

INSPECTION REPORT

BROWNLOW FOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bolton, Lancashire

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105149

Headteacher: Mr R. Hesford

Reporting inspector: Mr P. Evans
20737

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th December 2002

Inspection number: 246443

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Darley Street

Postcode: Bolton
BL1 3DX

Telephone number: 01204 333511

Fax number: 01204 333512

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M. Kilcoyne

Date of previous inspection: December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr P. Evans 20737	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Art and design Music Religious education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further?
Ms A. Smith 13895	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr P. Martin 23262	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
Mr M. Galowalia 20832	Team inspector	English as an additional language Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography	How well are pupils' taught? How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brownlow Fold Primary School provides education for 219 pupils aged 4 to 11, 116 boys and 103 girls. At the time of the inspection 50 children had places in the school's nursery, although not all these children will move into the school's reception class. The majority of children attend the nursery either in the morning or afternoon. A significant majority of pupils live within the school's catchment area, which is made up of mostly council or social housing, with a small minority of privately-owned properties. The proportion of pupils identified as being eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The school has a very high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils on the school's special educational needs register is broadly in line with the national average, as is the proportion who have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Attainment on entry to the school is poor when compared with what is expected for the age of the children. A recent, serious fire damaged the school to such an extent that major rebuilding was necessary. The recruitment of teachers has presented the school with difficulties during the past three years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of Brownlow Fold Primary School is good. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good. This, together with the good attitudes among pupils, leads to the good progress they make as they move through the school. The leadership and management of the school are good. In view of its context, the standards that it achieves, the level of education that it offers to all its pupils and the money that it spends, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and learning in the school is good overall in Years 1 to 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the nursery and good overall in the Foundation Stage.
- The progress that pupils make is good overall.
- Pupils' personal development, including their moral and social development, is good. The quality of relationships is also good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are good.
- The use of resources is good.
- The action taken to meet the school's targets is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English and science throughout the school, and in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, are less than satisfactory.
- Standards in art and design, religious education, physical education and music are below expectations throughout the school.
- A small minority of teachers do not have good strategies for guiding and controlling the behaviour of a small number of pupils in some lessons.
- The school does not have well developed strategies for promoting good attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1997, when it was felt that improving pupils' mental skills in mathematics, improving teachers' planning, the governing body becoming more involved in the school's curriculum, monitoring standards achieved and meeting the statutory requirements for teacher appraisal would help to raise overall attainment. All these issues have been addressed at least satisfactorily, and most well. In addition, the school has made progress in raising the standards that pupils consistently reach in reading and writing at the end of Year 2. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have been raised steadily since the last inspection. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	E	D	B
Mathematics	D	D	D	B
Science	E	E	E	C

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

On entry to the school's nursery, children's levels of attainment are poor when compared with what is expected for their age overall. They make very good progress in the school's nursery and good progress overall in the Foundation Stage. By the time that they move into Year 1 the majority of children are in line with the targets for their age in their physical and personal and social development, and some achieve higher levels than this. They remain below expectations in the other four areas of learning set out in the national Early Learning Goals for children as they enter Year 1.

The school's results in the 2002 national tests for 7-year-olds were below average in writing and well below average in reading and mathematics. When compared with the results of schools with a similar level of entitlement to free school meals, these results were well below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Standards in science, according to teacher assessments, were above average. Since 2000 the overall trend in the school has been one of steady improvement in line with the national trend. In mathematics the school's results have fallen from average standards in 2000 to well below average in 2002. This was because of the levels of ability of the pupils in that particular group. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the current Year 2 are on target to reach below average standards in English, mathematics and science in the 2003 national tests.

In the 2002 national tests for 11-year-olds the school's results were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. The school's results have been maintained since 2000, rising in line with the national trend. When compared with the results of schools with similar prior attainment¹, the school's results are above average in English and mathematics and average in science, as shown in the table above.

Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics are on target to be average at the end of Year 6 in 2003. Standards in English and science are on target to be below average. Standards in design and technology, history and geography are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in all other subjects are below expectations. Standards in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress through the school. The school sets realistic but challenging targets, and has good strategies for meeting them.

¹ The school's results for ~~eleven~~-11-year-olds in 2002 are compared with schools that achieved similar average scores at the end of Year 2 in 1998

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have good attitudes to the work they undertake and are happy to come to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour both in and out of classrooms is satisfactory. However, a small minority of pupils behave badly when teachers do not manage their behaviour well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. There are good relationships between pupils and between pupils and their teachers.
Attendance	Attendance is well below the national average.

Pupils' attitudes to school and the work they undertake are good. There are good relationships between all pupils and staff. However, in spite of the strategies presently in place attendance is well below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good and it is good in the Foundation Stage overall. Forty-seven lessons or parts of lessons were seen during the inspection. In 10 lessons the quality of teaching was very good, and it was good in another 19. In 10 lessons the quality of teaching was satisfactory and in three lessons it was less than satisfactory. Five lessons were seen for too short a time to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. In the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils' levels of learning closely matched the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching in English, literacy, mathematics and numeracy is good overall throughout the school. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with English as an additional language also receive good teaching. The quality of learning throughout the school is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, which is enhanced by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants to enable them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school makes good provision for pupils with English as an additional language with the quality of teaching and support given to them.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Provision for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development is good. However, procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are less than satisfactory.

The partnership between the school and parents is good. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are less than satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides good, clear educational direction for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body gives good pastoral support to the school. Changes in the governing body mean that further professional training is required.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The effectiveness of the school's evaluation has been affected by a high level of staff change.
The strategic use of resources	Good. All the resources available to the school, including specific grants, are well used.

The number, training and experience of staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum are very good. The school's accommodation is good, and resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high expectations that the school has for their children • The fact that their children like attending school • The quality of teaching in the school • The way that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible • The leadership and management of the school • The good progress that their children make in school • The behaviour of the children in the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive, particularly about their children's progress • They feel that the school could work more closely with parents • A very small minority of parents are not comfortable in approaching the school with any questions or concerns

Inspection evidence supports the positive views expressed by the great majority of parents. The school has a good working relationship with parents. The information provided for them and the amount of homework provided are satisfactory. In these matters, inspection evidence does not support the views of a small minority of parents. A small minority of pupils behave badly when teachers do not manage their behaviour well in lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection in December 1997, pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were judged to be in line with expectations in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, religious education, design and technology, geography, music and physical education. Standards in art and history were judged to be above expectations.
2. Children's levels of attainment on entry to the school are below expectations overall. However, there are a significant number of children who attend the school's nursery who do not move into Year 1 in the main school but return to schools in their own catchment areas in other parts of the town. The attainment of this group of children is well above the average of those who continue their education at Brownlow Fold School. The attainment on entry to the school of the children who join Year 1 at the school is poor. This judgement is supported by the school's very good records of the results of tests and assessments undertaken shortly after children join the school. All children make very good progress in the nursery, the great majority of the children who leave to attend other schools reach the targets in the Early Learning Goals set for children of this age and a majority exceed them.
3. The school's results for 7-year-olds in national tests in 2002 were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing when compared with all schools nationally. When compared with the results in schools with a similar level of entitlement of free school meals, these results were again well below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. This is because of the levels of ability of pupils on entry to the school. Each year group has few pupils of higher ability and a higher than average percentage with low levels of attainment. Test results show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 is broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportion reaching the higher than expected Level 3 is very low in all three areas and the proportion of pupils who only achieve Level 1, which is below expectations, is high. The Year 2 group that took the tests in 2002 had a higher than usual level of pupils with special educational needs and pupils of lower ability. However, the trend over time between 1998 and 2001 has been steadily upwards in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. In national tests for 11-year-olds in 2002, the school's results were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science, when compared with those in all schools nationally. When compared with those in schools that had similar results for the same group of pupils at the end of Year 2, these results were above average in English and mathematics and average in science. There was a significant improvement in the school's results in English, mathematics and science in 1999 compared with previous years. Since then the trend has been slowly upwards towards the national averages. Once again, the test results for 2002 show that there were significantly more pupils who achieved the below-expected Level 3 than there were nationally. However, the proportion of pupils who achieved the average Level 4 and the above average Level 5 was in line with or only slightly below the national averages in all three subjects. This is a significant achievement for the school.
5. Inspection evidence shows that the children who remain at Brownlow Fold School make very good progress in the nursery and good progress overall in the Foundation Stage. However, because of their low levels of attainment on entry to the school, they do not

reach the levels expected of them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world or creative development, by the time they enter Year 1. The great majority of children reach the standards expected of them in their personal and social skills, and a majority exceed them by the time they enter Year 1. A great majority also achieve the standards expected of them in their physical development and a significant minority exceed them by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

