

INSPECTION REPORT

**SACRED HEART R.C. (V.A.) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119606

Headteacher: Mr. M. Gee

Reporting inspector: Dr. B. Blundell
23868

Dates of inspection: 26th-29th March 2001

Inspection number: 230501

Full 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

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Poulton Street
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. C. Barwise

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23868	Dr. B. Blundell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19343	Mrs. M. Howel	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29263	Mrs. F. Clarke	Team inspector	Science Art and design History Music Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32016	Mrs. P. Ward	Team inspector	English Provision for pupils in the foundation stage Special educational needs English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic primary school is a voluntary aided school for boys and girls, aged four to eleven, situated in Preston, Lancashire. There are 182 pupils on roll. The ethnic background of the pupils is nearly all white with UK heritage, with a small number of black pupils having Caribbean and African heritages. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs is above average, but the percentage of pupils with statements of special needs is below average. The nature of special needs includes pupils with specific and moderate learning difficulties, together with emotional, behavioural, speech and communication problems. No pupils have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is rising, and is now above average. Children's attainment on entry is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science for pupils aged eleven are average; the overall quality of teaching is good; leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards for pupils currently aged eleven are in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science; standards for pupils aged seven are above average in English and mathematics.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, and has improved dramatically since the last inspection.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good; relationships are also good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for pupils in the foundation stage is good.

What could be improved

- Assessment of pupils' work and the use of assessment to help plan the curriculum and track pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.
- Attainment in information and communication technology, whilst improving, is below national expectations at the end of both key stages.
- The level of challenge in some classes could be greater, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.

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 June, 1996. The school has made good improvement since then. Standards now either match or are above national averages in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged seven and eleven. The school is on course to meet its targets. The overall quality of teaching has improved substantially; at the time of the last inspection, approximately one lesson in every four was judged to be unsatisfactory, and there were few very good or better lessons. The key issue to ensure that there is less variation in the quality of teaching has been successfully addressed. The key issue to improve standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1 has been addressed; pupils' progress in design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) has been improved appropriately, although standards in information and communication technology are still below national expectations. Assessment has still not improved sufficiently. The presentation of pupils' work has improved, as has the provision of hardware to support information and communication technology. Levels of homework have improved and are satisfactory.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	E	C	C
mathematics	C	D	C	C
science	E	D	E	E

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

In the national tests in 2000 for eleven year olds, pupils' attainment was in line with national averages in English and mathematics, and well below average in science.

Compared with schools having a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils' performance was average in English and mathematics and, again, well below average in science. Considering how those same pupils performed who took their national tests in 1997 at the end of Key Stage 1, their performance in 2000 was well above the standard expected in English and mathematics, and below the standard expected in science.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in the 2000 national tests for pupils aged seven, when compared to schools of a similar type, were average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics.

The school's results over time are rising at the same rate as results nationally.

The school's targets are low for the current Year 6, but were formulated 18 months ago. The school expects a substantial improvement on these targets, and inspection findings support this expectation. Targets for the current Year 5 are more challenging and should be met.

In the work seen during the inspection, standards for pupils aged eleven meet national averages in English, mathematics and science. Standards for pupils aged seven are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, and average in science. Standards for both seven and eleven year olds are below national expectations in information and communication technology, but match national expectations in design technology, art and design, history, geography, music and physical education.

Pupils' achievement is good, in view of their average attainment on entry to the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good; they are very enthusiastic and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good, both in class and around the school. They are polite and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance for the last full academic year was satisfactory. Attendance this year has improved and is now good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

In the lessons seen during the inspection, four per cent of lessons seen were excellent, 17 per cent were very good and 46 per cent were good. 31 per cent were satisfactory and 2 per cent were unsatisfactory.

The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics was good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught.

Particular strengths in teaching include teachers' management, their use of time and the teaching of basic skills; a weakness is a lack of challenge in some classes, especially for the high attaining pupils.

The school meets the needs of most of its pupils well.

Particular strengths in pupils' learning include their interest and concentration. Their awareness of what they are learning is best in those classes where teachers share the objectives for the lessons with pupils. Overall, pupils' learning is good throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory; the curriculum for children under five is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their individual educational plans are regularly reviewed and targets for improvement are well focussed. Appropriately, pupils are supported in class, rather than being withdrawn.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and for their moral and social development, provision is good. The adults are good role models.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils appropriately. Appropriate child protection policies are in place. Procedures for monitoring and supporting behaviour and attendance are good.

The school works well in partnership with parents.

All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements.

Weaknesses in the way the school cares for its pupils, include the lack of consistent and rigorous assessment of pupils' work, coupled with a lack of a whole-school system for tracking pupils' progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other key staff are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' fulfilment of their responsibilities is good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is good.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is good.

The staffing of the school is good. Whilst the accommodation is satisfactory overall, the level of heating in the school hall is unsatisfactory. Learning resources are satisfactory overall.

The headteacher leads the school well, particularly in his pastoral capacity. Both he and the deputy headteacher work hard for the school's pupils. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school expects children to work hard. • Teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with suggestions and concerns. • The school is well led and managed. • Their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more information about their child's progress. • Some parents are not happy with the level of homework. • Some parents would like the school to work more closely with them. • Some parents would like the school to offer a greater range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Inspectors judge that the issues raised by a minority of parents concerning information on pupils' progress, the level of homework, the range of extra-curricular activities and the way in which the school works with parents, are all being handled satisfactorily by the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Shortly after children enter the foundation stage in Reception, they are assessed to see what they know, understand and can do; social and physical skills are also noted. The intakes in 1999 and 2000 were judged to have below average attainments overall. All in all, the intake to this school, whilst encompassing a wide range, is below average.
2. By the age of five, near to the end of their time in Reception, children are again assessed against national standards known as the Early Learning Goals. The children currently in Reception are on course to meet this standard. Their skills in literacy and numeracy are well developed, and they have made good progress.
3. At the age of seven, close to the end of their time in Year 2, pupils take the Key Stage 1 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils who sat these tests in 2000, and who are now in the current Year 3, obtained levels that were average in mathematics, below average in reading and well below average in writing. Their attainment when compared to schools of a similar type was above average in mathematics, average in reading and below average in writing. Taking the results over the last three years from 1998 to 2000, averaged together, pupils' performance has been just over one term behind pupils nationally in reading and writing, and half a term behind in mathematics. The performance of boys and girls over the same three years has been similar in reading; in writing and mathematics, girls have outperformed boys.
4. Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 2, who will take their national tests in May, 2001, are reaching above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and average standards in science. The Year 2 teacher is extremely competent, and this has a direct bearing on the improved standards. Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations. Pupils are reaching nationally expected standards in music, art and design, geography, history, design and technology and physical education.
5. By the age of eleven, near to the end of Year 6, pupils take the Key Stage 2 national tests in English, science and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the 2000 tests in terms of national curriculum points scores matched national averages in English and mathematics, but was well below average in science. It was average in English and mathematics, and well below average in science, when compared with the performance of pupils in schools of a similar type. Taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, pupils have left Key Stage 2 at about the same standard as pupils nationally in English and mathematics, and half a term behind in science. Comparison with the performance of these same pupils when they took their end of Key Stage 1 tests, in 1996, shows them to have reached well above the standards expected in English and mathematics, and below the standard expected in science.

6. Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 6 are at average standards in mathematics, science and English. This group achieved below national average points scores in their tests in 1997 at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics, and above average standards in writing. The quality and quantity of work in their books show that they have made good progress overall over the last twelve months, in all three subjects. As with pupils lower down the school, their attainment in information and communications technology is below national expectations. In music, physical education, art and design, design technology, history and geography, pupils' attainment meets national expectations.
7. Pupils with special educational needs are valued in the school. The level of support and encouragement that they receive has a significant impact on their self-esteem, their confidence to ask for assistance when they are not sure what to do and on their achievements.
8. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained overall, with improvements in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1. Pupils are generally achieving well, considering their prior attainments, except in information and communication technology. The presentation of pupils' work has improved. Greater emphasis on writing and science is now bearing fruit. The key issues relating to standards in mathematics and number, and progress in design technology and information and communication technology (ICT), have been addressed appropriately, although there is still some way to go in information and communication technology.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, with good personal development. The previous report was positive about the pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and those high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
10. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. They play an active part in lessons and show willingness to join in discussions and answer questions. There are good levels of concentration during lessons, and pupils settle down well to the tasks set. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and discuss their views. They are enthusiastic when told what is to happen during a lesson, and look forward to future lessons. There is equal enthusiasm for the extra-curricular activities, which are well supported.
11. Behaviour is good throughout the school. It is clear that pupils know how they are expected to behave, and follow the school rules. There are very occasional lapses in the behaviour of a small number of pupils, and teachers need to spend very little time correcting unacceptable conduct. The pupils move around the school in a sensible manner, and their good behaviour makes a considerable contribution to the friendly and happy atmosphere in the school. Bullying is not a problem in the school. Pupils are confident they will be listened to if there is an incident, and that the teachers will resolve the problem quickly and fairly. There have been no exclusions during the last academic year.

