

# INSPECTION REPORT

## LARKHOLME PRIMARY SCHOOL

Fleetwood, Lancashire

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119299

Headteacher: Mr J Goodhew

Reporting inspector: Parveen Raja  
6282

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> June-3<sup>rd</sup> July 2003

Inspection number: 247991

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Windermere Avenue Fleetwood Lancashire
Postcode:	FY7 8QB
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Barlow
Date of previous inspection:	21 May 2001

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6282	Parveen Raja	Registered inspector	Physical education English as additional language Educational Inclusion	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9981	Salim Hussain	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10053	Janet Simms	Team inspector	English History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30745	Patricia Thorpe		Music Art and design Foundation Stage Special educational needs	
32129	Peter McCarthy	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Religious education	
2632	Roger Holmes	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Larkholme is a large primary school situated on the outskirts of Fleetwood, Lancashire. It has 381 pupils aged four to eleven on roll. Numbers continues to fall year on year. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The school has 106 pupils on the register for pupils with special educational needs including seven with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The number of pupils on the register is above the national average. Most of these pupils are identified as requiring school action. Nearly all children receive pre-school education from a range of providers before starting school. None of the eight pupils who come from homes where English is an additional language have any difficulty with the English language. The pupils' attainment when they start school is broadly average with a significant minority at below average levels. The school has a growing transient population; 60 pupils joined the school and 34 left at other than the usual time of admission and transfer during the current academic year.

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

The school provides a sound standard of education. Children now get off to a good start in the Reception class, achieving well in the basics of reading and writing. These standards are maintained well in Year 2. Pupils throughout the school achieve good standards in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Most of the teaching is good with a significant proportion being very good, and pupils are learning well. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and to their work. Provision for their overall personal development is very good. Leadership provided by the headteacher and key staff is good. The school is governed well. It knows what it does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them. It includes all pupils in everything it does and has a purposeful and caring environment. It manages its resources efficiently and provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The leadership provided by the headteacher, key staff and governors is good and the school is managed well.
- Pupils attain good standards in science and ICT by the ages of seven and eleven and good standards in English, geography and physical education by the age of seven.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and very good in the infants; it is beginning to contribute effectively to the academic standards achieved.
- Pupils are well supported in maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline and sustaining very good attitudes to work.
- The school provides strongly for children in the Reception class.
- It provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

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

- The rate of pupils' progress in the lower sets for mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- The provision for special educational needs, particularly in the juniors.
- Equitable distribution of additional teaching and support time between infants and juniors.
- Standards in music through the school.

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

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

The school was last inspected in 2001. Since then improvement has been good. Standards have improved significantly in science, ICT and reading in the infants and juniors and overall in English by the end of Year 2. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage has improved and children's achievement in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional is above average. The quality of teaching is much better than at the time of the last inspection, with a much higher incidence of good and very good teaching. The school now analyses test results and uses a range of information to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Curriculum planning, teaching and learning are monitored and the findings form a secure basis for setting priorities for school improvement. The assessment of pupils' learning has improved considerably but is not always used well enough when planning future work. The school has made a good start in setting targets for classes to achieve, but this is at an early stage of development. Subject co-ordination has developed well and many subjects are now well

managed. The school has taken good advantage of the additional support provided by the local education authority (LEA) to address its weaknesses. It has a very good capacity to sustain the developments and secure further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by eleven 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	B	C	B
Mathematics	A	B	D	C
Science	B	A	C	B

<b>Key</b>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The 2002 national test results by the end of Year 6 were lower than the previous years. Standards were average in English and science and below average in mathematics when compared to all schools. They were above average for English and science and average for mathematics when compared to similar schools. This is because of the nature of the cohort and a lack of focused support for the lower attaining pupils. The test results seen for 2003 in English and science show a better picture for English and a similar picture for science. The school has set appropriate targets for English and mathematics. It has exceeded its target of 78 per cent reaching Level 4 and above in English and is unlikely to reach its target for mathematics. The number of pupils attaining the higher than average Level 5 has improved in English and significantly in science. Standards in mathematics have declined over the past two years. Higher and average attaining Year 6 pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress, but the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are not making the progress of which they are capable, which affects the spectrum at the end of Year 6.

