

INSPECTION REPORT

ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kearsley, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105240

Headteacher: Mrs M Cross

Reporting inspector: Brian Holmes
15215

Dates of inspection: 2nd - 5th June 2003

Inspection number: 246462

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bent Spur Road Kearsley Bolton
Postcode:	BL4 8PB
Telephone number:	(01204) 333642
Fax number:	(01204) 333642
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd Kevin Wainwright
Date of previous inspection:	19 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15215	Brian Holmes	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology History Physical education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13786	Susan Walsh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
23319	Vincent Leary	Team inspector	English Music Geography Special educational needs Education inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23024	Sandra Whitehead	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 8
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9 - 12
The school's results and pupils achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12 - 14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14 - 17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18 - 21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22 - 26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27 - 41

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Stephen's Aided Church of England Primary School, Kearsley, is an average-sized primary school with 219 pupils between the ages of four and 11, 106 boys and 113 girls. Most of the pupils come from the surrounding locality, although a small minority come from outside the immediate area. The school is situated in Kearsley Moor, a suburban district of Bolton. It is closely linked with St Stephen's church, which is close by. Children enter the school at the age of four, most having attended pre-school or nursery provision elsewhere. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average, although the socio-economic status of pupils is broadly average for the country as a whole. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language, and very few who are from a different ethnic background. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average. Most of these pupils have specific learning plans, written by the school, to address their learning difficulties. In most cases, pupils' attainment level on entry is in line with the average, although there is a wide range of ability within the cohort of children.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Stephen's is an effective school, which does very well for its pupils with very good, and some excellent, features. The pupils are extremely happy and well cared for. They have very good attitudes towards their learning, and to school, and achieve very good standards of behaviour. Their personal development and their relationships with each other and the adults around them are both excellent and a strength of the school. Pupils are taught well and achieve standards that are above the national average by the time they are 11. The school strongly promotes educational and social inclusion, and is very committed to raising the achievements of all pupils. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and staff, supported well by the governing body and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science, music and physical education are above average at the end of Year 6, and pupils achieve well across the school.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, staff and governing body.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, are keen to learn and behave very well.
- Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual and social development, is excellent. Relationships between pupils and with the adults around them are excellent and are a strength of the school.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good overall, with excellent provision for extra-curricular activities and very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils are very well cared for and the school has a very good partnership with its parents.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in science at the end of Year 2, particularly their investigative work.
- The accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage, including access to the outside and outdoor play equipment.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998 and has made very good improvement in its provision since then. Good progress has been maintained in improving pupils' standards of attainment and their achievements, and also in developing the quality of the leadership and management of the school. In addition, many aspects of the school's provision have improved significantly to reach very good and excellent levels, with a very good impact on the quality of pupils' learning and their experiences in school. These include the quality of the curriculum, with improvements of a high standard in provision for children in the Foundation Stage, pupils with special educational needs, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and extra-curricular activities. Provision for information and communication technology, the teaching and monitoring of reading, and the needs of higher-attaining pupils, have all improved well, with

improvements in standards in these areas as a direct consequence of action taken. The quality of teaching, level of attendance, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development, assessment, and the partnership with parents have all improved well since the previous inspection. The school's capacity to improve further and build on its achievements is excellent, based on the extremely strong partnership between staff, governors, parents and pupils.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	C	E	E
mathematics	B	B	D	E
science	C	B	D	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The results of the 2002 National tests for pupils aged 11 show that, when compared with schools nationally, standards in English were well below average and below average in mathematics and science. When compared with the performance of pupils from a similar background, standards were well below average in the core subjects. In all three subjects, a lower than average proportion of pupils gained the higher level (Level 5) in their tests. The 2002 cohort of Year 6 pupils did contain a higher-than-normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and when their attainment is compared with their prior learning, their progress in mathematics and science was satisfactory, while that in English was below average. Inspection findings are that standards of attainment for the current Year 6 pupils are above average in all three core subjects – English, mathematics and science. In the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds, results were above national averages in mathematics, and in line with them in reading and writing. This was also the picture when the results were compared to those of pupils from schools in similar circumstances. Teacher assessments for science showed that all pupils attained the national average, but few attained the higher level (Level 3). Inspection evidence shows that these standards have been maintained with the current Year 2 pupils, apart from in science. Standards of attainment in reading and writing are in line with the average, although in writing in particular an above-average proportion of pupils have reached the higher level (Level 3). In mathematics, standards are above average with a very good proportion of pupils reaching a higher-than-average level. In science, attainment is below average, with few pupils gaining the higher level. No significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls were seen during the inspection, although in the national tests at 11 there have been some differences in the last three years, with girls performing better in English and mathematics and boys performing better in science. Over time, standards of attainment have risen in line with national trends and pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them, which are challenging. Most pupils make good progress from their average levels of attainment on entry to the school in the Reception classes to achieve, and exceed, the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. They then maintain a good rate of progress through to the age of 11. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages at the ages of seven and 11. By the age of 11, pupils' achievement is above average in music and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects, showing that standards have improved well since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are identified as gifted and talented, make good progress over time.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school and to their learning are very good. They enjoy their lessons and the many activities on offer to them. They are keen to be involved and sustain high levels of interest and motivation.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and in and around the school is very good. Pupils learn to treat each other well. There is a strong family atmosphere in the school.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development and relationships at all levels are both excellent and are a strength of the school. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities they are given to show initiative and take responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance levels have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	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 overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in the infant classes with good features, and good in the junior classes with very good features. Teachers successfully meet the needs of their pupils in almost all lessons. Teaching is good or better in over seven out of ten lessons and very good or better in almost four out of ten lessons. Overall, there has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. In the infant classes, during the inspection, one of the two regular teachers was absent for maternity leave. Therefore, fewer lessons were observed in Years 1-2. In addition to the lessons seen, analysis of the planning of the absent teacher and of her pupils' work showed that teaching has a positive impact on pupils' achievements and attainment over time. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is good overall, with the skills of literacy and numeracy taught extremely well throughout the school. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and plan effectively. The school makes very good use of specialist expertise from outside to enrich pupils' learning experiences, for example, in music. Teachers set high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and challenge them to improve their standards and achievements. They use a wide range of teaching to sustain the pace of learning. Teachers' management of pupils is very good and the relationships they foster with pupils are excellent. Day-to-day assessment is used well to plan for the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils' learning experiences are enhanced positively by the contribution in lessons of the learning support assistants. Pupils are very well motivated in lessons and show high levels of interest and concentration. They work at a good pace in all classes and sustain a good rate of learning. The impact of teaching on learning is that pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage, satisfactorily in the infant classes, and well in the junior classes. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs, and those who are gifted and talented, is good and results in a good quality of learning for those pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning experiences are very good overall, especially in the Foundation Stage and in the junior classes. There is excellent provision for pupils through extra-curricular activities and educational visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Identification of their needs is undertaken early, and there are good learning plans with a good quality of learning support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Overall provision is excellent. Provision for spiritual and social development is outstanding, with very good provision for both moral and cultural development. Adults are exceptional role models for the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very happy and secure environment for all children of different backgrounds, races and genders. There are good procedures for child protection, and very good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Assessment procedures are good, with good use of the information gained to plan learning and set targets for improvement.

The school's partnership with parents is very good, and parents have excellent views of the school. The parents support pupils' learning both in school and at home well and receive a very good quality of information, both about what their children will learn, and their progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. She is a dedicated leader, with a strong commitment to the school. She is well supported by the senior management team and by curriculum co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive of the school and work well in partnership with the staff. They know the school well and what it needs to do next.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There are effective procedures for using evaluation and monitoring to raise pupils' standards, with the role of the subject co-ordinators being well developed through 'Focus Fortnight'.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses the money it receives efficiently and deploys its resources effectively. Financial planning targets priorities on the school development plan, although this could be improved by planning over a longer period. The school applies the principles of best value effectively in purchasing equipment and resources.

The quality of the school's accommodation is satisfactory, with notable improvements in the course of development and being planned for the future. The number and quality of appropriately qualified staff, including learning support assistants, are good and learning resources are of a good quality and quantity.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Two hundred questionnaires were sent to parents and 47 returned. Sixteen parents attended the parents' meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Through their responses to the questionnaire, and at the meeting, parents expressed a great deal of satisfaction with the education provided by the school for their children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• The behaviour of the pupils is good.• The quality of teaching is good and children make good progress at the school.• The amount of homework is right and they are well informed about progress.• The school is well led and managed.• The expectations of work, which the school successfully promotes.• Teachers are approachable and the school works closely with parents.• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.• The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	<p>The parents raised no significant areas for improvement, either in their responses to the questionnaire, or at the Parents' Meeting.</p>

Inspection findings agree with parents' positive views of the school. Pupils are taught well and make good progress as a result. There is excellent provision for activities outside normal lessons, and this promotes positive attitudes to school, good behaviour and pupils' levels of maturity and responsibility. The school is very well led and managed, and this has resulted in very good relationships with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of the 2002 National tests for pupils aged 11 show that, when compared with schools nationally, standards in English were well below average and were below average in mathematics and science. When compared with the performance of pupils from a similar background, standards were well below average in all three subjects. In all three subjects, a lower-than-average proportion of pupils gained the higher level (Level 5) in their tests. The 2002 cohort of Year 6 pupils did contain a higher-than-normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and when their attainment is compared with their prior learning, their progress in mathematics and science was satisfactory, while that in English was below average. Inspection findings are that standards of attainment for the current Year 6 pupils are above average in all three core subjects – English, mathematics and science. The pupils are on target to achieve the challenging targets set for them in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. In the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds, results were above national averages in mathematics, and in line with them in reading and writing. This was also the picture when the results were compared to those of pupils from schools in similar circumstances. Teacher assessments for science showed that all pupils attained the national average, but few attained the higher level (Level 3). Inspection evidence shows that these standards have been maintained with the current Year 2 pupils, apart from science and the weaknesses in investigative science. Standards of attainment in reading and writing are in line with the average, although in writing in particular an above-average proportion of pupils have reached the higher level (Level 3). In mathematics, standards are above average with a very good proportion of pupils reaching a higher than average level. However, in science attainment is below average, with few pupils gaining the higher level. No significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls were seen during the inspection, although in the national tests at 11 there have been some differences in the last three years, with girls performing better in English and mathematics and boys performing better in science. Over time, standards of attainment have risen in line with national trends and pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them. Most pupils make good progress from their average levels of attainment on entry to the school in the Reception classes to achieve, and exceed, the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. They then maintain a good rate of progress through to the age of 11.
2. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is broadly in line with what is expected nationally, although there is a wide range of ability, with many children entering the school with poor language and social skills. The present cohort of children in the Reception class are attaining above expectations, because of the very good progress in all areas of learning in the lessons seen. Overall progress in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are on target to attain standards which are above the national expectations for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. They are well above average in personal, social and emotional development.
3. Standards in English are in line with national averages in Year 2 and above national averages in Year 6. Pupils achieve well across the school, particularly in the junior classes. In speaking and listening, standards are above those found in most schools by the end of Years 2 and 6. Year 2 pupils are beginning to interpret instructions accurately and learning to wait their turn to speak. In Years 3 to 6, pupils develop increasing fluency in speaking and accuracy in their choice of vocabulary. The higher-attaining Year 6 pupils are confident speakers and discuss editing a text with impressive accuracy. Attainment in reading is broadly in line with the national average by the end of Year 2. Pupils make sound progress. Most build up unknown words with increasing confidence, although some pupils do not refer to the text when talking about their books. In the present Year 6, standards of attainment are above average. Most pupils read a range of texts with fluency and expression. In writing, by the end of Year 2, most pupils spell common words accurately and their handwriting is usually well formed and easy to read. The higher-attaining pupils produce well-structured pieces of extended writing using dialogue to add interest to their stories. Overall, pupils have increased opportunities to develop their skills in longer and more complex pieces of free writing, but the full impact of this work has yet to be seen in improved attainment. A significant amount of pupils' writing is confined to completing worksheets. By the end of Year 6, pupils progressively develop their ability to write for different

purposes using a range of styles. Higher-attaining pupils' writing is fluent overall with good use of paragraphs, correct punctuation, and varied vocabulary. Spelling standards are generally satisfactory across the classes.