12. Relationships, including race relations, are very good, both between pupils and between teachers and pupils. Pupils listen attentively to their peers. They allow them time to think of answers or collect their thoughts. They work very well together in pairs or small groups, with good examples seen of pupils sharing equipment and helping one another. During playtimes and at lunchtime, pupils play happily together, with very few arguments or disagreements seen. The relationships between the staff and the pupils are very positive. There is a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere in the classrooms, which makes a considerable contribution to the pupils' progress.
13. Pupils play an active part in the daily routines of the school. Each class appoints monitors who have regular duties to help the teacher. In all classes, pupils were seen to help tidy up at the end of lessons. The Year 6 pupils regularly help the younger children in Reception; they help with the award assemblies and are responsible for collecting the daily dinner numbers.
14. Attendance is satisfactory, but the figures for the current year show a marked improvement. There are below average figures for unauthorised absences. The school day begins promptly, with very few pupils arriving late to lessons. Registration meets statutory requirements. The levels of attendance demonstrate the pupils' enthusiasm for school and the parental support that the school enjoys.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. In all except one lesson observed, teaching was at least satisfactory. Overall, it was satisfactory in 31 per cent of lessons, good in 46 per cent, very good in 17 per cent and excellent in four per cent. Excellent lessons were seen in Year 2 and Year 3. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed in Key Stage 2.
16. Examples of good lessons were seen in each class in the school. The greatest concentrations of good, very good or excellent teaching were in the Reception class, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5.
17. The biggest strengths in teaching include the helpful manner in which some teachers share the learning objectives for lessons with their pupils, the way in which they manage their pupils and the use of support staff. The pace of most lessons is brisk and purposeful.
18. In the one lesson that was unsatisfactory, there was a lack of challenge, and pupils were not instructed sufficiently on how they might improve their performance; this was also a feature of a minority of other lessons that were judged to be satisfactory, rather than better than this. The lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils is particularly evident in some classes. Teachers generally know their pupils well and work tremendously hard on their behalf. Pupils are aware of what is expected from them in terms of behaviour, and nearly always respond appropriately.
19. In an excellent numeracy lesson on the subject of "time" for Year 2 pupils, the teacher stated the learning objectives for the lesson clearly and in easy terms, so that her pupils knew exactly what they were to do. Pupils find some of the concepts of time difficult to grasp, and so the teacher had prepared a range of outstanding resources to help pupils to learn. For example, she had made a

circular twine clock with the numbers from one to twelve arranged in the usual “clock” manner. To illustrate the six indicating “half past” and the three indicating “quarter” and so on, she unravelled the circle into a straight line, revealing to her pupils that the numbers on a clock face form a reverse number line. Her pupils were very familiar with number lines and easily grasped that as, for example, three was one quarter of the way from one to twelve, then it represented “quarter past”. The worksheets that she had prepared were very well structured and challenged all pupils sufficiently. By the end of this lesson, pupils had made excellent gains in their knowledge and understanding of time; many were able to tackle written problems such as “What is the difference between the number of years in two centuries and the number in three decades?” successfully.

20. In a very good literacy lesson in the foundation stage, children made very good gains in their learning about the sound “r” and clusters of letters with the consonant “r”. The teacher used skilful questioning and encouraged the pupils to respond, reinforcing previous knowledge and extending their phonic skills. The pace of lessons is generally good through the school and very good in Reception. The teacher’s expectations in this class are appropriately high.
21. In a Year 3 lesson on fractions, the teaching and learning were both excellent. The teacher, realising the difficulties that this subject can cause, came prepared with useful resources. “Dinosaur cubes” were used to make a creature that was $\frac{1}{2}$ red and $\frac{1}{5}$ blue; pupils then had to work out what fraction was neither red nor blue. The teacher placed great emphasis on using the correct mathematical vocabulary, and expected her pupils to do likewise. Pupils were appropriately reminded of the time limits on their exercises; they were not allowed to “drift”.
22. The lessons that were very good or excellent, throughout the school, contained plenty of challenge for the whole class, including the higher attainers. Very good or better lessons were observed in Reception and years two, three, four and five, They encompassed a range of subject areas, including music, design technology, literacy and numeracy. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy are well taught. Lessons usually start with productive question and answer sessions to set pupils thinking.
23. Teachers’ knowledge and understanding are generally good in all subjects; they manage their pupils well. Throughout the school, day-to-day marking of pupils’ work and other assessment procedures are generally good. An exception to this is the marking in some books for the oldest pupils, where some of the marking is unsatisfactory. Although pupils’ work is often well marked, with appropriate comments to praise pupils’ efforts, this is not done to the same degree in each class. Additionally, there are rarely comments to stretch pupils who have obtained full marks for a particular exercise. Whilst lessons generally have clear learning objectives, these are not always looked at again at the end of lessons, to see how far they have been met. The use of homework is satisfactory through the school. Support staff work well with teachers through the school and make a significant contribution to pupils’ learning. The targeted teaching of Year 5 pupils, according to how well they have done previously, is helping to raise standards.

24. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is a strong commitment to meeting the needs of pupils and to raising standards of teaching and learning. Teachers and the coordinator work together in the formulation of individual education plans. Parents are kept well informed and, where necessary, are involved in the setting of targets. Classroom assistants are kept well aware of the targets, and are provided with the appropriate training to enable them to support teaching and learning. Good pupil management has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Teachers use praise, which helps to sustain enthusiasm, and enables pupils to feel confident enough to ask for help when they do not understand. Pupils' learning is reviewed regularly, their progress is evaluated, and decisions are then made as to the next step in learning. Where external support is required, the appropriate procedures are followed. As a result, pupils at all stages of the Code of Practice for special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior learning, and their individual education plans. Pupils' work is regularly assessed and attainment recorded, so that targets in pupils' educational plans can be modified with full information to hand. In almost all lessons seen, teachers had planned carefully to provide work that ensured that pupils succeeded and made good progress. Occasionally, the overuse of work sheets meant that pupils were insufficiently challenged to work things out for themselves.
25. Standards of teaching have improved considerably since the last inspection. At that time, one quarter of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory, and the proportion of very good or better teaching was very small indeed. The key issue to address the issue of the variation in teaching quality has been met. The presentation of pupils' work is now satisfactory. Parents and pupils have appropriate guidelines on homework.

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

26. The school provides its pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, at the Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2. Curriculum planning for the Foundation Stage ensures that the six areas of learning receive appropriate coverage, with sufficient emphasis given to personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. The school's curriculum meets the statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when provision for information technology was unsatisfactory.
27. There are schemes of work in place for all subjects. The school has mainly adopted the exemplar schemes of work from the Qualifications and Curricular Authority, and adapted these to its own needs. These provide teachers with guidance in the planning of work. The quality of the school's long and medium term planning has improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory, apart from planning being positively influenced at all levels by improved marking and assessment. An appropriate allocation of time is given to all subjects. Teachers are successful in identifying links between subjects, and provide pupils with opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum.

28. The school has responded well to the national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. In literacy, particular emphasis is put on improving spelling and reading, and in numeracy the emphasis is on mental mathematics. A weekly intensive spelling session takes place, in which pupils are set according to ability, and one day each week is used specifically to develop writing for a particular purpose. The literacy strategy is delivered effectively. Daily, well-organised sessions, which adhere closely to the national framework, are taught in each class. Teaching in most subjects makes a positive contribution to the development of literacy skills. The promotion of subject-specific words and terminology provides valuable vocabulary extension, as, for example, when pupils describe their musical compositions in terms of crotchets and quavers, or discuss the solubility and insolubility of substances when conducting a scientific investigation. Pupils use their reading skills extensively to retrieve information and to follow instructions. They learn to adapt the style of their writing to its purpose. For example, they present findings in tables and report frameworks in science, and use their knowledge of an historical period to write imaginative accounts in history. The numeracy strategy is also having a positive effect on pupils' learning and the standards achieved. Numeracy skills are promoted satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, pupils measure, calculate and draw graphs as part of their work in science, and use their knowledge of numbers to construct historical time lines.
29. The school's arrangements for ensuring that pupils have equal access to the curriculum are good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported within their own classrooms.
30. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities provides additional learning opportunities for boys and girls in Key Stage 2. These include a choir and team games and attract a good number of pupils. The school enters a number of inter-school sports competitions.
31. There is satisfactory provision for personal and social education, including issues such as healthy eating and health education generally within subject areas, particularly science and religious education. There is an appropriate policy for sex education. The school has plans to develop a drugs awareness programme in the near future. Visitors to the school, such as the police, the fire service, the railway and the school nurse, enhance the provision for pupils' health and personal safety.
32. The school has a good links with the local community, which adds much to the breadth and relevance of the curriculum. Sacred Heart Church is a focus for several activities. The parish priest visits the school each week to talk to the pupils. Pupils from the school take part in Mass on special occasions in the church, such as for Mother's Day. They take part in the liturgy through readings, bidding prayers and the offertory procession.
33. The school has been able to improve its outside areas because of a grant from Lancashire County Council, which, together with hard work by teachers and parents, has enabled the development of a very pleasant and welcoming learning environment for the pupils. The school has also received some sponsorship from local shops, which has enabled some extra learning provision. Trips within the locality support pupils' work in all areas of the curriculum.