Children in the Reception class are likely to go beyond the expected levels in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. They are on course to reach the expected levels in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. Children with special educational needs are well supported in the Reception class and make good progress; they continue to make satisfactory progress in the infants but their progress in the juniors is hampered by a lack of systematic checking of their progress.

Standards in ICT are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in music are beginning to improve due to more specialist teaching, but continue to be below average through the school. Most pupils by Years 2 and 6 achieve average standards in other subjects and meet expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Many pupils are hardworking and mature from Reception through to Year 6.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils make very good relationships with adults and each other. They work and play co-operatively and collaborate well in activities. Older pupils work with concentration and independently for long periods and Reception children settle very quickly in the class.



Attendance	It is now satisfactory. The school has worked hard to improve the rate over the past academic year.
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This area is a strength of the school. Pupils respond very well to the high standards of behaviour and self-discipline expected of them. A range of interesting activities is provided during lessons, which generate motivation.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5 – 7 years	Aged 7 – 11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and contributes effectively to improvement in standards, in the infants in particular. Almost all the lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory and most were at least good with two lessons being excellent in the infants. Evidence from pupils' work confirms that good teaching is typical for the school. Teaching is good in the Reception class and in all the subjects, except in mathematics, music and religious education where teaching is satisfactory overall. The basic skills of literacy are taught well throughout the school and very well in the infants and Year 6. The development of numeracy skills is generally satisfactory with improvement needed for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in the juniors. Teachers usually have high expectations and provide interesting and challenging work in lessons, which are conducted at a good pace. Class routines, rules and responsibilities effectively promote independence and personal development. Throughout the school, teachers use very effective methods and strategies, which result in pupils' very good standards of behaviour, self-motivation and attitudes to work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of activities is provided throughout the school. The National Curriculum is applied satisfactorily in Years 1 to 6 and is extended well by a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory in Reception and Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory in the juniors. Processes for identifying the educational needs of junior pupils are not applied consistently and the effectiveness of the support allocated to individuals is not always monitored systematically. Consequently, some of the junior pupils make unsatisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for the few bilingual pupils, who all speak English well, meets their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The school makes very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development and good provision for cultural development. This makes a very good contribution to their personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. There are very good systems for checking and promoting good behaviour. Pupils' work in English, mathematics and science is well monitored and assessed, but this practice does not yet extend to other subjects.

The school has a productive partnership with parents. They make a good contribution to their children's learning through homework and some parents work in the classrooms. The school's good systems for care effectively underpin very good standards of behaviour. They foster a strong sense of belonging to the school community and raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good and effective in taking the school forward. They provide clear guidance and support to staff and pupils. Consequently, the subject co-ordination has improved and pupils learn well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are strongly committed to the school. They keep themselves well informed about its work and contribute well to the efficient management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has introduced appropriate systems for gathering and analysing information about how well it is doing. It is aware that these need to be applied consistently and developed further.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans carefully to secure improvement and makes effective use of the funds available to achieve this. Criteria for the allocation of staff, however, are not clear enough.

The school is adequately staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. They receive good training opportunities. The support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning but their deployment in the junior classes is not always well matched to the needs of the lower attaining pupils. Resources are mainly adequate; ICT is well resourced but there are not enough resources for mathematics.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress in their work.</li> <li>• Most parents believe teaching is good.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	Parents, who hold the school in high regard and are confident about all the aspects of its work, registered no significant concerns.

