

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY MAGDALEN'S RC
PRIMARY SCHOOL
Preston**

LEA area : Lancashire

Unique Reference Number : 119638

Headteacher : Mr P A Gavin

**Reporting inspector : Mrs B M Dearden AI
Additional Inspector Number : T23236**

Dates of inspection : 5 - 8 November 1996

Under OFSTED contract number : 507024

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Primary

Type of control : Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils : 4 - 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Buller Avenue
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Appropriate authority : Governing Body

Name of Chair of Governors : Rev T Cotter

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MAIN FINDINGS

1. St Mary Magdalen's Roman Catholic Primary School is a good school with many strengths. Firstly, the dedicated, hard-working staff share a common purpose, namely to provide a safe, caring, supportive environment for its pupils to achieve high standards. Secondly, there is a clear emphasis on the personal development of all its pupils, resulting in a school community which is polite, friendly and welcoming. Thirdly, there are strong links with the community, including the local high school as well as the church and parents, which ensure that everyone is working together for the good of the pupils.
2. Overall, the standards of work in the school are at least sound and often better. The attainment of pupils by the age of five is above national expectations for their age. They are well on their way to becoming fluent readers and are able to count, order and compare everyday objects. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is at least in line with national expectations; in English, mathematics, science and music it is above national expectations. The pupils can confidently read new books and can add and subtract competently. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is at least in line with national expectations; in speaking and listening, mathematics, science and music it is above national expectations. Pupils are able to adapt their writing to a variety of purposes and audiences and can easily find information from reference books.
3. In the majority of lessons seen, and from reception to year 6, pupils make good progress in their lessons. They gain knowledge and understanding about all aspects of the curriculum and acquire the necessary skills. There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and, as a result, they make good progress. Pupils have a good attitude to school and to their work. They maintain their concentration for increasing periods of time; eventually the oldest pupils preparing work independently for presentations and debates. Their behaviour is of a consistently high standard and they show respect for property belonging to others. Attendance rates are very good and pupils' punctuality is excellent. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are consistently good and are a strength of the school.
4. The quality of education is generally sound with some good features. The quality of teaching is generally good, with 20 per cent of lessons seen being very good or better. In the best lessons work is well planned, teachers make good use of challenging questions and have high expectations of the pupils who are engaged in meaningful activities at an appropriate level. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of all the subjects they teach. Although assessment of pupils' work is built into the long term planning, day-to-day assessment is not used to inform future planning which will help pupils to progress further.
5. The curriculum is broad, it covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and complies with statutory requirements. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum which is enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities in sport,

music and chess. However, there is an imbalance in the time spent between history and geography and no overview of the curriculum in every subject to ensure coverage of the Programmes of Study.

6. Good provision is made for the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils through whole-school assemblies, through development of self-discipline and by encouraging pupils to take responsibilities in school. Provision is also made to enrich pupils' knowledge of their own cultural traditions but there are insufficient opportunities for the appreciation of other cultures. A clear strength of the school is the strong partnership with parents, the church and the community, including the local high school.
7. The school, under the thoughtful and caring leadership of the headteacher, has purpose and direction. All the staff of the school are committed to promoting high educational standards within a safe, caring environment. The school development plan (SDP) provides a framework to help the school achieve its aims. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum are at an early stage of development, particularly the contribution of the co-ordinators. However, the school recognises this as an area for development in the SDP. Governors are supportive of the school in much of its work but have not, as yet, developed procedures for acquiring a strategic overview of the curriculum. Resources for learning are generally adequate and are deployed well by teachers to support pupils' learning. However, there is a shortage of adequate computers to support the work in information technology (IT). The administrative staff have efficient procedures to enhance the smooth running of the school and financial resources are well managed. The school provides good value for money.
8. The school places great emphasis on a caring, sharing approach to raise the standards of achievement for all its pupils. In this it has achieved considerable success. There is a very positive ethos in the school which is based upon a clear set of values shared by staff, pupils, parents and governors. As a result, the school is an orderly, polite and welcoming community where pupils work hard to achieve to the best of their ability.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

9. The governing body, headteacher and staff should:
 - * provide an overview of the curriculum in every subject, to ensure coverage of the Programmes of Study;
 - * ensure there are secure links between teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' progress and the planning of future work;

- * develop a system of monitoring and evaluating the whole curriculum by the subject co-ordinators, senior staff and governors to ensure that they all have an overview of their own areas of responsibility;
- * develop the cultural aspect of pupils' education by strengthening the attention to pupils' understanding of the range and diversity of other cultures.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

