teachers, checks their planning to make sure they are following the agreed scheme of work and samples pupils' work in class and on display. Teachers assess pupils' work as they move around, offering help and advice to individuals. However, the formal assessment of art is not yet in place. Some pieces of work the school's art portfolio are annotated to show which skills are best represented in them but there is insufficient guidance for teachers as to how to assess art. This is a key priority in the subject development plan to help teachers understand the levels required by the National Curriculum programme of study. Another priority is to increase the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in this subject. At present this is limited to two programs and little progression in the relevant ICT or art skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. During the inspection week only one lesson was observed in the 7 to 11 age range and there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards or the quality of teaching. In the lesson seen teaching was satisfactory. Discussion with pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 and the scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that pupils are given a satisfactory range of worthwhile experiences. They enjoy the subject and speak with enthusiasm about what they have done using the correct vocabulary for the subject. Year 1 pupils can accurately explain the terms sliders and levers and can discuss how they will improve their initial attempts at a moving picture. Last year visiting artists who designed and made puppets with pupils during a multicultural week enriched the pupils' learning experiences.
102. Since the previous inspection the school has placed an emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy and there has been little opportunity to develop design and technology further. The co-ordinator is committed to raising standards in the subject and a revised policy has recently been approved. In addition, she has organised a detailed draft scheme of work based upon the scheme devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This is to be implemented during this school year. The school has identified within the action plan for the subject, the need to evaluate and modify each unit of study upon completion. Resources for the subject are limited and the school intends to improve the quality and quantity as the new scheme develops during this year. There is no evidence of the use of information and communication technology in this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

103. Geography was a key issue for action in the previous inspection with a requirement to raise standards of attainment at age 11. This was to be done by improving teacher knowledge and expertise and ensuring that planning and teaching reflected schemes of work and provided continuity and progression in learning. Because of the organisation of the school timetable only two classes were studying geography at the time of this inspection. There is, therefore, insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards, teaching or improvement since the last inspection.
104. Since the last inspection, staff have received support from the Local Education Authority advisory service since the last inspection and scrutiny of planning shows that pupils are given a range of worthwhile activities. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory and pupils are able to talk with knowledge and enthusiasm about the local environment, which they have many opportunities to visit and study. Work on

Kenya in Year 4 has involved the use of photographs as sources of information and pupils in Year 4 are able to make appropriate deductions from these.

105. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has attended appropriate courses and meetings and meets termly with the headteacher to monitor the development of the subject. The co-ordinator has compiled a portfolio of pupils' work to help monitor pupils' progress and achievement and has worked alongside colleagues to monitor the implementation of the subject. There is an appropriate action plan in place to improve the subject. However, there is no evidence of the use of information and communication technology skills in geography.

HISTORY

106. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils aged 7 and 11. It was possible to see only one lesson in the 5 to 7 age range. The quality of teaching was good in that lesson. Judgements about standards at the age of 7 are based on the analysis of work in pupils' books and on discussion with them about their work. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the 7 to 11 age group, with some good history teaching in Years 5 and 6. History is taught alternately with geography and was the focus for the 7 to 11 age group during the inspection.
107. Careful preparation and a range of stimulating activities help pupils in the 5 to 7 age range to attain satisfactory standards. They can recount stories of famous people from the past and are becoming increasingly aware of how what those people did affects the present. For example, they understand that Florence Nightingale was not allowed to be a nurse and could only clean at first but that her persistence led to better conditions in hospitals in her own time that have an impact on the conditions found in hospitals nowadays. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They are able to record their findings in different ways, according to their levels of prior attainment and higher attaining pupils show a greater degree of independence than other pupils in their writing and presentation.
108. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 have good subject knowledge and are able to convey this to the pupils. Pupils in Year 5 have a good understanding of working life in Victorian times. A visit to the textile mill museum enhances their learning and leads to better understanding of conditions in local coalmines. Good use of primary sources enables pupils to check census materials and to read accounts of workers' lives. Pupils in Year 6 are able to name Greek gods and understand the importance of religious beliefs in the lives of Ancient Greeks. They are able to compare ancient and modern Olympic games and understand similarities and differences between then and now. Where teachers show enthusiasm for the subject pupils achieve well and are motivated. Where pupils are unsure about the task and time is not used well, as in a Year 3 lesson, they become noisy and disruptive, and the high levels of noise adversely affect their concentration and learning. Pupils in Year 3 are familiar with the importance of Sutton Hoo and can describe the working life of Anglo-Saxons.
109. Loans of artefacts from the museum service provide effective displays and are a good source of first-hand information. However, these loans are for very short periods of time and the school does not have sufficient artefacts of its own to enable pupils to study and learn from them throughout the length of a unit. Pupils' sense of chronology is weak and they are unable to place periods being studied alongside other important periods of time. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment show interest in the subject and the majority of teachers provide work at appropriate levels for them. When support staff are available they encourage and advise pupils with special educational needs and are able discreetly to clarify points made by the teacher. Average and higher attaining pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills of historical enquiry by, for example, conducting their own research or making informed judgements about a range of historical information and evidence. Too often, the follow up activity to the teacher input is a comprehension task rather than a task that promotes historical skills. Pupils use a range of appropriate recording methods and teachers use worksheets with discretion. However, although there are some examples of pupils using their speaking and listening skills in history, there are also many missed opportunities for them to use different styles of writing for different purposes and audiences.

110. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The headteacher checks planning, teaching and pupils' work to ensure that the scheme of work is implemented throughout the school. The co-ordinator adequately supports other members of staff in ensuring appropriate content to lessons. Information and communication technology is not yet being used sufficiently to help develop historical skills or to extend pupils' historical knowledge and understanding.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

111. There was very limited opportunity to observe much direct teaching of information and communication technology during the inspection week. It is not therefore possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Judgements about standards and achievement are based on observation of pupils using information and technology in the classroom, analysis of work on display, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and with the co-ordinator for the subject. The attainment of pupils aged 7 and 11 is below that expected nationally and achievement is unsatisfactory. Progress since the last inspection is also unsatisfactory.

112. Progress in developing information and communication technology across the school has been hindered by financial constraints. Following some delay, the school was finally allocated National Grid for Learning funding and has only very recently installed up to date equipment and software in each class including the nursery. At the time of the inspection, teaching staff had not had sufficient time to become familiar with the new hardware and software. Discussions with them and with pupils, and an analysis of the small amount of pupils' work available, shows that the subject knowledge and understanding of several teachers is insecure. This means they are unable to extend pupils' learning sufficiently. However, teachers' planning is satisfactory. It identifies the skills to be taught and in some classes, these are displayed with examples beside the computer area.

113. Pupils do not sufficiently use information and technology skills across the curriculum. Currently, the majority of pupils in the school are working at least one year behind the expected level for their age. Throughout the school, pupils do not have frequent enough access to the computers. They are not developing the skills necessary to make appropriate progress and their achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing keyboard skills and learning to control the mouse correctly. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Pupils in the 7 to 11 age range are also enthusiastic about information and communication technology. Some pupils in each year group can talk confidently about the subject. These pupils have access to computers outside of school and they readily share their knowledge with their less confident members of their class. This was evident in Year 5 when some pupils were unsure how to underline information and select a colour. In Year 4 some pupils have poor keyboard skills and do not know how to save, retrieve or independently print information. When working at the computer either independently or in pairs, pupils co-operate, take turns and assist each other. This helps their personal development.

114. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides advice and support for colleagues and checks teachers' medium and short term planning. A detailed policy has been agreed and the implementation of the recently introduced scheme of work, based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme, is to be checked as the year progresses. The co-ordinator has attended relevant courses and is herself adequately informed about the subject. A thorough audit of hardware and software has been undertaken and an appropriate action plan drawn up to improve the resources. However, the implementation of the action plan was delayed for twelve months because of the delay in receiving the funding. The plan accurately identifies the major points necessary for improving standards. These include training for staff, implementing assessment procedures, access to and use of the Internet and continuing to improve resources.

MUSIC

115. Pupils aged 7 and 11 are working at the expected levels for their age. Pupils in Year 6 are able to describe the characteristics of street cries. They can sing them with a good sense of style and combine different street cries in part singing. They understand the structure of repetition in the melodies, and working in groups, they can compose their own using a pentatonic (five note) scale, recording their work in a variety of ways

including, for some, traditional musical notation. Because of good teacher questioning, they are able to evaluate what worked and what did not in their compositions and suggest how to improve their work when they return to complete this project in the next lesson. Most perform confidently and singing is of a good standard. Pupils in Year 2 sing confidently and with a good sense of pitch. They can hold a melody in their heads and join in singing again at the right time. Most follow instructions well but are less confident in instrumental work. Many hold instruments hesitantly and not always correctly. Individual children can use symbols to represent sounds but their skills in controlling sounds are limited because they are not given enough time to practise or to investigate and experiment with sound. Pupils do not yet have access to information and communication technology in music. This is one of the priorities in the subject development plan. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development as they learn to work in groups, cooperate with each other, take turns to play their instruments and sing in time with each other. Music also makes a sound contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, insufficient attention is being given to music from other cultures. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and in particular the contribution of the support staff enables them to achieve satisfactorily. Pupils use their speaking and listening skills appropriately in music but insufficient attention is given to the promotion of reading, writing or numeracy skills.

