

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St. Stephens C.E. Primary School**

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119358

Headteacher: Mr D Sharkey

Reporting inspector: Stuart Dobson  
18074

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2002

Inspection number: 244995

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 category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	South Meadow Lane Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR1 8JN
Telephone number:	01772 556306
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Youll
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18074	Mr S Dobson	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Equal Opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and pupils' achievements</i> How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13450	Ms J Madden	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
23276	Mrs M Mann	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Music Religious education	
11528	Mr M Wainwright	Team inspector	English History Physical education Special educational needs	
20970	Ms I Wakefield	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a large Church of England primary school which serves the city of Preston. There are 343 boys and girls aged from three to eleven years. They are taught in a mixture of single year and mixed age classes. Pupils come from a range of private and publicly owned housing in the inner city area and a variety of different cultural heritage and linguistic backgrounds. An above average proportion of families are eligible for free school meals. The school is situated in a socially disadvantaged area.

A well above average number of pupils (about 40 per cent) speak English as an additional language and about 10 per cent of pupils are at an early stage of acquisition of English. Most of these pupils speak Gujarati. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs but an above average proportion of them have statements of special educational need. These pupils have a broad range of individual difficulties. The school has a nursery and on entry children's attainment is well below that expected for their age.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school overall which offers a good education to its pupils. It is very effective in ensuring that, despite weaknesses in one part of the school, pupils from all backgrounds benefit from provision. It caters particularly well for those pupils who speak English as an additional language and for those who have special educational needs. Overall, pupils make good progress from a relatively low starting point. The standards achieved in this year's national tests at the end of Year 6 show good improvement. The school is well led and is in a good position to improve further. Although teaching has improved since the last inspection there is further scope for improvement. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Provides well for the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
- Good use is made of assessment information to help plan for improvements in the quality of education.
- There is a good standard of care for pupils.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- The nursery and reception classes (Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>) provide a very good start to learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in writing.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 4 and 5, where teachers' expectations are too low.
- Higher attaining pupils could do better in some classes.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

There has been good improvement since the school was last inspected in June 1996. This year, standards in tests are much higher and this is likely to be sustained. There has been satisfactory improvement to the curriculum, although in some subjects<sup>2</sup> there is a need for further guidance. This is already planned by the school. There has been good improvement in assessment and it is mostly used well. There has been a vast improvement in provision for ICT with more time devoted to this subject and to the teaching of science throughout the school. There has been good improvement in the monitoring of

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<sup>1</sup> Education prior to children moving into Year 1 and beginning the National Curriculum.

<sup>2</sup> Art and design, design and technology (DT), information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history, music, physical education, religious education.

teaching and learning. There has been very good improvement of the deployment and effectiveness of the support staff who now make a major contribution to the quality of education.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	D	E	C
Mathematics	D	E	E	E
Science	D	D	E	C

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

The above table does not accurately represent the school at the current time. The school has used a range of new strategies during the last year and standards have risen very significantly in all three subjects. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are now broadly average and pupils are performing well compared with similar schools. This judgement is supported by the outcomes of the 2002 national tests in these three subjects. Although national results have not yet been published for 2002 it is clear that school results have improved significantly this year. The school set itself challenging targets for 2002 which were exceeded.

Pupils at the ages of seven and eleven perform considerably better in reading than they do in writing though there has been all-round improvement. At the end of Year 2, standards are below average in writing and reading. They are average in mathematics. The biggest improvement in attainment in the last year has been in mathematics.

Nursery and reception children achieve well especially in speaking. By the time they begin Year 1, they are still below expected levels in most areas of learning<sup>3</sup> but they achieve the expected levels in their personal, social and emotional development. This good progress continues and by the end of Year 2 they broadly achieve expected levels in all subjects except English. This is because many of the pupils have English as an additional language. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is similar to that expected in all subjects except art and design where standards are higher. This marks satisfactory progress overall and is achieved because pupils make very rapid progress in Year 6 which compensates for slower progress in Years 4 and 5.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Children with English as an additional language make good progress, particularly in the nursery and reception classes. Higher achieving and talented pupils could do better in Years 4 and 5 in some subjects. Here, all pupils do virtually the same work and higher achievers are not challenged or encouraged to think for themselves.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They enjoy coming to school and are pleased to join in with what the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory overall. In many classes it is always good but this is not consistent across the school. In the playground behaviour is

<sup>3</sup> Personal, social and emotional, language, literacy and communication, mathematical, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical.



	mostly very good.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. The pupils learn to be learners and many take responsibility for themselves and others but there are too few opportunities for them to act on their own initiative and they don't achieve as much as they might.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory despite great efforts on the part of school, attendance is below the national average, mostly caused by the pupils' holiday patterns.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Teaching in the nursery and for reception children is always good or better. The staff plan very well, the curriculum is appropriate and the children have a very good range of activities to support their learning. The classrooms are stimulating and attractive with well-organised resources and equipment. The support staff give very good assistance to children, especially those with English as an additional language and those who need extra help with their learning.

Just over three-quarters of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good or better and most of the remainder is satisfactory. Only one lesson (physical education) was unsatisfactory. Mostly the teaching is planned well and the teachers have good relationships with the pupils.

About 60 per cent of teaching and learning is good or better in the juniors but there is considerable variation between the classes. Pupils in Year 3 get a good start to their learning and Years 5/6 and 6 pupils are taught very well for almost all of the time. In the other classes, most of the teaching is satisfactory and it is occasionally unsatisfactory or even poor. This is caused by the teachers' low expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort. With the exception of Year 6, the marking of pupils' work does not help them to improve.

Teaching and learning in mathematics is always at least satisfactory and is most often good or better. The school has successfully improved teaching and has raised standards. The teaching of English, including literacy is most often good though poor teaching was seen in one class. Planning for both literacy and numeracy lessons is good but teachers do not help pupils reinforce learning through other subjects.

Most teachers address pupils' special educational needs well and closely follow the recently created and very effective Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Most teachers take great care to involve all pupils appropriately in lessons. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, all pupils learn well. They are keen to learn, and even though they find the work hard, they persevere and try to improve. This builds on the good learning skills which are developed in nursery and reception classes and in Years 1 – 3.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the youngest children is good. In the rest of the school, there is an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics but some lessons are too long and some subjects have only the minimum recommended time. Too few opportunities are provided for

	pupils to develop their writing for different purposes in a range of subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The recently produced individual education programmes are very helpful to pupils and their teachers because the learning targets are clear and meaningful. Support for pupils is very well organised and is effective.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Throughout the school pupils are given good help by support staff. Teachers are generally skilled at checking and supporting pupils' understanding of English. This helps them to understand their work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for spiritual, moral and social and very good for cultural development. The school acknowledges and celebrates the ethnic background of all its pupils and works hard to encourage pupils to be responsible and caring individuals.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good and improving rapidly. There is good care for pupils and in the last year the school has developed good systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic and personal development.

There is a good partnership between the school and the parents which benefits pupils' learning. The curriculum is significantly enhanced by the extensive provision of extra-curricular activities.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led well by the headteacher who has very effectively developed a number of initiatives to improve standards. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Overall satisfactory The governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their role in monitoring and taking effective action is developing but they are not yet sufficiently involved in this aspect.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Analysis of information has recently established key priorities, such as, the need to improve mathematics, provision for the youngest children and provision for special educational needs. Good improvements have been made.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well, for example the school decision to employ more classroom assistants has had very effective outcomes. Finances are managed prudently.

There is a good number of staff to meet pupils' needs. The accommodation is spacious and of good quality. Resources, particularly the library and the ICT suite, are very good. The headteacher is systematically supporting the improvement of teaching; this has been effective but needs to continue at a more rapid pace to eradicate unsatisfactory teaching. The managers seek best value when undertaking new initiatives.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are pleased with all aspects of school, in particular: children enjoy school, they are expected to work hard and the school is well managed.</li> <li>Most think teaching is good.</li> </ul>	.

The inspection team agrees that the school provides well in most areas of provision but there are some weaknesses in teaching.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Children enter the school with levels of skills in literacy and numeracy that are well below average. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is also very limited. Although they do not reach the early learning goals set for children at the end of the reception year they make good progress and achieve well.
2. Results of national tests in reading, writing and mathematics taken by seven-year-olds have been generally well below the national average over the past three years. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in all three areas has been below average. In reading and writing this is directly attributable to many pupils' limited skills in English. Results are more variable in mathematics and in both 1998 and 2000 the results were slightly above average. When compared with pupils in similar schools results are well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics.
3. The results in the mathematics tests for seven-year-olds for 2002 show a significant improvement when compared with 2001. This is a direct consequence of the increased focus on improving teaching in mathematics. Similar improvements have also been shown in 2002 in both reading and writing though a very low number of pupils reached the higher levels.
4. Throughout the school, pupils perform considerably better in reading than in writing and this is reflected consistently in the test results of eleven-year-olds. Test results for this year group have improved significantly in 2002. In mathematics, the tremendous effort which the staff and pupils have put in, especially in Year 6, has paid off and the results this year are a vast improvement on the previous four years. Targets for achievement in English and mathematics in 2002 were exceeded.
5. In science, there has been an improvement in results in 2002. Compared to national averages, the performance of eleven-year-olds was well below average in 2001. However, results were close to those in similar schools and are likely to be much better this year. The significant improvements in English, mathematics and science tests this year show that pupils have made good progress overall. Most pupils achieve well. Recent test results show that the performance of boys and girls is similar in English, mathematics and science.
6. Inspection findings confirm the improved picture shown by the most recent test results. Standards in English, mathematics and science are similar to those expected nationally except in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 where standards remain below average. The last inspection found that standards were generally average and most pupils made steady progress. Test results indicate that standards have gradually improved though there was a fall in 2001. Despite the improvement it is clear that in some 'junior' classes higher attainers are underachieving.
7. The last report indicated that standards were below average in art and history. This has been addressed and standards are now average in history and above in art.
8. By the time they leave school, pupils have a good range of skills in literacy and numeracy. Many read enthusiastically and well. They find information on CD-ROMs

and on the Internet, know how to use the library though few were seen in there at the time of the inspection. The majority of pupils are confident in using various writing strategies within English lessons but few apply these at other times. However, the standards of writing which pupils produce in English are not achieved in other subjects such as history, science or geography where much of the work for the seven to ten-year-olds involves completing worksheets and does not encourage pupils to practise literacy skills.