10. St Mary Magdalen's RC School is a voluntary aided junior and infant school situated in Lower Penwortham, a residential suburb about three miles from Preston. It serves the parish of St Mary Magdalen in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Pupils are drawn from the immediate area which is a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties.
11. There are 223 pupils on roll with 30 of these pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; three have Statements of Special Educational Need. Eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and there are no pupils from ethnic minorities. There is a broad range of attainment on entry to the school, mainly towards the middle of the range.
12. Religious education (RE) and collective worship were not included in this inspection as this is a voluntary aided school in which the responsibility for inspecting these areas lies with the Liverpool Archdiocesan inspectors.
13. The school's current priorities, as set out in the SDP, include:
 - * review of the school mission statement;
 - * a policy for education for personal relationships;
 - * a review of arrangements for pupils with SEN;
 - * a review of school security;
 - * improving monitoring of the curriculum to raise standards of achievement;
 - * improvement of safety in Buller Avenue.

Key indicators

14. Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1995/96	18	15	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	15	17	16
	Girls	14	14	12
	Total	29	31	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (82)	94 (91)	85 (79)
	National	* (78)	* (80)	* (79)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	15	17	16
	Girls	14	14	8
	Total	29	31	24
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (82)	94 (70)	73 (88)
	National	* (80)	* (79)	* (84)

¹Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

*** NOTE: There were no comparable national figures available for 1995/96 at the time of the inspection.**

15. **Attainment at Key Stage 2¹**

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1995/96	13	20	33

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	10	10
	Girls	12	14	17
	Total	20	24	27
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	61 (53)	73 (67)	82 (76)
	National	* (48)	* (44)	* (70)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	17	15	13
	Total	26	25	24
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (71)	76 (66)	73 (74)
	National	* (56)	* (54)	* (64)

¹Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

*** NOTE: There were no comparable national figures available for 1995/96 at the time of the inspection.**

16. **Attendance**

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.2
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.0
	National comparative data	0.5

17. Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

18. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	20
Satisfactory or better	98
Less than satisfactory	2

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

19. The attainment of pupils by the age of five is above national expectations for their age. Pupils acquire a good range of skills and knowledge in all areas of learning. By the age of five they are well on their way to becoming fluent readers and are able to count, order and compare everyday objects.
20. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is at least in line with national expectations. In English, mathematics, science and music pupils' attainment is above national expectations. They can confidently read new books and can add and subtract competently. In science they are able to describe and record accurately observations to an experiment and classify changes as reversible or not.
21. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is at least in line with national expectations. In speaking and listening, mathematics, science and music pupils' attainment is above national expectations. However, there is some underachievement in writing by higher attaining pupils at the lower end of Key Stage 2, especially their competence in extended writing. Where standards are good, pupils are able to adapt their writing to a variety of purposes and audiences. Most pupils are able to find information easily from reference books in the library and in the classroom. Pupils can use their mathematical knowledge to design and construct a cuboid and prism in order to construct a Tudor house. They also use calculators competently to check the accuracy of answers to problems. In science

they can generalise about physical phenomena and soundly apply ideas about physical processes such as altering the current in a circuit. There are no significant variations in attainment between girls and boys. There are examples of higher attainment in music and physical education (PE).

22. In the majority of lessons most pupils make good progress in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding, which reflects the high quality of teaching supported by an appropriate range of resources. Pupils with SEN make good progress and receive very good support from the dedicated and enthusiastic SEN support staff. The school has identified the need to improve standards in reading and writing, especially for higher attaining pupils. The most recent results of the National Curriculum assessments at the end of both key stages indicate that pupils are above national expectations and that there is an improvement since the previous year. The results of the inspection confirm these assessments.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

23. For the under fives, through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are consistently good and are a strength of the school. Pupils are interested in their work and are able to maintain their concentration for increasing periods of time as they get older. The oldest pupils demonstrate a good level of independence in preparing work for presentations and debates.
24. Pupils' behaviour in and around school is of a consistently high standard. They are courteous and friendly towards each other, to teachers and to visitors to the school. They show great respect for the school's property and grounds as well as other people's belongings. Pupils demonstrate sensitivity to the values and beliefs of other people and actively support and help people in the wider community through various fund-raising activities.
25. The quality of relationships is very good. The pupils play and work well together, including the occasions when they are not under the direct supervision of a teacher. Pupils with disabilities are well integrated into the school and are encouraged sensitively to take a full part where appropriate.
26. Pupils of all ages are trusted to perform certain duties around school to enhance their personal development. They take great pride in these tasks and perform them very well, taking greater responsibility as they get older. For example, the oldest pupils help to look after the younger ones during breaks which helps to improve understanding on both sides. In the classroom pupils show initiative in solving problems which helps them to work more independently as they progress through the school.