6. The poor levels of attainment of children joining the school mean that they have a great deal of learning to do in order to reach the standards expected for them, according to their age, as they progress through the school. This means that they are not able to achieve the levels expected of them by the time that they leave Year 2. However, the steady building of basic skills, knowledge and understanding in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils in Years 3 to 6 to move closer to the standards expected of them at the end of Year 6. While the school does not yet reach those standards, it has moved steadily closer to them since the last inspection. Inspection evidence shows that, in the present Year 6, standards in mathematics are on target to be average by the end of the year. Standards in English and science are on target to remain below average at the end of Year 6.
7. There are 62 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. A number of these receive additional support. They make good progress because of the good support and teaching they are given. Pupils who have formal statements of needs receive their full entitlements. This contributes well to the standards that they reach. All pupils with special educational needs reach standards that are in line with their levels of ability.
8. One in three pupils in the school speaks English as an additional language. Nine pupils are at early stage of language acquisition. Seven of these are in reception. Two are in junior classes. Their main languages are Gujarati, Urdu and Panjabi. These pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 2 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is better than that of other pupils. This is because of the very good specialist support that they are given. They continue to make good progress. By the end of Year 6 their attainment in reading and writing is still better than that of other pupils. However, they do not maintain the same rate of progress in mathematics. As a result they attain results that are similar to those of other pupils.
9. Inspection evidence shows that the school has placed great emphasis on raising standards in English, mathematics and science. This has been at the expense of achievement in some other subjects. Standards in design and technology, history and geography are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in all other subjects are below expectations. Standards in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
10. The school works hard to improve standards. In spite of setting realistic though challenging targets, it has had to cope with a steadily changing staff and recruitment difficulties during recent years. At the time of the inspection the headteacher was acting as co-ordinator for several subjects in the absence of a deputy headteacher and other subject specialists. A new deputy headteacher takes up post in January 2003. These factors have had a slowing effect on the raising of pupils' standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning. Many listen carefully to teachers, use their imagination and concentrate well in lessons, especially the younger children. The last inspection found that pupils' attitudes were good and this is still the case. Pupils in the reception class settle happily into the school routine and quickly adopt very positive attitudes to school and learning.
12. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. The majority of younger pupils behave very well around the school. Teachers are consistent in their high expectations of behaviour and speak to pupils with respect and consideration. However, the older pupils in the school behave less well and there are a number who have difficulties with concentration and behaviour. Occasionally they disrupt lessons, as teachers do not always deal with them quickly and effectively enough. The school is inclusive as it welcomes pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities. During the inspection no racist or sexist behaviour was seen, nor was any bullying observed. Bullying is rare, although there are several recorded incidents of pupils being excluded from school. The reasons given for these are satisfactory. Overall behaviour is not as good as reported at the time of the last inspection.
13. Personal development is good overall. Most pupils respond well to opportunities to take initiative and responsibility, for example by collecting and delivering attendance registers and helping in the classroom. Pupils in Year 6 take turns to sell morning snacks and organise games for younger children to encourage co-operative play during the lunchtime break. Pupils take part in extra-curricular activities provided after school, such as the 'Busy Club', and sporting activities such as cross-country running. All pupils are involved in supporting charities and are very supportive of those in their school who are disabled. They are quick to make friends with them and to do what they can to help them join in fully with all activities.
14. Pupils' social and moral development is good. They are aware that oppressive behaviour such as bullying will not be tolerated and, therefore, there are almost no such incidents. Parents endorse the view that moral development is good and pupils have good attitudes and respond well to the school rules. Pupils are generally courteous to one another and polite to adults, including visitors. They are orderly when they move around the school and on entering and leaving assemblies. They behave well in the dining room and when in the playground. Pupils in all year groups regularly work in pairs or small groups to discuss elements of their work and some teachers make very good use of interactive teaching methods to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Their experience of preparing and performing to their schoolmates, parents and others in the wider community help them to identify with the feelings and experiences of other people and to develop an awareness of community. Most pupils generally show respect for each other, for example when they listen carefully to each other's contributions during discussions. They show respect towards adults, are polite to visitors and are pleased to share in each other's achievements. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. The great majority are very aware of the difference between right and wrong. Some teachers do not have good strategies for managing pupils' behaviour and do not have the full attention of all pupils at all times. Relationships in the school community are generally good and make a positive contribution to the high standards of behaviour demonstrated by many pupils, particularly in the younger year groups. Pupils are friendly, courteous and willing to help and talk to visitors to the school. Pupils are given many opportunities during class discussions to reflect on the impact of their actions on others. Pupils show respect for one another's views, beliefs and culture, and are caring towards each other. They frequently help each other and work together sharing ideas. Many take turns, discuss their work with each other and are generally supportive of each other's efforts.

15. The cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. They have a good understanding of their own culture. All pupils mix well across gender, ethnic and ability groups and play well in an atmosphere of mutual trust and harmony. Whilst pupils recognise individual differences, their friendships cross racial barriers and racism is not an issue. However, the development of a clear understanding of the multi-cultural nature of our society and their place within it is not well developed and the school recognises this as an area for further development. The positive ethos of inclusion in the school enables them to be confident, take pride in their achievements and become fully integrated into the school's social fabric. They also respond well and appreciate the efforts of support staff to help them make progress. Pupils begin to develop an understanding of different religious beliefs and to respect them. This is a good beginning to their learning to live in a multi-cultural society. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. They show awareness of spirituality, know the difference between right and wrong and some of the distinguishing features of a multi-cultural society. Some assemblies during the inspection offered pupils appropriate moments of prayer or reflection to develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. However, there are insufficient well-planned activities that place an emphasis on reflection or the spiritual aspects of art and music and as a result opportunities are missed. Pupils are encouraged by their teachers to take responsibility for each other in the playground.
16. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are enthusiastic and keen to take part in classroom activities. They forge good relationships with their teachers and other pupils. They behave and collaborate well with other pupils.
17. Attendance is less than satisfactory as it is well below the national average for similar schools. The percentage of unauthorised absences is less than the national average. The disappointing attendance levels are due to a number of factors, including term-time holidays and domestic difficulties. There are a few pupils who regularly arrive late, but most arrive in time for the beginning of the school day, settle down quickly and are ready for lessons. When pupils do not attend or are late, this has a detrimental effect on their learning. At the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions registration is quickly and efficiently carried out. These judgements are broadly similar to those made at the time of the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good. More than one in nine parents also recognise this strength. In all, 47 lessons were observed. Good or better teaching was seen in 29 lessons. Very good teaching was seen in 10 lessons. Less than satisfactory teaching was seen in only three lessons. These were in Years 3 to 6. Two of these were in physical education. One was in mathematics. The main reasons for less than satisfactory teaching were teachers' less than satisfactory management of pupils' behaviour and insecure knowledge of aspects of the subject observed. No less than satisfactory teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. Five lessons were seen for too short a time to make a judgement. The overall good quality of teaching is helping the pupils to learn well and make good progress.
19. The school has maintained a good quality of teaching since the last inspection. The school has created a good climate to provide better teaching so that pupils learn better. The good teaching seen promotes good attitudes to learning. Consequently, pupils' acquire a good deal of knowledge, understanding and skills.
20. The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery is very good. The teacher has a very good understanding of the needs of young children in general and the particular needs of

the children who join the nursery class. In the reception class and throughout the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

21. Pupils with special educational needs, including behavioural difficulties, are taught well. Teachers devise good plans for helping individual pupils to make steady progress in small, manageable steps. They are ably supported and advised by the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs. There is very good liaison between teachers and support assistants who work with particular pupils or groups of pupils. This has a positive impact on their learning and they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
22. The learning of pupils who speak English as an additional language is good because of good teaching. Teachers use questioning and discussions well. This helps pupils to learn various subjects well. They explain technical vocabulary clearly. This, together with good classroom management, promotes good acquisition of English. Teachers share the reading of text aloud. Such reading provides good models of language. Teaching and learning are less effective when support teachers do not continue mainstream work in withdrawal groups. Teachers apply the same good assessment procedures as for other pupils, for example undertaking national and optional tests. The school analyses the results thoroughly to check pupils' progress. If they show underachievement, the school redeploys the support teacher to provide additional support. The school has effectively applied this procedure recently to improve the writing of two targeted pupils.
23. The teaching of literacy is good because of teachers' good understanding of how pupils develop literacy. It has a positive impact on improving standards. Pupils begin schooling with low standards. They make good progress and achieve well. Teachers place good emphasis on the key skills of reading and writing. This leads to pupils making good progress in these areas. Teachers provide good opportunities to experience and develop different styles of writing. Reading aloud provides good models for pupils to emulate. However, comprehension does not always keep pace with pupils' fluency. This slows down their progress in reading with understanding. Teachers effectively use written materials in other subjects, for example in geography, to promote pupils' literacy. Teachers encourage pupils to develop speaking and listening skills. This is having a modest effect. Occasional weakness in listening skills leads to inappropriate behaviour in some classes.
24. The teaching of numeracy is good because of teachers' good understanding of how to promote it, such as the teaching of good strategies to deal with mental calculations. This leads to good learning and good progress. Numeracy lessons begin with mental arithmetic. This sharpens pupils' thinking and provides a good stimulus to develop interest. They also develop confidence. Independent work is well planned. Teachers conclude lessons with questioning to check how well pupils have learnt. This helps pupils to consolidate what they have learnt in the lesson.
25. The best lessons are very well structured and organised. Introductions are clear so that pupils know what to do. In a numeracy lesson the teacher set high expectations, requiring pupils to plot coordinates in all four quadrants. The teacher used the overhead projector effectively. The explanations were very clear. Pupils were made to feel a sense of urgency. The pace was very good and contributed to productive learning. The pupils behaved very well and engaged in learning with heightened interest. The support assistant was very effective in engaging and helping pupils with special educational needs. This resulted in these pupils making very good progress. The lesson ended with an effective review of learning.
26. The common strengths of most lessons are teachers' good subject knowledge, the teaching of skills of literacy and numeracy, and assessing how well pupils learn.

Teachers' have secure knowledge of the subjects. This is evident from the skills with which they ask questions and explain key ideas and subject specific vocabulary. These induce motivation. Pupils want to learn more. Management of pupils is a strength of teaching in many lessons. However, when this was weak, as was the case in a few lessons, pupils did not learn as well as they should have. Teachers do not always use learning objectives to enable pupils to know what they are expected to learn in lessons. As a result, pupils know what the task is but do not always know what they are expected to learn. The occasional delayed start of lessons also leads to unsatisfactory teaching and learning. An analysis of pupils' work shows that teaching and learning in religious education and history are less than satisfactory.