34. The school has good liaison with other educational establishments. It has effective links with the pre-school establishments which some children attend before coming to school and the nursery nurse visits these to meet prospective pupils. The school also has close links with the High School to which most pupils will transfer. During their final term, Year 6 pupils have opportunities to become familiar with some aspects of their new school. For example, the headteacher and other staff from Our Lady's High School come to Sacred Heart School to give the pupils information, and a liaison day is arranged when pupils from the two schools can meet. Effective arrangements are in place to facilitate transfer and all pupil records are passed on. For science and other subjects, the school is able to borrow from the High School resources, which enhances the provision for the curriculum. In its turn, Sacred Heart provides work experience opportunities for older secondary pupils. It also has close links with local nursery nurse and teacher training institutions, and accepts their students into the school.
35. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. This results in high levels of harmony, and very good relationships throughout the school.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, and is intrinsically woven into the general ethos and Catholic beliefs of the school. Prayers, often ones which pupils choose or have written themselves, are said regularly, and pupils join in these with a sense of reverence. The priest says Mass in the school, and pupils are taken to Mass in the church on particular feast days. Pupils are helped to develop spiritual awareness in various areas of the curriculum, particularly in assemblies and acts of collective worship which offer opportunities for stillness and reflection, and enable pupils to consider a wide range of themes such as growing up and knowledge of one's innermost self. Opportunities for awe and wonder arise across the curriculum, as when the pupils showed delight and amazement in the dramatic moment when their animated cards, designed and made by themselves, in a technology class were first seen to work successfully, or when pupils expressed spontaneous pleasure observing the colours and movement of goldfish.
37. Provision for pupils' moral development is good, and rooted in the aims of the school. Respect for others and positive caring relationships are central to the schools' ethos, and the adults provide good models of sensitive and caring behaviour, which are readily followed by the pupils. Pupils are made aware of the need to take responsibility for their own actions, and Christian values are strongly promoted, often through stories about the life of Jesus. Good behaviour and achievement, in terms of the effort made as well as the quality of work is celebrated in lessons and rewarded with certificates in the Friday assembly. Opportunities to work together to gain house points inspire pupils to try hard. Sanctions are recorded in the schools' behaviour policy but are rarely needed. There are opportunities in class to explore moral issues through class discussion. Opportunities to consider the needs of people less fortunate than themselves are provided, and pupils contribute generously, for instance, to the Good Shepherd Fund and CAFOD. Considering the needs of others is a particular feature of the prayers said in the school.

38. The provision for social development is good. Frequent visits to the local and wider community provide opportunities for pupils to work together in a different context. Group and paired work in lessons in most subjects is well organised, to promote collaborative and co-operative skills. In many lessons, particularly in music and physical education, pupils are encouraged to evaluate one another's performances. Following the very good example of their teachers, they do this in a very positive way, emphasising the good points. This promotes good interaction between pupils, and boosts the confidence of the individual. The personal and teamwork skills required in musical and sporting performance are fostered and developed when pupils take part in the Preston Music Festival, and represent the school in competitive sport, where pupils are proud to be in the school teams. Older pupils have special responsibilities, for instance, helping at lunchtime, preparing for assemblies and assisting in the reception class. The school successfully fosters a sense of citizenship, by raising funds each year for a variety of charitable causes. This is developed in other ways, too. For example, Year 4 is involved in a project on improving the environment, pupils donate harvest gifts to the elderly and the choir sings carols at the local old people's home.
39. Provision for cultural development is good. It is promoted well through the curriculum, which includes an interesting range of educational visits, linked to pupils' work. There are regular visits to museums and places of historical and geographical interest, for example, the Lancashire Museum and the Fylde Coast. Exploration of the local area with its interesting old houses, fine churches and other historic buildings deepens the pupils' awareness of their historic cultural heritage. Pupils are developing an understanding of the ways in which earlier societies, like the Victorians or Ancient Greeks, have influenced our lives today. Opportunities are used to foster pupils' multicultural knowledge and understanding through the curriculum. Pupils learn about major world faiths in religious education and about the lives of people in different parts of the world in geography, but there is insufficient emphasis on multicultural aspects of life in Britain today. Music plays an important part in cultural development. The school takes part in Preston School's Music Festival and pupils have many opportunities to become involved in out-of-school performances, such as the lunchtime recitals put on by the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra at Preston Guildhall. Visits to the school by musicians, to perform and to work with the pupils, also enhance their experience.
40. The policy for special educational needs, which is implemented well, is clearly written, provides a good overview of the code stages, sets out the school's stance on inclusion of pupils with special educational needs, and outlines the school's arrangements for meeting their needs. It also contains detailed information regarding provision for, identification of, and methods to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils. A broad range of opportunities is provided to meet the interest, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils. The curriculum takes good account of what is in pupils' individual education plans, and statements of special educational needs. Pupils are included in all lessons and extra curricular activities. The foundation curriculum is modified where necessary to meet their needs. There is a good balance between the time pupils are in mixed ability groupings within their classes, and when they are grouped to enable an emphasis to be placed on their individual needs, for example in the teachers' focus group during the literacy hour. Pupils with special educational needs follow the same curriculum as other pupils, through tasks which are well adapted to suit their learning needs. National literacy sessions are used effectively, with support

targeted to enable pupils to have equality of access. Additional literacy teaching, involving well-planned group withdrawal, enables pupils in Year 2 to reinforce and extend their literacy skills. All pupils have full access to the National Curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school provides a secure and happy learning environment for its pupils. The class teachers play an important role in the care and welfare of the pupils. They know their pupils well, and provide help and support readily when this is needed.
42. There is a well-established induction programme for children starting at the school. Home visits are made by staff from the reception class, who also visit all the feeder nursery settings. The children enjoy a number of pre-school visits, and all these arrangements help to build the confidence of the pupils as they begin their school life. There is an equally well established connection with the local High School. Visits are exchanged both by pupils and staff, including the presence of high school teachers at parents' evenings.
43. There are effective policies in place relating to child protection procedures, and health and safety matters. The key staff have received appropriate training and all records are kept in accordance with the policies. Whilst all procedures are securely followed, the school is aware of the need to define the roles of the staff involved with health and safety matters more clearly. The policies to monitor and promote good behaviour and attendance are good. The teachers use the behaviour policy consistently, and the pupils know and understand the rewards and sanctions available. The individual classroom rules are clearly displayed, and there is a weekly assembly when merit certificates are awarded. The improving attendance rates indicate the effectiveness of the attendance policy, which has the active support of the parents. The school has recently reviewed the way it monitors and supports pupils' personal development, and, as a result of this review, has introduced a personal development record which will begin in the reception year and continue with the pupils throughout their time at school.
44. The assessment of pupils' work and its use to plan future work is unsatisfactory overall. The literacy coordinator has introduced some very good practice in her subject, but even in this area, assessment is not consistently implemented through the school. In other subjects, assessment is too general, and work is not always assessed using sufficiently precise National Curriculum levels. For example, rather than pupils being identified as at a level 3a, 3b or 3c, they are often merely assessed as being at level 3. Since pupils nationally are only expected to go up by one full level every two years, two years could go past before it is realised that a pupil is not making sufficient progress. Therefore, the tracking of pupils' academic progress is also unsatisfactory.
45. There is good liaison with support agencies, for example, the behavioural support service and the language unit. All staff have good knowledge of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, as a result of the coordinator keeping up to date with developments and the provision of school-based in-service education. Governors are kept well informed, and ensure that the priorities in the school development plan are met. Clear objectives are set that pupils understand. There is good use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs, and appropriate procedures are followed for placing those pupils on the detailed and comprehensive register maintained by