Attendance

27. The excellent punctuality of staff and pupils alike makes an important contribution to the overall positive ethos of the school. The attendance figures are significantly above the national average and there is little unauthorised absence. There are clear procedures for parents to notify the school of any absences, and administrative staff have effective strategies for monitoring them.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

28. The quality of teaching for pupils under five and in Key Stage 1 is at least sound and mostly good, with some examples of very good practice. In Key Stage 2, in almost all lessons the quality of teaching is at least sound, though mostly good to very good, with an example of excellent practice seen. All teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum subjects.
29. In Key Stage 1 and for pupils under five, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their standard of work. Lessons are well planned and pupils contribute to the good organisation within the classroom. Teachers use a range of effective teaching methods which include a good mix of whole class teaching and group work planned to meet the needs of individual pupils, including those with SEN. Teachers manage the pupils well, ensuring that they are purposefully engaged in a variety of activities and praise pupils when they do well. Teachers carry out day-to-day assessment of pupils' work; the quality of these assessments is variable and only, at best, satisfactory. Teachers do not systematically use this information to inform future planning.
30. In Key Stage 2 teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and standards of work are generally at least satisfactory and often high. Daily planning of lessons is good with a carefully planned programme of work being set to challenge all pupils at the appropriate level. Classrooms are well organised and pupils are given responsibility for the distribution, collection and storage of resources, which contributes to the high standards of personal development displayed by the pupils. The quality of day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but marking rarely informs pupils of ways to improve their work.
31. Where the teaching is very good or better, teachers have very high expectations of the pupils, using challenging questions to enhance pupils' understanding and promote self-evaluation. Particular attention is paid to praising pupils for their responses which contributes to their self-esteem.
32. Homework is effectively used throughout the school to support and extend pupils' learning, particularly in reading.

The curriculum and assessment

33. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements in all subjects. Overall, the school's curriculum reflects its aims and values and soundly promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. The governing body is in the process of developing a drugs and sex education policy, as recommended by the diocese.
34. The curriculum provided for pupils under five is good. A balanced programme of well structured activities covers the areas of learning and encourages pupils to develop as independent learners.
35. The school provides equality of access for all pupils. Provision for pupils with SEN is good, effective and meets the Code of Practice. There is an effective policy for SEN; individual education plans are detailed and identify appropriate learning objectives. There is good liaison between the SEN co-ordinator, the staff, including the SEN support staff, the parents and the outreach staff who support the statemented pupils. Pupils' progress is carefully recorded and reviewed. The school effectively encourages and promotes acceptance and integration of pupils with special needs including those with physical disabilities. The link with the governors through the SEN governor is helpful for maintaining an overview of provision and could be used as a model for governors' further development.
36. Curriculum policies are in place for all subjects and there are guidelines for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers' long term plans do not show how the Programmes of Study are being implemented in each year group or how progression and continuity of learning are being addressed. Their medium term plans have neither clear learning objectives matched to Programmes of Study, nor assessment opportunities built into this planning. Short term planning related to lesson plans is good with clear aims and objectives linked to teaching methods and classroom organisation.
37. Procedures for assessment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 meet statutory requirements. There is a clear assessment policy but there are no formal effective systems in place for assessing pupils' progress in lessons, which will inform future planning. The best examples of the links between assessment and planning are to be seen in the modification of teaching programmes for pupils with SEN and in the use of diagnostic tests in English which accelerate progress. There are effective procedures for targeting pupils' reading attainment in each year group. The school has begun the process of compiling portfolios of work especially in the core subjects. These provide useful models for assessing pupils' work and their levels of attainment. Portfolios for other subject areas need to be developed and used to establish whole-school understanding of standards of achievement. There is some evidence of teacher assessment in pupil profiles of records and samples of work; this could be further developed to clarify individual teachers' judgements related to National Curriculum requirements.
38. All pupils are offered opportunities to participate in a programme of extra-curricular activities which include sport, recorders, guitar tuition and chess. There

are opportunities for pupils to participate in inter-school events in football, netball, swimming, rounders, cricket and athletics. These activities are greatly enjoyed by the pupils and have a positive impact on their personal and social development.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

39. The school has clear aims for the provision of the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development which are successfully achieved.
40. Spiritual development is fostered in whole-school assemblies together with the opportunities for prayer throughout the day. There is also provision in other curriculum areas such as English, art and music for pupils to experience the awe and wonder of life. A good example of this is the pupils' appreciation of the beauty of art.
41. Principles of right and wrong are well taught through the implementation of the behaviour policy which promotes self-discipline, through school and class rules and through the good examples shown by the headteacher and staff who promote a caring, sharing ethos. Older pupils are encouraged to give presentations and to debate moral issues with their fellow classmates.
42. The school gives careful attention to pupils' social development by ensuring that all pupils have responsibilities around the school, and older pupils are encouraged to look after younger pupils at lunchtimes. The school actively promotes positive attitudes and positive achievement which are rewarded through the merit system. Pupils are involved in the wider community by raising funds annually for a national charity, the Good Shepherd Collection, during Lent and for Cafod twice a year. Voluntary collections taken after Christmas concerts are also donated to third world charities.
43. The school seeks to enrich pupils' knowledge and experience of their own cultural traditions through visits to museums and art galleries, and an appreciation of the natural world through art and literature. However, there are few opportunities for the appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