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

27. The school provides teaching and learning experiences in all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, there are some subjects that are not given as much time as they should be, such as physical education, art and design, religious education and music. This has the effect of lowering pupils' learning in these subjects. The school has continued to improve the curriculum in line with national initiatives. In addition, it soundly provides sex education and education about drug misuse. It fully meets the legal requirements. It has also successfully addressed the issues related to the use of results of assessments to plan the curriculum. However, the school has focused heavily on raising standards in literacy and numeracy to the detriment of the other subjects mentioned above.
28. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. It is planned to meet the guidance for the curriculum for children in this stage. Teachers show a good understanding of how children in this age group learn.
29. The school has updated subject policies to guide the work of each subject. Although the school has adequate resources for personal, social and health education, it is not taught consistently in all classes. Nevertheless, its spirit is there. Its impact is seen in generally good relationships in the school. The application of the national strategies for English and mathematics is effective. These have had an impact on improving the quality of learning.
30. The curriculum for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. The pupils are mostly taught along with others in their classes. The school gives additional support if checking their results shows underachievement. This support is given mainly in their own classes. They are also withdrawn for specific support according to need, for example to improve speaking and listening in Year 2 and writing in Year 6. These strategies are effective. As a result, many of them are among the better performing pupils of the school. Occasionally, work in withdrawal groups does not follow what is covered in the first part of their literacy lesson. This digression results in pupils missing out on what others learn in their class. This hinders their progress in English. This type of additional support is less than satisfactory.
31. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well by teachers and other staff. This means that they have the same opportunities to learn as other pupils and make similar levels of progress in relation to what they already know and understand. This provision is enhanced by individual plans that help them to overcome their difficulties in learning basic skills in literacy and numeracy, or to overcome other barriers to their learning.
32. The teachers plan the curriculum well. The best planning is in English and mathematics. It is well guided by the national strategies for these subjects. The weakest planning is in

religious education, music and art. Weaknesses in the planning of some aspects of subjects are found in scientific enquiry and physical processes, problem solving in mathematics, reading and dance. As a result, pupils' achievements in these areas are relatively lower, for example in reading at the end of Year 2. Planning of the curriculum in most subjects other than English and mathematics is based on national model schemes of work. The subject leaders provide a summary of the curriculum plan for the whole year. This is satisfactory. The class teachers then use this guidance to prepare short-term plans. These are adequate. Whilst the subject leaders check these, the practice of checking is not consistent. It is understandable that part of the problem has arisen because of changes in staffing. Nevertheless, the practice does not ensure rigorous coverage and systematic progress and this affects the learning of some pupils.

33. The school has a satisfactory, socially inclusive curriculum. Pupils have equality of access. This is mainly through the good number of additional teachers and support assistants. However, matching of tasks to different abilities, especially for the more able pupils, is not developed as well as it should be. As a result, fewer pupils attain the higher Level 5 in national tests, for example in mathematics and science.
34. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. These include Busy Club for pupils in Years 2 and 3. There are two clubs for rounders. One is mixed for Years 5 and 6. The other is for Year 4 only. In addition, the school provides a computer club, an art club and a cross-country club. The pupils also benefit from football training provided by Bolton Wanderers 'Football in the Community' initiative. These activities make a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development.
35. The school has sound links and relationships with the community and other schools in the area. The police and the community nurse make an effective contribution to pupils' learning about stranger danger, drug misuse and sex education. The local vicar takes school assemblies at regular intervals. The school appreciates this very much. It has no links with local business. Overall, satisfactory links with the local secondary schools ensure the smooth transfer of pupils at the end of Year 6.
36. Overall, the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection. Personal development is a priority at Brownlow Fold and is supported by care from all teaching and support staff. The school seeks to develop a range of beliefs and values, particularly those of care, respect and an understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The caring relationships between adults and pupils, and pupils and their peer groups, bear witness to this commitment.
37. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school provides opportunities for spiritual awareness through assemblies, but time for reflection and contemplation in both assemblies and lessons is often too brief to raise pupils' spiritual awareness. Daily assemblies are used to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem, for example, through a celebration of achievements and good work. However, opportunities are often missed to enable pupils to reflect on their experiences in a way that develops their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Religious education lessons give pupils only limited opportunities to reflect on the beliefs and practices of several major world faiths. Spirituality is fostered in some lessons, although opportunities to appreciate art, literature and music are limited.
38. Provision for moral development is good. The use of moral themes in school assemblies, such as the importance of helping others, leads pupils to recognise the needs of people less fortunate than themselves. Pupils take part in opportunities to help in school and are active in regular fundraising events for charitable causes. Older pupils are encouraged to help and look after those much younger. Within religious education lessons, moral issues

are discussed in relation to respect and friendship. Rules of good behaviour are in evidence around the school and are referred to as part of reinforcing good behaviour.

39. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school is successful in fostering the social development of its pupils and works hard to create a strong sense of community. The members of staff are very conscious of the need to encourage good behaviour. They strive hard to promote and maintain the conditions in which a caring ethos flourishes and work hard to develop trust between adults and pupils. Pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other in different contexts around the school. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones. They receive some good opportunities to take part in organised social activities, such as sports days and school productions. Opportunities that encourage pupils to use their own initiative and take on more mature responsibilities are limited.
40. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. It fully celebrates the rich ethnic mix and differing cultures represented throughout the school community. Pupils are made aware of the British heritage, for example, through local history and geography lessons. Occasionally the school invites visitors to the school, or involves parents from differing cultures and faith communities, to help pupils learn and understand more about their own and other cultures. However, there is little contribution to cultural development provided through art or music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. Procedures for the measuring pupils' attainment and progress are good, particularly in English and mathematics. They make a significant contribution to pupils' good progress in these areas. Teachers use a range of tests, including optional end-of-year tests in English and mathematics, and their own expertise to judge how well pupils are doing. They use the information gained from these to set targets for improvement. These targets are clearly displayed on pupils' tables or in their exercise books. Most know that these targets are designed to help to raise their attainment, but some cannot read or understand the words and phrases in these targets. Teachers do not always stress the importance of these targets by reminding pupils to look at them before doing relevant work, or in their marking. However, there are some instances where this has been done well; for example, a teacher writes '*...you have used lots of good metaphors (target 1) confidently in your poem*'. This helps pupils to understand what they are doing well and whether they are reaching their goals. However, this type of comment is inconsistently used and, in some cases, pupils have reached their targets without the teacher giving them recognition for their achievement. Teachers use the results of assessments to identify where extra support needs to be given in order to raise standards, for example identifying those pupils who would benefit from 'booster' classes in English and mathematics or those pupils who need extra support in literacy.
42. The school has analysed the results of tests in a number of useful ways. These help the school to identify how well different groups of pupils are progressing in English and mathematics. However, these analyses do not provide enough information about how well the different aspects of the subjects have been taught or learned. The school's procedures for checking pupils' attainment in other subjects are sound overall. Teachers have identified assessment opportunities in each subject and use these to record pupils' achievements.
43. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from the same level of care as their classmates. Teachers apply the same good assessment procedures as for other pupils, for example national and optional tests. The school analyses the results thoroughly to check their progress. If pupils show underachievement, the school redeploys the support teacher to provide additional support. It has effectively applied this procedure to improve the writing of two targeted pupils.

44. Teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs review pupils' learning plans regularly to make sure that they are making progress towards their targets. There is regular contact between the school and support services, and the school uses the advice and support from these services effectively.
45. The care of pupils is good overall. The school has a caring ethos and parents are made very welcome. All members of staff are supportive of both the academic and pastoral needs of pupils, including those with learning and other difficulties. Teachers know the pupils very well. Members of staff work hard to develop and maintain the good relationships observed between teachers and pupils throughout the school and this contributes positively to the general quality of care offered. The school has good facilities for disabled pupils and enables them to take part fully in school life and activities.
46. Child protection procedures are very good; the headteacher is the designated person. The use of learning support assistants generally contributes to the welfare and progress of many pupils. The arrangements and provision for dealing with first aid, child sickness, accidents and emergencies are good and well understood by pupils and staff. Risk assessments are undertaken appropriately in areas concerning pupils' safety. There is a suitable programme for personal, social and health education, although coverage is inconsistent across classes. There is a satisfactory health and safety policy.
47. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring discipline and promoting good behaviour. The school's approach to behaviour management encourages each class to follow a set of rules agreed between teacher and pupils. This often works well within classes, but results in an inconsistent approach to behaviour management across the whole school. The expectation that pupils will behave well is reinforced during lessons, break times and assemblies by the example of adults working in the school. The policy of introducing other activities, such as break time and assembly, between teaching sessions is effective as pupils are able to concentrate better on lessons when there is a change of activity in between. When there is a threat of bullying or poor behaviour most teachers take immediate action, talking through difficulties with pupils to prevent more serious problems from developing.
48. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to discuss and share opinions on a range of personal, social, moral and health issues. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for others, and the Year 6 work in selling mid-morning snacks is a good example of how the school does this. There are no formal procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development or recording their personal interests and achievements in school or at home, although a good celebration of the pupils' achievements and personal development takes place weekly during assemblies and some class discussions.
49. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are unsatisfactory overall. The school works with the educational social worker, who visits the school weekly and makes home visits to those families who have consistently poor records of attendance. Certificates of good attendance are awarded to those pupils with 100 per cent attendance. However, the school does not formally track pupils' absence and punctuality closely on a regular basis, although there are secure procedures to ensure that reasons for absence are received and recorded. The school does not have a policy of contacting parents if they fail to inform the school on the first morning when pupils are absent from school. Registers are stored in accordance with statutory regulations, although procedures to account securely for all pupils during the course of the school day were put in place during inspection. During the inspection some lessons observed did not start on time and a number of pupils did not arrive punctually at the beginning of each school day, although

the school adopts a policy of preferring pupils to arrive late rather than not at all. Overall, these judgements are not as good as those made at the time of the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting with a small number of parents show that, overall, parents and carers have a positive view of the school. The school works well in partnership with parents and the community, and has forged good links that make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. This judgement is similar to that made at the time of the last inspection.
51. Parents feel that their children enjoy school and are happy to attend. Most parents are comfortable to approach the school with suggestions or complaints and feel that the school works closely with them, and many say that they are kept well informed about progress, although a few disagree. Whilst inspectors agree with the first two points, they think that the quality of information given to parents about their children's progress could be improved. The school has good procedures for contacting parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are kept well informed of their children's progress and have good opportunities to be involved in the provision and review of the plans devised to help them to make progress. This contributes well to pupils learning.
52. Home visits to support those pupils who speak English as an additional language are not a strong feature. However, the selective visits that are made are considered effective by the parents and contribute well to the standards that pupils achieve.
53. The quality and quantity of information provided for parents are satisfactory. Letters and newsletters are sent out regularly and keep parents informed about events, issues and forthcoming school trips whilst also celebrating the school's successes. Curriculum information is also sent to parents each term. The parents of new pupils are provided with essential information through the school prospectus, meetings and visits to the school. Parents' consultation meetings, which provide good opportunities for them to discuss their children's progress and attainment, are well attended. The headteacher is available to talk to parents at most times during the school day and there are opportunities for them to meet with teachers as necessary after school. These strategies enable parents to understand how well their children are learning.
54. The annual governors' report to parents provides another source of information for them. However, the section on special educational needs lacks some statutory details such as the success of the policy, significant changes to the policy, how resources have been allocated, or whether there have been any consultations with other bodies such as the local education authority. There are annual reports on pupils' progress, which include a record of their attendance at school. However, although reports are thoughtfully prepared, they rarely suggest targets for pupils' further improvement.
55. The school operates an informal open-door policy for parents and carers wishing to discuss matters or to make complaints. Teachers are accessible at the start of each school day and the headteacher is usually available to parents and carers throughout the day. Most parents feel welcome in the school, although a few note that they do not think the school always works closely with them. There are good arrangements for pupils with a statement of special educational need to receive appropriate information through annual reviews. Consultation meetings for parents of pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Most parents attend reviews and contribute suggestions about how the needs of their children may be met. This contributes well to pupils' learning.
56. Parental involvement in pupils' learning, both at home and school, is satisfactory. The school welcomes the help of parents who are able to give time consistently to work