9. In information and communication technology (ICT), geography, design and technology (DT), history, physical education (PE) and music, standards are broadly in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils reach the expected standards in religious education (RE) at the ends of Year 2 and 6.
10. Pupils with different learning needs make good progress overall though there are some exceptions where teachers' expectations are too low and pupils of high prior attainment are insufficiently challenged. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls, between pupils from different minority ethnic or cultural backgrounds, between those who learn English as an additional language and between pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs) and by the age of eleven, many of these pupils attain expected levels in national tests. Pupils with English as an additional language do not do as well as others in writing at the end of Year 2 but, by the time they reach Year 6, there is no noticeable difference and many pupils in this group achieve very well. A few of the pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties do not make good progress where the school's behaviour management procedures are not applied.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good; an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and appear happy in and around the school. Most classes settle quickly at the start of the school day moving around the classroom confidently and purposefully. A minority arrives late for registration and this causes some small disruption to their own learning but they are generally not allowed to disturb others. During most lessons, pupils give their full attention to the teacher, concentrating hard and keen to take turns in discussions. Most pupils take an active part in the numerous clubs, visits and sports organised by the school as part of the out of classroom activities. Pupils with special needs and those for whom English is not their first language are fully integrated into the life of the school and take a full part in classroom activities as a result of the care taken by teachers and classroom assistants.
12. Behaviour continues to be satisfactory, as at the last inspection. Where behaviour is good, pupils respond well to teachers and their learning is good or very good and in line with high expectations of these teachers. However, in a minority of classes where the pace of the lessons and the tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs and the teachers' behaviour management skills are lacking, behaviour is below acceptable standards and learning suffers. At break times and lunchtimes, pupils' behaviour is at least good. Pupils play well together and are clearly caring of each other. During wet playtimes pupils behave just as well. The absence of oppressive behaviour such as bullying, sexism and racism truly reflects the positive ethos of the school. There have been no exclusions in the last four school years.

13. Relationships are good in this a multicultural community where pupils mix well. In a Year 1 class RE lesson for example, pupils respected each other's prayers and discussed different kinds of prayer, listening carefully to each other. After each prayer, pupils spontaneously said 'thank you' and 'Amen'. Most teachers and classroom assistants have a good rapport with pupils who respond well by working hard and concentrating. Most pupils work together well in pairs and groups.
14. Personal development is satisfactory but in most of the school pupils don't show a great deal of independence or initiative. However, pupils with special needs are now starting to be involved in the writing of their IEPs and in some lessons, especially in Year 6, pupils are beginning to work well independently. This is not the case in Year 4 where pupils still need lots of help and support to complete 'independent' tasks. Older pupils act as playground 'buddies', which helps the youngest pupils to feel secure and gives the older ones a sense of responsibility. Year 6 pupils also conduct the Friday assemblies. Pupils of all ages take part in school productions, and, for example, the Hindi Youth Festival, which builds their self-confidence and maturity. When given the opportunity, pupils show that they can be reflective, for example, explaining why they want to talk to God or when writing tributes to a child who had died.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory being below the national averages. This shows a decline since the last report when attendance was very good. This is a direct result of the extended holidays taken by some pupils. This disrupts learning and creates exceptional difficulties for both children and teachers as they attempt to catch up. A number of pupils arrive late for lessons each day, miss the social interaction before lessons begin and fail to make an ordered start to the school day.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

16. The quality of teaching has improved overall since the last inspection because the teaching staff have improved their planning which now clearly indicates the learning targets for lessons. This means that there is a clearer focus and better learning for pupils.
17. In the nursery, teaching is always good or very good. All staff are very clear about what they are doing. The teacher plans well and informs the other staff about the purposes of the activities. The nursery nurse and bi-lingual assistants are therefore able to support learning appropriately. Many nursery children have a limited knowledge of English but make good progress because all of the activities have a strong language focus. The staff talk constantly to children and support them in the range of exciting learning opportunities provided both inside and outdoors.
18. Teachers in the nursery and reception classes, plan for all of the areas of learning in line with the recommended Foundation Stage<sup>4</sup> curriculum and successfully help children to work towards the early learning goals<sup>5</sup>. Despite joining the school with achievements well below the nationally expected levels, consistently good teaching results in many of the children reaching the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development before the end of the reception year.
19. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good in three-quarters of the lessons because teachers plan well, provide stimulating classrooms and mostly interesting activities. They build very well on the start to learning which has been made in the Foundation Stage, providing a range of practical learning opportunities in their classrooms. They

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<sup>4</sup> Education prior to children moving into Year 1 and beginning the National Curriculum.

<sup>5</sup> Nationally agreed targets for pupils at the end of the reception year.

maintain the focus on developing vocabulary through discussion and all staff have good relationships with the pupils. The teachers have generally high expectations of pupils' behaviour. On just one occasion the teaching was unsatisfactory. This was a physical education lesson; the teacher lacked confidence with the subject and the lesson went too slowly. As a consequence the pupils did not listen to instructions, became very silly and the teacher did not employ appropriate management skills to keep them to task.

20. Teaching for pupils in Years 3 - 6 is more variable. In Year 3, generally good teaching maintains the good progress made in Years 1 and 2. Also in those classes where Year 6 pupils are taught, all pupils make very good progress because they are taught very well and are strongly encouraged to do as much as they can. The pupils find Year 6 difficult but know clearly that they have made very good progress in almost all subjects. During the inspection, the application of these oldest pupils to their work in their last week in primary school was very pleasing. The pupils work so hard because the work is very well matched to their needs and is challenging. The teachers quietly insist that the pupils work hard and there is a very positive atmosphere.
21. However, the quality of teaching and learning seen in Years 3 and 6 is not mirrored in Years 4 and 5. Here the work, especially in subjects such as history and geography and science, is not matched well to pupils' needs and higher attainers underachieve because they are not challenged. A lot of the work consists of filling in worksheets and the most able pupils had completed a lot of simple, time-consuming colouring tasks during the year.
22. Teaching in this part of the school is rarely better than satisfactory. Moreover, it is clear from pupils' books that the standard of marking is not of the standard achieved in the rest of the school and pupils have little information to help them to improve. Of more concern are lessons which are unsatisfactory or even poor. This is due mainly to the teachers' unsatisfactory management of pupils, lack of clarity when giving information and setting tasks and low expectations of pupils in terms of how much work they should do and how they should behave. In Years 4 and 5, pupils make less progress than at any other time in this school and they sometimes exhibit inappropriate behaviour in the classroom. However, these same pupils are seen to work very hard and effectively with other teachers for example in mathematics lessons. The lack of appropriate management of behaviour works against the good moral development which is promoted in the remainder of the school.
23. The teaching of English is good in Years 1, 2 and classes 5/6 and 6 and satisfactory elsewhere. The teaching of mathematics is at least good and often better throughout the vast majority of the school and this has contributed to the significant rise in standards during 2001-2002. The teaching of literacy and numeracy are generally improving and mostly good and all teachers are fully aware of the need to maintain a focus on these areas of the pupils' learning. However, writing is not promoted well enough across the curriculum and the teaching of PE is quite often in need of improvement.
24. The teaching of ICT has improved since the last inspection and is mostly at least good. Teachers have recently been trained in ICT and in the use of the new suite of computers. They are using ICT well to support learning across the curriculum.
25. Most of the teachers have a very good awareness of pupils' special educational needs and provide well for them to meet their targets. Many of the staff are skilled at teaching pupils with English as an additional language and these pupils make good progress. In most classes, teaching helps all pupils to be fully involved.

26. In many classes the teachers provide very well for pupils' personal development. Some of the staff regularly encourage pupils to reflect on ideas and thoughts and this contributes to their spiritual development. Well-considered use of groupings of pupils for tasks, for example in ICT, contributes to their social development.