44. A strength of the school is the provision of a safe, supportive and caring environment in which the pupils are supported in their development by the caring teaching and support staff. There is an effective policy to promote self-discipline which is implemented by all staff, resulting in a very positive ethos.
45. There is a clear, agreed health and safety policy and good child protection procedures which are effectively promoted within the secure environment of the school. Links with external agencies ensure health care and assistance are provided as required.

Partnership with parents and the community

46. A strength of the school is the strong partnership which exists with parents, the church and the wider community, including the local high school.
47. The school benefits from parental help in school and financial help through the society of the Friends of the School. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education and other school activities. Many help either in the classroom on a regular basis or by occasional support in the form of school visits. Parents are also involved in reading with their child at home; this helps teachers and parents to work together towards raising standards in reading. The school keeps parents well informed about pupils' work and progress. There is a well organised induction of new pupils into school and the annual report to parents gives a comprehensive overview of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.
48. There are strong links with the church through parents, staff and the governing body, which contribute positively to pupils' personal development. A significant strength of the school is the excellent relationships which have been forged with the Roman Catholic high school. This ensures a smooth transition for the pupils from one school to the other; there is also direct support for pupils' learning in the form of loans of classroom equipment. This was best seen where rheostats borrowed from the high school were used to further pupils' understanding of electrical circuits.
49. The school has a comprehensive programme of school visits during the year, including visits to local industry. There are, however, no direct links with industry which benefit the pupils' education. This is compensated for by a significant indirect link through the secondary school which results in the acquisition of surplus equipment for the pupils' benefit, for example the recently acquired computer.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

50. The school, under the thoughtful and caring leadership of the headteacher, has purpose and direction. The headteacher and staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are highly committed to the children in their care. There is a shared vision of promoting high educational standards within a caring environment to help all children achieve their potential. This is best seen in the successful promotion of the personal development of the pupils. A significant achievement of the school is its undoubted success in creating a caring, sharing community in which great emphasis is placed on ensuring equal opportunities for all.
51. The SDP is a useful tool to help the school to identify short term priorities which help it to achieve its aims. It is carefully monitored and evaluations are used to

help set the targets for the next year. However, there is no written plan for longer term priorities which would help the governors to maintain a strategic view of the direction of the school.

52. Procedures for monitoring the curriculum throughout the school are at an early stage of development. The headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators have scrutinised pupils' work, both in books and on display, which provides the school with a useful foundation for the next stage which has been identified in the SDP. This should give co-ordinators the opportunity to identify and strengthen areas for development within their own subjects.
53. The governing body supports the school in much of its work, using to good effect its delegated committees for finance and staffing. It fulfils most, but not all, of its statutory responsibilities. It has not yet a clear role in monitoring the curriculum; there is, however, good practice in other areas of its work on which it can build a strategic overview of the curriculum. The governors' annual report to parents and the school brochure do not contain the full range and detail of information that is statutorily required.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

54. The school is adequately staffed by committed and hard-working teachers both for pupils under five and for those of statutory school age. They have initial qualifications in a range of subjects and bring a variety of experience to the school. The education support staff are well deployed to enhance the work of the teaching staff and contribute significantly to the quality of education provided.
55. The school benefits from a team of non-teaching staff who are very capable, caring and well organised. They are fully involved in the life of the school and make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.
56. There are sound procedures in place for appraisal. Each member of staff has been appraised in keeping with national requirements; targets relating to professional and curriculum development are currently being implemented. Staff development currently tends to concentrate on co-ordinators and their subject areas, leaving little time for the broader development of teachers across the curriculum.
57. The school premises are very clean and well maintained. The position of the school building is not ideal, having the main entrance at the head of a narrow cul-de-sac. This leads to difficulties of congestion at the beginning and end of the school day, which the school has addressed as best it can by using a second exit. The school is comfortable and well decorated. Classrooms, corridors and shared activity areas are used very effectively to enhance learning through interesting displays of pupils' work, information posters and historical artefacts. The recently refurbished library is a pleasant environment for library skills to be effectively taught as well as being a useful resource area. Drainage problems in the school playground and adjacent field considerably restrict the use of both after heavy rain.

Overall, the quality of indoor and outdoor accommodation provides an attractive environment and has a positive effect on teaching and learning.