alongside teachers, for example sharing books with pupils or listening to them read. Many more are involved in supporting school activities such as sports day, school productions and school outings. To help understand the work done by their children, the school holds curriculum sessions with parents of children who are about to sit statutory attainment tests. Parents of pupils in the reception class are invited into school to learn about how their children will be taught reading, numeracy and literacy and how they may help them with this. This enables parents to be more involved in their children's learning.

57. Many parents, carers, friends of the school and the local community attend school presentations. The school raises extra funds through raffles such as the Christmas raffle, and from the small profit made in selling mid-morning snacks. These funds are used to pay for some school outings and to provide parties and presents for the pupils at Christmas. Parents are also invited into the school for occasions such as the summer sports days. This contributes well to the partnership between the school and parents and has a positive effect on pupils learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The leadership and management of the school are good. The previous report noted strong and purposeful leadership and this is still the case.
59. The headteacher has a good vision for the school's educational direction and works hard to keep the school on the right track. He recognises that pupils' achievements depend not only on their academic development but also on the care provided by the school to support all aspects of their development.
60. The headteacher has organised a team of senior members of staff to help to create, support and spread procedures and ideas for school improvement and good practice. At the time of the inspection the school was without a deputy headteacher. The previous one was promoted and the new one was about to take up her post in January 2003. The headteacher had usefully delegated, temporarily, some of the deputy headteacher's responsibilities to other members of the senior management team. This team is effective in ensuring that the school is working well towards its aims. Subject co-ordinators generally have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects and how to go about securing these improvements. These include checking teachers' plans to ensure that they cover the appropriate content, and some have looked at the work that pupils have done. There is a programme for checking how well pupils are learning in the classroom. This is achieved by monitoring subjects in turn. This helps to identify strengths and areas for development, but the nature of this programme has meant that less than satisfactory teaching in physical education has not been detected. The school has a sound system for managing the performance of all members of the teaching staff, including the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. This contributes satisfactorily to the standards that pupils reach.
61. The governing body plays a sound part in shaping the direction of the school. There have been some recent changes, so the current governing body is not yet as experienced as the previous one. With the help of the headteacher, governors keep themselves informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. An area for development in the previous inspection, that of ensuring that the governors 'become more involved in the curriculum and the monitoring of the standards achieved in each subject' are being implemented. The school has reported on the results of National Curriculum tests at a meeting of the governing body. Recently each governor has been paired with a subject co-ordinator, but they have no clear remit about how this pairing is to work towards improving standards.
62. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well led. Teachers bring their concerns to the co-ordinator, who supports the development of individual education plans

if required and arranges for regular reviews. The co-ordinator provides very well organised and effective systems and strategies for supporting pupils with special educational needs. This support is effective in ensuring that these pupils learn well. The school governor who is linked to special needs provision has a sound understanding of the Code of Practice and its implementation in school. However, this provision is not adequately described in the governing body's annual report to parents.

63. The school effectively uses the specified funding for pupils who speak English as an additional language for its intended purpose. Overall, leadership and management of this support are satisfactory.
64. The school's plans for further improvement identify appropriate areas for development, for example in raising standards in English and in information and communication technology. Another positive feature of the plans is that the number of targets is manageable. However, sometimes the targets for individual areas are not clear enough. The financial implications of reaching the targets are soundly considered, although sometimes it is not clear how much time will be involved in reaching each target.
65. The school carefully considers different options before spending to ensure that it receives good value for money. For example, when buying laptop computers, the school ensured that it not only paid a sensible price, but that it also received a maintenance contract. The school uses its funding well, including those funds provided for particular purposes, for example supporting pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. A recent reduction in nursery funding is being carefully handled so that it has as small an impact on the school as possible.
66. Considering the standards that pupils achieve, the degree of improvement since the last inspection and its good overall effectiveness, the school provides good value for money.
67. Despite staffing difficulties, the school has a good number of experienced teachers for the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, there is no one with expertise in music or art. Having two extra support teachers working across the school enables many of the learning activities to be strongly supported and increases the overall teaching support available for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers deploy support staff well, particularly in support of those pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs. This has a positive impact on the standards that they reach.
68. Resources are satisfactory and sufficient to teach the curriculum overall, although the library is under-used and under-stocked. This has a detrimental effect on the development of pupils' research skills. Accommodation is good overall and sufficient for the number of pupils. However, resources for indoor physical education, including dance, are restricted. The school hall has been rebuilt recently, but the space available for physical activity is barely adequate for the numbers of pupils in the largest classes. This does have an impact on pupils' learning. There is a particularly well-resourced nursery with a good outdoor area that can be used to extend the classroom into the outdoors. A new extension caters for the extra needs of disabled pupils, and the school has good, inclusive facilities and provision to enable disabled pupils to fully access the school and curriculum. This has a very good impact on the standards that these pupils achieve.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:-

- (1) further raise standards in English and science throughout the school and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 by:

- a) raising pupils' skills of speaking and listening in order to enable them to access the whole curriculum at the earliest opportunity;
- b) increasing the opportunities for pupils to undertake truly open-ended investigations in science and the independent recording of their discoveries;
- c) improving opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to experiment with mathematics and to use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in other subjects;

(Paragraphs 3 - 6, 23, 41, 85 - 90, 93, 103)

(2) raise standards throughout the school in art and design, religious education, physical education and music by:

- a) finalising and implementing the plans to improve standards in religious education and music which are being developed in partnership with the advisory teams for these subjects;
- b) raising teachers' knowledge and understanding of physical education through professional development and training;
- c) ensuring that all aspects of art and design are taught consistently throughout the school;

(Paragraphs 9, 29, 32, 109, 134 - 135, 139, 140, 142 - 143)

(3) through further staff training, improve the skills of some teachers in promoting and maintaining the good attitudes and behaviour of pupils in lessons, to match the highest quality seen within the school;

(Paragraphs 12, 26, 47, 90, 102, 140)

(4) develop and implement effective strategies to promote good attendance.

(Paragraphs 17, 50)

The governing body may also wish to include the following minor areas for development in its action plan.

There is inconsistent development of pupils' personal, social and health education. Guided reading sessions are not yet used well enough to raise pupils' standards. Contemplation is not well used in assemblies or in lessons to raise pupils' levels of spiritual awareness. The governors' annual report to parents does not contain sufficient information about the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	10	19	10	3	0	0
Percentage	0	24	45	24	7	0	0

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

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)	25	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	61

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	85

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	14
	Girls	9	10	9
	Total	21	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	70 (87)	77 (97)	77 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	16
	Girls	9	9	11
	Total	21	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	70 (87)	77 (77)	90 (87)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
	2002	18	17	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	12
	Girls	13	11	16
	Total	24	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (60)	69 (69)	80 (74)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	13	12	14
	Total	24	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (63)	69 (71)	80 (80)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
98	26	0
0	0	0
8	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
55	1	0
21	1	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.3
Average class size	31.4

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	165

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	42.1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	639,495
Total expenditure	645,919
Expenditure per pupil	2,274
Balance brought forward from previous year	71,650
Balance carried forward to next year	65,226

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 36.5%

Number of questionnaires sent out	241
Number of questionnaires returned	88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	30	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	33	7	1	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	34	6	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	43	7	2	6
The teaching is good.	58	33	6	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	33	17	0	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	26	10	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	27	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	40	36	13	2	9
The school is well led and managed.	55	35	7	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	38	1	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	28	9	2	20

Inspection evidence supports the positive views expressed by the great majority of parents. The school has a good working relationship with them. The information provided for parents and the amount of homework provided are satisfactory. In these matters, inspection evidence does not support the views of a small minority of parents. However, a small minority of pupils do not behave well in lessons when their teachers do not manage their behaviour well.