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

27. The school meets its statutory responsibility to provide the full range of National Curriculum subjects, religious education and hold a daily act of worship.
28. The school provides learning opportunities to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those who learn English as an additional language and those from different minority ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The school's priority to improve numeracy skills is raising standards in mathematics. The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Use of the numeracy strategy is good and is effectively helping to raise standards. The school's use of the literacy strategy is satisfactory.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, reflecting the attention paid to this area since the last inspection. The number of learning support assistants has increased and they are deployed very well to maximise learning for pupils. A comprehensive special educational needs policy, thorough records and IEPs have played a part in improving provision and promoting achievement.
30. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which are well subscribed to by pupils. A newly established breakfast club has proved popular and, because it incorporates literacy and numeracy activities, has contributed to raising standards. A homework club exists, also featuring literacy and numeracy work. Despite some higher attainers underachieving in Years 4 and 5, equality of access is very good overall because of the ways in which the school involves pupils from a very broad range of backgrounds in all aspects of learning. Links with the community are achieved through connections with the church, the nearby Hindu temple and the Mosque. Pupils raise money for various charities.
31. At the last inspection planning in some subjects was unsatisfactory. Better planning has been implemented in all subjects but some teachers are not making the best use of the planning material. For example in geography, the planning offers very good guidance that is not being used fully in some classes. Throughout the school, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to extend their writing in subjects such as history, geography and science.
32. The current organisation of the timetable is not helpful. Many lessons last for over an hour and a half and pupils lose interest. The timetable organisation also means that there is very limited time for subjects such as music, art, history and geography because the large blocks of time are all allocated to aspects of English. Pupils have very little time to record their work in these subjects and this impacts both on their overall standards and the amount of work which they can recall.
33. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. The school has a Christian ethos and also a wide ethnic mix, but, nevertheless, all pupils attend assemblies and take part in religious education. Acts of worship are conducted regularly by the Vicar and the Baptist Minister. In all assemblies, pupils are given an



opportunity to reflect and pray. Some lessons have elements of spirituality planned into them. This was particularly apparent in a Year 1 RE lesson when pupils sat in circle with candles and spoke about the reasons why they wanted to pray to their God. Examples included, 'Thank you for our friends', and 'I hope God, my Grandad doesn't die'. The overall provision for spirituality is good.

34. The provision for moral education is good. The school provides a clear moral code based on Christian values. The school encourages and supports personal equality, recognising that each pupil is an individual with differences and that they can learn from each other. An anti-bullying week is held in the school. The school provides public recognition of acts of caring and a constant re-enforcement of school values through assemblies, discussions and the development of classroom codes of conduct, as well as the day to day interaction of staff with pupils.
35. The provision for social development is good. The school is consistent in its promotion of racial, religious and other forms of equality. The good range of extra- curricular activities including school productions, taking part in the Preston Afro-Caribbean carnival and residential visits, all contribute to pupils' widening range of social experiences and knowledge of the wider community. Pupils from each class have an opportunity to take part in the democratic experience through the school council, whilst older pupils are given the opportunity to exercise social responsibility through their role as playground buddies and monitors.
36. The provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils are helped to develop a greater understanding of their own cultures and those of others. All ethnic backgrounds and cultures are treated with respect. Pupils display openness to new ideas in their learning, which can at times be different from their own cultural norms. The school celebrates and uses the local area through visits to places of historical interest and galleries as well as visits to the Mosque, the recently constructed Hindu Temple, the Church and Methodist Mission. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the arts through lessons in art and design, music and history.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

37. The school takes good care of its pupils. All teachers have a good knowledge of pupils in their class and those with whom they are involved more generally across the school. Pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language receive good support. The recently introduced Code of Practice for special educational needs is securely in place and contributing to pupils' care. IEPs are written by teachers, in consultation with the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and support assistants. However, in those lessons which are not well-managed, support assistants struggle to fully provide for pupils' needs.
38. The school is a safe environment. Health and safety are the responsibility of the headteacher, the governors, responsible staff, and the caretaker and all undertake inspections of the school at various intervals. This ensures that any necessary safety measures are undertaken quickly. Pupils are supervised well during playtimes and lunchtimes with a member of staff qualified to give first aid on duty at these times.
39. The arrangements to deal with child protection in the school are good; procedures are in place and staff appropriately trained.

40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Registers are marked in line with local guidelines. Those pupils who achieve 100 per cent attendance for the year receive an award. The parents of those whose attendance gives cause for concern are visited by the education welfare officer and their children's attendance is monitored. When necessary, the school keeps in constant touch with parents by letter and telephone. Extended holidays are difficult to prevent in light of the cultural pressures to visit relatives abroad for long periods. Hence the fall in attendance over the recent years.
41. There are good procedures to promote and monitor good behaviour. In most classrooms pupils are well and consistently managed according to the school's guidelines. Consequently they have neither the time nor the desire to misbehave. In classes where pupils are set ill-matched tasks, they become irritable, lose concentration and misbehave. Consequently learning is disturbed and pupils fail to make sufficient progress. Around the school and in the playground, pupils know how to behave well and are positively encouraged by the lunchtime welfare assistants. Incidents of any type are recorded and there has been no instance of racial harassment in the last year.
42. Pupils' personal development receives good support and is actively promoted throughout the school. The school makes every effort to accentuate the positive aspects of pupils' achievements inside and outside school at the achievement assembly. Extra awards are given by the headteacher at the end of each year for special academic and personal achievement. Each pupil has a record of achievement, which contains, for example, certificates for good attendance and awards for good work. Pupils from Year 1 onwards are given the opportunity to extend their self-confidence and social skills by taking part in school productions and local festivals. The school identifies those children who will benefit from booster classes in English and mathematics. Year 6 pupils make a residential visit to the Lake District where they develop their self-confidence and independence through a series of testing activities.
43. The school has made an effort to introduce tracking of pupils' progress and this is proving successful in English and mathematics. Assessment data is analysed to identify the learning needs of different groups of pupils and provide appropriately for them. Pupils in Year 6 are divided into groups based on prior attainment for mathematics and this enables all pupils to be challenged in the work they are given. The school improvement plan for 2002-2003 rightly identifies the need to continue the development of assessment procedures to make them a fully integrated part of teaching and learning in all subjects and not just in English and mathematics. The Foundation Stage has detailed record-keeping systems in all areas of learning.
44. The co-ordinator for assessment works closely with the headteacher and staff to produce consistent records. Learning support assistants assess their groups and report to teachers to help inform the next stage of planning for learning.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

45. This is a strong feature and parents have very positive views about the school. Links with parents are effective. Nursery and reception staff visit children and parents in their home before they start in their respective classes. Topic boxes are provided for parents to help prepare children for school. Admission meetings are held so that parents have an opportunity to become familiar with school procedures. A well-written brochure, translated into Gujarati where necessary, gives good information. School

policies and other informative documents are available for parents in the reception area. Special meetings about the literacy and numeracy strategies and sex education are arranged. Parents whose children have special needs have regular meetings with staff. Those with children in Year 2 are given a drugs awareness course and others have enrolled on a 'Computers for the Terrified' course. Information about the work of the school is plentiful through the weekly newsletters for Foundation Stage children and regular letters to other parents.

46. Written reports for parents on their children's progress are good. They are brief and to the point giving targets for improvement in English and mathematics. Very often, the headteacher will comment on attendance of pupils, whether good or poor. Parents are given the opportunity to respond in writing to the report as well as to attend the discussion meeting with teachers. There are termly meetings with parents as part of the regular exchange of information on pupils. Additionally, the headteacher and teachers are available daily in the playground after school to talk informally to parents. Parents of pupils with special needs are kept informed and invited to the review meetings and about 75 per cent regularly attend.
47. Pupils regularly take home reading books and diaries and many parents take the opportunity to read with their children and report back to the teacher. Three parents help regularly in school, both in the classroom and with other tasks. Many parents also help on the school visits. Teachers and parent raise funds for resources.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

48. The headteacher shows good leadership of the school. He has developed effective links with governors, parents and the community. An effective senior management team provides a clear sense of direction. There is a shared desire for improvement amongst all these groups. The headteacher contributes significantly to the improvement of standards by teaching mathematics to Year 6 pupils every day. The headteacher also leads good analysis of assessment information and other data to identify areas for improvement. There is good support for those staff who are attempting to improve standards. Over the last five years, the managers have supported improvement to the quality of teaching which is now considerably better than it was. The headteacher works well with the deputy headteacher who is an excellent model of good teaching for other members of staff. She undertakes her roles well and adds considerable strength to management. Other senior staff also make very significant contributions in helping the school to develop. However, there are some staff who do not fully implement school policies and the school management has not been active enough in ensuring these are followed.
49. The headteacher and other key staff undertake considerable monitoring of teaching and learning and the head has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. Where significant weaknesses have been found, the headteacher, with the support of the governors, has put in place a generous amount of support and training to attempt to raise the quality of education. This has been only partially successful as identified weaknesses still exist.
50. The aims and values of the school are made clear to all and for the most part are reflected in the day to day management and running of the school. The whole school tries to support all pupils from a range of backgrounds and with a range of abilities. School managers want the pupils to have a bright, pleasant and stimulating learning environment and have ensured that there is an on-going programme of redecoration and refurbishment. The building is kept clean and in good order by a most

conscientious site manager. However, two of the classrooms are noticeably less well presented than the others and this is reflected in the pupils' response to learning; there is a lack of care in the presentation of the work of these classes.

51. There has been considerable improvement in the involvement of some of the governors in the life of the school. The Chair of Governors is a regular visitor and is well known to the pupils. The governors are well informed by the headteacher and carry out their statutory duties. They are completely supportive but they do not sufficiently challenge the school to improve or evaluate the cost effectiveness of existing provision. For example, they are aware of the effectiveness of the new ICT suite but less clear about the cost and quality implications of the on-going weaknesses in teaching.
52. Co-ordinators regularly monitor standards in English and mathematics. They review pupils' work, talk with pupils and parents and observe the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. They have good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. This quality of monitoring is not yet fully established in subjects and co-ordinators have not yet fully taken effective action to ensure that the highest quality of work is delivered in all classes. By contrast, very effective action has been put in place in the last year to raise standards in mathematics, improve the Foundation Stage and improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
53. The school has a well managed system of review of staff performance and the process of induction for newly qualified teachers is good.
54. The school budget is prudently managed and there are clearly costed targets in the school development plan. The plan's objectives are appropriate and individual plans are clear but the document is extensive and overall, not particularly clear or easy for staff and governors to use. All finances are appropriately allocated; for example the funding for special educational needs is clearly directed to those pupils. Much of the current underspend has already been allocated to the improvements for ICT and for outdoor provision for the children in the reception year and the remainder is clearly earmarked for future developments.
55. The school has spacious accommodation of good quality and good outdoor areas. There are very good teaching resources in the library and the ICT suite and the school is generally well resourced. There is a good number of staff for the needs of the pupils because the managers have decided to employ an increased number of classroom assistants.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

56. The school offers a good standard of education for most of the pupils in most of the year groups. In order to improve further, the headteacher and the governing body should ensure the following.
  - (1) Take steps to raise standards further in writing.
    - The school should consider ways in which pupils can be given more real purposes for writing. All staff need to take every opportunity to develop the pupils' writing through the foundation subjects. This will mean that the school needs to approve an appropriate allocation of time to subjects such as history, religious education and geography. There is a need to add more time for science even though this has improved since the last inspection. In these subjects opportunities for writing are missed.