116. Because it was possible to see only one lesson in the 7 to 11 age range, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching in that age group. In the lesson seen, with Year 6 pupils, the quality of teaching was very good. In the 5 to 7 age range, teaching is satisfactory. All lessons are well planned and the clear musical objectives are shared with the pupils. The strength in the Year 6 class is the way in which the teacher reinforces pupils' learning as they move from one part of a very well structured lesson to the next. The teacher's very effective management of a group of girls ensures that the pupils achieve the lesson's objectives in spite of their immature behaviour. Sound teaching in the younger age range results in pupils being introduced to early composing and performing techniques. The teachers' own enthusiasm for and enjoyment of musical activity is transmitted to the pupils and the direct teaching of musical skills enables them to make appropriate progress through the lesson. However, in Year 2, insufficient time for practice leads to some pupils not being able to play the intended chord sequence and in Year 1, an over long introduction and then a slowing of pace towards the end of the lesson result in some decline in concentration and insufficient time for pupils to evaluate fully what they have achieved.

117. Leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has had some release time to check on teaching in the classroom and to advise and guide colleagues. She checks teachers' plans to ensure that the agreed scheme of work is being followed and gives advice and support to colleagues when necessary. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve musical provision, for example, the introduction of manageable assessment procedures so that pupils' progress can be tracked to the new levels required in the revised National Curriculum, and the purchase of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment so that the requirements of the programme of study can be met in full. With the exception of the provision for ICT, resources are satisfactory. There is evidence of good improvement in the management and organisation of the music curriculum and in the provision for music since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. Standards are satisfactory in this subject and pupils' achievements are sound. Since the previous inspection, when the subject was identified as a key issue, the school has improved standards. All pupils have access to the curriculum and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. During the inspection week lessons in gymnastics and one games lesson were seen. However, evidence from teachers' planning and the school's curriculum framework indicates that there is satisfactory provision for the teaching of dance and games. Teachers pay close attention to health and safety and discuss with pupils the importance of warm-up and of exercise. During gymnastic lessons most pupils aged 5 to 7 are able to control a basic curl and stretch position. Some pupils make good attempts to make their movements more interesting and can create a short sequence with control and co-ordination. Most pupils work hard and are willing to demonstrate their work. However, a minority of pupils become noisy when equipment is being distributed and do not respond quickly to the teacher's instructions. Swimming is taught to pupils in Year 3 and the majority are able to swim the regulation 25 metres unaided by the time swimming lessons cease.

119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers of pupils aged 5 to 7 provide short and frequent opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their skills. Praise is used effectively to

encourage the pupils to strive for improved performance. Teaching is good in Year 6 because the teacher is very sure of the lesson objectives and expects and receives the full attention of and participation from the pupils, who respond quickly to instructions without fuss. As a result they make good progress, enjoy the challenges set for them and most work hard to improve their performance. They work in pairs to share ideas and produce movements that involve jumps and making bridges. Most pupils have good control of their movements and choose appropriate movements to demonstrate their work. The teacher regularly reinforces the safety implications of their movements. During another lesson seen in the 7 to 11 age range, a significant group of pupils were restless and inattentive from the start and some have difficulty obeying the stop command. Whilst the majority of pupils are keen to practise chest passes with balls, regular interruptions by the teacher to manage poor behaviour lessens the amount of time pupils have to improve their skills and hinders their progress.

120. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has received training and has this year put into place the Lancashire scheme of work. There are clear plans to review the effectiveness of the scheme as the year progresses. Since the start of the year, the co-ordinator has observed all teachers teaching a lesson and has provided an evaluation of their teaching both individually and to the whole staff. In addition, teaching staff have attended Top Play and Top Sport training. Materials from these courses are appropriately incorporated into the programme of work. Resources for physical education are satisfactory. However, the system of communal changing for physical education in Year 6 does not take into account the levels of maturity of some of the pupils and is unsatisfactory. Pupils are taught two physical education lessons each week. However, the length of time allocated is insufficient to allow pupils a reasonable length of time to get changed, practice, develop and improve skills. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular sporting activities throughout the year, although during the inspection week only table tennis was available for pupils, taken by a governor's husband. At other times during the year, pupils have access to football, cricket, athletics, skittle ball and cross-country running. The school is proud of its successes in a range of competitive support, including, for example, coming second in the district sports league and in a cricket tournament against other primary schools.