58. Generally, learning resources are adequate to deliver the National Curriculum. However, the library stock is in need of further expenditure following the removal of outdated stock and there is a shortage of adequate computers. There is some effective use of the resources of the local community, including the local high school, to support pupils' learning. Generally, equipment and resources are accessible and well deployed to help pupils' progress.

The efficiency of the school

59. The school provides good value for money. The teaching and learning support staff are effectively deployed in a smooth running school which uses available resources efficiently. The accommodation provides a stimulating learning environment. However, the lack of non-contact time for the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators impacts on the time available for monitoring the curriculum. Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST) are almost wholly used to support the professional development of staff.
60. The school is administered effectively. There are satisfactory routines in place to ensure that the school's budget is controlled efficiently by the headteacher and the administrative staff. The recommendations from the most recent auditor's report of 1995 have now been fully implemented. The governors effectively oversee the financial management of the school's budget. With the continuing support of the governing body the school strives to build on the attainment of the pupils through the successful implementation of targets for raising standards of achievement.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

61. By the age of five the majority of children attain standards which are higher than national expectations for their age group. They make good progress in all areas of learning.
62. In language and literacy they show a positive response to stories, poems and songs; they listen attentively to the teacher and to each other. They enjoy looking at books and listen with concentration to taped recordings of a pre-reading book whilst following the text. Parents are involved in the early stages of reading through the home/school liaison scheme which has a positive effect on the children's progress. Children recognise their own name labels and can name some letters of the alphabet by name and sound. Children quickly gain confidence in writing unaided.

63. In mathematics the children can sort by colour, size and shape; they can also sequence patterns and count, order and compare everyday objects. They can recognise numbers up to five, know their values and record numbers from zero to five. They enjoy daily singing of number rhymes, action songs and jingles. Through baking activities they are familiar with weighing and measuring quantities and through sand and water activities further develop mathematical language and skills.
64. The children demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the environment by talking about where they live and family events in the present and the past. From their topic work on “Ourselves” they can name parts of the body and understand that there are five senses, each one associated with different parts of the body. They can select materials and equipment and use skills such as cutting, sticking and joining paper and fabric. They can build using a variety of constructional equipment. They can use a concept keyboard with a computer to support their learning.
65. The children demonstrate good physical skills in their use of space, movement of different parts of the body and finding different ways of travelling across the floor. A range of small and large equipment is available for inside and outside play. The children can sing a variety of songs and use clapping and other body sounds to make rhythmic accompaniments to the songs.
66. The quality of teaching is good. The areas of learning are well planned around a theme and the activities are well structured. The school is currently undertaking baseline assessments which will provide valuable information for the planning of future work.
67. The accommodation in the reception class is good with appropriate levels of furniture, sinks and work surfaces. The classroom has bright, lively displays, play areas, book and writing corners. The planned external area would provide extra space for outside play activities. The resources are good and easily accessible to the children. These all have a beneficial impact on children’s attainment and progress.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

68. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils’ attainment is higher than national expectations. The recent results of the National Curriculum assessments show that standards reached by pupils is particularly high.
69. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. However, there is some underachievement in writing by higher attaining pupils at the lower end of Key Stage 2, especially their competence in extended writing.

Pupils in both key stages with SEN make good progress in relation to the learning targets identified in the individual education plans.

70. Pupils listen with concentration, speak clearly and confidently, and are keen to offer contributions to oral work in lessons. When given the opportunity, pupils report back to the class and evaluate their own achievements. Older pupils are encouraged to give oral presentations to their class and to debate current issues with their peers.
71. In reading, pupils make good progress, especially in Key Stage 1 where the home/school liaison support system has a positive effect on the standards of reading. Pupils use an appropriate range of skills to help them read new words including phonics, word recognition, picture and contextual cues. By the end of the key stage pupils are confidently reading new books and have acquired positive attitudes to reading.
72. At Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress but there is a lack of range and sophistication in their reading. There are effective procedures in place for targeting pupils' reading attainment in each year but none to show how class teachers monitor individual pupils' progress to ensure that pupils are reading challenging literature. Most pupils are able to find information from reference books in the library and in the classroom satisfactorily.
73. The standards of writing at Key Stage 1 are good. In the reception class pupils consolidate their skills of letter formation and sentence structure in their development towards independent writing. Pupils have a keen interest in the written word and demonstrate a sense of achievement. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to produce extended pieces of writing in a range of forms, for example, lists, stories, reports, notes and factual information. Pupils present their writing in well constructed sentences with appropriate punctuation.
74. In Key Stage 2 pupils make sound progress. Where standards are good, pupils have opportunities to plan, draft and improve their work and to discuss their own and others' writing. They are able to adapt their writing to a variety of purposes and audiences. The best example of this was seen in year 5 where pupils made very good, well written books to share with younger pupils.
75. Standards of spelling are generally good and pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses with confidence but are not encouraged to self-correct their own mistakes. Pupils' handwriting and presentational skills are good in Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2, and sound in lower Key Stage 2. Most pupils have positive attitudes to English, work with sustained concentration and stay on task. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils.
76. The quality of teaching is generally sound in most lessons and there are examples of good and very good teaching. Where it is very good, teachers have high expectations of pupils, linked to challenging tasks. Teachers' knowledge and