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

69. The 80 children presently in the Foundation Stage are based in the school's very good nursery and the reception class. Twenty-five children attend the nursery part-time in the morning and a different group of 25 in the afternoon. Very good teamwork on the part of the teacher and the support assistant provides a high quality and range of learning opportunities. There is a good match of activities to the needs of pupils of this age range in the six recommended areas of learning, in both the nursery and the reception class. Good liaison between these classes and the rest of the school ensures that children get to know other teachers and routines, and this smoothes their transition from one class to another.
70. Two quite distinct groups of children attend the school's nursery. Approximately a half of children attend because the school in their own area does not provide nursery education.
71. Tests and assessments administered shortly after children join the nursery show that this group of children has considerably higher attainment than those who undertake all their education at Brownlow Fold Primary School. Those who leave at the end of the nursery often achieve scores in these tests that are, on average, twice as high as those who remain. At the end of the nursery these children return to schools in their own areas in other parts of the town. This group of children leave the nursery meeting the targets set in the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage, in all six areas of learning. All are on target to meet these goals by the time that they enter Year 1 and many to exceed them. They make very good progress in the nursery because of very good teaching.
72. Overall, the attainment of children on entry to the school is below expectations. However, the attainment of the group of children who remain at the school is poor overall. The proportion of these children who speak English as an additional language is high and the proportion who have special educational needs is above the national average.
73. When children move into the reception class they have already made very good progress in their personal and social development and are ready to make significant progress in other areas. Good assessment procedures allow staff to record and track individual children's development, and gauge progress throughout their time in the Foundation Stage. Children with special educational needs receive good support and take small steps towards success. By the time that they are ready to start Year 1, almost all pupils have made good progress and attain the Early Learning Goals for children of this age in their personal, social, emotional and physical development, with a significant minority doing even better than this. Because of their limited pre-school experiences and in spite of the very good opportunities that they are given in the nursery and the reception class, this group of children overall do not reach the expected standards in their skills in communication, language and literacy, their mathematical development, their knowledge and understanding of the world, or their creative development, by the time that they enter Year 1.
74. Overall, the quality of teaching in the nursery and it is good overall throughout the Foundation Stage. The teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and learning. Their knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age group are good. The learning support assistants are an important part of the teaching team and make a strong contribution to the learning process. In all six areas of learning the majority of children work hard, concentrate well and complete their given tasks without wasting any

time. They show a commendably high interest in all that they do and a relatively mature spirit of independence for their age and levels of development.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the nursery and good throughout the Foundation Stage. Many children enter the school with poor skills in personal and social development. Children make rapid strides in this area because of the good and very good teaching and almost all attain the Early Learning Goals by the time that they start Year 1. A significant minority exceed this. This gives them a secure foundation for their future school life. The school places a strong emphasis on building positive relationships with parents before their children start school and has developed a strong bond with parents. This results in parents feeling confident about placing children in the school and children settle well. Children throughout the Foundation Stage are eager to learn because there is a bright and welcoming atmosphere and the teachers prepare resources imaginatively. They soon gain confidence because the adults are caring and help them to understand the routines. The staff work together well and provide the children with very good role models on which to base their own relationships with each other.
76. There are good opportunities for children to work and play independently and, when appropriate, they share and take turns in using equipment. For example, during a very good session in the nursery outdoor play area, children gave each other lifts on wheeled vehicles and joined together very well in using a parachute when singing about snow. Behaviour in all lessons is good and very well managed. This results in teaching and learning taking place in a happy and supportive atmosphere.

Communication, language and literacy

77. Good teaching of communication, language and literacy throughout the Foundation Stage means that all children make very good progress from a low starting point, although only a minority achieve the targets in the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.
78. Because of the very good behaviour management of the teachers and the learning support assistants, the children listen well, especially when the situation involves an element of excitement. For example, in a good literacy lesson a large group of less able children worked hard to tell the teacher and the learning support assistants about their weekend. The teacher showed good care to include children from ethnic minority backgrounds by asking them to talk about their experiences of the Eid celebrations. The subsequent work session included good experiences in developing children's early reading and writing skills. This resulted in all making good progress. Overall, children's skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing are poor in the nursery and well below expectations in the reception class, but their continued good progress means that they are on target to reach below expected standards by the time that they enter Year 1. The teachers use sessions at the end of lessons effectively to encourage the children to share their ideas and what they have achieved.
79. The great majority of children listen politely to each other and wait their turn to speak. Imaginative and stimulating role-play situations provide great scope for pupils to talk to each other and to adults in a variety of ways. Few can talk fluently in well-formed sentences, but they are helped to put their ideas forward sensibly. The children enjoy listening to stories read to them by adults, and a small minority know that authors write books and illustrators draw the pictures. Teachers share reading time with children, which demonstrates the great value that the school puts on teaching children to read. Most children understand that print carries meaning and should be read from left to right. Parts of the National Literacy Strategy are effectively introduced in whole-class sessions and are

carefully extended towards the end of the reception year. This helps children get ready for work that is more formal in Year 1. During the inspection week a father came into the nursery to share books with children, an activity that he undertakes regularly. This promotes children's learning well.

80. Many activities are planned to help children learn early writing skills. They are encouraged to hold their pencils correctly to form recognisable letters and their copying over of handwriting patterns shows that some have good pencil control and grip. About half the children are able to write the initial letters of words and three-quarters of them are able to sound these out correctly. These skills are helping a minority to read a range of familiar words independently and to attempt writing short sentences.

Mathematical development

81. From a poor overall level of ability on entry, good and very good teaching enables children to make very good progress in their mathematical development. This results in their overall ability being raised to below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Staff in the nursery and the reception class take every opportunity to help children to see how mathematics is used in everyday life, including the early sequencing of numbers, for example on the houses in a street. Effective use is made of good quality equipment that interests children and encourages the ordering of numbers, sorting, pattern-making and counting. Good teaching ensures that children learn a good range of mathematical vocabulary and so, when filling a range of containers with coloured water, they begin to talk confidently and accurately about these being full or empty, bigger or smaller. Some children are becoming adept at counting on and back from five or ten and this is made fun through number songs and rhymes. In a good lesson in the nursery, children discriminated between gold and silver, made good progress in consistently recognising the number three and identified objects as being 'tall', 'big', 'small' or 'short'. They gain in confidence as they move through the Foundation Stage and become more accurate because their teachers provide plenty of repetition and practice. By the time that they enter Year 1 more-able children can count to 20 and recognise numbers on a dice.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. This area of the curriculum greatly enhances children's learning and enjoyment of school. However, because of their limited pre-school experiences and the necessity for the school to concentrate on the development of their personal, social and emotional skills, as a group children do not reach the targets set in the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of their reception year. Good teaching provides exciting and interesting activities that extend the children's outlook on life and help them to make good progress in their understanding of what is happening in the wider world. They use the school's grounds to identify living things.
83. The children enjoy playing with a good range of construction kits and modelling materials and some are keen to talk to adults about what they have made. During the inspection week children in the nursery were seen making their own buns, and children in the reception class used diagrams to place domestic equipment in the empty rooms of a house to give each room a purpose.

Physical development

84. Children achieve well in this aspect. Almost all are on target to attain the Early Learning Goals, and a significant minority to exceed them, by the end of the reception year. Through good teaching, children have ample opportunities to improve their skills in handling scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and other tools. They use these with developing

control and enjoyment. The school has a very good fenced-off outside area specifically for the use of the Foundation Stage children. This is well supplied with large wheeled toys and climbing equipment. Most of the children have a good awareness of space and move around their classrooms and the outdoor area with good co-ordination. When children are working in the hall, the demands made on them by teachers are high and their response is always good and sometimes excellent. Children demonstrate controlled movements when travelling in a variety of ways, such as 'plodding or walking jauntily', and their smiling faces show their real enjoyment of the exercise undertaken. Teachers sometimes use pre-recorded tapes to give lessons more interest. For example, one teacher used a dance tape of *Jack and the Beanstalk* to promote excellent responses from children in a movement lesson. The teacher identified what children were doing well and some children confidently demonstrated this to the rest of the class. This prompted all to improve on their work. Children who are less sure are effectively supported and this helps them to achieve appropriately. The teacher emphasised the need to warm up and, at the end of a lesson, a slow exercise ensured that children were ready to return to their classroom quietly.

Creative development

85. Once again, because of the school's identified priorities of raising standards in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development, and the low level of most children's pre-school experiences, most do not attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the time that they enter Year 1. The quality of teaching is good. The range of experiences the children are given successfully develops their creative skills and they make good progress in this aspect. Children enjoy working in the various imaginative settings provided. They play harmoniously with other children and act out various characters as part of a group. Their confidence in taking part in role-play and drama situations is extended when other adults visit the school and join in with these activities. Children enjoy singing songs, particularly ones with associated actions. The children sing heartily and have a sound recollection of the words of well-known and loved songs. The children's skills in art are steadily developed and they are encouraged to explore freely the use of a wide range of media and materials. They are given good opportunities to use paint, make models, create collage pictures and to make figures.

ENGLISH

86. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards of attainment are below those expected from pupils of this age. However, considering that many children start in the nursery with poor skills in speaking and listening, they achieve well. This is due to the good teaching they receive throughout the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported by their teachers and classroom assistants. The level of support for pupils with special educational needs is also good. Consequently, the pupils make good progress. Therefore, although standards of attainment are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection, the school is enabling all to make good progress. Standards are lower because there are more pupils with special educational needs and of lower ability than there were at the time of the last inspection. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. This includes developing a consistent approach to handwriting and ensuring that the work for higher-attaining pupils sufficiently challenges their ability.
87. Pupils start Year 1 with speaking and listening skills that are below those expected for the age range nationally. Whilst pupils make satisfactory progress in developing these skills, standards are still below expectations at the end of Year 2. Many pupils tend to answer questions in single words or short phrases but seldom in full sentences. One higher-attaining pupil in Year 2, when talking about the books he had read, said about Vincent Van Gogh that '*he drawed flowers*'. Despite good support for pupils for whom English is an additional language, some of them have particular difficulties. The teacher asks questions that require an extended answer, but one or two need encouragement. One

Year 2 pupil was only able to reply to a question about where he had been on Friday by tapping his shoes to show he had bought these. Because of good teaching and positive attitudes, pupils make good progress in the juniors. By the end of Year 6, their listening skills are similar to those expected from pupils of their age. However, speaking skills are below those expected, although Year 3 pupils developed these skills well when reading play scripts expressively. They show by thoughtful responses that they have been listening to discussions and instructions during lessons. Some older higher-attaining pupils are quite coherent in discussion, for example when explaining what they know about historical events. However, some find difficulty, for example relying on hand gestures to describe the shape and appearance of a sarcophagus.