- There needs to be a consistent and sustained approach to the presentation of pupils' work, including their handwriting. The school managers should ensure that once a decision has been made about handwriting, every member of staff has the same expectations of their pupils.
- (2) Improve teaching in classes where it is mostly satisfactory and sometimes unsatisfactory. The managers need to take steps to ensure that the teachers in these classes plan work which is appropriately demanding of pupils of all abilities. They also need to ensure that all teachers manage behaviour effectively. In many classes there is a need to improve the quality and effectiveness of marking.
- (3) In some classes the higher achieving pupils should be more appropriately challenged. In particular in the foundation subjects the managers need to ensure that teachers cease to use worksheets indiscriminately and offer more opportunities for pupils to record their own work. Extension work, such as that seen being offered to the higher achieving Year 6 mathematics group, needs to be offered more widely.

### **Minor Issue**

The headteacher and Governing Body should also consider the following:

- (a) All staff should fully support the agreed procedures of the school. This needs to be particularly strongly monitored in the area of behaviour management in those classes where poor classroom management is having a detrimental effect on learning. Also there is a need to comply with agreed procedures for the teaching of writing and marking.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	15	32	14	3	1	0
Percentage	4	22	48	21	4	1	0

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

### 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)	26	281
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	91

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	77

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	140

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

%
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#### Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	30	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	12	19
	Girls	25	23	28
	Total	43	35	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (84)	66 (82)	89 (94)
	National	884 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	19	17
	Girls	24	27	22
	Total	40	46	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (84)	87 (94)	74 (74)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	30	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	11	20
	Girls	20	13	21
	Total	34	24	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (77)	46 (66)	79 (81)
	National	73 (75)	74 (72)	82 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	11	20
	Girls	20	14	21
	Total	34	25	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (74)	48 (72)	79 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	0
Indian	67
Pakistani	21
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	1
White	172
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*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)	13.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	348

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	870,662
Total expenditure	933,309
Expenditure per pupil	2,644
Balance brought forward from previous year	147,409
Balance carried forward to next year	84,762

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	377
Number of questionnaires returned	127

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	43	2	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	39	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	43	5	2	4
The teaching is good.	66	28	2	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	36	5	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	24	2	3	7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	25	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	55	35	3	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	68	27	1	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	27	1	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	33	6	2	9

## **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**

57. Children begin nursery in the September following their third birthday and transfer to the reception classes after one year. There are fifty-two children in the nursery who attend on a part-time basis. There are 37 reception children, 13 of whom work with a Year 1 class. On starting school, children's standards are generally low in relation to what is expected for their age. Many begin in the nursery in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Children make good progress and achieve well, in relation to the low starting point, but standards in some areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are still below those expected at the end of the reception year.
58. Children also achieve well in the areas of physical, creative and personal, social and emotional development where, by the end of reception year, standards are as expected in relation to their age. Children's good achievement is due to high quality teaching and very good support in all areas of the curriculum, with particular emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and language skills. A very good induction process includes home visits from teachers and bi-lingual support staff, at the beginning of both nursery and reception. These, plus several visits to school, ensure that the children settle happily and feel comfortable. On-going records and meticulous day by day assessment support the planning of a good curriculum targeted to the children's needs. The Foundation Stage is well managed and the school adds particularly good value to the children's education throughout this stage.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

59. The children achieve very well in this area, demonstrating good behaviour and a growing understanding of sharing and courteous social interaction. Good teaching constantly reinforces the need to listen, to respect people and property and to care for each other. For example, in a story about 'Daisy the duck', reception children showed empathy when Daisy was lost and described her feelings as 'scared', 'worried' and 'frightened'. Children also show a good understanding of right and wrong behaviour and the consequences. For example, at the end of the story one child volunteered, "You get into trouble if you don't listen to grown-ups". Children co-operate well in group activities and nursery children play happily together when using mobile toys. They share well.
60. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and treat them with respect. Bi-lingual staff talk to children in their home languages in the nursery, thus making them feel secure and included. Children are encouraged to take responsibility and be independent from the outset. For example, children mark themselves as present at school, dress and undress sensibly for physical education and help to give out snacks. In circle time<sup>6</sup>, children show care as they pass round 'precious' objects, at the same time extending vocabulary with words such as 'precious', 'gentle', and 'fragile'. Songs, such as 'Teddy on the Railway', help children understand danger and the need to play safely and responsibly. Staff interact with children continually so that children know that their contributions are valued. They are beginning to take pride in what they do and self-esteem is growing. Personal, social and emotional development

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<sup>6</sup> A group time when children are encourage to share their ideas and thoughts with others.

is integrated into the whole curriculum and children are prepared well for the next stage of learning.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

61. The children achieve well and in some elements, reach the early learning goals. By the end of reception, listening skills show great improvement and are as expected for children of this age. Children also show good understanding, but often struggle to find the correct words when answering questions. Many nursery children answer with one word or a short phrase. For example, when discussing vehicles, children described a 'big blue van' or 'yellow bus'. Bilingual staff assist and support the children well and help them to expand their answers. A good range of role-play activities enable children to gain good experiences in speaking and listening with effective interaction from staff. For example, the reception class has a vet's surgery and children earnestly try to explain what is wrong with their animals.
62. Staff in both nursery and reception classes switch from one language to another to support children's knowledge and language skills. Approximately half of the children in reception classes give short answers whilst others can answer in sentences. Some are beginning to make deductions, such as 'They're like ambulance lights' or 'It's Postman Pat's van'. Good questioning and explanations extend children's vocabulary and promote speaking skills well.
63. By the end of reception, children recognise initial sounds and blend sounds together to form simple words. The early reading skills developed in the nursery through stories, songs and rhymes support this learning. Higher attainers in reception recognise many words and are beginning to read simple books. Lower attainers, and many children for whom English is an additional language, enjoy looking at books. They use the pictures to help them to understand the stories. Children enjoy sharing books with adults and handle books with care. Some notices and captions are in dual languages to encourage children's reading. Word jigsaws, reading games and activities, with good adult interaction, give children further experiences in reading.
64. Most nursery children hold their pencils correctly and enjoy mark-making. They all recognise their names and some make good attempts at writing them. Most can write the initial sounds. The fruit shop and writing table give children scope to develop writing skills and most handle pencils and crayons confidently. Reception children make good progress in writing. For example, in one lesson following their visit to the zoo, higher attainers enjoyed having clipboards and matching animal pictures to their names. They wrote sentences such as 'I lik the elephant' or 'The giraffe has a log nek'. Average attainers 'wrote' letters and labels or made books about the animals. They made phonetically plausible attempts at writing words such as 'elephant' (elphet). Lower attainers worked with support staff making a picture of the visit to the zoo and recognised initial letters of the names of the animals. Children experience a wide range of writing styles. For example, one group learned to write a postcard and made very good attempts at spelling most of the simple words. Another group recorded how they planted their seeds, listing how they did it. For example:
  - 'I put the sul (soil) in the pot'
  - 'I plantid the sids'
  - 'I watd the sids'

### **Mathematical development**

65. Counting skills are constantly promoted within the wide range of activities provided throughout the day in the nursery. Children count the number of vehicles in a group when learning about transport and have good experiences, recognising numbers and coins in the class fruit shop. Number rhymes and games help children to begin understanding for example, one less and one more and to count accurately to ten. They enjoy making repeating patterns such as when they create caterpillars with coloured circles. Mathematical vocabulary is extended in mathematical activities and children learn words such as 'straight', 'long', 'short'.
66. Reception children count reliably, forwards and backwards, to ten. They have practical experiences, for example, in using cubes and coins to make ten in different ways and in recording the totals. Higher attainers count beyond ten and their thinking skills are beginning to develop well. For example, when playing the 'Farmer's Apple Tree' game, which reinforces the idea of 'taking away', one child pointed out that everyone cannot have a turn because 'there are only ten apples on the tree and 22 in the class today!' Children's knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes is reinforced through a variety of activities such as the 'feely' bag containing shapes, walks around school to recognise and find shapes and dice games. Good input from the staff ensures children understand and say the names of shapes correctly. Activities are planned to take account of children's abilities and language needs. Planning and teaching are good and all staff work as a team for the benefit of the children. Children show good concentration in group work and organise themselves well in independent activities. Teachers consistently praise their efforts and encourage them to join in all that is happening in the purposeful, busy classrooms.
67. Most children will reach expected levels in using numbers as labels and for counting, and in work with shape, space and measures. However, because of limited skills in English and limited pre-school mathematical experiences, many children cannot transfer their knowledge to simple problem-solving. They find problems and their solutions difficult to talk about or explain.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

68. Most children enter nursery with very limited experiences of the world. They show interest in the wide range of activities provided and make good progress. They have experiences in handling and talking about fruit and create a colourful shop in one of the alcoves in the room. They take a walk in the school and surrounding area and learn the importance of road safety and how to cross a road. A visit from the fire officer helps them understand how 'people help us' and the visit of the dental nurse highlights the importance of healthy eating and care of teeth. The dressing up clothes, with a range of uniforms and clothes representing many cultures, enable children to act out their experiences. Adults work alongside the children to promote their learning and constantly reinforce language. For example, when discussing vehicles and how they move, good question and answer sessions enabled children to extend their limited knowledge of differences between 'helicopters' and 'aeroplanes', 'trucks' and 'vans'. The high number of staff and good planning means that staff can work effectively with small groups of children and promote language skills well in these sessions.
69. Reception children experienced a range of activities related to their recent visit to the zoo. They created a zoo environment in the sand, with animals and building kits. In the role-play area they wore masks and played productively in the large cage they had made and in the zoo shop. With support, they match animals to the country of origin and understand the difference between the water and land on a world map. They are

gaining a good knowledge of hot and cold lands and can name continents such as Australia, Africa and Asia. Teachers reinforce and explain ideas of time, for example, how long it would take to travel to places. As yet, children find this difficult to comprehend but are beginning to understand the differences between a 'long' journey and a 'short' journey in relation to the number of 'sleeps' they would have. A map of the world, showing where their friends and relations live, reinforces and extends children's knowledge.