The parents' meeting was attended by 18 parents and 19 per cent of parents returned the questionnaires. The findings of the inspection confirm all the positive views expressed by this relatively small percentage of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children achieve well in the Reception class and in the infants and overall make satisfactory progress through the junior stage with most pupils achieving well in Year 6. Standards are currently above average by the end of Year 2 in English, science and ICT and average in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in science and ICT, average in English and below average in mathematics. This represents good improvement in science and ICT across the whole school and overall improvement in standards in Reception, and Years 1 and 2. The 2003 national test results show good improvement in the number of Year 6 pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English and science and Year 2 pupils attaining Level 3 in reading and writing. The higher than usual number of pupils who enter the school at other than the usual time of admission make the same progress as their classmates. The school has lost some of the momentum in its provision for mathematics since the co-ordinator left for secondment; the subject has generally been put on hold with greater emphasis on literacy development, ICT and the other subjects.
2. Children enter school with a wide range of attainment levels, which are broadly average overall, with a significant percentage at below average levels. In the Reception class, children are provided with a good range of stimulating activities, and a variety of resources are used well. Support staff make an effective contribution to children's learning. Consequently children make good progress. By the end of the Reception year most children will have exceeded the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. They will have reached the expected levels in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development.
3. On the basis of 2002 national test results for the seven year olds, pupils' attainment in reading was below average, average in writing and well above average in mathematics when compared to all schools. Results were average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics when compared to similar schools. In the teacher assessments at this age, standards in science were average compared to all schools and above average when compared to similar schools. The 2003 results for Year 2 pupils show good improvement in reading and writing.
4. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are attaining above the national expectations in English, science, ICT, geography and physical education. This represents good achievement. Year 2 pupils' attainment in art and design, history, design and technology is in line with what is expected nationally. The very good teaching, allocation of additional teaching and support time, and improvements in the quality and range of the curriculum provided have a very positive effect on the quality of learning. These, combined with pupils' very good attitudes and motivation to succeed, create a good learning environment and a brisk pace in lessons, which help most pupils make very good progress. Focus on direct teaching of key vocabulary in some subjects and regular opportunities for investigative and practical work in science as well as some of the other subjects contribute well to raising pupils' standards of attainment.
5. In the 2002 tests for eleven year olds in English and science, pupils attained average standards, and in mathematics standards were below average when compared to all schools. Standards were above average in English and science and average in mathematics when compared to similar schools. Generally no difference in standards attained by boys and girls was evident during the inspection except in mathematics, where,

on occasions, boys made less progress than girls. Trends in attainment over the last three years show that attainment in English, mathematics and science has been improving in line with the national picture. The national test results for 2003 show that the school has exceeded its target for English but is unlikely to reach its target for mathematics.

6. Inspection evidence shows that by the age of eleven, pupils achieve above average standards in science and ICT. They achieve average standards in all the subjects except in mathematics and music where standards are below average. Most pupils make satisfactory progress through the junior classes overall. Progress is accelerated in Years 5 and 6 with some pupils making very good progress in Year 6 classes. This is evident from the high percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 in English and science. Pupils systematically question one another to improve the quality of their work and justify their ideas. Pupils read a range of demanding texts from different sources with fluency, accuracy and understanding. They are able to draw inferential meaning from texts. Most pupils write creatively, can sustain a story line and make accurate use of punctuation. Throughout the school, standards of presentation are high.
7. Overall the higher attaining pupils and those of average ability in the higher sets for mathematics make at least satisfactory progress. The lower attaining and pupils with special educational need in lower sets for mathematics mostly make unsatisfactory progress. This is because in the lower sets, teachers' planning is not always informed sufficiently by their assessment of pupils' learning and, consequently, work is not matched well enough to pupils' needs. For example, by Year 4, pupils are not skilled enough in using number operations accurately to calculate different ways of making up 126. The progress towards their targets in the individual education plans of pupils identified as having special educational needs is not always monitored systematically.