88. Reading standards at the age of seven are below average. Many pupils start Year 1 with standards in reading below average for their age, and achievement, although good overall, is not high enough to raise standards by the end of Year 2. Few pupils read at a high enough level, and a significant number have not reached the expected level. Not enough read aloud with the fluency and understanding appropriate for their age. Most enjoy reading, but few can describe a plot or characters in a story. Pupils recognise familiar words and make reasonable attempts to read less familiar ones, based on their understanding of the sounds that letters and groups of letters make. One higher-attaining pupil used this type of knowledge to read the word 'sustained'. Pupils continue to make good progress in the juniors and by Year 6 reading standards have improved. Achievement is good, but standards are still below what is expected from pupils of this age nationally. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Higher-attaining pupils describe favourite parts of the books they are reading. One pupil, for example, gave a clear account from the story *Goodnight, Mr Tom* of how Mr Tom found Willy in the cupboard with the dead baby. The majority of pupils, not including the higher attainers, find it difficult to give a clear and detailed plot summary. Pupils use a satisfactory degree of expression and pay attention to punctuation when reading together, for example in a Year 4 lesson on commas. However, only the higher-attaining pupils do this independently. Older pupils generally know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can find information using contents and index pages. Pupils generally understand what they read and can answer questions based on the text. This, however, is often at a very literal level and they are less successful when making inferences, that is, 'reading between the lines'.
89. By the age of seven, standards in writing are below those expected from pupils of this age. Handwriting is often inconsistently formed, unclear and rarely joined. Higher-attaining pupils use capital letters and full stops reasonably accurately, but this is not always the case for other pupils. Pupils usually spell common words correctly, but are less successful with less common ones. Some pupils, notably those for whom English is an additional language, use incorrect forms of some words '*My cusem gived me a...*' instead of '*My cousin gave me a ...*'. This suggests that the pupil knows the sentence should be written in the past tense, but that he has not learned that the past tense of 'give' is 'gave'. Pupils have enough opportunities to write for an increasing range of purposes, for example retelling the story of how 'Trotty Turtle Lost His Shell', news and stories. They write accounts of events such as the Great Fire of London linked to their history topic, noting that Samuel Pepys '*bereeyed his cheese, whine and books*'. Pupils in the juniors make good progress overall and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Year 6, attainment is only just below average. Handwriting is good by the end of Year 6. It is generally legible, joined up and often neat. They accurately use basic punctuation such as capital letters, full stops and question marks. Some older pupils are beginning to use a wider range of punctuation, such as speech marks and semicolons. Pupils write for a sound range of purposes, for example letters inviting a famous footballer to a charity event, accounts of historical events such as the Battle of Marathon, and diary entries. In her review of a poem, a Year 4 pupil wrote how she enjoyed the poem because '*it makes me feel happy and bright*'. Although pupils have good opportunities to practise and

develop their range of writing, they do not have enough to develop one piece of writing at length, for example drafting and redrafting, or building up a longer story. Pupils usually use their existing skills soundly in other subjects, except in science, where they have few opportunities for using their literacy skills.

90. Pupils with special educational needs who work individually with support teachers and with learning support assistants make good progress. They have individual programmes that identify short steps for improvement. These plans are carefully reviewed and adjusted as necessary. Similarly, pupils receiving additional literacy support make good progress during small group sessions. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress too. They are supported well by teachers, often in the pupils' own classroom.
91. The quality of teaching is good. The school uses the structure of the National Literacy Strategy effectively in planning interesting, well-structured lessons and series of lessons. These lessons usually build on what pupils have already learned and teachers modify plans according to how well (or otherwise) pupils have learned previously. When teachers share the purposes of lessons with pupils, they know what is expected of them and this enhances their learning. In a good Year 3 lesson the teacher invited pupils to look for the lesson objective 'to include instructions in their play scripts', which was clearly displayed on the board. The class then read through this together and discussed its meaning. This set the scene for the good learning that went on throughout the lesson. When the purposes of the lesson are not shared in this way, pupils are unsure about what they are meant to be doing, and this holds up progress. Teachers plan activities that match the purposes of the lesson well to the prior knowledge and understanding of pupils. In a Year 6 lesson, higher-attaining pupils were given more freedom and flexibility to use their writing skills when creating the storyboard for a play based on Greek myths. Other pupils were given more detailed guidance so that they too could make good progress. Teachers usually involve all pupils in discussions and ask useful questions that encourage pupils to think and meet the lesson objectives. In a Year 3 lesson the teacher used the overhead projector well to display copies of pupils' work and discussed what instructions could be added. She involved the pupils well in reading out the dialogue once this had been done - '*Cinderella, get me my newspaper NOW!*' However, in general, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to read together, for example when reading the text they are working on. This means that pupils do not always have opportunities to practise speaking aloud. Teachers usually manage pupils' behaviour satisfactorily, which means that pupils do not misbehave or distract others, and learning can go on through the time available. This is not always the case, however, and the guided reading sessions, provided outside the 'Literacy Hour' (the time devoted to teaching and learning literacy), are not effective in promoting reading skills. Whilst the teacher works well with a small group, the rest of the class are not doing any useful work. In one class, a number of pupils were not reading what they were meant to. These sessions lack a clear focus for the pupils outside the teacher's own group. Teachers use summing-up sessions well, revisit the main themes of the lesson and discuss what pupils have learned, again helping them to fix and retain their understanding. Teachers mark work well. As well as providing praise, teachers offer advice about how to improve work, for example '*...use other connectives to vary sentence structure*'. These comments not only encourage pupils to try hard, they also tell them how to improve. This enhances their quality of learning. There is a good range of tests and assessments that provide teachers with information about how well pupils are learning. The findings from these assessments are used well to guide planning and to set targets for pupils. However, teachers do not always monitor these closely enough and some pupils still have targets that they met earlier in the term. Most pupils know what their targets are and that they will raise their own levels of attainment if they reach them. However, a minority are unclear about their own targets and have difficulty in reading them. In a few

cases, teachers usefully refer to targets when marking, for example in the 'Special Writing' books.

92. The subject is well led and managed by the knowledgeable subject co-ordinator. She has identified the areas in which the school needs to develop, for example the importance of extending all pupils' speaking and listening skills. There are firm plans to put these improvements in place. There is a good range of strategies in place to support lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. These include providing support in small groups and running 'booster classes' for pupils who would benefit from them. These strategies are already beginning to have a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve. Although the library itself is under-stocked and doubles as a computer suite, there are firm plans to remove the computers, which have been replaced by portable laptop computers, to provide more space. The school's own stocks are enhanced by a good range of books from the local authority's library service, so there are enough books for research into other subjects. Pupils use information and communication technology to display work, but there is little use of it to draft and redraft writing.

MATHEMATICS

93. In Year 2 the work pupils were doing during the inspection shows that standards are below the national average overall. There is no significant difference between the standards attained by boys and girls. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 build securely on the good progress made in the Foundation Stage.
94. The work seen in the present Year 6 class shows that pupils will reach average standards in tests at the end of the school year.
95. The school has developed and implemented strategies for the focused monitoring of teaching and learning, and the careful tracking of pupils' progress throughout the school, and this is contributing to raising standards.
96. Almost all teachers ensure that all pupils are wholly involved in mathematics lessons. This enables all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Almost all make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is well organised and learning support assistants are well briefed to develop their confidence and understanding. They provide strong support for both teachers and pupils. In all lessons seen this ensured that pupils sustained their concentration well when engaged in small group tasks and during whole-class sessions. At the same time the sensitive nature of the support encourages pupils to develop as independent learners. At the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment at the end of Year 2.
97. Most pupils join the school with skills in mathematics that are well below average, as shown by tests and assessments. Their rate of learning is generally consistent. They make good gains overall in their knowledge and understanding of number, and in the other aspects of mathematics, including shape, space and measuring. Pupils are also taught the basic skills of data handling and an early understanding of the use of graphs. In particular, as a result of the emphasis that teachers place upon the basic skills, pupils make good progress in acquiring strategies to deal confidently with number problems. However, because of their low level of attainment on entry to the school, pupils do not reach average standards by the end of Year 2. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 builds steadily on the good grounding provided in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make good, and often very good, progress in Years 3 to 6, and the school's results, together with

inspection evidence, show that, overall, pupils are reaching average standards at the end of Year 6.

98. In Years 1 and 2, the range of investigations within mathematics and the use of pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematics in other subjects are less than satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs work at a lower level, but because of sensitive support they demonstrate good attitudes to their work and apply their skills well.
99. Teachers have been trained and supported in their implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is good. Teachers throughout the school gather a good range of assessment information about pupils' progress in mathematics. The use of this information to carefully match future tasks to pupils' individual levels of ability is generally good. This particularly affects the learning of the small number of more-able pupils and also those of lower ability who do not have special educational needs. Information and communication technology is shown in some teachers' planning and when it is used it raises the level of pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson six laptop computers were used well to raise pupils' understanding of pictograms to show in a pictorial format data that they had gathered.
100. The three-part lesson structure is firmly established. All lessons begin with a brisk mental mathematics session that captures pupils' interest and develops and extends their calculation skills. In a lesson for pupils in Year 6, for example, as a result of the teacher's quick-fire questioning pupils were keen to respond and as a result learned quickly about prime numbers. Learning objectives for these lessons are regularly shared with pupils, which steadily raises their knowledge and understanding of their own learning. Most teachers use the plenary or final part of the lesson effectively to reinforce what has been learnt in the lesson.
101. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics throughout the school is good. Evidence gathered from looking at pupils' past work shows that a small minority of work is set for all pupils at one level. When this happens the work does not extend more-able pupils. However, the quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen during the inspection ranged from very good to less than satisfactory. When teaching was less than satisfactory, pupils' behaviour was not well managed and this led to poor behaviour restricting pupils' learning. Teachers throughout the school have a good knowledge of the subject overall. They use it well to encourage pupils to discuss the strategies that they acquire for dealing with mental calculations. The very good relationships established within the great majority of classrooms are the key to the most successful teaching at Brownlow Fold, and are at the heart of teachers' skilful management of behaviour. Their encouraging manner ensures that both they and their pupils enjoy their lessons and the subject. Pupils see that their contributions are valued and join in discussions readily, as their skills in speaking and listening develop. The quality of marking is good overall. Teachers often use written comments to tell pupils how they could improve their work further, and this is used well to promote pupils' progress. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory overall.
102. The subject is well managed. During the inspection there was no mathematics co-ordinator in the school because of a promotion to headship. However, the new deputy headteacher, who joins the school in January 2003, is a mathematics specialist and will become the new co-ordinator. In the past, standards have been raised through a programme of teachers in the school watching exemplar lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' work, the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a three-year programme of support in mathematics provided by the local education authority.