the special educational needs coordinator. The school also meets the requirements of those pupils with statements of special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents have positive views of the school. The returned questionnaires show that they are comfortable to approach the school with questions or problems, and that they feel their children are expected to work hard. They also feel their children are well behaved at school, make good progress and enjoy going to school. They were less positive about the extra-curricular activities available, the information the school supplies to them and the amount of homework which is set. The inspectors agreed with the parents' positive views. They also found that there is sufficient and appropriate homework set, that there is a satisfactory range of activities provided outside the school day, and that the school provides good information for parents about the pupils' progress.
47. The quality of information supplied to parents is good. The annual reports are detailed and give information about what the pupils know and understand, and the levels to which they are working. Regular newsletters are produced which give details of school news and forthcoming events. They also give parents a summary of the main areas of study to be covered during the current term. Meetings are organised to explain the literacy and numeracy projects, and individual meetings are arranged to provide detailed information about the school's special educational needs provision. There are two parents' meetings held each year; the second one has recently been brought forward to the spring term, after discussions with parents. In addition, the school operates an 'open door' system, which gives parents easy access to teachers and to the headteacher every day. The information supplied to parents provides an effective link between home and school, and enables parents to make a significant contribution to their children's learning.
48. There is an active parents/teacher association, which organises a number of social and fund raising events each year. These are well supported by the parents and the local community, and provide valuable additional revenue for the school. The school and pupils benefit from the regular help which parents, grandparents and other adults provide in the classrooms. The adults enjoy the time they spend in school, and feel they are welcomed by the teachers. Parents are also willing to help on school trips and with the annual school plays and concerts.
49. Partnership with parents of children who have special educational needs is good. Parents are kept well informed as to the concerns of the school. They are encouraged to be involved in the setting of targets, to meet teachers to discuss progress, and to contribute to reviews and the decisions made regarding the targets set. There is some good practice where parents are kept informed through a daily report, and vice versa. Parents support learning well through such homework as learning spellings and hearing reading.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are very good, on both academic and pastoral fronts; the headteacher is especially good in the pastoral sphere. He is hard working and dedicated to his pupils. The deputy headteacher, as literacy coordinator, special needs coordinator, religious education coordinator and teacher in charge of girls' welfare, has a large workload and is particularly able on the academic wing. Between them, the head and deputy know where they want the school to go. The leadership ensures clear educational direction for the school, is always looking to improve, and is fully backed by the governing body. A relative weakness in leadership and management is that there are no regularly scheduled meetings of the management team. The school's aims and values are easily seen in the daily routines of the school; their mission statement was recently re-visited and is appropriate. The subject coordinators manage their subjects appropriately, and the literacy and numeracy coordinators have monitored standards in their subjects.
51. The governing body's fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities is good. The governors want the school to succeed. The governing body and senior management team have been pro-active in redeploying staff to maximise pupils' attainment. Governors visit the school and have monitored the delivery of some of the curriculum appropriately, particularly numeracy, literacy and the provision for special educational needs; this has not yet spread sufficiently to other subject areas. There is an appropriate committee structure, and governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Recent deliberations have included consideration of measures that may have to be instigated if the number of pupils continues to decline. The curriculum committee has a particularly sharp focus on standards. Between them, the governors bring appropriate experience to the running of this church school.
52. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and literacy and numeracy coordinators have monitored teaching throughout the school, and have given staff both verbal and written feedback. The overall impact of this monitoring has resulted in the standard of teaching being much higher than it was at the time of the last inspection. Although other curriculum coordinators do not yet monitor the teaching of their subjects, they do monitor planning and subject policies across the school; this is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.
53. The school's targets for the current Year 6 are not appropriate, nor sufficiently ambitious. However, they were set approximately 18 months ago, and the school is on course to exceed them significantly. Targets for Year 5 and Year 2 are more ambitious and, again, are on course to be met. Because numbers of pupils are relatively small in most year groups, the achievement of these targets can be dependent on the performance of two or three pupils. Inspection evidence is that the targets for 2001 in English, mathematics and science will be met. Targeted teaching is having an effect in raising standards further.
54. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good. Newly appointed teachers are mentored well by the deputy headteacher. Staff appraisal and performance management are on course, with up-to-date policies.

55. The management of special educational needs provision is very good. The special needs coordinator provides very good leadership. She ensures that parents are kept well informed, and that teachers and non-teaching assistants know the procedures for identifying pupils' special educational needs. A detailed and comprehensive register of special educational needs pupils is well maintained. Liaison with teachers and staff is of a high standard. Where necessary, arrangements are made to upgrade teachers' and the non-teaching staff's knowledge. Classroom assistants are kept well informed of pupils' needs. Good advice is given regarding the formulation of individual education plans. Accurate records of pupils' progress are well maintained. There are appropriate arrangements for pupils' learning to be reviewed regularly, their progress evaluated and decisions made as to the next step in learning. Where external support is required, the recommended procedures are followed. The nominated governor for special educational needs is kept well informed, and ensures that the priorities in the school development plan are met. Funding allocated for special educational needs provision is fully utilised, to provide effective support and to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
56. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. Support staff are deployed well across the school. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The classrooms for Reception and Year 1 are spacious, but other classes are rather cramped. The level of heating in the school hall is unsatisfactory for teaching groups of pupils withdrawn from classes. The school hall is large, and the stage would be the envy of many much larger schools. Classrooms have very attractive displays. The school benefits from two large playgrounds, and recently a small, grassed area has been created. There is no dedicated play area for children in the foundation stage, and this is not satisfactory. Resources are generally satisfactory in quality and quantity, although some of the equipment for the under-fives is in need of replacement.
57. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology is good. The school's secretary, who is both efficient and competent, is experienced in the use of information and communications technology.
58. The school development plan is a very useful working document, which clearly prioritises what needs to be done. Appropriately, both staff and governors contribute to this and the priorities are stated in plain English. Specific grants are used for their intended purposes.
59. Since the last inspection, the requirement to develop the role of the curriculum coordinators in monitoring policies, planning and record keeping has been successfully addressed. Monitoring of the presentation of pupils' work has improved. Resources for information and communication technology have improved but are still not sufficient.

60.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the school further, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body should:

1. Improve the assessment of pupils' work and the use of assessment to help plan the curriculum and track pupils' progress. (Para 44)
2. Improve pupils' attainment in information and communication technology throughout both key stages. (Para 129)
3. Raise the level of challenge throughout the school to that seen in the best-taught classes, with particular provision for the higher attaining pupils. (Para 18)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3.7%	16.7%	46.4%	31.4%	1.8%	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)	N/A	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	41

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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
		2000	5	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	1	5
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	16	13	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84(73)	68(70)	89(87)
	National	94(82)	85(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	2	4	5
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	14	15	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74(70)	79(83)	89(87)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(87)

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
		2000	17	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	12
	Girls	11	9	11
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79(70)	79(57)	79(70)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	11	8	11
	Total	23	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79(67)	72(60)	83(63)
	National	70(68)	72(69)	80(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	179
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	311,548
Total expenditure	314,718
Expenditure per pupil	1,730
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,130
Balance carried forward to next year	13,960

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	170
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	40	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	49	6	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	60	6	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	41	27	0	1
The teaching is good.	43	46	3	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	41	24	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	34	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	44	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	26	52	16	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	30	56	9	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	41	6	0	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	34	21	10	15

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

61. The provision for children under the age of five is good. The reception class provides a safe and secure environment in which children can learn.
62. Children enter the school in the year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, there were 20 children in the reception class. They attend full time. Staffing consists of one teacher and one nursery nurse. One child is presently attending a language unit and six children who have been identified as having special educational needs are well supported, enabling them to be included in all areas of the curriculum.
63. A carefully planned induction programme helps the children to settle into school life with ease. Care is taken to meet with parents and carers in school, in order to be able to meet the individual needs of children effectively. The nursery nurse also visits pre-school placements so that individual needs can be planned for.
64. Planning in the foundation stage is of a good quality and covers the nationally agreed areas of learning well. The teacher and nursery nurse have established good, caring relationships with the children, and they work closely together as an effective team. The quality of teaching is good overall. Good use is made of voluntary workers, who give generously of their time to make a positive contribution to children's progress. Careful assessments of attainment in all areas of learning are carried out when children start school. These assessments are continued to make sure that the progress of the pupils is tracked, and that work is planned to meet individual pupils' stages of development.
65. The initial assessments conducted with these children indicate that they begin school with below average attainment overall. They make very good progress in the foundation class. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of the children achieve well and attain the early learning goals in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Children make very good progress in the time they are in the reception class, and are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in personal and social development by the end of the Foundation Stage. This area is given high priority. The children work well as part of a group or class. The majority of children are eager to learn. They show good understanding of the class routines. They respond well to expectations to sit quietly on the carpet in class, and to behave very patiently during whole school assemblies. Many children happily engage in activities of their own, for example, participating in role-play in the 'clinic' area. They respond well to the teacher's instructions. Routines are well established; for example, each morning they place their lunch boxes, homework folders and their coats in the designated areas. They tidy up after themselves, and remember to say 'please' and 'thank you'. They listen carefully to their teachers, and do as they are told. They demonstrate growing independence in their dressing skills and in personal hygiene, for example, washing hands following a painting activity, and putting objects and games in the correct place. They enjoy being given

responsibilities such as preparing the tape recorder and earphones. Most are confident to try new activities.

67. Teaching in this area is very good. The staff, through their encouragement and support, ensure that children feel confident. They have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve, in terms of growth in independence and of good behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children's development in communication, language and literacy is very good. The majority of children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals and a significant minority already have. They listen attentively, and talk about their experiences. They use a developing vocabulary with increasing fluency, and express their thoughts well. Children enjoy having stories read to them, and know that stories follow a sequence of events. The role-play experiences, for example, the 'baby clinic', provide good opportunities for children to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. When the pupils are playing, the teacher and nursery nurse constantly discuss with them what it is they are doing, and challenge them to think and voice their opinions, thereby effectively developing their speech and language skills. Good use is made of the letter costumes that have been made by the nursery nurse, to help children to learn letter sounds and to understand how to join them together to make words. Most children hold their pencils correctly, are beginning to form their letters, and can write their name and simple words and sentences. The appointments book in the 'clinic' and the writing area are used well by the children, in less formal sessions.