70. Technological skills are developing well in both nursery and reception. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Children confidently operate the computer's mouse and enjoy playing games of matching and sorting on computer programs. A range of programmable toys and access to tape recorders, which even the nursery children operate efficiently, give children good and relevant ICT experiences. Children grow seeds and plants and write about them. Visits to the local church and mosque extend children's knowledge and understanding of other people's beliefs and practices. Some children record their work well, for example, 'We saw some men praying and lots of patterns'. This linked with their work in mathematics recognising symmetrical patterns. Whilst higher attainers will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year, most will not achieve all the elements, for example, in exploration and investigation and sense of time.

### **Physical development**

71. Prior to starting school many children have not had an extensive range of experiences of climbing, jumping, balancing and using moving toys. Through good teaching and experiences, most children achieve the early learning goals at the end of the reception year. This shows very good achievement.
72. Both reception and nursery children have access to good play areas and each group has a range of mobile toys suitable for their ages. A spacious hall and a range of apparatus are also available to them. A soft play area for reception children is planned but not yet available. Nursery children are given good support in throwing, catching and ball games and are learning to share. Co-ordination skills are developing well. The outdoor area is often used by a group of children whilst the others are engaged in indoor activities. This is good practice as staff can assess children's needs and support them. Reception children are developing a good awareness of space and the importance of moving around safely. They understand how to move, using 'tiny' steps and then 'giant' steps. They are learning to move over, under and through apparatus and to balance. Teachers choose children to demonstrate activities, for example, when using bats and balls, and most children watch attentively. Teachers have good behaviour management skills and the children feel secure and included. Most children dress and undress themselves and work hard. The importance of exercise and safety is stressed by staff. The development of finer movements includes plenty of good experience in using scissors, crayons, brushes, malleable materials and tools.

### **Creative development**

73. Children have had limited experiences in creative activities when they enter school. Most have not been to a play group or had opportunities to experiment with materials. Children enjoy the wide range of stimulating activities and the opportunity to express themselves through drawing, painting, model making and collage work. Some enter school with poor manipulative skills, but with support and experience, they learn to handle equipment and develop their imagination. All the children's work is appreciated by the staff and carefully mounted with suitable captions. This helps the children to

take pride in their work and increases their self-esteem. They are proud to show visitors their work and make good efforts to explain their pictures. For example, 'This is my best animal'.

74. Music corners enable children to experiment with percussion instruments and listen to rhymes and songs on the tape recorder. Reception children are developing a good sense of rhythm and clap in time to music and march whilst playing instruments to accompany the beat. They handle instruments carefully and do not play until asked. Throughout the day, spontaneous singing of rhymes and songs, to support other areas of learning, are enjoyed by the children. They join in the hymns in assemblies with enthusiasm. They engage in role-play throughout the day and work co-operatively. Teaching is good and children achieve very well

## ENGLISH

75. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 they are average. This is a significant improvement on the national test results of 2001 and reflects the improved performance in tests in 2002. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level and above at the end of Year 6 has more than doubled since the last inspection.
76. Standards in speaking and listening are average but pupils make good progress. In most lessons pupils listen attentively and other adults support teachers well in ensuring that they understand instructions and explanations. Pupils answer questions and understand tasks that they are set. However, in some classes, pupils talk to each other instead of listening. Speaking skills develop well. This is because in all classes the teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to speak. A Year 1 teacher gave pupils time to think and reword their answers and their work markedly improved. At the end of a lesson in another Year 1 class, some pupils sat in the 'hot seat' and told the class what they had learned. A pupil with special educational needs spoke out clearly and confidently. The pupils listened to their classmates with interest and respect, and applauded them. The high level and quality of adult support in lessons ensures that less confident pupils are encouraged to speak. Good questioning draws in different pupils and requires them to answer in full sentences. When older pupils met with visitors in small groups they showed how well they have progressed. They were confident, had definite views, which they explained, and shared politely in the discussion.
77. Standards of reading are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to read; some read individual words whilst others manage short stories. In one lesson, they used letter fans to show the missing vowels in simple three-letter words. They expressed their views about a story of Granddad Bear and predicted what might happen next. Pupils in Year 2 used skills of skimming and scanning to look at a book of maps. They read new words by recognising letter sounds and by using other reading skills. In history they took turns to read the 'detective' story. The teacher supported a small group so that they were included and read some of the words. Most read independently, with confidence and some attention to expression, noting question marks, for example. Junior pupils read competently. They are set tasks which require them to read and understand sometimes explaining their findings verbally rather than having to write. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have the range of skills expected. Around 30 per cent read at a higher level. They have varied tastes in reading, know what they like and are keen to be offered a wider choice of fiction. The library is very



well stocked and older pupils particularly, are set tasks which require them to research both books and the Internet.

78. Standards in writing are below average but the emphasis on teaching writing has had an impact and standards have improved from a low level. Teachers in Year 1 expect the pupils to write independently from the outset. Some pupils show very good progress, from copying simple sentences to writing their own stories. By the age of seven pupils communicate in a range of written formats. Writing tasks include retelling or writing their own stories, information about plants, comparisons of books and sequenced instructions. Pupils sometimes use capital letters and full stops although not consistently. Some pupils use a cursive script and most work is presented with reasonable neatness and clearly formed letters. A few higher attainers sometimes use speech marks and are more assured in their use of punctuation and correct use of grammar. There is very limited evidence of imaginative writing using a variety of interesting words.
79. In Year 3 pupils make satisfactory progress in basic grammar and spelling and have some experience of writing for different purposes. There is, however, overuse of worksheets and not enough opportunities to write, particularly for higher attainers. In Years 4 and 5 it is a similar situation, with lots of worksheets, and pupils making unsatisfactory progress in some aspects of writing. Handwriting varies. A few pupils write carefully with well-formed letters and begin to develop some style but the majority is poor. Some Year 5 pupils alternate between pen and unsharpened pencil and this is unhelpful in developing their presentation style. Higher attainers in Year 5 and all pupils in Year 6 make good progress. They show an ability to use words for effect and advanced levels of punctuation. One pupil wrote *'Now a wave of energy passed through me'* and *'"Help", she cried in anguish.'* Year 6 pupils have sheets that give them guidance on persuasive writing and they list phrases that could help them, such as *'It is widely acknowledged that'*. Pupils draft their work, appraise pieces of professional writing and write comparisons of two stories by Roald Dahl. Writing of any length is set out in paragraphs and pupils show an understanding of well-structured writing.
80. Teaching and learning in lessons is very good in Years 1 and 2. An outstanding lesson in a Year 1 class saw pupils bubbling with enthusiasm. The teacher's strategies captured their interest and involved them all. They attended well and were quick to point out 'forgotten' capital letters and full stops. Pupils with English as an additional language were provided with extra support so that they also made very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs were fully included and supported so that during the lesson review, some took their turn reading out their work. The pace of learning of all pupils was very good.
81. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. Year 6 pupils benefit from very good teaching and the teachers manage and motivate them very well. In one lesson, they knew clearly what was expected of them and responded very well, paying excellent attention during oral work. Some good directed questioning ensured full inclusion and required pupils to explain their answers. The work set was matched to the needs of different groups, with higher attainers being challenged well. A small group of pupils with special educational needs worked very well independently. The pupils maintained their application throughout a lengthy lesson. Very good learning took place. Year 6 books show some examples of good marking. Comments such as 'Try to expand....' or 'What about.....?' cause pupils to think about improvement to their work. However in most classes marking merely acknowledges work completed

or praises pupils and there is little to guide further progress. In one class it is difficult to decipher the teacher's writing.