understanding of the subject are sound, and in the best instances they are good. There is effective planning and good use of strategies to match text to pupils' needs.

77. Teachers mark work regularly and use positive comments, but the marking fails to inform pupils of ways in which the content and structure of their work could be improved. Although good use is made of test results, the links between on-going assessment and future planning are not fully developed. The portfolio of English work provides good examples on which to develop and extend teachers' competence in assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
78. Some of the school's English resources are now outdated. The school recognises this and is in the process of updating them. The library provides a good, but currently limited, stock of information and fiction books and it is well used by the pupils.

Mathematics

79. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is above national expectations. They are able to add and subtract, sequence clocks showing different times, name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and read data tables. The school places emphasis on number work which results in pupils gaining a high standard of attainment in this aspect of mathematics.
80. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is well above national expectations and the pupils are successful in using their knowledge in other areas. A good example of this was seen where year 5 pupils used their knowledge of cuboids and prisms to construct Tudor houses.
81. Pupils make good progress in both key stages. A particular strength is the support provided for pupils with SEN who have additional classroom support helping them to progress well. All pupils are attentive and confident in responding to questions and are eager to do their work. As pupils progress through the school they show sustained concentration for an increasing length of time in order to finish their work. Relationships within the classroom are good, reflecting the caring, sharing ethos of the school.
82. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils, they plan their work well and have a good knowledge of the subject. They use effective strategies to match the tasks to the pupils' needs. However, there is no overview of the whole subject to ensure coverage of the Programmes of Study, or procedures for day-to-day assessment. There are very good liaison procedures in place for the smooth transfer of pupils to the secondary school, ensuring continuity and progression.
83. The subject is effectively co-ordinated on a daily basis. The co-ordinator ensures availability of equipment and supports other staff when necessary. The role

includes monitoring and evaluation which is at an early level of development. The school recognises this and the role will be reviewed in the near future.

Science

84. At the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2, standards of attainment are above national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to describe and record accurately observations of an experiment, understand terms such as degrees and classify various changes as reversible or not. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to make generalisations about physical phenomena, use the idea that shadows are formed because light travels and begin to apply ideas about physical processes such as altering the current in a circuit.
85. Pupils make at least sound progress; there are many more examples where progress is good or better, including those with SEN. Pupils show a high level of interest and involvement in their work, enjoy the activities and sustain their concentration for an increasing amount of time as they get older. They work well together to perform experiments and use resources independently and with care. They have good relationships with both their teachers and one another.
86. The quality of teaching is at least sound with examples of good, very good and excellent practice. Where very good practice is seen, teachers plan their work well in order to develop pupils' skills in scientific process, as well as to build on knowledge and understanding. They have high expectations and challenge pupils to think for themselves. An excellent example was seen of using challenging questions to produce the result of an experiment incorporating very good scientific language, knowledge and concepts. Although there are assessment opportunities built in to the schemes of work, they are not generally used on a day-to-day basis to inform planning, and there is no overview of the whole subject.
87. The role of the science co-ordinator includes that of ensuring equipment is available and offering advice. This should now be strengthened to include monitoring of science work throughout the school. Basic resources are generally adequate, though larger items of equipment are borrowed from the neighbouring high school with which there are very good links. In all classes teachers pay very good attention to safety, both in the planning stage and in practical activities.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Design and technology

88. The standards of pupils' attainment are generally in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 1 they are able to manipulate tools safely and join materials in a variety of ways. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils illustrate alternatives using sketches and make choices between them.

89. Overall, pupils' progress in acquiring skills and understanding is sound. They are involved in their work and apply themselves well. They are able to work independently, showing initiative in solving problems, and show sensitivity to others.
90. The quality of teaching is generally good. Teachers plan their work well, with reference to aims and objectives, resources and activities. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and pupils are motivated to solve problems. Lessons are well organised and managed with good use of resources. However, the programme of work does not include the element of control because of a shortage of equipment. The co-ordinator has identified this as an area for development and it should be addressed as soon as possible in order to raise standards in the subject.