4. Standards in mathematics are above the national average, both in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils make good progress in both the infant and the junior classes. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well in mental calculations, using addition and subtraction within 20, and in their ability to apply these strategies to mathematical tasks. Pupils have a good knowledge of money and are transferring their knowledge to money problems. Higher-attaining pupils, and those who are gifted and talented in Year 1, work confidently up to 1000 as well as smaller numbers. Most pupils continue to make good progress in the junior classes and the present Year 6 pupils apply number operations to problem-solving activities well, and are increasing their range of mental strategies and the speed of mental calculations. Their work shows that they have a good understanding of mathematical language such as sum and product and have good knowledge of table facts. Higher-attaining pupils show that they are attaining standards above those expected and work quickly and competitively at mental multiplication tasks.
5. In science, pupils' attainment is below the national average in Year 2. In the junior classes, pupils progress well and by the time they are in Year 6 their attainment is above the national average. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the basic conditions needed for plants to survive, and the basic habitats that animals live in. Most pupils understand the basic properties of materials, although the correct vocabulary to describe the materials is not well developed. Investigative work is below standard and not well developed. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils are working at the expected level, with a significant proportion of pupils above average. They have a clear understanding of the process needed to develop a scientific investigation, making clear predictions, testing them, recording their results in a variety of ways and drawing conclusions which include the application of their knowledge and understanding to explain what they have found out. Most pupils apply scientific language in its correct context, for example, in their work on circuits, and higher-attaining pupils use language with more precision and accuracy to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.
6. In information and communication technology (ICT), in Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily and their attainment matches the expected level, which represents good progress since the previous inspection. In Year 2, pupils log on independently, find the right program and import a picture for their work into a Word document. Most type independently, although some still a little slowly. Higher attaining pupils write more complex sentences using the word-processing program. They have also used a digital camera to take their own images. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of basic ICT skills. Year 6 pupils work on a presentation about themselves using a multi-media program. They log on independently, insert and re-size images into their work and show an awareness of audience in choosing material for their presentation. They have also produced posters for a specific audience for a 'House Music' competition. In other work, they have used formulas to make calculations within a spreadsheet, and have written procedures, including repeat commands, in work on control devices.
7. By the time they reach Year 2 and Year 6, the standard of work for almost all pupils is at the level expected in most non-core subjects. In music, attainment is above average in Year 2 and Year 6. And in physical education, it is above average for pupils in Year 6. Overall, there has been a satisfactory rate of improvement since the previous inspection in improving standards across different subjects of the curriculum. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress from their attainment on entry to the school, and this progress is consolidated in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3–6. Inspection evidence confirms that in most subjects pupils achieve appropriately and make satisfactory progress throughout the school. No significant differences were observed in the progress made by boys and girls. The school has made good progress in achieving the targets it sets itself, which are sufficiently challenging.
8. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in all phases of the school. In literacy, this is in developing and reinforcing reading and writing skills and in providing pupils with a greater number of opportunities to apply literacy skills in other subjects. In history, in both infant and junior classes, pupils have undertaken extended writing activities for a range of different purposes. In science, pupils write reports of their experiments and make good use of scientific terms when demonstrating their

understanding. The use of numeracy to support other areas of the curriculum includes pictograms of pets in the Reception class and maps drawn to scale by pupils in Year 6. Year 5 pupils have used graphs and charts to show the results of their investigations in science. Most year groups use information and communication technology effectively to support learning, except in history. For example, pupils in Year 4 created a branching database to show classification keys of living things in science; Year 6 used a drawing program to create symmetrical patterns linked to their work in art and mathematics.

9. The standards and achievements of pupils of different levels of attainment are good. Good progress has been made in identifying and meeting the needs of higher-attaining pupils. Positive steps have been taken to identify the needs of pupils who are gifted and talented. In literacy and numeracy, pupils are 'streamed' into higher and lower sets in the infant classes, and higher, middle or lower sets in the junior classes. One Year 1 pupil is taught in the Year 2 class and a Year 2 pupil in the Year 3 class. Two Year 2 pupils are taught in the higher Year 3/4 sets for literacy and numeracy. These pupils usually achieve in line with their capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs throughout the school make good progress, and are suitably challenged. The school is aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses through its assessment and testing procedures in English and mathematics. Teachers plan appropriate work for pupils with special educational needs especially in English and mathematics and make sure they receive the necessary support to successfully complete the activities. As a result, the pupils achieve standards in line with their capabilities.
10. Attainment and progress have shown good improvement overall since the previous inspection for pupils in different year groups. Significant factors affecting the improvement in standards have been the leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body and the improvements that have taken place through the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and in information and communication technology. The impact of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators and the use of assessment information for target setting purposes have both had a positive impact on pupils' learning and the attainment of pupils of different abilities. The analysis of performance data, for example, is used to 'stream' classes and set targets for pupils right across the school. Committing additional staff to teach these classes, thereby keeping class sizes for these subjects small, has been a management priority and continues to be so. Another factor which has contributed positively to improvements in pupils' learning and their progress, has been the commitment to professional development of the staff. For example, every member of the teaching staff has attended an LEA course in ICT to improve their delivery of the ICT scheme of work. Many staff have given up their own time to attend Active Training and Education Weekends with pupils, which give a hands-on approach to the delivery of the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and enjoy taking part in the many activities that are available after school. Pupils talk eagerly about residential experiences they have enjoyed. School is a very exciting and interesting place to be.
12. Pupils are keen to do well and respond very well to motivational teaching. They are excited by interesting work, for example, when Year 3 pupils had the opportunity to use music software in their ICT lesson. During a Communion Service for Years 3-6, pupils displayed a mature attitude, showing reverence and respect, especially when pupils and adults went to the altar to take communion. They persevere at their work, and continue to work hard even in less exciting lessons. Pupils co-operate well and work well in groups. They are keen to help each other.
13. Behaviour is very good both in class and around school. There is a very nice social atmosphere at morning break and pupils take responsibility by helping to distribute healthy snacks. Behaviour in the playground is also very good. The pupils are lively and enjoy themselves. The provision of small play equipment helps to ensure that pupils are occupied and pupils often use this equipment imaginatively. There has been one recent fixed-term exclusion, which was implemented as a last resort. Exclusions are rare because behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is extremely good and the needs of the very small number of pupils who may sometimes be challenging are well met. Bullying is uncommon because the school teaches pupils mutual respect. Pupils are able to empathise with the feelings of others and they learn to treat each other well. They took great care in designing and painting

aboriginal-style pictures and showed their appreciation of the work of other pupils by the constructive comments that were made about their work.

14. Relationships are excellent and are a strength of the school. There is a particularly warm relationship between pupils and the headteacher, who chats to many pupils during the school day. The excellent relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils help pupils speak out without fear of derision. They express their viewpoints knowing that their feelings, values and beliefs will be respected. Older pupils are extremely supportive of younger pupils and there is a strong family atmosphere. Pupils understand the difficulties of pupils with special educational needs and willingly form partnerships with, and support, lower-attaining pupils. Reception children show an appreciation for the needs of others and allow others to have a go at a popular activity; for example sitting in the pilot's seat in the aeroplane during role-play.
15. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to school. Most are attentive and follow instructions well. Pupils are confident and show enthusiasm for learning. They work well together and support each other in their learning. During the week of the inspection there were many opportunities in lessons for pupils to share their ideas and support each other. For example, in a history lesson in Year 3, higher-attaining pupils were paired with lower-attaining pupils when researching Anglo-Saxon towns on a map. They enjoyed sharing their observations and the lower attaining pupil was well supported. Pupils show great pleasure when they are awarded house points and value these; for example, a pupil with special educational needs reminded his teacher that he had extra points on a day when the teacher was not with the class and these did not appear on his individual chart.
16. Personal development is excellent and pupils respond very well to the many opportunities to develop initiative and responsibility. Each morning the whole school, including the teachers, takes part in exercise to music in the 'Health Hustle'. Year 6 pupils choreograph the routines and lead the exercises. Pupils, especially boys, address this task with exceptional verve and enthusiasm. This is an uplifting and extremely enjoyable start for the day. Excellent provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education together with very supportive relationships with teachers ensures that pupils gain self-confidence and can speak very well in informal and informal situations. Physical education lessons encourage pupils to develop a strong sense of fair play.
17. There have been very good improvements since the previous inspection, when attitudes and behaviour of pupils were satisfactory. They are now very good. Relationships were satisfactory and are now excellent. There were insufficient opportunities for pupils to become independent learners and this has been corrected. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson, pupils were very interested and involved in obtaining information about classification from a good range of books.
18. Attendance rates are good. Attendance rates have improved significantly from just below the national average to above the national average because of rigorous monitoring of attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in the infant classes with good features, and good in the junior classes with very good features. Teachers successfully meet the needs of their pupils in almost all lessons. Teaching is good or better in over seven out of ten lessons and very good or better in almost four out of ten lessons. In the infant classes, during the inspection, one of the two regular teachers was absent for maternity leave. Therefore fewer lessons were observed in Years 1-2. In addition to the lessons seen, analysis of the planning of the absent teacher and of her pupils' work showed that teaching has a positive impact on pupils' achievements and attainment over time. Overall, there has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
20. In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching was very good in all the areas of learning. In English, science and physical education, the quality of teaching observed was satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the junior classes. In information and communication technology, geography and history, it was satisfactory in both the infant and the junior classes. In mathematics, teaching was good in the infant and junior classes, and in music it was very good in all classes. Teaching seen was

good in art in the junior classes and in design and technology in the infant classes. No teaching was observed during the inspection in art in the infant classes and in design and technology in the junior classes.

21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. In Years 1 to 6, pupils are streamed for English and mathematics. This strategy is effective as it results in more focused support for the SEN pupils. All teachers have an appropriate understanding of the curriculum needs of pupils who have individual difficulties, especially in English and mathematics. They take care to plan activities which take account of pupils' capabilities. This has an impact on pupils' learning because it means that they are able to make good progress. Learning support assistants are supported through very close planning procedures. Most classes receive good learning support. Generally, the deployment of assistants in classes is good. Individual learning plans are in place and the targets are more specific, an improvement since the previous inspection. The special needs co-ordinator provides assessment advice and resources where needed. Pupils know the composition of their individual learning plans.
22. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is consistently very good for all areas of learning. The teacher and the nursery nurse form a very effective team both in the planning and teaching of the curriculum. They interact very well with the children in lessons and informally, for example, in role-play. Staff are skilled at teaching young children, imparting knowledge and giving them opportunities to investigate and experiment. Good use is made of other adults such as students and parent helpers to further enhance the support for children's learning. Thorough assessment procedures are developing, which enable staff to keep close track of children's progress. In a very good lesson in the hall, the teacher modelled the use of different apparatus for the children and made very good use of children's demonstrations to evaluate the quality of movements, resulting in very good progress. In another very good lesson in communication, language and literacy, the children were highly motivated as together with their teacher they read the story of a train ride. During this activity the wide range of speaking skills was apparent; many children speaking clearly and audibly using a broad vocabulary and re-telling the beginning, middle and end of the story in their own words.
23. For pupils in Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. Teachers have sound knowledge of the subjects they deliver and teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively. They plan well and have appropriate expectations of what pupils should achieve in most subjects. Work is generally well matched to the different abilities of pupils, although in science there is insufficient planning of work for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils are managed well and time and resources are well used to sustain pupils' learning. An example of good teaching occurred in a Year 2 numeracy lesson for a higher-ability group, where pupils were learning measurement in litres and to count in hundreds. The lesson was well organised with a clear demonstration by the teacher of accurate measurement of liquid. The work was well matched to different abilities within the class and challenged all pupils. Pupils' learning was supported well, through good questioning, by both the class teacher and the learning support assistant. As a result, pupils were stimulated to learn and make good progress within the lesson. Where there are weaknesses in teaching, planning is not sufficiently clear and the activities are led too much by the teacher, denying pupils the opportunity to become involved and engaged in the lesson. This results in a slow pace of learning.
24. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good features. Of the lessons observed, eight out of ten were good or better, and three out of ten were very good or better. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding and teach basic skills very well. Where teaching is good or better, teachers plan well, have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and share targets and objectives with pupils in clear language so that pupils understand what is expected of them. Their management of pupils is very good, with good use of time and resources, including learning support staff. They use a wide range of strategies to stimulate and engage their pupils, including collaborative work in physical education and in science investigations, paired discussions in history and independent work in information and communication technology. An example of very good teaching occurred in a Year 3/4 literacy lesson. There was a clear focus for learning on understanding the format and layout of a letter. The class teacher had a very good rapport with the pupils, which enabled them to feel comfortable and confident within the learning environment and keen to participate within the lesson. Very good modelling of letter writing and identification of the key features of a letter further increased pupils' understanding of the main task, resulting in very good levels of engagement,

concentration, independent working and a brisk pace of learning. In a very good numeracy lesson in Year 5/6, very good planning and use of investigation provided pupils with good challenge and engaged the pupils to the point where teacher intervention to maintain learning was minimal. Very good monitoring by the teacher and intervention to assess progress and guide pupils added to the overall progress made by the class during the lesson. Although no unsatisfactory lessons were seen, there were lessons which had some weaknesses. Occasionally opportunities were missed to make clear to pupils what was required of them, or to increase understanding through the use of correct terminology. This had the effect of restricting attainment within a lesson and slowing the pace of learning on occasion.

25. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, and plan effectively. The school makes very good use of specialist expertise from outside to enrich pupils' learning experiences, for example, in music. Teachers set high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and challenge them to improve their standards and achievements. They use a wide range of teaching strategies to sustain the pace of learning. Teachers' management of pupils is very good and the relationships they foster with pupils are excellent. Day-to-day assessment is used well to plan for the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils' learning experiences are enhanced positively by the contribution in lessons of the learning support assistants. They are very well motivated in lessons and show high levels of interest and concentration. They work at a good pace in all classes and sustain a good rate of learning.
26. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has helped to improve the teaching of English through the use of a wider range of teaching strategies, which include whole-class work, paired, individual and group work. The impact of these developments is evident across all phases of the school. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good and teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons follow closely the recommended structure, with appropriate amounts of time allocated to the different sections of the lesson. These developments have had a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning experiences and, consequently, on improving their standards and progress in numeracy.
27. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is at least satisfactory in all parts of the school and is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in the junior classes. Teachers review learning regularly and in writing use the information gained to set pupils targets for future learning. Teachers make good use of review sessions to assess pupils' learning against the set objectives. The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is satisfactory in most subjects, and is good in mathematics and science.
28. Homework is used satisfactorily to support the work in classrooms. It is effective in promoting the development of reading, spelling and mathematics. In the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, there was strong support for the school's approach to homework.

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

29. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are very good overall. The curriculum is very good in the Reception class and in Years 3 - 6. In Years 1 - 2, it is satisfactory with some good features, but with improvement needed in the investigative aspect of science. The emphasis is rightly placed on the key areas of literacy and numeracy and reflects the school's aims to maintain high standards in these areas. Statutory requirements are met in all areas. There is very good equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. The social and educational provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is a strength of the school.
30. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good, covering all of the recommended areas of learning. The curriculum provided for children in the Reception class is stimulating and impacts positively on their progress and standards attained. Although there is an area for improvement in relation to outdoor play and equipment and facilities, the current provision tries hard to overcome this issue in the entitlement of the children.
31. English and mathematics are taught to pupils in Years 1-6 using the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Weaknesses in the curriculum identified by the previous inspection have been well addressed, for example, in information and communication technology. In English, the range of work

provided now includes more opportunities for developing reading skills and the practice of providing pupils with literacy targets so as to raise achievement for all pupils.

32. Teachers provide sufficient opportunities to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subjects. For example, they encourage pupils to word process a selection of their poems and create spreadsheets in geography. In history, however, the identification of opportunities to use ICT has been identified as an area for development.
33. The curriculum provision for personal development is very good. There is a very well developed personal, social, and health education programme. The curriculum, notably in English, science, and physical education, includes appropriate provision throughout the school with elements of health and sex education, including learning about the dangers of substance misuse. Assemblies make a significant contribution to the promotion of good behaviour and personal development. Two strong features of school life with an emphasis on health and citizenship are the T.R.E.E. Project (Towards Responsibility in Education and Employment) where the school works closely with a partner high school in developing pupils' awareness of civic responsibilities, and the 'Health Hustle'. The latter is a daily activity for the whole school, where all pupils participate in a ten-minute physical exercise programme at the start of the school day. The school also provides its pupils with healthy snacks. These initiatives are very effective in developing pupils' personal and physical wellbeing.
34. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which is a significant improvement from the satisfactory provision reported at the time of the previous inspection. There has been a strong emphasis on improving provision for these pupils, identifying their needs as early as possible and taking appropriate steps to address them. The quality of their individual learning plans is good and they are regularly reviewed. All pupils receive support that is of a good quality from the learning support assistants.
35. The school strongly promotes the inclusion of all pupils in its educational and social activities, and is very committed to raising the achievements of all pupils. There is full access to the curriculum and to educational visits.
36. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. There is a wide range of after-school activities. These include sports drama, music, ICT, art, embroidery and gardening. These activities are usually well attended. The school is an active participant in local inter-school sporting events and music festivals, and recently participated in an inter-school concert at the Victoria Hall, Bolton. A significant feature of the curriculum is the excellent well-organised visits, field-trips, residential and Active Training and Education super weekends, which involve both staff and pupils. The latter provides enrichment for the able and talented pupils as well as for those with an interest in a range of subjects.
37. The school is closely involved with its local community, participating in its many activities, for example, developing pupils' life skills in partnership with the local police. These links contribute significantly to the personal, social and health education programme. The church plays a central role in the life of the school and the vicar, Father Kevin, is a regular visitor. The excellent relationship with the local church helps pupils with their religious education lessons and their spiritual awareness. There are strong connections with local colleges, schools and nurseries, and a very good link has been developed with local high schools, which enables pupils to make a smooth transition into Year 7.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

38. The school makes excellent provision for pupils' personal development. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, when this area was judged to be good.
39. Provision for spiritual development is excellent. Everyone in the school is valued; all staff and pupils. Adults in the school are exceptional role models, especially the example of staff working together and giving so generously of their time to provide the excellent range of extra-curricular and residential visits. The school's vision statement, aims and ethos create a learning environment which fosters spirituality and supports and encourages all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining. Pupils frequently raise money for charities both at home and abroad: the

Bolton Hospice, harvest gifts for Romania and the Children's Society are a few examples. There are very good opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to develop their imagination and inspiration, for example, in art and design, the 'Take One Picture' project sponsored by the National Gallery. They improve their insight and empathy through history, geography and displays of religious education work. The high quality of music in the school enables pupils to feel spirituality when listening to the choir; for example, when singing 'Yesterday' with such empathy and lovely harmony and the ethereal quality of music in the church. A 'special' ethos is created for assemblies and church services. Assemblies encourage pupils to think about their spirituality and include a time of stillness, silence and reflection. The very close links with the church result in weekly assemblies being held there. The school has involved pupils in the services by giving them responsibilities of being church servers and writing a special communion service booklet which is easy for pupils to understand. The PSHE programme fosters the emotional life of the pupils by giving them opportunities to consider, discuss and manage their feelings. Teachers have high expectations, use a variety of teaching styles and value pupils' work and effort through good quality displays so that they enjoy learning and strive to reach high standards. Pupils enjoy learning, and through effective target setting, which is shared with them, they are able to take some responsibility for their own learning. The house system enables pupils to develop leadership skills, and the Children's Representative Council (CRC) is one of many opportunities to develop self-esteem. The T.R.E.E. project (Towards Responsibility in Education and Employment) provides many opportunities for pupils to develop qualities such as perseverance, self-organisation and self-esteem, through the recognition and rewards given for pupils' achievements in these areas, which are displayed in classes and the hall for all to see. The success of this project is recognised and appreciated by parents.

40. Provision for moral development is very good. The school has high expectations of behaviour, and school and class rules, which are agreed collectively, are attractively displayed and frequently referred to. All teachers implement the school behaviour policy consistently so that pupils know the expectations are the same from Reception to Year 6. There are many reward systems which encourage pupils to develop self-discipline; for example, collecting house points, certificates and 'leaves' for the T.R.E.E. project. Equal opportunities are strongly promoted and all pupils know that they are valued and are expected to behave appropriately. Older pupils, as well as teachers, make a positive contribution to moral development. For example, older pupils encourage the younger ones to do well for their house. Moral stories are a regular feature of assemblies, such as the story telling that 'Mummy always comes home' to allay the fears of Reception children. One Year 2 pupil wrote the story of 'Mr Greedy Guts' which showed a good understanding of morality. Year 4 pupils visited Cartmel Priory and experienced shadowing a day in the life of a monk, giving them a strong role model.
41. Provision for social development is excellent. It is promoted and exemplified through a range of events, activities and initiatives. Year 4 pupils are invited, along with staff, to a 'sleep in' at school and look after each other and cook supper. There is a formal dinner for leavers and their parents. This is catered for by the wife of a governor, and school staff serve the meal. This gives pupils an insight into the etiquette of formal occasions and the behaviour appropriate to the occasion. The Children's Representative Council (CRC) gives the class representatives the responsibility to speak up for the needs of their classmates and they learn how to behave in a formal meeting with a pupil chairing the meeting. Pupils are given many opportunities to work together in lessons and this is particularly fostered in the Reception class. Personal, social and emotional development has a high priority in this class and, because of the very good provision, children's development in this area is very good. For example, they are provided with a range of activities where they work together in small groups, learn to take turns and wait patiently for time on the computer or the role play area. The school values its links with parents and gives opportunities for parents and pupils to experience activities together, for example on visits, special services and school clubs. Several times per year, pupils participate in residential weekends focusing on different subjects of the curriculum but also providing many opportunities for them to improve their social skills, particularly with pupils from other schools.
42. Provision for cultural development is very good. Many different cultures are studied as part of the curriculum. Year 4 pupils are studying a village in India, and this work has been extended to look at a variety of Indian artefacts and other aspects of Indian daily life. Reception have learned about Chinese New Year celebrations and food from different countries. History and geography studies have broadened pupils' awareness of other cultures and RE studies include knowledge of Islam and

Judaism. Assemblies include stories from other religions, for example the Passover, and pupils tasted 'Karpas' which is a piece of parsley dipped in salt water. Pupils' ICT studies include working with a CD-ROM which follows the lives of six children from different parts of the world. Pupils have many opportunities to experience western culture. They have visited art galleries, including the National Gallery, and museums. The 'Take One Picture' project involves all pupils in looking closely at paintings and appreciating their beauty. The very good quality of music includes songs from other cultures such as Aboriginal and Indian songs. The school has CDs of music from several countries for pupils to listen to and the choir attended a multi-cultural singing day. Year 6 pupils show a good understanding of aboriginal culture and the art from this culture is included in their art and design work. Pupils at the residential weekends have studied topics such as the Romans at Hadrian's Wall, World War II and European influences. An Italian parent spoke to pupils about his culture and language and pupils learn greetings from several languages, which they use when answering the register. The school plays a full part in the local community by its strong links with the church and its cultural heritage, visits to homes for the elderly and involvement with other local charities. Pupils are also aware of the needs of people in other countries and send gifts to Romania. Although the school provides numerous cultural experiences, more use could be made of visits and visitors to raise awareness of the multi-cultural diversity of this country.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school provides a very caring and supportive environment. Teachers, especially the headteacher, know the pupils very well. There is a strong Christian ethos and staff have pupils' best interests at heart. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and pupils are valued and respected. The school has sustained its supportive environment since the previous inspection.
44. In the Foundation Stage, there is good liaison with local playgroups and nurseries and staff visit some children at home. Children and their parents make two visits during the summer term prior to admission. They attend for mornings and lunchtime only for the first two weeks before commencing full-time education.
45. The school cares well for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and this caring attitude reflects the ethos of the school. Pupils with special educational needs know they are very well cared for and valued and this has a positive impact on their learning.
46. Pupils receive very good academic support. There are 'before' school study groups available to pupils of all abilities. Pupils with particular skills and interests in many academic areas have been able to extend those talents by attending the super weekends where teachers and pupils learn together. Setting by prior attainment in English and mathematics results in smaller groups where pupils can be better supported. There is also extra voluntary support that enables pupils to improve their reading.
47. There is very good support for personal development. The T.R.E.E. project focuses on personal development and pupils are encouraged to develop self-confidence, skills of working with others, taking on responsibility and organising themselves. The collecting and recording of leaves on the tree, together with careful collecting of house points and star badges result in very good monitoring of personal development. There is also good provision for sex and relationship education, and for drugs education during the PSHE day in Year 6.
48. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There is a very clear policy and hierarchy of rewards and sanctions which teachers consistently follow. There are many rewards for good attitudes and behaviour, which are appreciated by the pupils. Those pupils who find it difficult to maintain good behaviour undertake behaviour contracts and there is lots of discussion about appropriate behaviour, with a strong moral focus. Behaviour contracts are usually successful. There is a clear policy for promoting the equality of all pupils regardless of race, background or gender, and for dealing with any incidents arising from a pupils' race or gender. The excellent provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, together with the excellent relationships between pupils and teachers, make a very significant contribution to the very good behaviour seen in the school. The school is very clear about what it considers as bullying and pupils realise that they should treat each other with respect.