69. This area of learning is particularly well taught, therefore pupils make very good progress. The activities are thoughtfully planned, to include children in speaking and listening activities that encourage them to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Detailed records of the progress children make are maintained. Good use is made of visitors to the school, as was the case when a mother visited to talk about her newborn baby. The children were confident in chatting about when they were babies, and in asking her questions, the answers to which extended their knowledge. Children are encouraged to make simple storybooks. They regularly take reading and library books home, and parents and carers are kept well informed as to how to assist the children with their listening, speaking and reading skills. Some of the reading books are old and need replacing. However, the stimulating displays, and the good quality script in teachers' captions, promote good standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Mathematical development

70. Children generally make good progress in this area, and are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development by the end of the foundation stage. Lower attaining children easily count everyday objects to 12, and the higher attaining children well beyond. They understand how to add two numbers together and all use appropriate mathematical language, such as 'more' and 'less', 'taller' and 'shorter'. Planning shows that they investigate flat and solid shapes, and those children making furniture for "Biff's house" are able to name a rectangle when making a bed. They are able to recognise some coins and are beginning to have an understanding of the passing of time.

71. This area of teaching is generally good. There are carefully planned opportunities for children to develop their mathematical language and understanding of number, through practical activities and daily routines. The good quality displays and the use of number lines are used well as teaching aids, and assist children during counting activities. The children with special needs receive good quality support to enable them to be included in activities, and to make good progress in acquisition of early mathematical vocabulary through discussion about practical mathematical activities. Occasionally, pupils use resources that do not pose sufficient challenge for them. Although the teacher and the nursery nurse are imaginative in inventing resources, much of the school's equipment is old, worn and needs replacing.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Carefully planned activities encourage children to identify features of living things, and to investigate and question why things happen. Children are involved in planting beans and in observing stages of growth. The adults support the pupils well in investigating their surroundings, and encourage them to find things out for themselves. The teacher's planning and earlier records show that children learn about their local area. There have been visits to the local clinic and to the supermarket; these provided first hand experience for children to grow in knowledge and understanding. They are finding out about the life cycle of a frog. Their earlier work includes looking at patterns in fruit, the making of biscuits and the use of salt dough for their baker's shop, to increase awareness of changes in materials. Photographic evidence shows that they participated in an assembly about other children in other countries of the world. However, there are few resources in the classroom to promote knowledge of other cultures.
73. Teaching is very good. The displays and investigative areas contain appropriate items for observation and exploration, although there is perhaps too much out at once, which means that the classroom is cluttered. The children are taught how to use the computer and are competent in working the tape recorder. Children are provided with very good opportunities to talk about, and to record, their observations. Good use is made of visitors to the class and visits in the locality, in order to broaden pupils' experiences.

Creative development

74. Children make generally good progress in their creative skills and are likely to attain the standards set by the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the foundation stage. They explore colour, for example, when painting imaginative pictures. The detail in their paintings show that the pupils have thought carefully about their work before recording what they have imagined and seen, and are beginning to think about how to mix colours. They cut and stick pictures confidently on their frog story frames, and when making furniture for Biff's house. They sing well in class and in assemblies, remembering the words to songs and hymns.

75. Teaching is of a generally good standard. Children are provided with carefully planned opportunities to explore colour and shape, and to use their imagination through art, music, stories, dance and imaginative play. When experimenting with paint, children are taught how to hold the paintbrush correctly. They are challenged to think about their work, through skilful questioning about what they are doing and discussion as to what they should do next. Occasionally, when their work is over-directed, this prevents them thinking out solutions for themselves. Staff enable children to sing together and to remember the words and tunes to simple rhymes.

Physical development

76. Children are already achieving the early learning goals in this area. A wide variety of learning opportunities are provided. Their skills in cutting, modelling and building with construction toys and bricks are developing well. Children also participate in physical education lessons in the school hall. They move confidently when travelling over and along the apparatus. They show a good awareness of space.
77. Standards in teaching are good. Staff help children to use tools and modelling materials with increasing skill. The well-organised activities area enables children to practise running, jumping, skipping and hopping skills. There are appropriate physical challenges which enable the pupils to grow in confidence; for example, there are benches, boxes and mats to travel over, in as many ways as they can. During all activities, staff ensure that children are well supported and that good attention is given to safety. Clear instructions and skilful questioning extend the children's understanding of what is required and promotes progressive development.
78. There is no specifically designated play area for children under the age of five, and no access to the outside area from the classroom. There are sufficient wheeled toys; however, there is a shortage of soft surface area in one of the playground areas, and the mats used in physical education lessons are old and need replacing. The children have to use the hall, which is situated upstairs. During the inspection, this teaching area was far too cold for the activities that were taking place.

ENGLISH

79. In the year 2000 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, attainment in terms of average national points scores was below the National Average in reading. In writing, attainment was well below the national average. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, reading and writing were below the national average, reading by half a term and writing by just over one term. When compared to similar schools, it was a similar picture. Inspection evidence suggests that standards are improving. In the present Year 2 class, a higher number of pupils than in previous years are on line to attain the national average, and a significant percentage the higher level 3. This can be explained by the improvement in the quality of teaching, the effective systems that have been put in place, and the whole school commitment to raising standards.

80. In Key Stage 2, the results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests in English were in line with the national average, and also in line with those of schools with a similar intake. Taken across the period from 1998 to 2000, standards have fallen below the national average by half a term, and the performance of boys was below the average for their age group. Children who sat the tests in 2000 performed better than they did when they were at the end of Key Stage 1. Evidence from the inspection indicates that the standards of pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are rising. The present cohort of pupils are attaining standards that are in line with the national average, with a higher percentage of pupils than in previous years being on target to achieve the higher level five. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
81. When pupils enter the school, assessments show that attainment overall is below average. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of language and communication skills, and this enables pupils to make good progress. A small minority of pupils find it difficult to listen for sustained periods of time. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and therefore make good progress in relation to their individual education plans.
82. Standards in speaking and listening by the end of Key Stage 1 are good. Pupils are taught to listen carefully and the well-planned opportunities for pupils to talk, during whole class and group sessions, enable pupils to make good progress. By the end of the key stage, most demonstrate the ability to listen attentively, ask questions and respond to their teachers' questions with obvious confidence. There was a good example of this in a Year 2 class, where higher attaining pupils spoke clearly and confidently, demonstrating their growth in knowledge of the use of glossaries and the meaning of the word 'definition' during the course of the lesson.
83. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to other pupils. A small minority of lower attaining pupils within the key stage have a restricted vocabulary. Teachers make effective use of discussion, and use questions skilfully to check understanding of vocabulary, and to develop pupils' confidence in speaking. Because of these opportunities, pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills, and by the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils are able to retain information well. Their conversational skills are well developed. When given the opportunity to participate in class discussion, the higher attaining pupils put forward their views confidently. This was evident in a lesson where year 6 pupils used a rich and wide range of vocabulary when constructing their information leaflets to promote the Globe Theatre.
84. Overall standards in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Lower attaining pupils, including some who have been identified as having special educational needs, use pictures and their knowledge of sounds to assist them in reading words they are not sure of. The middle- and higher-attaining pupils are confident in tackling words that are unfamiliar. They are eager to read, and to talk about their favourite stories. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to explain the difference between an author and an illustrator, and are able to read simple texts with some accuracy. The higher attaining pupils clearly enjoy reading short stories, demonstrate good understanding of what they have read, and are able to talk about what has happened in the story and what they think may happen next.

85. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils read well for their age. Overall, pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Most pupils are able to read independently, fluently and with good expression from a satisfactory range of texts. When asked about their reading, they show good comprehension skills. They understand the use of the thesaurus and dictionaries, and have good understanding of the difference between fact and fiction. Some pupils who make good use of their local public library are able to explain how to locate information. They enjoy reading for pleasure, and are able to discuss books and authors. Those pupils who find reading more difficult are hesitant, but are able to use contents pages, indexes and dictionaries to assist them in their work in other subjects. During the inspection, although pupils were observed changing their library books, they were not seen making use of the library for the purpose of finding out information for themselves. Throughout the school, pupils take reading books home. There is good support from those parents and carers who regularly hear their child read at home, and those who give generously of their time to assist in school. Although there are satisfactory systems in place for teachers to hear pupils read regularly and to record their progress, the application of this is variable and therefore, at the end of Key Stage 2, some pupils who are capable readers are not yet reading sufficiently challenging material.
86. Standards in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 are good. Teachers provide carefully planned opportunities to develop writing skills, and this enables pupils to make good progress as they move through the key stage. Most of the younger pupils form their letters correctly and write simple sentences, using full stops and capital letters. The lower attaining pupils require the assistance of an adult when recording their ideas, in their spelling of simple everyday words, and their use of punctuation. A few pupils are still holding their pencil incorrectly and therefore have insufficient control in their formation of letters. By the end of the key stage, most pupils write independently and are beginning to write stories with a beginning, middle and an end. Their spelling of simple words is generally accurate and they are able to use full stops and capital letters appropriately. Grammatical skills are well developed for their age. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to use speech marks. Their work, which is well presented, includes a good range of writing for different purposes.
87. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are attaining satisfactory levels for their age. They are able to write letters, stories, descriptions, reports and instructions. They plan, draft and improve their work. Most write imaginatively, and with increasing confidence. Their work demonstrates accurate sentence construction and grammar. There is good use of pronouns in Year 5, good progress in the use of different tenses, the range of vocabulary accuracy in spelling, and the use of speech marks is good. All but the lowest attaining pupils write in a well-developed, joined-up style of writing. Scrutiny of previous work, and of their work in geography and science, demonstrates that higher and lower attaining pupils have made good progress in the presentation and organisation of work. The initiative of the coordinator, to set aside one literacy session per week for staff and pupils to concentrate on the development of writing skills, is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of writing and the good standards attained. There has been an improvement in pupils' individual writing skills and their use of interesting descriptive language, although there are still some pupils whose vocabulary range is limited, and who need assistance in formulating their ideas. Pupils' spelling is usually accurate. The introduction of assessing pupils' spelling levels and the provision of time to extend spelling skills have enabled pupils to become more confident in tackling words that they are unsure of. The support