Information technology

91. Standards of pupils' attainment are generally in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use IT to help them generate and communicate ideas and control devices purposefully. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils add to, amend and interrogate information that has been stored and understand the need for care in framing questions when completing such work. They also use IT to generate, amend, organise and present ideas. Pupils competently use the program LOGO to control a screen turtle but this does not give pupils sufficient opportunity to achieve the standards expected of them because of a shortage of resources.
92. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. There is a scheme for the whole school showing the programs used in each year, to ensure satisfactory continuity. Pupils display a positive attitude to IT. They enjoy their work, sustain their concentration for an increasing amount of time and respect other pupils' opinions. They often work independently, though sometimes they work in pairs with one pupil teaching another. Although this can be successful in most cases, teachers need to check that pupils are consistently achieving their aims.
93. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. Although little direct teaching was observed during the inspection, the planning, organisation and use of resources are sound. Although teachers keep records to ensure equality of access to IT, these are not sufficiently detailed to inform planning.
94. The number of computers in school is below that expected nationally and some equipment is of poor quality. This has an impact on pupils' learning as they are able to achieve limited standards in IT. However, the school's library of software resources is good. It includes programs for language work, history and geography studies, art work, data handling and control.

History

95. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment in history is at least in line with national expectations. In Key Stage 2 there are instances where attainment is higher than national expectations. In year 2, pupils studying the topic 'Food' are able to describe how the food was bought in the earlier part of this century. In year 6 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the order in which events took place, they are familiar with methods of investigation and are able to describe the different lifestyles of people at the time of the Vikings, Tudors and in Victorian England.
96. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils are attentive and respond well to lessons. They listen carefully to stories and handle artefacts with care. Written work is often in the form of short sentences or paragraphs; pupils are given insufficient opportunity to undertake extended historical writing.

97. The quality of teaching is generally good. Teachers plan their work well and effectively use resources, including museums, to support the pupils' learning. In Key Stage 1, history is taught as part of the school's programme of topics. Detailed planning of each topic ensures a balance between the respective Programmes of Study across the key stage. In Key Stage 2, however, history is taught as a separate subject in blocks of a term or a term and a half. This interrupts the development of pupils' understanding and progress.
98. The school does not have a co-ordinator for history at the moment, but is hoping to address this in the near future. This presents difficulties for the school in resourcing the subject and setting and achieving targets.

Geography

99. Only one year group was studying geography at the time of the inspection. As a result, judgements are based on the observation of a lesson, evidence of schemes of work for years 3 and 4, pupils' written work and discussions with the pupils.
100. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in geography is in line with national expectations. In the topic 'Ourselves' pupils in year 1 learn their address in Penwortham and know that this is a part of Preston. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop mapping skills and a scheme of work to meet the requirements of the Programmes of Study for the revised National Curriculum is not yet in place. There is no evidence to show that there is a sound geographical curriculum in place for years 5 and 6.
101. The quality of teaching is generally good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan their work well. They use school resources and local fieldwork to support the teaching of geography through both key stages. There is an imbalance in the time spent on history and geography with pupils studying geography for a smaller proportion of the time. This, together with the way the subject is organised in blocks, interrupts the development of pupils' understanding and progress.
102. The school does not have a co-ordinator for geography at the moment, but is hoping to address this soon. This presents difficulties for the co-ordination of the subject at the moment, particularly the setting and achieving of targets for development and resourcing.

Art

103. Standards of achievement at the end of both key stages are at least in line with, and sometimes higher than, national expectations. Good examples of attainment were seen in year 1 where pupils were working on observational drawings of the skeleton and in year 5 where pupils used their sketch books to experiment with figure drawing.

104. Pupils make good progress and carefully build on previous skills, knowledge, and understanding of line, tone, pattern, texture, colour, form and space. Pupils make use of sketch books to record the development of ideas. They also develop a secure appreciation of the work of famous artists which is well integrated with their practical work; for example, in year 5, pupils used the work of L S Lowry for inspiration to develop their sketches of figures.
105. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm during art lessons and they make good use of the opportunity to work collaboratively with a partner or in groups. Pupils keep on task and show willingness to share ideas with each other and with the teacher.
106. The quality of teaching is at least sound and often good, particularly when teachers have high expectations of pupils. The quality of planning varies from satisfactory to very good. It could be improved by the use of guidelines for the subject by all members of staff. Lessons are well organised and managed with good use of resources.
107. There are good links with the high school and year 6 pupils are encouraged to work with them on a joint project and to display their art work at the school. There are also good links with the Museum and Exhibition Centre, Leyland, where exhibits from the whole school are displayed annually.
108. There is a clear policy for art but there is no indication of the coverage of Programmes of Study in each year, which would provide continuity of progression if used in conjunction with the guidelines. However, the SDP identifies the need for schemes of work in art. The co-ordinator provides useful support for staff in the provision of expertise, knowledge and guidance on resources to support learning. A portfolio of samples of work and photographs is being compiled which the school is intending to use as a valuable learning resource and to demonstrate progression through the school.