SCIENCE

103. Seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds achieve below average standards. Both make good progress because of good teaching and learning. Pupils who speak English as an additional language learn well and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs participate well in learning activities and make good progress.
104. Seven-year-olds achieve well. Their progress is good, building on the low level of their attainment when they join the school. Their knowledge of materials and their properties is well developed. They explore and describe ways in which heating and cooling change materials such as egg and water. They know that processes such as bending, stretching, squashing and twisting can also change some materials, for example plasticine. They classify familiar foods into different categories such as cereals, meat, fish, fruit and vegetables soundly. They are beginning to understand the importance of these categories in their diet. Eleven-year-olds achieve well. They understand terms such as 'solution' and 'evaporation'. They describe methods such as filtration and evaporation to separate mixtures of insoluble and dissolved solids. They recognise the feeding relationships between plants and animals. They describe these in the form of food chains. However, their investigation skills are low, especially in planning investigations. They are beginning to understand how evidence and creative thinking have been combined to provide scientific explanations.
105. Pupils' attainment on entry is very low. They continue to learn well and make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show keen interest and good concentration. This contributes to the good atmosphere for teaching and learning in their classes. Teachers motivate pupils well. They provide and use a good range of objects and materials. They carefully plan the involvement of pupils in practical tasks, for example in testing whether or not various objects stick to a magnet. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also learn well. They show good enthusiasm and collaboration, especially when teachers engage them in practical work. For example, they investigate factors that affect the brightness of a bulb in a simple circuit or investigate factors that affect how quickly a solid dissolves.
106. The quality of teaching is good. It leads to good learning. Teachers organise and structure their lessons for productive learning. The lessons are well structured. Most begin with a quick review of previous work. This gives confidence to the more able and gives a good opportunity for others, especially the lower-attaining pupils, to consolidate previous learning. Teachers' secure subject knowledge is reflected in their very effective use of questioning and discussion. Teachers employ these to motivate pupils and to share ideas and information. Questioning is also used effectively to make pupils think, for example, how to make a test fair. These are also used effectively to assess learning. However, lesson objectives are neither shared effectively nor recorded as learning headlines to enhance pupils' understanding of what they are expected to learn or investigate. An analysis of pupils' work shows weaknesses in marking. Teachers sometimes miss mistakes in pupils' work. For example, one pupil had given the same definition for both predator and prey. This was ticked as correct. This affects the quality of learning. Expectations are also not consistently high enough. Teachers accept pupils' explanations that do not convey careful thinking, for example *'the plant is nearly dead because it did not have water, carbon dioxide and light'*. Another weakness in teaching is that tasks are not matched to pupils' needs. This affects learning, especially of pupils who are more able or are likely to reach the expected level. Occasionally, pupils' inattentive and restless behaviour limits the amount of knowledge and understanding that they acquire. Teaching makes little use of information and communication technology (ICT). As a result, pupils miss out on opportunities that it offers for learning in science.
107. Leadership and management of the subject are now good. The school's analysis of the current situation and the proposed actions and changes are good. It has recognised that

the key to improve standards is to increase pupils' skills in scientific enquiry. More opportunities are planned for independent learning when planning and carrying out fair tests. In addition, the school has planned to extend pupils' scientific vocabulary and to improve teachers' planning so that teaching matches the needs of pupils of differing abilities. School actions, such as increased time for science in Year 6, moving science teaching to morning and the development of skills and vocabulary, are progressing well and making a good impact on learning and achievement.

ART AND DESIGN

108. During the inspection only one lesson was seen. This was in Years 1 and 2. However, additional evidence was gained from looking at pupils' work, displays, teachers' planning, and discussions with the headteacher and pupils. This evidence shows that pupils' standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below national expectations and pupils make less than satisfactory progress.
109. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils use a sound range of materials and techniques when creating their artwork. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop their imagination and creativity by drawing, painting and making collages. However, from poor levels of attainment on entry to the school their development is slow and much of their work is below the standard expected for their ages. They draw from observation, for example, an arrangement of fruit. Their visual perception remains at a low level and many pupils in this lesson drew each piece of fruit individually, even though they could not see them all. They use paint in self-portraits, but the outcomes, while having elements of a face such as eyes or hair, are naive and below what are expected for their age. Some work is at a suitable level for pupils in Year 1, such as their three-dimensional pictures of themselves in a geography study entitled 'How can I get to Mr. Hesford's office?'
110. Pupils continue to build up their artistic skills slowly as they progress through Years 3 to 6. Some of the finished products are of a satisfactory standard. By the end of Year 6, some pupils observe objects closely, carefully drawing what they see. However, their skills in three-dimensional work are below expectations. Art and design skills are used in other subjects; for example, in Year 4 sound hand-drawn and coloured sketches were seen in pupils' plans for making money carriers. In a scientific study of water, a sound three-dimensional picture of a reservoir and a good picture of a sewage works using reflective materials in appliqué demonstrate some satisfactory pupil skills.
111. Displays show a limited range of art activities. For example, in a display of work throughout the school each year group is represented by a small number of pieces of pupils' work. The work is bordered and accompanied by basic two-dimensional print work. This display clearly shows that pupils' skills in art and design are below expectations throughout the school. Pupils have a very good attitude toward art and design and clearly enjoy the subject. However, opportunities for them to use information and communication technology to support their learning in art and design are underdeveloped. This slows their learning both in art and design and in information and communication technology.
112. In the lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The teacher showed a good knowledge of the subject, used suitable language and provided stimulating materials that encouraged pupils to record what they observed in the form of a picture. However, the results of this work again demonstrated low-level observational and sketching skills.
113. The subject is presently without a co-ordinator and the school finds it difficult to appoint staff with suitable creative skills. However, it has identified art and design as an area for development and has been working closely with the local education authority advisory

service for art and design to develop a new scheme of work and staff development and training in order to raise standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Seven- and eleven-year-olds attain expected standards. These match those found in the last inspection. All boys and girls, irrespective of their first language or background, engage in learning with good interest and concentration. As a result, they take full advantage of the opportunities teachers offer them to learn. This leads to satisfactory progress and standards that reflect their ability in design and technology.
115. By the age of seven, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They explore models. They generate ideas and use pictures to describe their design. They select and use tools and materials to make sound quality products such as moving pictures and finger or glove puppets. Their evaluation of their products is satisfactory. By the age of 11, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They examine commercial products and develop their own ideas. They make labelled sketches of their design and make paper templates. They practise skills, such as cutting, shaping and joining. They pay good attention to the finish and function of their products. They work with a variety of materials such as wood, card, textiles and baking ingredients. They use appropriate tools to make sound quality products, such as slippers, money containers and bread. Their evaluation of products is satisfactory. They have sound understanding of food safety.
116. Learning is satisfactory because of sound teaching. Teachers offer challenges that interest and motivate pupils. They provide a good range of resources, especially fabric. They explain and demonstrate effectively what they want pupils to learn. The management of pupils and relationships are good and create a good atmosphere for learning. Occasionally, a drop in pace slows learning. Teachers do not make enough use of information and communication technology.
117. Management and leadership of the subject are satisfactory. Pupils' learning benefits from links with a local bread company and puppet making workshops held in the local library. The school is aware of the need for the monitoring of teaching and for a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work. These are included in the school's 2002-03 development plan. So far the subject has made modest progress in these areas.

GEOGRAPHY

118. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils attain expected standards, similar to those reported in the previous inspection. In lessons, boys and girls take an equal part and make similar progress. Teachers' matching of tasks to pupils' needs engages pupils with special educational needs. As a result they make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of a good focus on technical vocabulary and effective use of resources, especially for reading.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve expected standards. For example, they compare features of a town with the countryside. Pupils know features of geographical significance in a seaside town and understand how these differ from their own locality. They compare holiday places frequented by pupils. They draw bar graphs to show their understanding of this activity.
120. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach the expected standards. For example, they know the location of the major mountains in the world. They relate altitude to temperature, for example 'The higher you go the cooler it becomes'. They understand the meaning of this statement in terms of animals that inhabit mountain areas. They have sound skills at using

various resources such as books, maps, an atlas and ICT (information and communication technology).

121. Pupils of all ages show good interest. They learn well in geography. In Year 1, the various countries and places that Barnaby Bear visits fascinate them. They locate these on a world map, for example England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Portugal, London, Manchester and Dublin. In preparation for Barnaby Bear's visit, they develop an understanding of the climate of various places and the need for clothes that suit these climates. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 draw bar graphs of jobs that people do in India and in Britain. This promotes their numeracy and gives them a graphic comparison. They interpret it well. Teachers' effective use of text promotes pupils' literacy and their knowledge of jobs that people do, for example in a village in India. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use the Internet effectively, for example to research and acquire knowledge of world mountains.
122. Teachers use exposition and discussion well to motivate and engage pupils. Good management and lesson planning lead to productive learning. Effective questioning involves as many boys and girls as possible across all abilities. This also enables the teacher to assess how well pupils are learning. Reading together aloud and the explanation of key words help pupils who speak English as an additional language to acquire language and subject knowledge. However, statistics are not explained well enough. For example, comparing percentages of people engaged in manufacturing industry in different countries gives only part of the information. Comparing numbers gives another perspective on the number of people employed in this industry.
123. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator monitors curriculum planning. However, monitoring of teaching and pupils' work is not done to verify how well the subject is taught. This is partially resolved by informal discussions with colleagues. The school's procedures for measuring pupils' progress are good. Application of these ensures that pupils achieve expected standards.