82. A scrutiny of pupils' work through the year shows that some of the teaching in Years 4 and 5 is unsatisfactory with some teachers' expectations being too low. Presentation is unacceptable, with scribbled handwriting and careless spelling. In one Year 5 class, most of the work is of a very low level and pupils have achieved little during the year. The teaching seen in this class was poor. Management of pupils was ineffective and instructions were unclear. Pupils were set low-level tasks involving copying from books and they were bored. On occasions, some teachers allow pupils to chatter whilst they are supposed to be listening, and continue talking over the noise. However, in most classes pupils are managed well. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and receive strong support from learning support assistants.
83. Most teachers have implemented the literacy strategy successfully. They share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils. The best teachers vary the order and type of activities. There has been some success in raising standards but monitoring of pupils' work is not rigorous enough to maintain and build on this. Good systems of assessment are in place and individual tracking of pupils is now undertaken. There are targets for groups and individuals but these are not yet explained to pupils in such a way as to enable them to monitor their own progress. Resources are good overall. The library is well stocked, as are classroom libraries, opportunities to use these good resources are sometimes missed.
84. There is some reinforcement of language through other subjects but overall this is under-developed. Pupils use computers in Year 1 to practise basic punctuation, and in Year 6 for presentation of history topics. In religious education pupils write prayers, compare and write in the different styles of Matthew and Luke, and write events in diaries and newspaper reports. However history and geography lessons contribute little to developing pupils' writing due to overuse of worksheets in some classes.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. The 2002 national test results for both Year 6 and Year 2 pupils show significant improvement on previous years. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve standards similar to the national average at the ends of Years 2 and 6.
86. In almost every class, pupils with different learning needs make good progress though there are a few exceptions to this where teachers' expectations are too low and higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their mental mathematics skills when teaching is conducted at a challenging pace. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils gained confidence when identifying multiples of five and when reciting the five times table. In a very lively session in Year 6, pupils added and subtracted decimals between 0.25 to 0.75. All pupils learn and make progress through these lively sessions.
87. Pupils' numeracy skills develop satisfactorily and sometimes well. Year 1 pupils satisfactorily order numbers to 20 and beyond, confident in using a bridging technique that their teacher has taught them. By Year 2 pupils show good understanding of numbers to and beyond 100. Pupils in Year 3 continue to make progress and have some success when identifying fractions other than halves and quarters. Pupils in Year 4 and those of lower attainment in Year 5 make much slower progress because

their behaviour deteriorates. Pupils of low prior attainment in Year 5 show some limited understanding of simple fractions but they make slow progress. Their knowledge and understanding of number overall is very limited.

88. However, by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in number work, understanding addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and knowing when to apply them. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages well. They know that to find the difference between two numbers they must do a 'take away' sum. Year 6 pupils record their work using correct notation and calculations.
89. Standards of presentation vary in different classes. In some classes, pupils are required to write the date and often a heading, to draw a margin and to set their work out properly. Where such standards are not required, number work is not carefully set out and inaccuracies occur.
90. Some good progress is made in other areas of mathematics for example in Year 2, where pupils interpret simple graphs and demonstrate their skills in handling data and reading data from a pictogram. Higher attainers in Year 5 are learning to solve word problems, as this is an element of mathematics that the school has recognised as an area for development. In almost every class, the school focus on improving mathematics is evident and most pupils are making good progress.
91. Most teaching is good or very good, with a small number of excellent and satisfactory lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. One of the reasons why pupils with different learning needs achieve well is because their work is planned carefully. Well deployed and experienced learning support assistants work in partnership with teachers to help pupils learn. This was seen in a Year 2 class, where the learning support assistant played an important role and the teacher involved her in all parts of the lesson. Shared mental mathematics sessions often use real life problems to make learning relevant, as in a Year 5 class where the teacher created her own 'shop' using real fruit and vegetables. In almost all classes, teachers share learning targets with the pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. In the important shared sessions at the end of lessons, pupils have the opportunity to talk with the teacher about their work and their learning is reinforced.
92. Where teachers know their subject well, and set work at different levels, all pupils receive appropriate challenge to enable them to make good progress. Teachers who plan their lessons well and teach at a brisk pace help pupils to sustain their concentration and motivation to learn. Where management of time and of behaviour is not secure, pupils lose interest and fail to pay attention. Teachers use a range of resources to engage and hold pupils' interest, for example in mental mathematics sessions when pupils jot down their answers and hold them up for the teacher to check. When constructing a block graph, pupils in Year 2 used coloured cubes to make the graph. This increased their understanding. Similarly the 'shop' in Year 5 involved pupils in a simple practical activity that preceded the written tasks.
93. Standards of marking vary from good to unsatisfactory. Most work is marked systematically but only the best marking helps pupils to improve by posing questions and offering explanations. Some work is not marked at all. The use of worksheets is sensible where it saves teachers time in preparation of material. However, overuse of worksheets inhibits pupils in developing independent skills and does not give them the opportunity to show by their jottings and working out how far they have understood the ideas they have been taught.

94. Pupils' attitudes are mostly good but sometimes prevent effective learning taking place. Where they fail to pay full attention to the teacher and talk amongst themselves, they achieve little. In a minority of classes, pupils are excitable and shout across the room to one another, or they are noisy and chattering as the lesson begins. This does not create a good learning atmosphere. In other classes however, pupils are quiet and settled, ready to absorb new learning. They listen carefully and follow instructions. Their attitudes are conducive to learning. In Year 6, pupils look forward to their lessons, know that the teacher makes learning fun and say "It's not like work".
95. A very knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader is assisted by the infant mathematics co-ordinator and together they advise and support teachers well. This effective leadership has already produced the desired improvement in standards in national tests and is set to make further advances. They now have an important role to play in monitoring teaching and learning throughout the school. Since the last inspection there has been substantial improvement in every area of mathematics. Assessment data is analysed to group pupils appropriately for teaching. This is effective in increasing the learning and progress of all pupils.

## SCIENCE

96. At the end of Year 2, most pupils attain the expected standards in most areas of science. Results in the 2001 national tests taken by eleven-year-olds were below average but the 2002 results are significantly better than this. The inspection found that overall, standards in science are average; all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
97. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good grasp of important elements of animals and plants and know something about materials. In a good lesson on classification of animals in a Year 1 class, the pupils sorted pictures of animals using a range of criteria. After finding some difficulties with their own choices, the teacher moved the lesson on with the class agreeing that 'method of locomotion' would be the chosen criterion. The teacher made very good use of a data-handling program; all the class moving to the ICT suite to enter their results into the program and produce graphs and pie charts to show their findings. This is typical of the good use of ICT throughout the school, to support learning in other subjects. Other examples include the good display of research on snails undertaken by Year 5 pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have experienced a number of practical tasks in their science lessons but there is little indication that they can set up tests for themselves.
98. Throughout Year 3 to 5, the pupils undertake a full range of science work. For example, Year 3 pupils have covered topics on teeth, light, material, nutrition, plants and friction. Whilst there are some examples in Year 3 of imaginative recording - notably a flow chart on the development of a broad bean, almost all of the work in these three year groups is recorded on a prescribed set of worksheets. These provide little to challenge the higher attaining pupils or to encourage any of the pupils to think scientifically. This leaves an enormous amount of scientific thinking for the Year 6 teachers to develop with their pupils.
99. By the end of Year 6, pupils display good levels of scientific enquiry in their work on sound and light. They carry out investigative work, making clear and justified predictions of the outcomes. The Year 5 and 6 pupils had recently been involved in a science fair which they had enjoyed tremendously and from which they had gained a lot of knowledge. In the lesson observed, the teacher helped pupils to understand the importance of scientific process and principles when undertaking investigative work.

This was very demanding work and the pupils coped very well with it. However, this level of challenge is only seen in the classes with Year 6 pupils.

100. Teaching is mostly good and in the lessons seen, pupils learnt well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In a Year 4 lesson on forces, the teacher had set up a good experiment to demonstrate streamlining and the lesson was effective because it involved demonstration of a practical task. The pupils were clearly involved despite the lesson being very long. Most of the pupils clearly understood why the 'sinkers' moved at different speeds through the water but they were not able to record this in a way which demonstrated the level of their understanding because the method of recording was prescribed.
101. Teachers interact with pupils in a lively and engaging manner and provide practical tasks which engage pupils' attention. However, scrutiny of pupils' work shows that with the exception of Year 6, the quality of marking is unsatisfactory and therefore pupils are not getting sufficient guidance on how to improve.
102. The two co-ordinators have identified some problems with the current organisation of the subject and have made effective changes to the programme of teaching. They have set up a system of assessments but have no way of gauging the accuracy of teacher assessment and therefore of monitoring pupils' progress. They have not checked the quality of pupils' written work. Despite having more time now than at the time of the last inspection, science gets only the minimum amount of time on the current timetable and this restricts progress.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve average standards and by Year 6, standards are above average. These standards show a good improvement since the last inspection when standards at age seven were unsatisfactory and average at age eleven. Pupils achieve very well.
104. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress and communicate their ideas using a wide range of media and techniques. For example, Year 1 pupils use different brushes to create different types and styles of lines, and mix primary colours to make secondary colours, producing effective displays. Year 2 pupils study artists' work, for example that of Lowry, and use dark colours to recreate one of his paintings. Pupils empathised with the Lowry figures of people coming home from the mill describing them as 'tired' and 'working hard'. They made determined efforts to create the Lowry pictures and the results were good. Pupils use equipment carefully and work with enjoyment. Art and design is well-integrated with other subjects, for example, in DT when pupils make moving pictures.
105. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 explore the use of colour to express a mood or feeling. They experiment with mixing paint to produce 'hot' and 'cold' colours and talk about how their paintings represent specific moods. They study artists' work and the colours and moods they reflect, for example, Monet and other impressionist artists. An in-depth study of the designer Clarice Cliff produced a most colourful and carefully painted three-dimensional display, linking with DT.
106. By Year 6, pupils have good skills in mixing and blending colours and using a variety of media. Work is beautifully mounted and displayed with artistry and flare. For example, a display inspired by 'The Tragedy' by Picasso, and incorporating the use of textiles, brightens up the corridor and stairs, supporting pupils' personal development and

aesthetic appreciation. Pupils use a range of brushes and explore how they create curves and diagonals to give a feeling of movement. Sketch books used in Years 5 and 6 give pupils experience in drawing and design. This method of recording is to be extended to other classes to show progression throughout the school. Pupils produce good quality 'still life' pictures of fruit and vegetables.