Music

109. The attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is above national expectations. At Key Stage 1 pupils can sing in tune and play tuned and untuned percussion to develop rhythm and pulse. They can respond to music, recognising repetition and changes within the musical elements. At Key Stage 2 pupils can sing a variety of songs, developing control of diction and phrasing; they can select appropriate instruments to compose a piece of group music and use different methods of notation.
110. Pupils make good progress in both key stages. They listen with appreciation to different styles of music in assembly, which creates an appropriate atmosphere for collective worship. Pupils enjoy music and participate with enthusiasm and commitment. They work collaboratively in groups to compose music using a range of tuned and untuned instruments. A good example was seen in year 6 where pupils used the pentatonic scale as the basis of their composition. They then

recorded this on charts using pictorial and musical notation, performing their final piece to the rest of the class.

111. The overall quality of teaching is good and on occasion it is very good. The support of a carefully structured scheme of work helps non-specialist teachers to plan and teach the programmes of work effectively. Lessons are well organised and teachers have high expectations of pupils, linked to challenging tasks. There is a comprehensive music policy. The co-ordinator has updated her own subject knowledge and provides useful advice and support to staff.
112. There is a good range of resources which are easily accessible to staff and pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 2 take part in the extra-curricular activities of recorder and guitar tuition.

Physical education

113. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are at least in line with national expectations and sometimes above.
114. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can work safely alone in gymnastics, practising and improving their own performance with increasing control. In dance they use expression to respond to music as well as contrasts of speed and shape.
115. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can move fluently with increasing control in gymnastics, refining longer series of actions both on the floor and on apparatus. In dance they develop control in the basic actions of travelling, gesture and stillness by varying level and tension, and respond well to music. In games they can send a ball accurately and receive it competently, travel safely and shoot into a net with increasing precision. In swimming pupils achieve a high standard.
116. All pupils make at least sound progress and in some lessons progress is good, especially for pupils with SEN. They enjoy their work, respond enthusiastically to instructions and show initiative in various activities. The pupils are always appropriately dressed and all have the same access to the full range of the curriculum offered. They show a growing awareness of basic safety procedures and are sensitive to others' needs. As a result they work well, both individually and in groups, showing respect for other people and resources.
117. The quality of teaching is at least sound though mostly good to very good. In the best lessons teachers are well organised, use their knowledge to plan their work well and use the resources effectively to develop prior skills. They have high expectations, assess pupils' work to inform later planning and use demonstrations of good work to help others to improve. In all lessons safety issues are reinforced regularly and effectively. Although no athletics was seen because of the timing of the inspection, the planning shows a satisfactory coverage of the areas required. There is no provision as yet for outdoor and adventurous activities but this is being addressed later this year.

118. The school hall provides adequate accommodation for gymnastics and dance and is very well equipped with appropriate apparatus. There is also a field and playground which provide further space for games and athletics. The school is well resourced with small equipment which is safely stored away and is accessible to all. The range of sporting extra-curricular activities, all of which are available to, and enthusiastically supported by, both boys and girls, has a very positive impact on the standards achieved.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

119. The inspection of St Mary Magdalen’s RC Primary was undertaken by a team of four inspectors who spent a total of approximately four days in school. The evidence in the report is based upon 34 hours inspection of classes in a total of 77 lessons distributed across each age group.

120. The evidence also includes:

- * inspection of a range of other activities including assemblies and extra-curricular activities;
- * listening to the reading of a sample of pupils selected from each age group to represent the range of attainment;
- * inspection of the work of a sample of pupils selected by the teachers to represent the full range of attainment;
- * discussions with pupils in each age group about aspects of their work;
- * discussions with the headteacher, teaching, non-teaching and ancillary staff;
- * discussion with members of the governing body about their roles and responsibilities.

DATA AND INDICATORS

121. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with Statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school’s register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	223	3	30	17

Teachers and classes

122. Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8.28
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9

123. Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	48.5

124. Primary and nursery schools

Average class size:	32
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125. Financial data

Financial year:	1996/97
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	£
Total income	298,773
Total expenditure	301,797
Expenditure per pupil	1,320
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,774
Balance carried forward to next year	15,750

126. **Parental survey**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	165
Number of questionnaires returned:	66
Percentage return rate:	40

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	42	42	6	9	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	59	35	3	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	26	52	15	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	33	48	8	9	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	38	44	14	3	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	61	33	2	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	45	44	6	2	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	42	47	5	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	59	39	2	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	59	36	5	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	65	32	2	0	2

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