8. Throughout the school standards in ICT have risen sharply. Pupils now have access to high quality resources and good teaching. These, together with effective support from the co-ordinator and technical assistance given by the ICT technician, have had a positive effect on pupils' learning. As a result, pupils' progress is good and standards are above average. Year 6 pupils frequently work in the computer suite during lunch time and carry out independent research on the Internet and CD ROMS which greatly enhances their skill and confidence in working with computers. ICT is used consistently in other subjects and is becoming an integral part of pupils' learning with good level of skills. Standards in music continue to be below average in both infants and juniors. The school has made a good effort to improve the provision for the subject recently by introducing special teaching and support. As a result teaching is satisfactory but there has not been sufficient time for the development to have much impact on standards. The locally agreed syllabus for religious education has been implemented systematically through the school. It provides well for raising pupils' understanding of other religions and awareness of other cultures. Pupils' attainment in both infant and junior stages is in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus.
9. Children with special educational needs in the Reception class make good progress. They make satisfactory progress in the infants but their progress is unsatisfactory in the juniors in relation to their prior attainment. The pupils for whom a statement of need exists make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. They are well supported by the support staff and the attention that teachers give in lessons. In English, junior pupils' progress is often constrained by a lack of additional support. For example, many find the instructions on worksheets difficult to read and subsequently are not always able to work on their own. Pupils who are new to the school settle quickly. The school makes good effort to find out about their previous education and provides appropriately for their learning needs. The few pupils from homes where English is not the first language make the same progress as their classmates.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development make a very good contribution to pupils' learning and to the positive ethos of the school. The school has made good improvements to pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships since the last inspection, with relationships emerging as a major strength.
11. Pupils' attitudes to the school are now very good. They show very high levels of interest, enthusiasm and involvement in lessons and other school activities. Pupils also enjoy school trips and after-school clubs, such as netball and football. Reception children are developing positive attitudes, behaviour, personal and social skills. They settle into learning routines quickly and soon build strong friendships with others.
12. The school is a very orderly community. Pupils are polite and well mannered towards others. Behaviour is very good in lessons, assemblies and at break times. Pupils say that there is hardly any bullying. They are confident that they can report any problems to staff. Personal, social and health education successfully gives pupils a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. On rare occasions exclusion from school is used as a sanction as in the case of one pupil who was excluded three times.
13. Relationships between adults and pupils, and amongst pupils, are excellent. As one pupil put it, "We are like a big family, we all stick up for each other". The few pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are very well integrated in classes. Pupils work particularly well together; for example, in a Year 4, literacy lesson the class worked in groups to answer questions such as 'Are school holidays too long?' They developed very good arguments and it was impressive how groups organised themselves to tackle the questions that were answered with very mature responses. Infant and junior assemblies are excellent in promoting the family ethos of the school. For example, 'celebration assemblies' demonstrate how much staff value pupils and how pupils enjoy seeing each other do well. Pupils show very high levels of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This is highly evident in religious education as pupils learn about other faiths.
14. Pupils' personal development is well supported by the school and pupils make good progress in their personal development. When opportunities are provided they take increasing responsibilities for independent study, which includes homework. There are opportunities for pupils to assume responsibility as class helpers and for older pupils to act as monitors, 'buddies' for pupils who are new to school and helpers for younger children, which greatly assists their personal development. The school has recently introduced a school council whose members show a mature and responsible approach to tasks.
15. Attendance is sound; punctuality is satisfactory and unauthorised absence is in line with the national average for the previous year. These factors make a significant contribution to learning. The school has done well to improve attendance from the last school year (2001/2) where it was below the national average. Attendance is slightly below that of the last inspection.