107. Teaching overall is good. Teachers' planning is thorough and there are clear objectives for lessons, which are shared with pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they ensure that all pupils are included in the interesting learning experiences they provide. Pupils enjoy their work and take a pride in it, as seen in the Year 5/6 class quilt, made with different materials and with each panel depicting something special to the specific designer. The class have made it carefully and displayed it well.
108. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and works closely with colleagues, for example in planning new subject guidance. Assessment is ongoing and teachers build on what children know and can do. The co-ordinator has monitored work but there is no formal system of assessment. However, this has not adversely affected standards. There are good links with other subjects, for example, pupils produce very good portraits of Tudor monarchs and frame them effectively. They also produce and design Greek pots and plates. There have been no recent visiting artists or visits by pupils to art galleries. However, use is made of the Internet to access information to support learning. Art and design contributes very well to pupils' cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)**

109. Only one lesson was observed in Years 3 to 6. Judgements are based on analysis of the work seen in displays and photographs. Two lessons were seen in Year 1.
110. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are average. In Years 5 and 6 pupils use pop-up and sliding mechanisms to make moving toys that are of satisfactory quality when finished. They plan their work diligently, making careful diagrams. In evaluating their models, they make sensible suggestions for improving them, thus covering all major elements of designing and making. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 plan and prepare thoroughly when designing and making photograph frames. In Year 1, pupils design and make wheeled vehicles. Moving pictures are a feature of work in Year 2. Photographs and examples of models in Years 1 and 2 show evidence of designing, making and evaluating wheeled vehicles and moving pictures. Pupils in Year 1 use design drawings to make decisions about painting their 'luggage trucks'. They make good progress in understanding construction techniques, learning through experimentation.
111. The teaching in the two lessons observed was good and very good. Lessons were well organised to allow teachers to give concentrated attention to the groups doing the practical tasks. Support assistants were used very well. Teachers used technical language, which pupils understood. Pupils making boats were clear about making them float because they knew that would be necessary in the real world. They listened carefully to the teachers and applied themselves enthusiastically to tasks. Year 1 pupils work with enthusiasm and energy, recalling important features when making boats. Their attitudes to learning are very good and they are willing to help one another in practical ways. They make very good progress.
112. The co-ordinator has engendered enthusiasm and confidence in the teachers in Years 1 and 2 and the subject now has a higher profile. Teachers pass on their confidence

to pupils who enjoy their activities and make good progress. Since the last inspection there has been a distinct improvement in Years 1 and 2. More time is now allocated to the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Inspection judgements for these year groups are therefore based on analysis of work, discussions and displays.
114. Standards achieved by Year 2 and Year 6 match those expected nationally and there are no significant differences in achievement between different identifiable groups of pupils. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, although in some classes there is insufficient independent work to know whether they achieve full understanding.
115. By Year 2 pupils do a small amount of recorded work on maps, plans and journeys. Pupils of higher attainment do a very small amount of independent writing to express their views on locations. This is a missed opportunity to extend the use of writing and to assess pupils' geographical understanding. Year 2 pupils completed careful independent drawings to make a plan of the journey to school. They completed a mixture of prepared worksheets and their own diagrams with developing accuracy. Overall, progress is satisfactory but the work is limited in scope.
116. Pupils in Year 3 compare the northern and southern hemispheres through a major topic on rain forests. They begin to have an insight into how conditions of temperature and rainfall affect life. They show understanding of main points and increasing ability to state their own opinions. They make satisfactory progress. In Year 4 pupils of high prior attainment complete map work largely accurately. They develop their skills of observation and successfully identify items on maps. They give sensible reasons to agree or disagree with statements about rain forests. All pupils learn about capital cities around the world, but they sometimes confuse countries with capital cities. Pupils in Year 5 are aware of the sequence of erosion that leads to the formation of deserts and poverty in the community. Some have a good grasp of the basics of conflict between commercial interests and people's lives. In Years 3, 4 and 5, most work consists of commercially produced worksheets that do little to improve pupils' understanding or to show what they know and can do. Work is not consistently well presented.
117. By Year 6, pupils compare and contrast landscapes, climates and natural resources from different locations in this country and around the world. They begin to understand the implications of environmental change and to consider how human activity can improve or damage the environment. In Year 6, pupils' simple drama exercises help them to develop an insight into the lives of the inhabitants of an area of Africa. They draw diagrams and illustrations meticulously and label them clearly and accurately. Most work is completed independently in exercise books.
118. Teaching is satisfactory, and some is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers' planning and subject knowledge often ensure that pupils' skills continue to improve during independent work following practical activities. However, where their assignments are restricted mainly to the completion of commercially produced worksheets, learning is limited and little progress is apparent from Year 3 to Year 4, when some work on rain forests lacked adequate challenge for higher attainers. Where lessons are conducted at a slow pace, or activities are carried on too long, pupils become restless, lose concentration and their learning is diminished. Teachers

in Years 1 and 2 match work to pupils' different needs, ensuring appropriate challenge and enabling them to make progress. They make links with mathematics, for example when making tables and graphs of journeys. Where teachers mark work and direct pupils to make corrections, this is not always complied with by pupils or checked by teachers.

119. The co-ordinator has created clear guidance for teachers. This has supported teacher confidence but not all follow it closely. The school has not yet established assessment procedures and consequently cannot accurately track pupils' progress. The co-ordinator does not sufficiently monitor teaching or pupils' work to ascertain that all pupils make sufficient progress. The subject gets only the minimum amount of time on the current timetable and this restricts progress.

## **HISTORY**

120. Standards are as expected nationally by the ends of Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the judgements given in the last inspection report.
121. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory comparisons of their own lives with how people lived in previous times. They think about meaningful aspects such as bathing habits, kitchen appliances and school life. Year 1 pupils investigate historical objects, draw them and write words which describe how they look and feel. When Year 2 pupils learn about different forms of transport they write about how each type is powered. However there are too few opportunities for pupils to write independently and higher attainers are insufficiently challenged.
122. Progress is inconsistent in Years 3 and 4. Pupils look at different sources of evidence, for example, photographs. Some of the recording tasks are unchallenging, such as colouring the Mediterranean Sea blue. Topics are presented as a collection of worksheets, some of which are both uninteresting and irrelevant. There are few opportunities for pupils to write at length to demonstrate their understanding. Similarly some of the work in Year 5 also involves colouring worksheets.
123. Higher attainers in Year 5 and pupils in Year 6 make big strides in learning. They compare fact, opinion and fiction as evidence. There is some very good interpretation of Tudor portraits. Studies of the local area are used well. Pupils write about the cotton trade and the Preston Riots and they study and interpret census information. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge of the history of the cotton industry and explain what they learned at a local museum. They have a good sense of chronology with some of them quoting dates from memory about aspects of Tudor times. These pupils are also aware of the importance of the subject and how we can learn from history.
124. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall throughout the school but the quality is varied. The main weakness in teaching is the lack of challenge for some pupils in the work given. Teachers make good use of artefacts and base lessons on investigating history. In a very good lesson in Year 1, pupils sequenced various objects according to their age. They knew that the different objects for warming the bed relied on different sources of heat. Pupils handled the artefacts and talked about them. The teacher used historical vocabulary well and continually encouraged the pupils to do so. Pupils with English as an additional language were well supported. Tasks were interesting and the pupils worked hard and behaved very well. A small group used the 'home corner' handling additional artefacts. They named and knew the uses of objects such as a snuffer, a flat iron and a mangle. Year 2 pupils examined the contents of a bag, one item at a time, in the manner of archaeologists, enthusiastic to solve the mystery.



Year 6 pupils shared some readings about Victorian education. The teacher led the discussion well so that the pupils were aware of what was fact or opinion. They examined extracts from school logbooks, making comparisons with school life today. Pupils with special educational needs were supported well and made similar progress to others.

125. A strength is the practical approach which teachers use. Pupils learn through investigation, the examination of artefacts and the good use of visits. However, learning is not sufficiently supported in some classes by the recording tasks set. There is particular lack of challenge for higher attainers. The subject makes little contribution to pupils' skills in literacy. Occasionally pupils write, for example, 'My adventure with the Greek Gods' or they read, 'The view from Ducie Bridge, Manchester', a piece of writing from 1844, answering questions and gauging reliability of evidence. Marking of work gives little guidance to support pupils' progress and sometimes is a token only. When a Year 5 pupil wrote, '*The school teacher is learning the children and she is called a chuter*', it was just ticked. Resources are very good and are used well, including the use of ICT. There is no formal assessment so progress in skills is not being tracked. The subject gets only the minimum amount of time on the current timetable and this restricts progress.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

126. Standards are similar to those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar judgement to that recorded at the time of the last inspection. However, given the changes which have occurred in the subject in the last five years, it is clear that standards have kept pace with change. Much of this improvement has occurred in the last six months since the school's new computer suite came into use. It is clear from discussion with the pupils, the planning for learning and the standard of work which the pupils have recently achieved, that standards are rising rapidly.
127. By the time pupils leave the school they have good levels of skill in handling and communicating information. This is seen in the work of some Year 5 and all Year 6 pupils who are creating multi-media presentations about the school. They have shown developing skill in creating these presentations which include text, moving images, sound and other illustrations. The presentations are good because the teachers have built in the time for pupils to refine their work. This was very cleverly done in one class where the teacher created a situation where pupils had to edit their work for the purposes of informing the seven-year-olds who are about to move into the 'junior' section of the school. They showed a good appreciation of the needs of the users, simplifying and reducing language and creating fun elements in the presentation.
128. The quality of teaching and learning was good or better in all lessons which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan work well in line with national guidelines and pupils are now building systematically on their knowledge and skills. All pupils enjoy ICT and this is evident in the way in which they are eager to get on with their work and the effort they put into the lessons. Work in this subject makes a good contribution to their social development as they work in pairs and small groups on joint projects. It encourages their skills of reflection when they are asked to make decisions about effectiveness of their products. The staff in the Year 6 classes teach ICT very well. They have planned all of the work thoroughly and are rapidly up-grading pupils' skills. They make every effort to use the ICT suite regularly and all pupils are learning quickly. The only hindrance to the pace of progress is the lack of a projector or the facility to teach all the pupils at once by means of a large screen.