49. The procedures to monitor and promote attendance are very good. There is careful monitoring of registers and as a result registers are well kept and fully meet statutory requirements. Parents are conscientious about sending in notes to explain absence and any unexplained absences are followed up. The school is meticulously honest about recording unauthorised absences including those involving excessive holidays. Rigorous monitoring has resulted in better attendance rates.
50. There are good arrangements for child protection that follow locally agreed procedures. However, the policy needs updating to ensure that it adequately reflects the good practice observed. Although standards of care are very high, some health and safety procedures such as risk assessment and the dispensing of medicines need to be formalised.
51. There are good procedures for assessing and recording the progress of pupils. In the Foundation Stage, thorough assessment procedures are developing which enable staff to keep close track of children's progress. Throughout the school, there is an end-of-year assessment, through National Curriculum tests in Year 2 and Year 6 and optional SAT tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Standardised testing is undertaken through NFER for pupils in Year 1. Reading tests are regularly undertaken in all classes. In English, pupils' writing is assessed each term, with the evidence collected into a 'continuity book' for each pupil. Mathematics and science are assessed at the end of each unit, with the outcomes recorded in each pupil's National Curriculum record book. Most other subjects are recorded in this way, although assessment in music and information and communication technology records achievement of pupils at different levels of ability within the class. Other subjects are beginning to change to this way of assessing pupils' progress.
52. Good use is made of the information gained from assessments to plan for pupils' future learning in the short, medium and long term. Test results and optional test papers are analysed by the whole staff, led by the deputy headteacher, to identify priorities for future planning, and to 'stream' pupils into sets for their literacy and numeracy lessons. The outcomes of writing assessments are used to formulate pupils' writing targets, and progress towards these targets is used to monitor progress towards predictions for performance at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Forecasts of performance at the end of Year 6 are made using pupils' results at the age of seven. The development of pupil targets for reading is a planned next step, as is monitoring pupils' progress in mathematics against key objectives. In other subjects, assessment is used to inform planning for next steps on a daily or weekly basis and for further learning from topic to topic.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school has developed a very good partnership with parents and there have been significant improvements since the previous inspection. Parents are delighted with the quality of education offered by the school and have excellent views of it. Parents recognise that the school has a strong Christian ethos and the excellent provision for spiritual and social education. They feel that teachers have high expectations and teaching is good. They report that their children like school and are helped to become mature and responsible. Parents value the teachers' hard work and the exceptional range of opportunities available to their children outside lessons. They are very comfortable about approaching the school if they have problems or questions to ask. The inspection team agreed with parents' positive views. Those parents who responded to the questionnaire and attended the meeting did not express any concerns about the school.
54. Parents are generally supportive of the school and their children's education. They are very willing to help their children attend extra-curricular activities. A small number of parents provide valuable help in the classroom and many more are willing to help on trips and visits. There is a very active Friends Association who organise well-supported fundraising and social activities. Expectations regarding homework are made very clear to parents, and they are very satisfied with the amount of work their children are expected to complete at home.
55. In the Foundation Stage, parents are encouraged to bring their children into the classroom at the beginning of the day, and to stay to share an activity with them. This is very effective in helping all children to settle easily and in valuing the importance of what parents have to offer.

56. The school has effective links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Liaison takes place on a regular basis. Parents discuss progress and future targets at the parents' evenings.
57. Parents receive a very good range of information about the work of the school and they appreciate this. There are regular high quality newsletters and the governors' report to parents gives a very detailed picture of the life of the school. Parent information nights, early in the school year, set out expectations and provide parents with information about what will be taught in the coming year. Together with written material, this provides parents with the information they need to help and assist their child. Parents have the opportunity to meet teachers at formal parents evenings twice a year but teachers are ready and willing to talk to parents anytime. Written reports cover progress within the National Curriculum but are limited in detail. There are targets for improvement in each subject area and these are usually well written. Each report is supplemented with high quality comments about children's personal development from the class teacher and the headteacher.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, based on developing a 'family ethos' and valuing the development of every child in a wide range of areas of experience. She has created an inclusive environment where every pupil is valued for the contribution they make to school life. She leads by example, particularly in devoting her time to after-school activities, and gives freely of her time, including training weekends. For example, with another member of staff, she takes the swimming squad to a local swimming baths for an hour's training twice a week before school begins in the morning. Her dedication and commitment are appreciated and noted by many connected to the school – staff, parents and governors. With the support of the senior management team and governing body she has created an environment in which the school community largely shares a common purpose. Standards are good and the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good, with excellent relationships and personal development.
59. The school's aims direct its work. The headteacher places a strong emphasis on developing the staff as a team and enabling them to become increasingly effective in the classroom. She adopts a positive approach to recognising and valuing the achievement of children and promoting the school ethos. She promotes a shared understanding of the aims and direction by all adults working in the school, and leads by example. She has a strong partnership with the deputy headteacher, who feels fully involved and included in the leadership and management of the school. They share an office and regularly meet and consult on the day-to-day running of the school. Planning is regularly monitored and the results of national and school based tests examined. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher know the school well. The headteacher places a high premium on working closely with parents and pupils to achieve the school's aims. Pupils, for example, accept willingly the opportunities they are given to take responsibility. Performance management processes are fully in place and support the development of the teachers.
60. The school development plan is a thorough and detailed document covering a one-year period. Its main aim is to raise standards and it is underpinned by analysis of data to identify key areas of priority. The plan is drawn up by the headteacher and senior management team and remaining staff and the governing body are involved in its production. Curriculum co-ordinators contribute to the plan by reviewing practice and identifying priorities for each curriculum area. The plan therefore involves all those people who are an integral part of the development of the school, and is perceived by the headteacher as a 'working document'.
61. The senior management team includes the deputy headteacher and Foundation Stage and infant and junior co-ordinators. It contributes well to school development, meeting on a weekly basis and undertaking regular monitoring of the school development plan. Part of the management team's monitoring of the school is to analyse the school performance documentation, as well as National Curriculum test results, in order to identify strengths and areas for development and inclusion on the school development plan. Strategic planning involves the whole staff – developing, reviewing and writing the school development plan. The review focus for the plan is based on the information subject co-ordinators gain from their 'Focus Fortnight' monitoring and a range of other monitoring activities.

62. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their roles well. Each subject co-ordinator produces an action plan each year, which forms the basis for subject development and is reviewed with the governing body. They fulfil the responsibility to monitor standards and teaching and learning in their subject areas in a variety of ways, but the main concentration of their efforts is in 'Focus Fortnight'. On a rota basis, each subject co-ordinator has undertaken lesson observations in each class in their area of responsibility. This enables them to gain a valuable insight and overview of their curriculum area. As an outcome, they feed back to staff and produce a report for the governing body. In addition, any issues arising are then included in their subject action plan. Subject co-ordinators also sample work in their area twice a year and receive planning from class teachers. As a result they are well informed about their subjects and have a good overview of standards.
63. The school has a broad range of aims and policies, which are consistently and effectively implemented. These provide guidance on all aspects of its life and are well known to all who work at the school.
64. The governing body fulfils its role well and is suitably involved in the life of the school. The governors fulfil all their duties well and all statutory duties are met. They support the school's mission and the headteacher's vision of a school with a family ethos, which values each pupil individually and promotes the development of the whole child through a wide range of experiences. They have a clear picture of strengths and areas for development. They are well informed through reports received by the different committees and feedback from subject co-ordinators on the outcomes of their 'Focus Fortnight' monitoring. They are also directly involved in the daily life of the school. Several governors are regular visitors to the school to attend assemblies, taking part in extra-curricular activities and also visiting classrooms and liaising with subject co-ordinators. Father Kevin regularly visits school, with pupils also going across to the church for communion. The chair of the governing body has a clear vision both of the governors' role and the direction of the school, endorsing the idea of a family school and the strong partnership between all concerned in its development.
65. The school provides a good quality of education for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The special educational needs co-ordinator manages and organises the provision to a high standard. She has some management time to discharge her responsibilities, and is also heavily involved in the teaching of SEN pupils. The school is developing the use of learning support assistants to support these pupils, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a governor with specific responsibility for special educational needs who monitors the provision. Pupils' involvement in their own individual learning plans is an area for further development.
66. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides strong leadership and is very well supported by an able nursery nurse. These good relationships significantly enhance the good progress made by the children.
67. The school uses its resources efficiently. The budget is planned and managed effectively to meet educational objectives. Specific grants and funds are used effectively. The school development plan is carefully costed and is monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that spending is achieving good value. Educational developments would, however, benefit from a more strategic view of school development over a longer term (three years) than the one-year period the school development plan and financial planning currently covers. The school, through its effective finance committee, reviews cost effectiveness and makes savings wherever possible. Budget expenditure is monitored each month through statements received from the local education authority (LEA). Best value principles are applied effectively.
68. The school has been carrying a healthy balance within its budget, the purpose of which has been used to help meet the school's commitment for the building improvements currently being undertaken. Effective use has been made of the grants the school has had for specific use, and effective use is also made of new technology in the financial management of the school.
69. The school secretary efficiently administers the day-to-day spending and provides valuable expertise to ensure the smooth running of the school, liaising closely with the headteacher. She reconciles bank statements and ensures that all records are kept up to date.

70. There are a good number of very committed, hard working, well qualified teachers and support staff. Generous staffing allows the teaching of literacy and numeracy in ability groups and has a positive impact on standards. So, too, does the good number of support staff who provide good quality learning support in literacy and numeracy lessons. Procedures for the induction of new teachers into the school are clear and effective. There is a good match between teachers' qualifications and their subject co-ordinator roles and this also helps to promote high standards. The employment of a highly effective music specialist one day a week has ensured that standards in music are high and makes a very significant contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
71. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school realises that there are weaknesses in the standard of accommodation, as identified in the previous report, and has begun a programme of improvements. Improvements have been made to the office and reception areas, with further developments and improvements to classroom areas planned. Teaching rooms are small and the large area reserved for carpet work often results in desks being squashed into a small area. Years 5 and 6 are taught in ageing temporary classrooms. The hall is used well for a variety of purposes, including for dining and physical education. There is a good playground space and large fields are used for games and play, which helps to support good standards in physical education. The space for the reception class is too small and there is no enclosed area for outdoor play. Although the reception children do play outside there is no suitable space for large climbing equipment.
72. Resources for learning are good in all subject areas. Interesting resources are used well to support teaching and contribute to good learning and promote high standards. Resources have improved since the previous inspection.
73. The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Most pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs, attaining standards above the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attitudes are very good and their personal development is excellent. The school ethos has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Taking these factors into account, plus the very good levels of leadership and management and the good quality of teaching and learning, the school provides good value for money, which represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. To continue to improve the performance of the school, the governors, headteacher and staff of the school should:

- I. Raise standards and improve pupils' progress in science by the end of Year 2 by:
- planning investigative work systematically into lessons and units of work; and
 - providing increased challenge for higher-attaining pupils.