HISTORY

124. Standards of attainment in history are at the expected levels for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. No teaching was observed in the infants, but work samples and planning show that pupils are learning about history in a way that emphasises that there are differences between what has happened in the past and what happens now, and the way that things have changed.
125. Pupils make good progress in relation to their prior understanding in Years 1 and 2. They find out about different events in the past and compare how things now are different from, or similar to, the way they were. Pupils are beginning to understand that certain events happened a long time ago and compare what life was like at the time of the Great Fire of London with life today. For example, they use pictures of street life then and now to make comparisons. When they learn about Samuel Pepys, pupils are beginning to understand that we can find out about the past from what people recorded then. They place the events they have found out about on timelines, that is, ordered sequences of historical events. They consider how long ago this took place by ordering it in comparison with past events such as their own birthdays. This helps them to realise that some events happened a long time ago and some are more recent. This shows that pupils are developing their understanding of historical enquiry well.
126. Teaching is good in lessons for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Pupils in the juniors make good progress because of this. Year 3 pupils make very good progress in a well-taught lesson when they find out more about the way that Ancient Egyptians lived. The teacher used

resources well when introducing hieroglyphics. These resources include video clips and the pictures on display. One pupil with special educational needs identifies hieroglyphics as 'picture writing'. Pupils have previously visited the Egyptology section of a nearby museum and use the information and understanding gained there well. The teacher reminds them of this through a useful question and answer session. These reviews of previous lessons are used very well to introduce topics such as the impact of World War II around the world. This helped to make history more directly relevant to the range of different groups in the class. Teachers include all pupils in these sessions. Consequently, all groups of pupils make similar progress. In Year 6, the teacher uses similar methods to stimulate pupils to construct a storyboard of a Greek myth. She further encourages pupils by reading the story of Icarus in a way that gains pupils' full attention, evoking the response 'Cool!' from one pupil when Icarus plummets into the sea. This also underlines pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. They enjoy history because of the sound teaching. Year 6 pupils had a number of facts at their fingertips when talking about their progress and said that they liked learning about past times and what happened then. They express opinions about life in the time of the Ancient Greeks, feeling that it would have been more interesting and enjoyable for girls in Sparta than in Athens. They delight in recounting the process of mummification. Pupils are aware that they can gain useful information about life in the past from objects from those times, but are less aware of the full range of ways in which we find out about history. They place too much reliance on books about history without considering the source or validity of this information.

127. Leadership and management in the subject are sound. The subject co-ordinator has recently carried out a review of how well the subject is taught and identified strengths and possible areas for development. Pupils visit places of historical interest such as museums, local Tudor buildings and a Victorian schoolroom. Teachers use literacy skills soundly in history, for example when producing plays about the Ancient Greeks or writing letters from evacuees to their parents. There is some sound use of information and communication technology when pupils use the Internet to find information. However, information and communication technology is not yet consistently used in teaching and learning. Although pupils make good progress in lessons, the time allocated to the subject is shortened because it is taught every other half term. This prevents standards of attainment from being above expectations, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. However, there has been a satisfactory degree of improvement in history because there are now guidelines for identifying assessment opportunities, and teaching has been monitored.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

128. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils attain below expected standards. These show a decline in standards since the previous inspection. Lately, the pupils have started to make rapid progress because of a substantial addition to resources. This comprises 18 up-to-date laptop computers with access to the Internet. These are wheeled into various classes according to the teaching timetable. The computer suite provides a facility for more focused split-class teaching. These facilities provide good access to ICT and learning in the subject. Boys and girls show similar skills. These computers also make a good contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also learn well.
129. By the end of Year 2, pupils' progress is satisfactory. They soundly apply word-processing skills to present their work. They classify and present information in a binary tree. They also produce a block chart, for example, of the distribution of eye colour in the class. The pupils have satisfactory knowledge and skills of entering information into a database. They are able to save it and retrieve it. Their data covers personal details such as name, age, month of birthday and colour of hair. Their skill in giving instructions to make things happen and describe effects is below average. They talk about their experience of the use

of ICT both inside and outside the school. Those who have computers at home use the Internet to research information on what interests them, for example learning about David Beckham.

130. By the end of Year 6, pupils' progress is satisfactory. They have sound skills in searching the Internet for information, for example on mountains. They use ICT for multimedia presentations combining text, images and sound. Higher-attaining pupils achieve very well in this area. The pupils make effective use of spreadsheets, for example for modelling a bedroom within a specified budget. They keenly use the digital camera for recording their work. Their skills, knowledge and understanding of using information and communication technology systems to control events are well below average.
131. Learning in information and communication technology is satisfactory because of overall satisfactory teaching. Teachers harness pupils' interest and enthusiasm effectively to provide learning that meets their needs. Occasionally, however, the learning of some pupils is affected because they do not receive help quickly enough. The misbehaviour of a few pupils also affects learning, especially of girls. This adversely affects the equality of opportunity for learning of all pupils. On most occasions, however, teachers make good use of resources. In one lesson, a teacher made good use of a digital projector to teach the use of databases. The management of pupils and relationships are strong in some lessons. In these lessons, learning progresses rapidly. One lesson had very good structure and organisation of activities. The teacher also set high expectations of independent work and behaviour. These helped all boys and girls to make significant gains in the skills of combining text and pictures for effect.
132. Leadership and management of the subject are good. As a result, the provision in ICT has improved rapidly and the pupil-to-computer ratio has risen to 1 to 11. A good deal of thought and planning has been put in to provide access and mobility so that the computers can be used most effectively. The ICT component of the school development plan is rational. It is set to address the current weakness of the use of ICT in other subjects. The target to improve teachers' knowledge and skills is progressing very well. However, the provision for the use of ICT to control events remains a weakness. The scheme of work provides good opportunities for learning. However, assessment procedures are inadequate. A lunchtime club provides additional support for learning once a week.

MUSIC

133. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below national expectations in all aspects of music for pupils of their ages. This is partly because of the low levels of musical experiences that many children have before they join the school and partly because music has had a lower priority than raising standards in literacy and numeracy in the school.
134. Pupils sing together, showing that they know the words of some familiar and favourite songs. However, their singing is often spoiled by them trying to show gusto in their performance, which borders on shouting.
135. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. In this the quality of teaching was good, but pupils' levels of playing instruments showed very little variation or knowledge and understanding of how to play instruments in different ways in order to produce different sounds.
136. The co-ordinator for the subject has clearly identified that standards in singing, composition and the use of information and communication technology in music are all below expectations throughout the school. She is working with the headteacher and the local education authority advisory service for the subject to introduce a new scheme of

work and to provide staff development in order to raise teachers' confidence in teaching music, in order to raise standards.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. It was not possible to make judgements on standards of attainment for seven-year-olds because the team did not observe any physical education for these pupils. Similarly, it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning for these pupils. There has been a less than satisfactory degree of improvement since the last inspection. Standards of attainment and progress for pupils in the juniors have fallen, and teaching is unsatisfactory for those pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. However, there are now satisfactory procedures for finding out and recording pupils' progress, even though these are not effectively used.
138. By the time pupils are 11 years of age, standards in physical education are below what is expected nationally and progress is unsatisfactory. Year 5 pupils display a restricted range of movements during floor work and on gymnastics apparatus. Year 6 pupils show a similarly restricted range of movement in dance. They do not have a wide enough range of controlled and imaginative movement. Pupils do not have a good understanding of the use of space and this reduces their quality of learning, particularly when working individually. Many pupils have no experience of swimming until Year 5 and, despite qualified instruction at the swimming baths, not enough pupils swim at least 25 metres before the end of Year 6.
139. The recent fire at the school meant that there was no hall available for indoor activities such as dance and gymnastics and this has had a negative impact on standards in these areas of physical education. However, teaching in physical education is unsatisfactory, resulting in unsatisfactory learning. In dance, teachers' subject knowledge is shaky. They provide warm-up sessions, but do not remind pupils of their importance. Consequently, some warm-ups are too brief to be effective, particularly when the pupils spend some time sitting and listening to instructions afterwards. This is made worse when the teacher cannot find the place on the tape because someone has previously interfered with it. In this case, the pupils become restless and the teacher does not manage to settle them. Teachers do not satisfactorily manage pupils' behaviour and this reduces the quality of learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are also unsatisfactory. They are often noisy, for example shrieking when the music seemed to demand it, and this detracts from the quality of learning. In one lesson the teacher used the music from *Thriller* to engage the pupils successfully. However, this also resulted in a limited range of movement because many pupils practised their disco moves rather than using their own imagination to match movement to music. Teachers manage the progress of the lesson rather than developing and encouraging better quality movement in dance or gymnastics. Consequently, there is a lack of definition in movement and sequences are often untidy. Pupils work together and some of them, particularly the girls, manage to produce satisfactory sequences, but too often shared work involves too much talking rather than practising. This is carried over to the actual performance and it becomes difficult to hear the music. Teachers do not encourage pupils to evaluate their own or others' work often enough. When this does happen, the focus of the evaluations is sometimes too negative. For example, a teacher asked pupils to demonstrate and then asked the class what they did wrong. This means that pupils are worried about being chosen, rather than keen to demonstrate.
140. The subject co-ordinator has good knowledge and experience of the subject and has drawn up a potentially useful policy. She has made sure that the government's guidelines for teaching the different aspects of physical education are suitably allocated in each year group. However, she has not observed lessons because it has not yet been the turn of physical education to be monitored in this way. This means that the unsatisfactory

aspects of some lessons have so far gone undetected. Resources are good, although the hall is somewhat small. This makes it more difficult for older pupils to use space wisely.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Great care is taken by the school to develop pupils' respect for the various religious beliefs of the families who attend the school. For example, when one class were talking about their experiences at the weekend, the teacher took great care to ensure that pupils who had celebrated Eid were enabled to talk about their experiences. However, the standards that pupils reach at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.
142. Throughout the school pupils are taught elements of Christianity, Islam and other major world religions. In pupils' books and in assemblies there are some good opportunities for them to think about the similarities and differences between the deities and festivals of different religions. There are some examples of good pupil work in displays. For example, 'An Eid Poem' undertaken by pupils in Year 6 shows good use of literacy skills in the rhyming and phrasing. While there were not many pieces of pupils' work included in this display, those on view showed good use of information and communication technology in fonts, colours and headlines. Year 3 pupils have studied a mosque and an attractive display shows a limited amount of pupils' work, which is confined to hand-drawn and coloured images of a mosque. These examples are the exception rather than the rule. From looking at pupils' work it is clear that the teaching of religious education is inconsistent throughout the school, that pupils have too few opportunities to record their work and that learning is less than satisfactory overall.
143. These findings are confirmed by the results of a scrutiny of pupils' recorded work undertaken by the co-ordinator for the subject. Religious education is a designated area for development for the school.