provided for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress. Throughout the school, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information and computer technology as an alternative form of recording their work or for research purposes, and there are few examples of extended writing.

88. The overall quality of teaching is good. There is also some very good teaching in both key stages. The strategies for teaching literacy are effective. Teachers plan lessons in accordance with the national literacy strategy. This ensures that lessons include reading, question and answer sessions, written activities, and the opportunity for teachers to check the progress in pupils' understanding and knowledge. Time is given at the end of each lesson to reinforce skills, and to check that the objectives of the lesson have been achieved, as was the case in a lesson in Year 3, where pupils had been learning about how to write rules containing the words, "You must".
89. The most successful teaching observed was characterised by a strong commitment to raising standards, and an energy which effectively accelerated the pace of pupils' progress. There was evidence of this in all classes and especially so in Year 2, where maximum effort was reflected in the pupils' desire to do well and the rate of learning they achieved. The skilful use of questioning to motivate pupils to listen carefully and to voice their opinions was evident in many lessons, including a science lesson in Year 1, where pupils were encouraged to classify fruits and plants according to which they could and couldn't eat. In Year 4, pupils were encouraged to think for themselves when drafting a fact file for a book on space. High expectations of pupils, both in terms of behaviour and regarding the quality of their work, as well as interesting and challenging lesson content, enable pupils to make very good progress in acquisition of knowledge and skills, as in Year 5 where pupils were encouraged to use dictionaries to check the meanings of words. Work in most classes is carefully planned to meet the needs of individual pupils, according to their attainment level. Where teaching is less successful, there is insufficient use of assessment of pupils' understanding and knowledge to provide work that is sufficiently challenging. This is so where there is an overuse of worksheets. These hinder the development of good handwriting skills and deny the pupils the opportunity to be creative.
90. The good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils have a significant impact on the good progress that pupils make. Pupils are eager to learn, and feel confident in asking for assistance when they are not sure what to do. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. The teachers and classroom assistants know the pupils well. The high quality support is very well organised, in order to ensure that all those involved are well informed, and included in the preparation of work to meet individual needs.
91. The school has some effective systems in place to monitor the progress of pupils in English as they move through the school. Good use is made of the National Curriculum and other tests to identify areas of concern relating to individuals and classes. The information gained, however, is not always used to best advantage. There are examples of teachers' marking being of a good standard; however, this practice is inconsistent and teachers do not always offer sufficient advice on how pupils can improve their written work.
92. The coordinator provides very effective leadership. She shows good understanding of the developments needed in the subject, and a strong

commitment to raising standards. A satisfactory start has been made in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This good initiative is beginning to raise standards in teaching and learning, although the impact of this has not yet been fully realised in all classes.

93. The school has made several improvements since the previous report. The National Literacy Strategy has provided a useful structure to support teachers' planning, and the development of appropriate skills and knowledge. There has been an improvement in standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2. Systems to improve handwriting and spelling are beginning to be effective. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved. Some teachers have involved all the pupils in their class in deciding individual targets. These are displayed in their room and on their desks, to remind them of what they are doing in order to improve. The additional literacy lessons in Year 2 and the booster classes for Year 6 pupils, in preparation for the tests at the end of the key stages, are used well to reinforce and extend literacy skills.
94. The school has rightly identified the need to reorganise the library. Although the range, quality and quantity of books have been improved, many are still in need of replacing and the range of fiction and non-fiction needs extending to widen pupils' experiences, and to include more information relating to other cultures, in preparation for living in a multicultural society.

MATHEMATICS

95. On the basis of the year 2000 national test results, based on average national curriculum points scores, attainment was in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils obtaining level 2, the expected level, and the proportion obtaining the higher level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 matched the national average. Pupils' performance in the Key Stage 1 mathematics test was above average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The average attainment of pupils in the four years 1998 to 2000 was below the national average in the Key Stage 1 tests. On average, pupils have left Key Stage 1 just over one half a term behind pupils nationally. The performance of girls was lower than that of boys in the end of Key Stage 1 tests; on average, they were nearly one term behind.
96. In the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in terms of points scores was in line with the national average. The proportions of pupils obtaining level 4, the expected level nationally, and the higher level five again matched national figures. The attainment of this group of pupils was average when compared with schools of a similar type. Their attainment was well above that expected when compared with the levels they attained in their Key Stage 1 national tests.

97. The evidence of attainment in lessons observed, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that the standards attained by the current cohorts of pupils are above average at the end of Key Stage 1, and average by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. Within the range of mathematics work seen during the inspection, many pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrated good levels of attainment related to investigative mathematics and number. Pupils in Key Stage 2 generally demonstrated satisfactory knowledge of money, fractions, decimals and percentages. Multiplication tables are not practised sufficiently consistently through the school; this is adversely affecting pupils' attainment and progress, and hinders their attainment in other areas of mathematics. Pupils at the top of the key stage develop their own strategies appropriately when solving problems in their heads, can interpret charts appropriately and are familiar with different ways of presenting data. They are able to solve problems by extracting information provided in a graph. There was no discernible difference in the performance of girls and boys in the lessons seen. Standards in mathematics are currently higher than they were at the time of the last inspection for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, and match those at the end of Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently stretched. To raise standards of attainment in both key stages, there is a need to continue to build up a coherent mathematical vocabulary, and to ensure that all pupils have instant recall of their multiplication tables.
98. Overall, pupils' learning in mathematics is good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress is, however, less good at the very top of Key Stage 2. Factors aiding learning include the positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, and the overall good standard of teaching. The teaching observed was excellent in two of the eight lessons seen, very good in one lesson, good in three lessons and satisfactory in two. The excellent lessons were in Year 2 and Year 3 and the very good was in Year 5. The features that made the best lessons excellent and contributed to a high rate of learning were very enthusiastic teaching, very good planning, with plenty of work for pupils and, most of all, the highest possible expectations. Such lessons clearly explained what the learning objectives were, and re-visited these at the end of the session to see how far they had been achieved. In the lessons that were satisfactory, rather than better than this, the pace was sometimes too slow, and too little was expected of the pupils. One of the lessons at the top of Key Stage 2 was close to being unsatisfactory; there was too little challenge for pupils, particularly the higher attainers. Teachers in most numeracy lessons start with appropriately brisk question and answer sessions to get pupils thinking. In numeracy lessons, the likeliest time for pupils to lessen their rate of working is in the "independent learning" sessions. In the best lessons, however, teachers are aware of this, and set appropriate time targets, as in, for example, the excellent Year 2 lesson on time. Factors militating against progress are a lack of higher expectations at the top of Key Stage 2, some lack of pupils' instant recall of multiplication tables, and, occasionally, an over-reliance on commercial worksheets. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress in mathematics; all pupils at Sacred Heart are appropriately included.

99. Pupils' response in lessons seen was good in both key stages. Pupils show great commitment to the subject, and their attitudes in Year 2 and Year 3 were particularly good. Pupils behave well and concentrate. Relationships between pupils and with their teachers, learning support assistants and other adults are good.
100. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory overall; pupils' academic progress is not tracked sufficiently accurately. Day-to-day marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. In some cases, it is detailed, with comments to help the pupils to improve, but in one class, the marking was only cursory. Rarely are there comments posing deeper questions for those who have obtained full marks. The standard of presentation of the pupils' work is good.
101. The school has generally satisfactory resources for mathematics; use of these resources to support the work in hand is satisfactory and supports learning. The co-ordinator for mathematics is exceptionally committed and able. She has carried out some monitoring of teaching. The effectiveness of the strategy to teach numeracy is good overall.