(Paragraphs 109 and 112)

- II. Improve the accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage by:
- providing access to the outside for them; and
 - providing a dedicated outside area with climbing equipment.

(Paragraphs 70 and 85)

(The inspection team recognises that this issue is a priority in the school's planned provision in building developments being undertaken.)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- III. In addition, the governors should consider including the following minor issues in the action plan:

Planning the school development plan over a longer period (three years), linked to strategic financial planning.

(Paragraph 66)

- IV. Formalise risk assessments and fully involve the governing body, to ensure that potential hazards are identified.

(Paragraph 49)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	17	17	12	1	0	0
Percentage	2	36	36	24	2	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	18	13	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	18
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	27	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (85)	94 (79)	97 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	18	18
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (82)	100 (76)	100 (97)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	24	19	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	16	20
	Girls	13	10	16
	Total	25	26	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (79)	60 (82)	84 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	23
	Girls	14	10	16
	Total	29	28	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (71)	65 (79)	91 (82)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	180	3	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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)	10.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	31.3

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	452,071
Total expenditure	463,071
Expenditure per pupil	2,049
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,830
Balance carried forward to next year	26,230

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

Number of questionnaires sent out

200

Number of questionnaires returned

47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	30	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	32	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	28	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	40	4	2	0
The teaching is good.	87	11	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	38	4	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	17	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	21	4	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	83	11	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	87	13	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	87	13	0	0	0

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

75. At the time of the inspection, there were 30 children in the Reception class. As the school doesn't have a nursery class, most of these children had attended pre-school or nursery classes elsewhere. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is broadly in line with that expected nationally, although there is a wide range of ability, with many children entering the school with poor language and social skills. They are provided with a stimulating curriculum that promotes all the areas of learning and enables these young children to achieve well. The attainment of the present cohort of children in the Reception class is above expectations because of the very good progress in all areas of learning in the lessons seen. Overall progress in the Foundation Stage is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Children are on target to attain standards which are above the national expectations for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. They are well above average in personal, social and emotional development. Standards in the Foundation Stage have improved since the last inspection when they were mainly in line with national expectations, and some attainment in literacy and numeracy was below these. The key issue of improving the quality of the early years provision has been fully rectified. However, there remain some weaknesses in the accommodation for these children.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. In all aspects of their personal, social and emotional development, children make very good progress and they are on course to well exceed expectations by the end of the reception year. Personal, social and emotional development is strongly promoted through all areas of learning. Praise, visual and verbal, and stickers are used effectively to teach children to listen, to follow instructions, to share, to take turns and not to call out or speak when someone else is talking. Staff are continuously reinforcing this acceptable behaviour and the children respond very well to their high expectations. School routines are established well. Children listen to a musical signal towards the end of a session and tidy up without instructions from adults. They confidently move about the school and integrate with older pupils, for example, when taking part in the daily fitness regime in the playground. They willingly share equipment with their classmates and look at books together. Children co-operate very well with each other in role-play and during outdoor play sessions in the playground.
77. The teaching is very good. Social skills are discussed with the children and they are well aware of the code of behaviour. There are high expectations that children will treat each other with kindness and respect and play safely together. Role models presented by adults are excellent. Very good behaviour is rewarded by consistent and appropriate use of praise and this helps children develop a positive view of right and wrong and self-control.
78. Adults ensure that the activities provided are interesting to children, for example, by using a torch to highlight words in a literacy lesson. This encourages them to become quickly involved and to maintain concentration. They are given many opportunities to take responsibility. Good opportunities are provided for children to talk about their feelings and care is taken to ensure that children feel secure and happy in their school environment. Older pupils help these young children to feel secure in school by befriending them around the school and in the playground.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Communication, language and literacy are developed very well through an appropriately adapted literacy hour as well as informally. Lessons are very well planned and the quality of the teaching is very good. During a lesson especially focusing on story construction, the children were highly motivated as together with their teacher they read the story of a train ride. During this activity the wide range of speaking skills was apparent; many children were speaking clearly and audibly, using a broad vocabulary and re-telling the beginning, middle and end of the story in their own words. On a second reading of the story, with a child using a pointer for others to follow the text, most children

joined in with the reading and recognised many familiar words and repeated phrases. Generally, the standard of reading is high, with examples of exceptional reading skills. All children attempt to write their own sentences. Higher-attaining children make good attempts at spelling words using their knowledge of sounds. In a literacy lesson, a group of children recorded their own spellings of people who help us, for example, a dentist. They take books home to share with parents and carers to develop their literacy skills. They are enthusiastic readers and show great enjoyment of books. The literacy lesson includes a good range of activities such as role-play in the airport, writing activities, sharing books, and using the computer to write the beginning of a story. Children speak with confidence during whole-class sessions and listen well to the teacher and each other.

Mathematical development

- 80. The quality of teaching is very good, enabling children to make very good progress during lessons. Very well-supported activities are provided which ensure that time is used very effectively throughout the sessions. Relevant conversations, using the correct mathematical language, stimulate children to think about their tasks and extend their learning.
- 81. There was a brisk pace to a lesson on time. The mental starter focused on counting on and back up to 20 and children applied this skill when counting the numbers on a clock face. They gained a good understanding of a clock by ordering the numbers and placing them on a large circle. They then quickly acquired the skill of placing the hands in the correct positions to record 'o'clock' times.
- 82. Children add and subtract numbers to 10 and count reliably to 20. They are learning to count in 10s and higher-attaining pupils use this knowledge to count up to 100. Their subtraction skills are helped by singing songs such as 'Five little speckled frogs' where they quickly calculate how many frogs are left after one jumps into the pool.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 83. The quality of teaching is very good. During a very good lesson, the teacher used a map of the world to show children the location of various countries while looking at postcards from these countries. Children's knowledge was further enhanced, by looking at a globe and realising that aeroplane journeys are affected by the curvature of the Earth. Several children understand why there is day on one side of the world and night on the other. The teacher used opportunities while telling the story of 'Granny's Holiday' to show the location of Australia and Canada. Children applied their knowledge of countries during role-play 'at the airport'. The 'pilots' discussed where they would fly to and decided on Japan. They were then able to find the British Isles on a globe and plot their route to Japan.
- 84. Children know the names of parts of a plant such as leaf and stem and understand how a bean grows. In their drawings they have named roots and shoots. Their knowledge of the natural world has been increased by stories such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and they understand the phases of the life cycle of the butterfly. Children have above-average skills when using computers. During one lesson, they drew a picture postcard using the pencil tool and used the 'fill' and 'spray' tools to colour their designs. They were able to add a short piece of text to the card and learn how to shut down the computer on completion. Children have good mouse skills and use the 'click and drag' technique effectively to turn the pages on a book on the screen.

Physical development

- 85. The quality of teaching is very good. The children have daily opportunities to exercise with older pupils during a fitness session. They join in with the movements enthusiastically and are able to follow a simple sequence of actions. During a very good lesson in the hall, the teacher modelled the use of different apparatus for the children and made very good use of children's demonstrations to evaluate the quality of movements, resulting in very good progress during the lesson.
- 86. The outdoor activities are very well planned and include an imaginative and interesting range of activities. Children steer a range of trikes, go-carts and cars around a marked track and accurately park them in the allocated parking bay. They improve their co-ordination while steering a remote-controlled car around a slalom course, learning how to steer left and right, forwards and backwards.

with increasing accuracy. In the classroom, children are encouraged to use a variety of tools safely and play with malleable materials and construction toys. As a result of the very good teaching, the children progress very well in this area of learning, despite the fact that there is no dedicated outdoor area for these children and no direct access to the outside. There is no outdoor climbing apparatus. Staff work very hard to overcome these short-comings.

Creative development

87. The children are provided with very good learning opportunities to paint, draw, cut and stick every day. Areas of learning are well linked, for example, pupils designed a garden and drew a picture of a wormery. Children have experienced a wide variety of techniques including printing and collage. Their batik designs are striking and completed to a high standard in striking colours. Children use their imagination very well during role-play activities. They snuggled up in their sleeping bags in a tent in the playground. In the aeroplane, the pilots talked animatedly during the take off and the stewards made the passengers comfortable and soothed a frightened passenger.
88. Children are learning a wide repertoire of songs, which are sung in the classroom and during the weekly lesson in the hall. The standards in music are very high for the age of the children. Their singing is tuneful when singing songs such as 'A Bee Yo'. The specialist music teacher changes the key that the song is sung in and the children recognise that this is higher. They maintain a steady pulse 'ch ch' while the teacher sings a train song and they pick out the correct notation symbols for the rhythm 'engine, engine number nine'. Children have the confidence to sing a solo line, maintaining the melody line at a good volume. The wide variety of carefully planned creative opportunities and the very good quality of the teaching enable children to exceed the expectations for their age.

ENGLISH

89. Standards of attainment in English are in line with the national average for pupils in Year 2, and above those found in most schools for pupils in Year 6. Overall, this represents a good improvement in standards since the previous inspection when attainment in English was above the average in Year 2 and in line with the average in Year 6. Pupils achieve well as they progress through the school. In the last three years, there have been variations in the attainment of pupils in English at the end of Year 6, ranging from above average to average. The results of the national tests in English in 2002 showed that, at the end of Year 6, pupils were attaining standards well below the national average and when compared to the performance of pupils in similar schools. Compared to their prior attainment, pupils' attainment and progress were below the national average. Analysis of the cohort of Year 6 pupils in 2002 showed that there was a larger-than-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The current cohort of pupils in Year 6 have progressed well and are on course to achieve improved results in the national tests in English, in line with the challenging targets set for them. In Year 2, in 2002, standards of attainment in reading and writing were in line with national averages both compared to all schools, and to pupils in similar schools. However, in writing, no pupils attained the higher level (Level 3) in their assessments. The current Year 2 pupils are on course to achieve similar standards in both reading and writing, but with a higher than average proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in writing.
90. In Years 1 and 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. By the end of Year 6, progress is good. The school has identified, through analysis of pupils' performance and its own monitoring, the need to improve pupils' writing and has introduced a number of initiatives to raise standards, including organising classes for literacy in Years 1 to 6 into ability groups and the modification of the literacy hour to allow more time to be spent on this aspect. Pupils are now developing some of the more complex writing skills, and it is evident that more pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining higher levels in their writing. However, further improvement in standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar are needed if standards are to rise even further.
91. The school places a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills and pupils make good progress overall. Standards are above those found in most schools by the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils in Year 1 speak clearly and listen carefully. For example, in a Year 1/2 lesson, pupils confidently talked about the role of the veterinary surgeon. By Year 2, pupils are beginning to interpret instructions accurately and learning to wait their turn to speak, while the higher-attaining pupils are

confident when describing a book they have read or a piece of work they have just completed. They participate well in question-and-answer sessions because their ideas and opinions are valued by both the teachers and other pupils.