129. Pupils in Year 1 made good use of the ICT suite to create labels for items in the classroom. This was an excellent lesson because the teacher had planned well and had paid good attention to providing opportunities for pupils to make decisions about their ICT products. The work was very well matched to the pupils' capabilities, for example, the lower attainers were given words for labels and created labels by stretching the text box. By contrast, the higher attainers had to enter the word and change its appearance and effect by changing the font settings. This was highly successful and all of the pupils managed to create useful labels. In this lesson the pupils' basic skills of opening and closing programs and storing data were reinforced.
130. A lot of the work to date has focused on data and information presentation. There is less evidence of pupils exploring patterns and relationships, controlling events or gathering physical data through use of sensors. Year 6 pupils have only limited knowledge of these aspects of ICT. They do, however, make good use of digital photography. Pupils now make good use of the Internet as a source of information but have not yet experienced electronic mail.
131. There is an ICT development plan which shows how the school will achieve further improvements to the teaching of the subject and good work is planned. It is abundantly clear that standards are improving rapidly with the improved resources. It is also improving because almost all of the staff have recently undertaken extensive ICT training and are now growing rapidly in confidence as their classroom practice improves.
132. Most classes have two lessons a week though in some cases one of these lessons is held in the classroom. This is of lower quality because of the poorer resources. There is a need for a school timetable which facilitates maximum use of the ICT suite.
133. Information and communication technology is used well to support other subjects. This is particularly evident in how it is used to support English work for drafting and redrafting. It is also used well to support basic skills learning in mathematics through the regular use of the program 'Maths Challenge'.
134. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership through her enthusiasm and developing knowledge. She has given clear direction for the subject and monitors its development very well. All aspects of the subject are planned for through the implementation of clear guidance. The expenditure on ICT has been well targeted to provide very good resources.

## **MUSIC**

135. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve expected standards. This is similar to the last inspection. Guidance on planning and teaching of the curriculum are now in place and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
136. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing tunefully and listen attentively. For example, they listened to a recording of a train journey and enjoyed describing the sounds they heard. They reproduced the sounds with their voices or by playing instruments and, eventually, produced a good 'class composition'. They have experiences in listening to a range of music, which extends to assemblies when for example, pupils enter to the music of Greig or more modern composers of film scores, such as 'The Mission'. Pupils are developing a good sense of rhythm. They clap and conduct in time, recognising different tempos. However, there are few opportunities to appraise their own and other's work or to record their work. Nevertheless, overall pupils are achieving well.

137. By Year 6, pupils have good skills in handling percussion instruments and opportunities to play keyboard instruments and guitars. They learn about a range of music from a variety of countries, for example, Irish folksongs. They recognise differences in pitch and produce the high and low notes to indicate the changes. Most pupils have a good sense of rhythm. They identify changes in tempo and instruments when listening to a piece of music. For example, they listened to 1960s music and recorded on worksheets the tempo and pulse and described the mood of the piece. They recognised 'rests' and understood their purpose. They compared two recordings of the same piece. Pupils sing tunefully, but there is little attention to breathing, phrasing and dynamics to help them produce good quality singing.
138. Teaching, overall, is satisfactory and teachers are enthusiastic. Planning is thorough and, in the best lessons, pupils work with enjoyment and make satisfactory progress. There was one unsatisfactory lesson because disruptive behaviour was not managed effectively. There are some clear links with literacy. For example, pupils create their own raps to fit the tune of a popular song and are eager to perform them for their friends but there are few opportunities for pupils to record their work on audio or videotape. Information and communication technology has not yet been incorporated into the planned programme to extend pupils' understanding and support their learning.
139. Pupils perform for their friends and parents in assemblies and at Christmas time. A talent competition, in the summer term, enables pupils to practise and demonstrate individual and group skills. Pupils perform confidently. For example, almost all pupils in a Year 5/6 lesson were eager to perform a song in pairs or alone. This supports their personal development. A very wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments including several keyboards and guitars support pupils' study of music from other cultures. Although there are trolleys for storing instruments, little attention is given to the care of the instruments or to storing them systematically and carefully.
140. The co-ordinator does not systematically assess or monitor pupils' progress and therefore does not have a secure view of standards throughout the school. All pupils are included in musical activities. Clubs such as keyboard, guitar and choir, plus a brass band group, enhance the provision for music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

141. Standards in games are as expected nationally by the ends of Years 2 and 6 and pupils enjoy the subject. Standards at Years 3 to 6 are not as high as indicated at the last inspection but there is no direct evidence of decline in standards.
142. By the end of Year 2 pupils are well co-ordinated and show this in the skills of throwing and catching large balls. When learning games skills in small groups they try hard, sharing and playing fairly. Older pupils co-operate well in small groups, taking turns and recording other's performances. Year 6 perform a range of skills such as sprinting, jumping and skipping and their technique is of a satisfactory standard. Standards in swimming are below average. Although around 25 per cent of pupils swim in excess of 400 metres, 30 per cent leave school without having achieved the basic 25 metres required.
143. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although two of the lessons were unsatisfactory. Teachers plan for warm-ups, skills practices and application of skills in games. In a good lesson, the teacher had high expectations of behaviour with the result that pupils applied themselves well to the task. Time was used well. Pupils

worked through a demanding warm-up activity. They organised and managed their own group activities and the majority collaborated well. A few non-participants were set tasks which included them in the lesson. Pupils worked hard throughout the lesson and gained much enjoyment from their efforts. Weaknesses in the unsatisfactory lessons stemmed from a lack of teachers' subject knowledge so that not enough attention was paid to the key skills. Management strategies were ineffective in the unsatisfactory lessons, leading to unsatisfactory behaviour and learning. Opportunities were missed for pupils to observe the performances of others and note points for improvement. The only dance lesson seen was not successful, as the teacher didn't use the dance tapes effectively. There was little teacher input. The tape was played too loudly causing the pupils to make more noise, moving around the room without purpose.

144. Some teachers rely too heavily on commercial guidance for planning, which lacks precision. For instance, some lessons involve a wide range of games skills but do not have specific learning objectives. Some lessons, particularly for younger pupils, are too long and pupils become restless.
145. The school provides additional opportunities for pupils to take part in football and cricket clubs after school. A residential visit to Shropshire is open to all older pupils. This provides experience of a wide range of adventurous activities as well enhancing pupils' social and personal development.
146. There is very limited co-ordination of the subject and little monitoring of pupil performance to help raise standards.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

147. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach standards that are expected for their age, in relation to the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the last inspection. All pupils study three main religions, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. In addition, pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn about Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Pupils have good opportunities to gain a very comprehensive knowledge and understanding of religious education.
148. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a good knowledge of different places of worship and have had experience of visiting them. They know that people celebrate special events. They talk and write about festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Eid and Diwali. Pupils have a growing knowledge of the Lord's Prayer and write their own prayers confidently. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils took turns in saying their own short prayer. They listened to each other and showed respect for each other's prayers. They made their own special prayer books and realised that people say prayers in their homes and school, in addition to special places of worship. In both Years 1 and 2, children show reverence. Candles are lit in the centre of a circle of pupils. These help them to concentrate and know that it is a special time. Year 2 pupils have a growing knowledge of stories in the Bible and the Qu'ran. They know that 'bread and red wine are shared in church', and that at Ramadam people 'fast, pray and read the Qu'ran'. They explain the rituals and know that special occasions such as weddings and christenings are celebrated in church.
149. By Year 6, pupils have a secure knowledge of many of the major beliefs, symbols and observances of Christians, Hindus, Muslims and Jews. Written work of pupils in Year 6 is good and provides relevant links with literacy. For example, they write Easter events as a diary. They compare the birth of Jesus as written in different Gospels and show a very good understanding of many of the events in the life of Jesus, including

the parables and miracles. They understand that parables have hidden meanings and this contributes to their moral development. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 discuss Founders and Leaders. Through their good knowledge of Jesus and his teachings, they understand the qualities required to be a good leader and suggest 'kindness', 'cheerfulness', 'fairness', 'generosity' etc. They know the events leading up to Easter and that it is a very important time in the Christian year. Teaching is good overall. Good planning and a genuine school commitment to religious education, and to the inclusion of all pupils, means that all are happy to practise their own religion and share beliefs with each other. This supports pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are mostly imaginative and taught well. Effective displays reinforce pupils' learning and understanding. Pupils have a very good knowledge of the 'I am' sayings of Jesus, such as, 'I am the light of the world' and understand that these sayings are not literally true but examples of metaphor. Assemblies support pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education well.

150. Presentation of work in Years 5/6 and 6 is good. However, pupils' work in Years 4 and 5 is often untidy. Teachers make assessments at the end of units of study, but there is no formal, whole school assessment and therefore little direct overview of pupils' progress. The co-ordinator has monitored some teaching but only to ensure coverage.
151. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has attended many courses. Resources are good, with appropriate artefacts to support learning. Frequent visits to places of worship and visitors from different faiths, who come to share their expertise with pupils, enhance the curriculum. The subject gets only the minimum amount of time on the current timetable and this restricts progress.