SCIENCE

102. In the end of Key Stage 1 assessments in 2000, teachers judged that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level 2 was close to the national average and that the proportion reaching the higher level 3 was below the national average. Pupils' performance when compared to similar schools was below the national average at both levels. In the Key Stage 2 national test results for the same year, attainment in terms of points scores was well below the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching level 4, the expected level, was well below the national average, as was the proportion reaching the higher level 5. Pupils' performance when compared to similar schools was also well below the national average at both levels. The performance of pupils over the last four years in the national tests has been well below average in each year, except 1999 when it was below average. The improvement in 1999 brought the school nearer to the national average, but though the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 remained the same for the following year, the school fell behind the national trend and so again, in 2000, was performing well below the national average.
103. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that attainment of pupils currently at the end of the Key Stage 1 remains in line with the national average. By the end of Key stage 1, pupils are developing an understanding of what constitutes a fair test. They undertake simple investigations successfully and use the results to come to sensible conclusions. They understand that plants need water and light for growth, and work successfully in groups to test the effects of depriving a plant of light or warmth. A range of opportunities enables them to explore physical and chemical change. For example, they heat various substances, such as chocolate and wax, and record the results. In making clay pots, they explore the effects of pushing and pulling. They identify and describe forces required to perform activities such as pedalling a bike or riding a go-cart.

104. The findings of the inspection are that standards are improving and that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is now in line with the national average. Year 6 pupils conducted an experiment to find out what happened to the shadow when the light source moved closer to the object. Their ability to carry out experimental investigations was good. Most make reasonable predictions, and come to sensible conclusions. The majority were skilled at recording results and tests in a scientific manner, using clear labels and accurate language. However, pupils were not given opportunities to plan and design their own investigations. This is done for them by the teacher, or through directive worksheets, and analysis of work shows that pupils in the last two years of the key stage have few opportunities to test their own ideas in their own way. Usually, the same experiment is carried out by all the pupils in the class, in exactly the same way. This means that higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
105. The quality of teaching is generally good. In the most effective lessons, the teaching is lively, explanations are clear and there is good pupil participation in group work. Teachers share the target for the lesson with the class, and this provides a clear focus. A very positive aspect of the science curriculum is the amount of practical work that is undertaken, enabling pupils to find things out for themselves. Lower attaining pupils are well supported by teachers and by the effective use of support staff. This enables them to make good progress. Teachers' behaviour management is good, and is based on the good relationships between pupils and teachers. Pupils respond positively. They enjoy their work and are keen to contribute in lessons. They learn because they are well-motivated and interested. They listen carefully, and follow instructions conscientiously to complete their practical tasks, and co-operate well when working in groups.
106. In a very well organised lesson, Year 5 pupils made good progress in carrying out a fair test to investigate conditions that might affect germination. Their understanding of some of the principles of fair testing was increased when they read an account of another group's experiment on the same topic, and compared it with their own. The teacher effectively used the discussion to reinforce pupils' knowledge in other scientific areas. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils made good progress in their understanding of how to set up an investigation, because the lesson was well planned and had clear learning objectives which the teacher shared with the pupils. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils responded to the teachers' high expectations that they should act like 'real scientists' with very good presentation and careful labelling of their work. In a good Year 2 lesson, the teachers' very careful explanations and skilful drawing out of the pupils' knowledge helped them to recall and consolidate what they had previously been taught, about the needs of a plant. Having effectively revised their existing knowledge, the teacher was then able to develop and extend their knowledge and understanding, so that they made good progress in considering the effect of removing certain provisions from the plant.
107. Analysis of work in Key Stage 2 shows that marking in Year 6 is unsatisfactory. Some of the work is unmarked, particularly that of lower attaining pupils who do not complete their recording of work done in the lesson. The teacher cannot assess these pupils' knowledge and understanding and plan future provision. In other Key Stage 2 classes, pupils' work is marked regularly, but the appraisals do not give pupils useful information about their success in learning, such as clarifying what they know, or direct them to the next step. On occasions, where the same information has been copied by all pupils, including those of lower

ability, it is not possible for the teacher to assess each individual pupil's level of understanding or gauge their knowledge of the facts.

108. Science makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. Teachers have prioritised the use of appropriate vocabulary, and pupils are encouraged to talk about their ideas and what they see and do. Mathematical skills are developed as pupils take measurements and use grids, charts and graphs to record results of investigations. There was very little evidence of information and communication technology supporting the subject.
109. Provision for science has been a particular focus of the school because of concern about low attainment in the statutory tests. The co-ordinator has analysed the results and has identified particular areas of weakness. He has discussed this analysis with the staff, with a view to putting more emphasis on developing these areas. The school has recently adopted the national scheme and the co-ordinator thinks that this is having a positive effect on improving standards. The co-ordinator has had opportunities to observe teaching in the school. He looks at weekly planning and at samples of pupils' work. This monitoring is done on an informal basis and is not recorded. The assessment procedures which have just been introduced are too general, in that they assess whole class performance and not that of individual pupils. There is no whole-school tracking of assessment, which would give a clear indication of each pupil's progress.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those expected of seven-year-olds, and have been maintained since the last inspection. There was a very limited amount of work available in Key Stage 2 for scrutiny, because teaching in the subject alternates with design and technology, so art and design is not being taught in most classes at the present time. There is no school portfolio with examples of past artwork, and much of the work done in the present academic year has been taken home by the pupils. The standard of the work available for inspection was satisfactory, but there was not enough evidence to make a judgement on standards of art overall at Key Stage 2.
111. Pupils in Key Stage 1 gain experience in using a range of materials including paint, crayon, pastels, clay and collage materials. By the end of the key stage, they have gained confidence in a range of techniques. They learn how images can be made using line and tone, when they work with charcoal. Art is used to complement their work in all subjects. Pupils study the work of famous artists, exploring techniques and working with various styles. After studying a painting by Monet, pupils have created their own colour areas imitating Monet's own colours by close observation. These are to form the background to a large-scale similar picture of their own.
112. In Key Stage 2, pupils respond imaginatively to the work and techniques of famous artists. They have studied Turner and William Morris, and produce good quality paintings of waterfalls in the style of the Japanese artist Hokusai. Pupils have had opportunities to produce work based on direct observation. Their paintings of daffodils are of a satisfactory standard, while their pencil drawings of hands and shoes are of a good quality, showing attention to line, tone and shade. Portraits of Tudor monarchs show satisfactory paint handling skills. The use of

sketchbooks has recently been introduced and these are used effectively in most classes.

113. Teaching in the lesson observed in Key Stage 2 was good. The work was challenging, but the pupils made good progress in identifying the notion of a repeat pattern and suggesting and creating examples for themselves, because of the clear explanations, prompting and effective use of the Paint software programme by the teacher. Pupils' vocabulary was appropriately extended.
114. Displays in the school are of a consistently high standard. The school has recently adopted aspects of the national scheme. The co-ordinator is very interested in developing art through other subjects. As an extra-curricular activity, pupils made an impressive art display which was exhibited at the Preston Music Festival. Pupils have visited the Harris Museum and worked with an artist making antique maps.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. Owing to timetable constraints, it was only possible to see three lessons in design and technology, all of which were in Key Stage 2. An analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, coupled with the work seen in the lessons, shows that standards match national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are building up their skills in both designing and making appropriately as they go through the school. All pupils are included appropriately.
116. The overall quality of teaching observed was good, with one lesson on constructing 3-D shapes from nets for pupils in Year 3 being very good. Pupils' learning is good overall. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils evaluated the work that they had done in attaching soles to slippers that they were making. They showed appropriate care in taking into account what the user of the slippers would want. Year 4 pupils made a variety of "pop-up" cards, using different types of linkages and moving mechanisms. The school has useful on-going links with a local college, where Sacred Heart pupils are able to carry out bricklaying and wallpapering, for example. The assessment of pupils' work and its use to track pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.
117. Pupils respond well and show enthusiasm for the subject. They enjoy their work and are keen to discuss what they are doing.
118. The co-ordinator is very keen and enthusiastic, and has attended relevant in-service training. She has been in post for one year, and her enthusiasm and drive are making an impact on the subject through the school. Resources are satisfactory and are stored appropriately. The school has recently won a special award for the subject in a local competition. Since the last inspection, standards and provision have improved. In 1996, there was insufficient evidence to judge standards, and resources were unsatisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

119. Standards in geography are in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Year 6 pupils have carried out much work of a good standard on rivers. They are familiar with the effects of erosion, and have studied V-shaped valleys and waterfalls. In a good lesson, they were able to identify river systems from maps, plot them and research the Internet to find information on local rivers. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils used the local environment to write about "In the street" and "Our walk". These pupils were able to name local places on maps satisfactorily.
120. The overall quality of teaching in the four lessons seen was good; pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn well in this subject. Teachers manage their pupils well, but assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. The quality of day-to-day marking is variable; in one class in Key Stage 2, the pupils' books were entirely unmarked. This is unsatisfactory.
121. Pupils enjoy geography and like to talk about their studies about other places, such as St. Lucia. They are interested in the subject, and this helps their learning.
122. The coordinator has good subject knowledge. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