92. In Years 3 to 6 pupils develop increasing fluency in speaking and accuracy in their choice of vocabulary. The higher-attaining Year 6 pupils are confident speakers and discuss, for example, the concept of paragraphs, editing a text with impressive accuracy. A significant number of pupils of average ability in Years 3 to 6 show generally above-average levels of attainment in speaking and listening as the school seeks many opportunities for developing pupils' oral skills. For instance, in a Year 3 assembly rehearsal, the teacher used drama as an effective method for reinforcing and improving pupils' expressive language skills. This resulted in many of the pupils talking with confidence and good expression. However, some lower-ability pupils have weak speaking and listening skills and find it difficult to retain their focus in discussions.
93. Attainment in reading is broadly in line with the national average by the end of Year 2. Pupils make sound progress. They are heard reading regularly and the necessary command of the sounds represented by letters is developed systematically, so that most build up unknown words with increasing confidence. The teachers, working in partnership with learning assistants, monitor reading rigorously. However, some pupils do not refer to the text when talking about their books and their description of the plot and characters is limited. They know what authors and illustrators do and are able to identify the main characters and events in their reading books. Most pupils enjoy reading.
94. Pupils make good progress in reading in Years 3 to 6. Standards of attainment in the present Year 6 are above average. Most pupils read a range of texts with fluency and expression. Books are well matched to pupils' attainment and interest level and most pupils are enthusiastic readers. Higher-attaining readers read in a lively and expressive style capturing the attention of their audience. They express a preference for different authors and choose books because of a particular interest, such as domestic issues. Some are knowledgeable about authors. For example, one pupil discussed why she enjoyed Jacqueline Wilson's books, describing them as a good read as the author is skilled at placing ordinary boys and girls in funny situations. However, lower-attaining pupils' skills in understanding the difference between literal and figurative language are underdeveloped.
95. Pupils of all ability levels are developing satisfactory independent research skills. They find information in reference books, using an index or contents and the Internet. However, few know the difference between a dictionary and a thesaurus. They have sufficient opportunities to develop their research because reference books are located in classrooms. Overall, there have been improvements in reading since the last inspection.
96. Standards of writing have improved since the previous inspection, when they were in line with the national average both in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Years 1 and 2 and standards are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2. In Years 3-6, pupils make good progress, and attain standards above the national average by the end of Year 6.
97. By end of Year 2, most pupils spell common words accurately and make good attempts to spell more complex words. Their handwriting is usually well formed and easy to read, with presentation of a satisfactory standard. They write for a variety of purposes; this includes writing verse, letters and instructional writing. Most pupils write stories and accounts made up of sequences of ideas and some are creative. The higher-attaining pupils produce well-structured pieces of extended writing, using dialogue to add interest to their stories. For example, a Year 2 pupil had rewritten the story of 'Red Riding Hood'. It was organised into paragraphs with correct spellings, punctuation and joined-up writing. Overall, pupils have increased opportunities to develop their skills in longer and more complex pieces of free writing. Some opportunities are provided in other subjects. For example, in history, Year 2 pupils wrote 'A life of an Apprentice Boy' in their work on the Victorians. The full impact of this work has yet to be seen in improved attainment. A significant amount of pupils' writing is confined to completing worksheets. Pupils occasionally use a word-processing program to create or copy out poems and stories.
98. By the end of Year 6, pupils progressively develop their ability to write for different purposes using a range of styles. They draft and re-draft their writing to improve its quality, for example, in history when

writing a Diary of Anne Frank. Higher-attaining pupils' writing is fluent overall with good use of paragraphs, correct punctuation and varied vocabulary. Spelling standards are generally satisfactory across the classes. Handwriting standards are inconsistent. They are good where teachers' marking and own modelling of handwriting are of a high standard.

99. A significant number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce lively, well-structured pieces of sustained writing. Some pupils really know how to grab the reader's attention with their prose. For example, one pupil in her composition on the sea used images very effectively to describe contrasting seascapes: 'the sea, smooth and gentle not wakened from its sleep. A storm brewing. The sea gets stressed, starting to sway, striking against the rocks, beating and howling, the calm bluewater is no more.' They write poems, book reviews, diaries, character-portraits and letters. There are opportunities provided in classes for pupils to practise and develop their writing skills in other subjects. For example, in history, pupils have written a diary of Anne Frank and have also undertaken interviews with local people on aspects of life in the past. These interviews were then written as dialogue. In science, they write reports to record the results of their investigations. In music, pupils made jottings of their responses to a work by Debussy.
100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1-2 and good overall in Years 3-6, with some very good teaching seen. Teachers are confidently implementing the Literacy hour. The majority of lessons are carefully structured and well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Most teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils, making sure that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. When teaching is very good, expectations are high and the teacher's enthusiasm, explanations and knowledge of the subject have a positive effect on pupils' attainment, progress and attitude to the subject. Pupils are absorbed in their work and do their best, such as in their understanding of the form and layout of a letter. There are clear targets for the different attainment groups; for example, the higher-attaining pupils are challenged to extend their vocabulary; while the focus for some others is on developing confidence with word strategies. The pace and interest generated keep pupils absorbed in their work and spur them on to do their best. Where teaching is less effective, teachers' explanations are not clear enough or the instructional teaching is too long, resulting in a lack of pace and pupils losing interest.
101. Teachers recognise the important weaknesses in grammar, punctuation and spelling and some highlight them when marking work. Good use is made of individual writing targets which are systematically directed at their learning needs. There is good quality use of a team of learning assistants who are used primarily to support pupils with special educational needs and monitor and support the teaching of reading. In most classes there is an effective partnership between the teachers and the support staff, resulting in lower attainers overall making good progress. Throughout the inspection it was noticeable how the learning support assistants used their time well to focus on reading skills. This has clearly worked well as reading standards have improved. The key issue raised in the previous inspection with reference to the teaching and monitoring of reading has been addressed.
102. Relationships are good, with most teachers having high expectations of their pupils' behaviour, resulting in good discipline and pupils working hard and productively in their literacy lessons.
103. The use of ICT is satisfactory, with room for further development. The work seen shows that pupils have the relevant expertise to present their work in varied fonts and formats. Year 5 pupils, for example, produced a poster/ flier for a holiday lesson during the independent activity during a lesson observed during the inspection.
104. The quality of subject leadership and management is good. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of what needs to be done to raise standards in English. She works closely with the staff. There is systematic monitoring of teaching and learning. Two strategies which have been introduced this school year are Writing Focus Weeks, in which there is a concentration on developing pupils' skills in extended writing, and the Continuity Books, in which pupils once a term complete a piece of extended writing for assessment. The latter initiative complements the good quality assessment procedures already in place. However, it is too early to gauge the impact of the Continuity Book on raising standards in writing. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection and are now good.

MATHEMATICS

105. Pupils enter the school with average attainment in mathematics. However, because of the good quality of the teaching overall, in lessons, they make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, and good progress in other years. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils in Years 3-6 also attain above the expected standards for their age overall. This represents good achievement for these pupils. Standards have been maintained at above average since the previous inspection. This is mainly due to the good quality of the teaching, the setting in ability groups in Years 1-6, and the very good subject leadership. Pupils of all abilities, including those who are higher attaining and gifted and talented, now make good progress.
106. The results of the national tests for the last three years for Year 6 pupils contain variations. However, they have generally been maintained at or above the national average. In the 2002 national tests the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level (Level 4) and the higher level (Level 5) were both below average, and well below average when compared to the performance of pupils from schools in similar circumstances. The 2002 cohort of Year 6 pupils contained a larger-than-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and when their attainment is compared to their prior learning, they made satisfactory progress over time. The present Year 6 pupils are making good progress in applying number operations to problem-solving activities and are increasing their range of mental strategies and the speed of mental calculations. Their work shows that they have a good understanding of mathematical language such as sum and product and they have good knowledge of table facts. They are making good progress towards the challenging target set for them to achieve at the end of Year 6. Higher attaining pupils, and those identified as gifted and talented, show that they are attaining standards above those expected and work quickly and competitively at mental multiplication tasks. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make rapid progress with their knowledge and measurement of angles and in Year 5 they use division and multiplication skills to solve problems. The higher-attaining pupils in these years attain above-average standards. The national test results for pupils in Year 2 show that standards over the last three years are variable but are above the national average overall and those attained by similar schools. Standards have improved at a similar rate to national improvements. Pupils achieve well in mental calculations, using addition and subtraction within 20, and in their ability to apply these strategies to mathematical tasks. Pupils have a good knowledge of money and are transferring their knowledge to money problems. Higher-attaining pupils, and those who are gifted and talented in Year 1, work confidently up to 1,000 as well as smaller numbers.
107. The quality of teaching and learning was good in the lessons seen and very good in Years 5 and 6. The good teaching is the most important contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons follow closely the recommended structure, with appropriate amounts of time allocated to the different sections of the lesson. The setting of pupils in Years 1-6 helps teachers to cope with the wide range of abilities. They teach pupils of below-average ability in smaller classes in Years 3-6 because of the contribution to teaching by the deputy headteacher. They also challenge the learning of higher-attaining pupils well. Teachers, throughout the school, work hard at motivating the pupils and providing interesting activities for them. The mental start to the lessons is brisk and varied and lessons are well structured, maintaining a good pace to pupils' learning. When gathered together at the end of lessons so that teachers could check their learning and understanding, Year 5 pupils show their more secure understanding of problems involving money calculations by the use of a game where the teacher is able to assess their progress in this relatively small group. Teachers effectively question pupils and show that they know the level of learning for each pupil. Individual questions are directed at pupils to extend them to the next stage. The evaluation of previous learning through the marking of pupils' work leads to changes in lesson plans in Years 3 and 4 and this accelerates pupils' learning. The work set is well matched to the abilities of the pupils and different tasks are matched to the needs of pupils within the classes already streamed by ability. The tasks set by teachers are often related to everyday life. For example, in the Years 1-2 top set, the teacher planned an activity which applied the work on numbers within 1000 from the start of the lesson to a practical activity measuring capacity in litres and millilitres. Teachers use classroom assistants well, particularly to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs or those having difficulty with their work. The teachers monitor the work of all pupils carefully to check their understanding. Occasionally, the organisation of a lesson takes too long to sustain the

concentration and interest of pupils in Years 1-2 and their interest wanes. The quality of marking and ongoing assessment during lessons is good. Individual feedback is given and this improved pupils' understanding of their own learning. The marking in pupils' books of past work contains some encouragement but few diagnostic comments about their work. Very good relationships are a feature of all lessons and the firm management of pupils often results in very good behaviour. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive because of the teachers' encouragement. This was particularly noticeable in a lower set Year 5 class where pupils were very keen to learn. They listened attentively to their teachers, were keen to undertake the tasks set and many of them persevered when the task challenged them. Pupils with special educational needs persevered with tasks as a result of constant encouragement and help by teachers and classroom assistants. However, in a Year 3-4 lower set, there are too many pupils with special educational needs for the teacher to give them the individual support that they require, in spite of her very best efforts. The higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 show great enthusiasm for their work and there is a competitive spirit to improve their speed in finishing times mental calculations. The teacher inspires these pupils to work at a fast pace by his enthusiasm and the varied and interesting tasks provided. Appropriate homework is set for pupils, which relates to their learning in lessons.

108. Pupils' skills in numeracy are effectively developed across the curriculum. In geography, pupils in both infant and junior classes use their understanding of scale and number to develop their map skills. In science, particularly in the junior classes, pupils make good use of charts and graphs in recording the results of their investigations. In the infant classes, these skills are in need of further improvement. In information and communication technology, pupils use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in their use of spreadsheets with simple formulae and in developing procedures to control devices.
109. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils used computers to enhance their knowledge of the properties of shapes. Pupils in Year 5 were very keen to increase the speed of their mental calculations of multiplication and division when using a computer program.
110. The leadership of the subject is very good overall. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is a good practitioner. He is well supported by the headteacher and given sufficient time to fulfil his responsibilities. The thorough analysis of test results and the monitoring of standards across the school have helped to raise standards. The assessment procedures are good and further improvements will shortly be introduced. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented.

SCIENCE

111. Standards in science are above the national average for pupils in Year 6, but below the average for pupils in Year 2. This represents a good improvement overall since the previous inspection for pupils at the end of Year 6, when standards were in line with national expectations. For pupils in Year 2, however, this represents an unsatisfactory level of improvement, as standards in the previous inspection were in line with national expectations. These findings are also different to the teacher assessments and results of the national tests in 2002. Then, all pupils attained the national average, but few attained the higher level (Level 3). In Year 6, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level (Level 4) and the higher level (Level 5) were both below average. Inspection findings are that in the current Year 6 class, analysis of work shows that almost all pupils are working at the expected level, with a significant proportion working towards the higher level. This difference in results can be explained by the fact that the 2002 cohort of Year 6 pupils did contain a higher-than-normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In Year 2, however, the proportion of pupils working at the expected level is below average, partly because of the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and the number working at the higher level is low. Significant factors to explain these standards are that there is little evidence of planned investigation work for practical science in Year 2, and also little evidence of planning to meet the needs of higher-attaining pupils.
112. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the basic conditions needed for plants to survive, and the basic habitats that animals live in. They name the external parts of a flower in a diagram. Most pupils understand the basic properties of materials, although the correct vocabulary to describe the

materials is not well developed. Investigative work is below standard and not frequently undertaken. Although most pupils of average and below-average ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, those who are higher attaining do not. There is one gifted pupil in Year 2, who is taught in Year 3, including for science.

113. In the junior classes, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding to attain above-average standards by the end of Year 6. Most pupils in Year 3 explain why a magnetic force will or will not work, and use terms like 'attract' and 'repel' in their correct context. In Years 4 and 5, pupils develop a good understanding of classification keys and vertebrate/invertebrate. They use terms correctly in all their topics, and in their investigative work they use graphs and charts to record their results; they are beginning to use their scientific knowledge and understanding to explain the conclusions to their investigations. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils are working at the expected level, with a significant proportion of pupils above average. They have a clear understanding of the process needed to develop a scientific investigation, making clear predictions, testing them, recording their results in a variety of ways and drawing conclusions which include the application of their knowledge and understanding to explain what they have found out. They know how to keep a test fair, including changing variables within their experiments, for example, in a test on plant growth. Most pupils apply scientific language in its correct context, for example, in their work on circuits, and higher-attaining pupils use language with more precision and accuracy to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.
114. All areas of the National Curriculum are covered but investigative science is not systematically planned for in the infant classes. This impacts negatively on pupils' attainment, particularly in giving opportunities for higher-attaining pupils to achieve higher levels. The process of scientific investigation is consistently developed in the junior classes. In Year 3, for example, pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding is developed through the process of an investigation into magnetism. In Year 5 and Year 6, investigative work is well planned and integrated into the development of pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding.
115. The quality of teaching in science is good. It ranges from good to very good in the junior classes, and is satisfactory, but with some weaknesses, in the infant classes. These judgements are based on an analysis of teaching through pupils' work as well as the lessons observed during the inspection. In the infant classes, planning is thorough and ensures that there is good coverage of scientific knowledge and understanding. However, there is insufficient planning of regular work to develop pupils' investigative skills or evidence of their recording of the results of investigations. There is also a lack of challenge in science activities for higher-attaining pupils. Analysis of work showed little difference in the work they are asked to do compared to other pupils in the lesson, and no evidence of planning to extend their knowledge and understanding. In the lesson observed, where pupils were asked to look at how materials can be changed by heating or cooling, there was too much reliance on teacher demonstration and pupils were not sufficiently involved or engaged in the activity themselves. In the junior classes, there are high expectations of what pupils can do and work is well planned and matched well to the needs of pupils of different abilities. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use scientific terms well to increase and enhance their pupils' knowledge and understanding. They also use their knowledge to make sure the pupils know what is expected of them by giving clear demonstrations and explanations of tasks. They have very good relationships with their pupils and manage them extremely well. Marking is clear and targets improvement well, informing pupils what they need to do to improve.
116. Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are positive, and very good at times, which makes a positive contribution to their learning. Pupils in Year 3 were thoroughly engaged in their investigation of magnetism and collaborated extremely well in sharing resources and working as a group to undertake tests of the magnetic qualities of different materials. Most pupils are keen to be involved in activities and usually sustain their interest and concentration well when asked to work independently on written tasks.
117. Teachers effectively reinforce and develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through science. Key terms and subject language are promoted through teaching and are used well by pupils, particularly in the junior classes and those who are higher attaining. Pupils are given opportunities to use their numeracy skills through the use of graphs and bar charts to show results. There is also effective use

of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in science. This was observed in Year 4, where pupils were developing a branching database to classify types of living animal and in Year 5, where pupils had used the Internet to investigate and research information on the Earth and the Moon.

118. The leadership of the subject is effective. The regular co-ordinator was absent during the inspection, but discussion with other staff, analysis of the subject file and the evidence of lessons and pupils' work show that her work has a positive impact on pupils' learning. There is an effective policy and scheme of work, with assessment of pupils' progress through end-of-unit tests and recording in the National Curriculum record books. Monitoring of teaching, learning and provision have taken place through 'Focus Fortnight'. The subject co-ordinator observed lessons in each year group and this led to a whole school focus on scientific investigations and fair testing.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. Two lessons were observed in art and design in Years 5 and 6 and one lesson in design and technology in Year 2. It was not possible to observe the teaching of the subjects to pupils in other years because it was planned to take place at a different time. Therefore, it is not possible to make a judgement about the teaching of art in the infant classes or design and technology in the junior classes. Judgements are based on the lessons seen, scrutiny of work, displays around the school and analysis of teachers' planning. Portfolios of completed work have been retained which show that some pupils have attained good standards of achievement. Overall, standards throughout the school are in line with national expectations in both subjects but there are good features in art and design, for example, the three-dimensional work in art. These standards are similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school in both subjects.
120. In Year 1, pupils learn to weave with paper, make collages, design patterns and use chalks on a black background for effective firework pictures. By Year 2, pupils draw detailed observational drawings. An exceptional technical drawing by a higher-attaining pupil showed accurate details of a drill, complete with bit and chuck key. However, there was no evidence of pupils evaluating their designs or improving them. Pupils learn about the work of famous artists such as Mondrian and Mackenzie Thorpe and produce pictures and designs based on their work. They have recorded their designs for a bag, using a simple net, used computers to paint their designs, printed them and glued them together.
121. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built well on their earlier skills. For example, they have learned to observe and record people in motion in their sketchbooks and made an effective picture of different sports in action using repeated small letters to fill in blocks of colour. However, their shapes often lack imagination or originality. Pupils designed a net for a box, recording the measurements. They constructed the box, gluing it together and made a separate lid. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills, especially during the 'Take One Picture' week. Pupils focused on the painting of 'St George and the Dragon' by Paolo Uccello. They constructed a large three-dimensional picture in the hall. This work lasted over the course of a week and included many links with other curriculum subjects by including tessellation, drama, stories and music. This work was to a high standard and requested as a display by the National Gallery. Year 6 pupils visited the National Gallery in London and made sketches in the city. Art and design makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is seen, for example, in their William Morris designs and beautiful batik designs.
122. The quality of teaching was good in the lessons seen in both subjects. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher combined design and technology with mathematics. Because of the restricted space in the classroom, she sensibly gave half of the pupils the task of making biscuits while the other pupils collected data to make a block graph showing their favourite biscuits, and others designed and made boxes to store the completed biscuits. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils used the paper from crisp and sweet packets to create posters on a conservation topic. Skills were taught confidently and pupils

were given time to look at the work of other pupils, pointing out the good features and their ideas for improvements. Throughout the school, support is provided for lower-attaining pupils in lessons, while higher-attaining pupils are challenged to develop their skills further by attending residential weekends. Pupils have the opportunity to attend a weekly art club and a needlework club. Many visits are arranged, such as to the art gallery in Bolton Museum and the Lowry Gallery. The school makes appropriate use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance the subjects. Teachers ensure that pupils make good use of sketchbooks; for example, Year 6 pupils drew aboriginal designs in these and later made dot paintings based on them. Pupils are using design books in design and technology, listing the materials needed, showing measurements and detail; for example a pupil with special educational needs made a good attempt at an exploded drawing for a design. However, the designs have not progressed to the evaluation stage so that pupils can improve on their work.

123. The co-ordinators of both subjects are providing good leadership and their enthusiasm and support for their colleagues are valued. This has ensured that the subjects remain an important part of the curriculum in spite of the need to focus on the core subjects. Co-ordinators are involved in taking pupils on residential weekends and provide a variety of extra-curricular activities for the pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Standards at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 match the levels expected nationally. These findings broadly reflect the judgements made at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the development of geographical knowledge of people, places and environments. They also develop skills in carrying out geographical enquiries as the school places a great emphasis on educational visits.
125. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 make good use of the school, the local area and visits to other places, such as New Mills. As a result, Year 2 pupils talk confidently and knowledgeably about their own locality and contrasting locations. They talked about their recent visit to Thornsett School and are developing skills in noting differences between their school and a village school. Displays and regular use of local maps and maps of the United Kingdom and the world are widening their understanding of places in the world. Pupils could further improve their use and application of key geographical terms; this would enhance their learning and progress.
126. By Year 6, pupils have learnt how to use a range of maps confidently and to draw their own, including a key and scale. They have sound knowledge of other communities, such as life in different parts of Australia, and know that climate and geographical features affect lifestyle. As part of a residential visit to the Lake District, pupils in Years 5 and 6 looked at how the environment can be protected and improved; they also investigated the local river. As a result, most pupils know about 'erosion', 'source' and 'current'. They identify and sequence the components of the Water Cycle, and are developing a working knowledge of how weather reports are presented in newspapers.
127. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good features, and has improved since the previous inspection. Strengths of teaching are improved planning, the very good use made of field trips for all age groups and appropriate resources to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of their environment. In the lessons observed, teachers made good use of a range of resources such as photographs, tape recorder and video to stimulate interest. They used questioning well to sharpen pupils' observation skills. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils' knowledge and understanding of school life in the outback of Australia were increased by the skilful use of a video and effective questioning by the teacher. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed well in some geography lessons. In a good lesson in Year 5, the pupils showed skills in representing data on temperatures by use of bar charts and line graphs. However, a survey of work shows an overdependence on worksheets, particularly in Years 1-2. This work is not always marked, resulting in limited feedback to pupils on their progress and opportunities missed for pupils to develop further their writing skills. Use of information and communication technology for research is a developing skill and an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' attitudes to geography are good. They show an interest in all topics studied. Their behaviour is good and they work well together. This impacts positively on the quality of their learning and relationships.

128. The subject co-ordinator is a strong leader. She is working effectively to raise the profile of geography in the curriculum. Her practice of pupils' developing their geographical skills through visits to a wide range of locations is impressive and effective. She has widened the range of resources, which is now good, to include ICT software, an improvement since the previous inspection. The school is currently adapting the government's recommended guidelines to produce their own scheme of work. She monitors the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but more use could be made of the information gathered to improve pupils' attainment.

HISTORY

129. Standards of attainment of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with what is expected nationally. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that achieved by other pupils. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection, when pupils' standards of attainment in history were judged to be satisfactory at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils made satisfactory progress throughout the school. Satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection in improving pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of provision.
130. At the end of Year 2, most pupils distinguish between life in the past compared to the present day. They identify differences related to aspects of everyday life, such as schools, clothes and hospitals. They study life in past periods and research features of life in the 1950s, locating information on life at home, the seaside and circuses. Higher-attaining pupils demonstrate a more in depth understanding of their topics, for example, explaining that hospitals today are better than those in Florence Nightingale's time because '*there are no germs today*'.
131. In the junior classes pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. In their historical studies, pupils develop an appropriate understanding of chronology and learn about important features of past societies. Year 3 pupils identify modern places from Anglo-Saxon place names on an atlas. In Year 4, pupils learn about the differences between primary and secondary sources in their study of the Victorian period. By the end of Year 6, most pupils link events into a correct sequence and use the term '*decade*' with accuracy. They demonstrate appropriate factual knowledge and understanding to describe features of life during World War Two, including the Home Front. In their work on life since the 1930s, they show effective understanding of change over time in aspects such as fashion and music. Higher attaining and gifted pupils show good reasoning in their understanding of why laws were passed against the Jews and in devising open-ended questions to ask a visitor about life during World War Two.
132. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was mainly good, but analysis of pupils' work shows that, over time, it is satisfactory overall. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and is used to plan lessons effectively, with a good balance of different aspects of the topics being studied. Opportunities for writing are included in planning, for example, the life on an Apprentice Boy in Year 2 and the Diary of Anne Frank in Year 6. However, opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning are limited and in need of improvement. Lessons are usually challenging for most pupils, for example, the differences between primary and secondary sources in Year 4. However, resources are not always well matched to pupils' ability and when they find texts difficult to follow, their attention levels drop. Most teachers use a good variety of teaching and learning strategies to engage their pupils. Speaking and listening is used well to share information and ideas, and in Year 6 'quizzes' are used well to sustain interest and concentration. However, in the infant classes, analysis of pupils' work shows some over-use of worksheets and colouring-in activities. There is good management of pupils, and use of time targets to sustain a brisk pace of learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy their work. They collaborate well on joint activities, for example, researching life in the 1950s in Year 2. They work at a good pace and persevere to complete their tasks.
133. The subject leadership of history is effective. There is a scheme of work, which meets requirements, and pupils' performance is assessed and recorded in the National Curriculum record books at present. Subject co-ordinator monitoring has identified the need to develop a system of assessment based more on identifying different levels of performance. During 'Focus Fortnight' the subject co-