HISTORY

123. Only two lessons were observed, but analysis of pupils' work, in books and displays, and discussion with pupils shows that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. A comprehensive variety of topics is covered, and the key elements of the subject are appropriately developed. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
124. Throughout the school, interesting activities and an extensive range of visits give pupils a genuine feeling for the life of particular times. Year 2 pupils develop enquiry skills, finding out about famous people in the past such as Samuel Pepys, and getting information about the Great Fire of London in 1666. Chronological skills are developed when they construct a family tree for Katie Morag, and examine photographs of their great grandmothers. The pupils brought the past to life, when they discussed and finalised the action and dialogue to create a dramatic scene of the outbreak of the Fire of London, based on events recorded in Samuel Pepys' diary. The resulting play was then performed in a whole school assembly. Very good use is made of the immediate local area and of the Fylde coast, to develop pupils' understanding of then and now.
125. In Key Stage 2, pupils are developing their knowledge about events and life styles through the ages. Year 3 pupils, in their study of the Anglo Saxons, have used a variety of sources, such as books, pictures and artefacts, to 'explore' the treasures found in the burial ship at Sutton Hoo and to give them a genuine feel for the craftsmanship and artistry of those times. In compiling a list of items for enclosure in a modern time capsule, they are effectively comparing and contrasting the past with modern times. They suggest reasons why the Vikings invaded Britain, and their knowledge of the Vikings generally is enhanced by a visit to the Penworthan Centre, dressed in appropriate costume, to engage in activities of the time. Year 5 pupils take on the role of archaeologists, diving to retrieve items from the hull of the Mary Rose, to find out about life on board the

ship in Tudor Times. A visit to Broughton Cottage to take part in, for instance, Tudor dancing and cooking Tudor recipes enables pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of this period also. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of aspects of Victorian life. They have studied the growth of Preston during Victorian times, and are aware of the hardships for people who worked in the mills in those times. Analysis of pupils' work shows, however, that in too many lessons opportunities to develop pertinent history skills are missed when pupils are required to complete worksheets designed to test factual knowledge only.

126. Teaching in the two lessons seen was good. There is good rapport between pupils and teacher. Clarity of explanation and careful questioning establish what pupils know and understand, and set the context for new learning. Year 2 pupils made good progress in their understanding of then and now, and how to construct a family tree, because the teacher related everything to the pupils' own experiences. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher effectively caught and maintained pupils' interest by a lively presentation of the story of Thor's hammer, extending their knowledge and understanding of Viking sagas.
127. History makes a good contribution to literacy in terms of speaking and listening. It contributes to writing when pupils are given opportunities to express thoughts and feelings in their own words, as, for example, in writing a letter to an imaginary friend, describing some of the exploits of the Viking invaders. The subject is well supported by information technology with CD ROM's and access to specific websites on Intranet.
128. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator examines planning and has collected samples of pupils' work, and so has an appropriate grasp of the work being done throughout the school. She has prepared a comprehensive development plan, which is to be implemented in the near future, and which will further enhance provision. Resources for history are good and the school borrows artefacts from a local museum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use information and communication technology to assemble text and symbols appropriately. Whilst they are able to generate text and save and retrieve information with some assistance, they are not given the opportunity to carry out modelling. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in monitoring and modelling is also unsatisfactory. They are not being given the opportunity to develop these key skills. Overall standards, whilst improving, have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection.
130. Overall progress, whilst improving, is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2, for all pupils, including those having special educational needs. No information and communication technology lessons were being taught during the inspection period. Assessment is not used effectively to monitor pupils' progress in this subject. Information and communications technology is not given its rightful place on the timetable as a subject to be taught to all pupils each week.
131. Groups of pupils were observed working on computers. Their response is good. They show eagerness for, and interest in, this subject.

132. The co-ordinator for this subject is knowledgeable, and keen to spread her skills. Whilst she has already provided some in-service training for colleagues, the national training for teachers at this school has not yet taken place. She has not yet had time to monitor and evaluate the work of colleagues in this core subject. There are appropriate computers in every classroom now, which are not yet networked. Provision has improved since the last inspection. The school is linked to the Internet. Whilst there is an appropriate range of cross-curricular software, insufficient material is available for the pupils to work on the key areas of monitoring and modelling. Whilst some improvement has been made since the last inspection in this subject, standards continue to be below national expectations and the subject is not given a sufficiently high priority.

MUSIC

133. Standards are average at the end of both key stages and have been maintained since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress overall.
134. Year 1 pupils sing simple songs to a taped accompaniment, adding appropriate actions. Year 2 pupils listen to environmental sounds, identify them as being long or short and imitate them with their voices. They recognise a variety of instruments, describing them as being pitched or unpitched. Pupils in Year 5 improvise and record their own rhythms, and perform these, using a variety of instruments. Year 6 pupils listen and respond to music identifying timbre and texture.
135. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils made very good progress in recognising long and short sounds, and making longer and shorter sounds with their voices, because the teacher knew exactly what she wanted each pupil to achieve, and from the start of the lesson involved them in activities which consolidated previous learning and reinforced each new learning skill. Pupils were required to listen carefully. At one point in the lesson there was absolute silence as pupils listened to water dripping from a sponge. The teacher made sure that pupils understood by careful questioning, and by getting them to demonstrate what they could do before moving on. Pupils were appropriately challenged. For example, when they reproduced a long or short sound, they were asked, "What sound have you made? Is it long? Is it short?" and, "Which note represents that sound?" Year 5 pupils made good progress in improvising, recording and performing their own rhythm patterns, in a very well planned and organised lesson. The teacher's clear explanations and demonstrations ensured thorough understanding. Pupils engaged in various activities, allowing them to experiment, to practise and to gain in confidence. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils made satisfactory progress but some parts of the lesson were unchallenging, as when, instead of being encouraged to respond to Grieg's "Peer Gynt" with their own words and ideas, pupils were given inappropriate worksheets listing adjectives from which to choose to describe the music and its timbre and texture.

136. Musical activities in the school make a good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills, and to their social and cultural development, as well as enhancing the provision for pupils' musical development. They work together to compose music, and so improve their interpersonal skills. A wide range of musical opportunities is provided in the school. Year 2 pupils wrote enthusiastically about the musicians who "showed us a trumpet and a French horn and played Star War's music." Several pupils have instrumental tuition in woodwind or brass. Pupils are encouraged to join the school choir, and to become involved in activities which include singing carols at an old people's home, and taking part in Preston School's Music Festival. Pupils attend musical performances outside school, such as those put on by the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra at Preston Guildhall. Some classes have worked with musicians in school, to compose pieces of music relating to periods of history they have studied.
137. Pupils' development and attainment in the subject is not assessed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Pupils' achievements at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations, and are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. The school provides a balanced programme of physical education. Pupils learn to play games, participate in gymnastics, and respond to music through dance and movement. Year 5 pupils participate in swimming lessons for three half-terms in the year. During the week of the inspection, the physical education lessons observed were outdoor games and gymnastics.
139. Year 1 pupils are developing good balancing skills. Pupils in Year 2 develop physical control and co-ordination, as they use different types of jumps to move around the hall and over benches. They link these jumps into simple sequences. Pupils jump off apparatus and land lightly and safely. They lift, move and place apparatus safely. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have satisfactory defensive batting techniques and use these to develop their positioning for attacking shots. Year 4 pupils demonstrated good jumping and rolling skills, and travelled over apparatus with a range of movements. By the time they leave the school, most pupils readily achieve the required standard to swim 25 metres. Pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress in physical education. The attitudes and behaviour of older pupils in the school are very good. They listen carefully and perform to the best of their ability. They work effectively in groups, and appraise and value the efforts of others. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of social skills.
140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan appropriate activities and generally follow lesson plans carefully, to ensure that the lesson objectives are met. In one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, the pupils were not given clear directions about what they were to do. The teacher was unsure of what standards the pupils should be achieving, and did not give them an accurate evaluation of their performance. This resulted in pupils making unsatisfactory progress. Lessons begin and end in an orderly manner, and contain suitable warm-up and cool-down activities. In most lessons, teachers are knowledgeable about all elements of the subject. They set appropriate challenges, provide clear instructions and demonstrations, and encourage pupils to develop their skills. Because the teacher's emphasis throughout the lesson was on improving performance, Year 4 pupils made good progress in refining their jumping and rolling movements, travelling over different arrangements of apparatus. Individual

pupils demonstrated their skills to the whole class, and the teacher clarified the good points. Pupils also developed their expertise in evaluation through identifying good elements in each other's performance. Pupils were motivated to perform well because the teacher continually praised the good features in their work.

141. There is a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, which includes football, cricket, swimming and cross-country running. In a recent Preston schools' swimming gala, the school achieved first place.
142. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good leadership in the subject. She is involved in a variety of sporting activities which benefit the school, such as membership of Preston Sports Council. The school is involved in the 'Top Sport' training initiative, and this has brought benefits in terms of training for teachers and equipment for the school. The co-ordinator looks at teachers' planning but, at present, has no other opportunities to monitor provision in the subject. There are no whole-school assessment procedures, apart from in swimming.