ordinator observed each class and has also sampled pupils' work to look at standards of attainment. One outcome of her work has been the development of artefacts as a resource and their increased use in classroom activities. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning experiences. These include visits to Wigan Pier and Bolton Museum as well as Active Training Weekends, involving both staff and pupils, on the Romans and World War Two. There have been visits into school from local people for the World War Two and Britain since the 1930s topics.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in improving provision for information and communication technology (ICT). At that time, standards were below national expectations both in Year 2 and in Year 6, with most pupils making unsatisfactory progress as they moved through the school. Levels of hardware and software have improved significantly since then and the number of computers per pupil is now broadly in line with the recommended level, at approximately nine pupils to every computer. There is a dedicated suite of 17 computers, which includes an interactive whiteboard, a 'mini-suite' of six computers in the Year 5/6 area and a computer in the Reception class. Classes also use Starwriter machines for word-processing, particularly for drafting writing. Teachers have worked hard to update their own subject knowledge and familiarity with the curriculum in order to enable pupils to receive their full entitlement in the subject. Pupils now have ICT lessons in the suite, as well as opportunities to use ICT in other subjects, both of which are improvements on the situation during the previous inspection. The scheme of work is in place and is currently being reviewed, with a useful assessment scheme in place which records pupils' performance as below average, average or above average. All of these initiatives have had a positive impact on pupils' standards and the issue identified at the time of the previous inspection has now been fully addressed. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards broadly in line with what is expected nationally by ages of both seven and 11. They achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress across the school.
135. In Year 1, pupils demonstrate appropriate mouse control in drawing a picture of their house in a geography topic. In Year 2, pupils log on independently, find the right program and import a picture for their work into a Word document. Most type independently, although some still a little slowly. Higher-attaining pupils write more complex sentences using the word-processing program. They have also used a digital camera to take their own images, and with work planned on handling data and controlling a floor turtle, have made satisfactory progress overall.
136. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 have a balance of experiences in text and graphics, data handling, spreadsheets, controlling devices and using the Internet. They increase the level of accuracy and precision when they use programs to produce their own work. Year 3 pupils, for example, combine text and graphics to produce posters on healthy eating. Year 4 pupils draft their own branching database for use in a science topic on animals. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of basic ICT skills. Year 6 pupils work on a presentation about themselves using a multi-media program. They log independently, insert and re-size images into their work and show an awareness of audience in choosing material for their presentation. They have also produced posters for a specific audience for a 'House Music' competition. In other work, they have used formulas to make calculations within a spreadsheet, and have written procedures, including repeat commands, in work on control devices. Pupils' quality of learning, and their achievements, will improve further as they gain increased access to computers through improvements in the ratio of computers to pupils and their increased use in subjects of the curriculum.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching. Lessons are organised so that teachers give pupils a demonstration of their main task, usually using the interactive whiteboard. Most teachers demonstrate secure knowledge in the use of this facility, and of the programs they need to teach to their classes. In a good lesson in Year 6, the learning objectives were shared with the class and a target set for the end of the lesson. The demonstration of techniques then focused on showing pupils what they needed to do to achieve the target. This made expectations clear to pupils and challenged and motivated most of them to succeed. Monitoring of progress, questioning and intervention are used effectively as strategies to maintain pupils' pace of learning. Management and organisation of pupils are good and this also contributes positively to maintaining progress in learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT are positive. They behave well and collaborate

well with other pupils when sharing a computer. When pupils are asked to take turns on the computers, which means some of them doing 'paper-based' work, they do so with good grace and wait patiently for their turn. At the computers, they remain well on task and sustain good levels of interest and concentration, working with enthusiasm.

138. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. He has a clear vision for the development of ICT, which includes the updating and renewal of hardware and the further development of software to support the acquisition of ICT skills and learning in subjects. Through 'Focus Fortnight' he has observed lessons in each class and also samples pupils' work twice a year. This has led to the development of a portfolio of work for ICT to exemplify standards of pupils' attainment.
139. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of subject areas. During the inspection, pupils' use of ICT to support learning was seen in several subject areas: English, mathematics, science, music, geography, art and design, and design and technology. It has been identified as an area for improvement in history. More use has begun to be made of ICT for teaching purposes, through the use of the interactive whiteboard, but also through its use for planning and producing pupil materials. Overall, the use of ICT in different subjects is satisfactory.

MUSIC

140. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in music are above the levels expected nationally and pupils demonstrate good achievement. Achievement in the performing elements, particularly in singing, is a strength throughout the school. This judgement shows that performing standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs receive good individual support and do well. There is no significant difference between the musical skills of girls and boys.
141. Pupils do well in singing because they have many opportunities to sing, particularly in assemblies and in the choir, where they are led and trained by a very competent musician. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to represent rhythm using musical notation for crotchets and quavers. They listen to music as they enter and leave the hall. Their singing is tuneful, rhythmic and enthusiastic and they demonstrate good understanding of how to vary their voices from loud to soft according to the requirements of the song. In the lessons and assemblies observed, the children demonstrated good listening skills and good ability in performance with percussion instruments. The performance repertoire includes hymns and songs from different cultures and this contributes positively to their cultural development.
142. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of specific vocabulary such as, 'ostinato', 'dynamics' and 'tempo' and use them successfully when singing two-part rounds and playing instruments. The majority of the pupils' skills in listening, appraising and performing music are above expectations. The majority know, for instance, what a scale is and are developing skills in recognising the distance between two notes. They are able to perform their own rhythmic patterns using a range of percussion instruments. Their skills in appraising the compositions are good. In singing, they achieve well. Most pupils sing in tune, hold their part when singing 'rounds' and show great sensitivity to the mood of the music, responding with suitable expression. Most pupils are widening their knowledge and experience of music. A significant number are able to identify and classify many instruments being played in an orchestral arrangement and are familiar with the works of several composers.
143. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching. All Year 1 pupils receive violin tuition and this is continued for a small number into Years 2 and 3. However, singing is given a high priority in the school. The expertise and high quality teaching skills of both the music specialist and the co-ordinator have a strong influence on the pupils' attitude to singing. This results in a significant number of boys and girls participating in the choir. Their attainment is good, with some pupils demonstrating very good skills. Some sight read formal notation skilfully and confidently play instruments with a degree of competence. The choir, which includes pupils mainly from Years 4, 5 and 6, performs well, demonstrating the ability to work successfully as members of a group. The skills developed in the extra activities have a positive impact on their performances in class lessons. For example, pupils from Years 5-6, who play instruments, influenced standards achieved in their music lesson. They

demonstrated skills in improvising when performing and combining sounds on pitched percussion instruments. They enhanced the overall standard of attainment in performing their versions of 'water music'.

144. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, an improvement since the previous inspection. The teacher's expectations are high and his enthusiasm, explanations and knowledge of the subject have a significant effect on pupils' attainment, achievement and very good attitude to the subject. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, the teacher challenged all the pupils to develop their skills in listening by recording their interpretations of Debussy's 'La Cathedrale Engloutie'. They remained focused and produced some creative phrases such as 'flying with angels' and 'ghosts, spirits rising from the graveyard'. Other strengths included the very good management of the pupils' behaviour and positive relationships. Lessons provide good links with other subjects. For example, in a Year 2 class, children improved their reading skills by using their 'singing voices' to relate the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. There is a very good pace to lessons and many practical opportunities for pupil involvement. The teacher evaluates skilfully what the pupils are able to do and ensures that they improve on their earlier performances. Music lessons are lively and enjoyable and this contributes strongly to the pupils' very positive attitudes.
145. The subject co-ordinator works closely with the specialist teacher who teaches music throughout the school. This is a productive partnership where there is a strong belief and practice in music-making for all pupils. The curriculum is planned well. There are clear objectives for each year group which include an emphasis on developing the pupils' skills as they progress through the school. Good formal evaluation of pupils' progress in lessons by the supporting class teachers helps planning for the next stage of learning. Information and communication technology is well used to support learning. For example, Year 3 pupils used a music program in their ICT lesson to compose a simple tune. Resources are good. All weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been addressed.
146. Liaison between the instrumental service and the school is strong, resulting in improving standards in the pupils' performing skills. There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in music festivals, residencies and to attend concerts. Professional musicians with skills in different types of music also make a positive contribution by playing with the pupils. This subject has a valued place in the school's curriculum and makes a very good contribution to the pupils' wider learning experiences and personal development, including those pupils identified as being gifted and talented.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. Standards in physical education for pupils aged 11 are above those normally expected, while for pupils aged seven they are in line with what is normally expected. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the infant classes and good progress in the junior classes. This represents a similar picture to that seen at the time of the previous inspection. There has been a very good improvement in the provision of sports activities through extra-curricular involvement and this has a positive impact on pupils' experiences and the standards attained.
148. Pupils in Year 2 create simple sequences of movements, using the floor and adapting their movements to music. They move in a variety of directions, and at different speeds, adapting their movements to the mood of the music. In the junior classes, pupils build well on their prior learning to improve their gymnastics performances. In Year 3, most perform a sequence involving rocking and sideways rolls with ease, and in Year 5 they perform a sequence of movements including two balances. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils perform with good accuracy and precision, creating sequences of movements which include a variety of balances. In outdoor games, pupils play rounders to a good standard - hitting, bowling and catching well. They understand and accept the rules.
149. By the time they leave the school, all pupils swim at least 25 metres. Swimming lessons are focused mainly on pupils in Years 5 and 6. In addition, there are two swimming sessions each week, before school begins for Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils in the school swimming squad.
150. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and ranges from very good to satisfactory. It is satisfactory in the infant classes, and good in the junior classes. Where teaching is good or very good, subject knowledge is very secure and is used to plan challenging lessons and share criteria for

success with pupils so that all are clear about what is expected of them. Lessons are well structured with warm-up and cool-down sessions, linked to skills practices and opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their performance. Very good use is made of pupil demonstration to demonstrate techniques correctly and to help pupils to evaluate their own, and others', performance. This results in improved performance and is a strong element of most lessons. Management of pupils is very good and is used to sustain a good pace of learning in all lessons. Where there are weaknesses in teaching, opportunities are missed to use pupil demonstration to evaluate and improve performance, and this limits the achievement in the lesson for those pupils who are gifted and talented. Pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning in most lessons. They clearly enjoy their work and respond quickly and enthusiastically to their teachers. They sustain their interest and motivation extremely well and collaborate very well in paired, small group and team activities. They show very good levels of appreciation for each other's efforts. Where teaching is less than good, opportunities to use pupils' performance for evaluation, or to illustrate teaching points, are missed.

151. The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher. The policy and scheme of work are extremely effective, with a well-structured curriculum. All pupils have a gym, dance and games session each week. Their progress is assessed and recorded through the National Curriculum record books. The co-ordinator has monitored provision extremely well through observation of all classes in 'Focus Fortnight', and has also delivered demonstration lessons to teachers on aspects of gym and dance. These strategies have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning as well as pupils' achievements. Learning resources are good and impact positively on pupils' learning - they have been developed to give pupils a broad and balanced physical education curriculum.
152. There is excellent extra-curricular provision for sport. A wide range of activities is offered to all pupils, which are open to both boys and girls. These activities are open to all pupils, but they particularly benefit those pupils who are gifted and talented in physical education and sport. The school participates in inter-school activities in most sports, including swimming, cricket, netball, athletics, rounders and cross-country as well as football. Involvement in physical activity also involves the whole school in a daily ten-minute routine, the 'Health Hustle', co-ordinated and choreographed by the Year 6 class.