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

16. The school has successfully maintained the improvements noted in the 2001 inspection. It has effectively strengthened further the quality of teaching through the school. Teaching is now good in all the subjects except in mathematics, music and religious education where it is satisfactory. There has been good improvement in teaching since the previous inspection because teachers now have good subject knowledge in many curriculum areas. However, this is a fairly recent development and has not had enough time to impact on

standards achieved by pupils. Planning has been further refined and the support provided by the local authority's consultants and advanced skills teachers has had a positive effect on raising teachers' expectations of themselves and of pupils. The deputy headteacher and the senior staff too have provided good support and set a very good example of professional practice, particularly the literacy co-ordinator. A good programme of staff development has improved the knowledge of teachers and classroom support staff, particularly in English, science, ICT and physical education and has led to significant improvement in teaching in these subjects. The school is aware of the need to provide continued support for teachers to improve their expertise and confidence in teaching music through the age range.

**Strengths in teaching are:**

- Planning is good and teachers plan a range of interesting and demanding activities for different levels of ability.
- Basic skills of literacy are taught very well.
- Teachers manage their pupils very well and channel their energies into productive work, which results in very good relationships and standards of behaviour.
- Subject-specific vocabulary is taught directly in some subjects, which provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their language skills.

**Areas for improvement are:**

- Development of teaching to improve mental calculation strategies.
  - Use of assessment to plan work in mathematics for low attaining pupils in the lower sets.
  - Further improving staff's confidence in teaching music.
17. There has been good improvement in the teaching of children in the Reception class. Children are now provided with a range of imaginative and stimulating structured play activities. For example, a variety of dressing-up kits generate imaginative role-play and children are confident in describing their roles as 'pirates, dragon and clown'. Adults intervene well during free play to extend children's ideas and vocabulary. Good assessment procedures are in place and assessment is used well to inform planning. Consequently children make good progress. Teachers, support staff and helpers work well together to promote optimum learning.
18. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught thoroughly and systematically, particularly reading. The school gives high priority to improving pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. Teachers provide highly creative and stimulating activities in literacy, which generate enthusiasm and interest. They provide good opportunities for pupils to apply and improve their basic skills although opportunities for practical problem-solving number work are less consistent. Spelling and grammar conventions are clearly taught from an early stage and are reinforced well in lessons. However, teachers pay insufficient attention to the systematic development of mental calculation strategies to ensure that pupils of all ages carry out number operations with growing agility, using and explaining their strategies in working out answers. While pupils in the higher ability sets for mathematics are taught basic numeracy skills well, planning for pupils in the lower sets is not closely linked to pupils' needs and prior attainment. Similarly in literacy lessons, teachers do not take enough care to ensure that the work provided to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is closely matched to their needs. As a result, tasks on occasions are too difficult, many pupils struggle and their progress is too slow, and some of these pupils cannot work without adult support.
19. The quality of teaching in the infants is very good with two examples of excellent lessons and all the other lessons being good or better, except one satisfactory lesson. Most of the very good teaching was seen in the infants. Teachers have good subject knowledge and

set very high expectations. This forms a good basis for very effective planning of stimulating and challenging activities, which generate high levels of enthusiasm amongst pupils who work hard with concentration, and lessons move at a brisk pace. For example, in a physical education lesson, Year 1 pupils moved to music as butterflies, eagles and wild animals in a jungle with changes in accompanying music pieces. The quality of content is maintained for most of the curricular areas. Teachers manage their pupils very well, which results in very good behaviour. They make good use of open questioning to check prior learning and deepen understanding. They consistently make constructive comments and give ongoing feedback to pupils, which improves their work. They work well with support staff and voluntary helpers who are kept well informed and subsequently make an effective contribution to pupils' learning.

20. The quality of teaching in the juniors is good. Half of the lessons seen were good, about a third satisfactory, with a few very good lessons. Two lessons were unsatisfactory. Teachers make good use of the opportunities provided for planning in year groups to collaborate with each other. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and have higher expectations for the more able pupils. In some lessons their expectations for the lower attaining pupils were not well matched to their abilities. The quality of teaching varies in year groups and between the classes. There have been several changes in the teaching staff and not all the teachers have had the benefit of the developmental work carried out in the school. Teaching is best in Year 6 classes and in one of the Year 5 classes. Teachers effectively plan a range of interesting activities, which generates interest and motivates pupils to work with concentration for longer periods. They provide good opportunities for research and independent work and promote reading development well. The Year 6 teacher who is also the literacy co-ordinator provides a good role model of effective practice and pupils in Year 6 make very good progress.
21. The quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good in the Reception class and infants. Teachers plan appropriately to meet the needs of these pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well in classes throughout the school. Teachers include them in discussions. They use encouragement and praise and give constructive feedback, which develops confidence and improves their work. In the junior classes the main focus for special needs is generally in literacy and numeracy. Pupils with a statement of special educational need are well supported, the additional support is used effectively and they achieve in line with their classmates. However, there is inconsistency in checking the progress of low attaining junior pupils and those with special educational needs. This lack of assessment of pupils' progress and a lack of effective action mean that their needs are not always met adequately.
22. Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge to adapt their teaching and response to the different levels of attainment in lessons. Teachers use a range of methods to assess pupils' progress and use this information as a basis for future planning. This practice is more developed in the Reception class, and Years 1 and 2. Pupils' work is marked regularly and most books contain helpful comments on how they can improve their work. Homework is generally used appropriately in classes and overall makes satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. ICT-related work is planned in most subjects. Teachers are now beginning to plan work through religious education, art and design and geography which develops pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity within the wider community. There is scope to do more.

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

23. The Foundation Stage curriculum for the under-fives provides for all the areas of children's learning, and standards have improved since the last inspection. Overall, the curriculum continues to provide the children with a good education. Planning is good and meets the requirements for children who are under five as outlined in the Foundation Stage curriculum.
24. The quality and range of the school's curriculum are good. The school provides a rich and stimulating environment. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. All subjects of the National Curriculum are in place and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are met. It provides well for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education, sex education and drugs' awareness. An appropriate time is allocated for literacy and numeracy lessons and the time for other subjects is usually well balanced. No pupils are disapplied from any aspect of the school's provision.
25. The school has a good overall curriculum plan that shows when each aspect of the different subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education will be taught to pupils. This is implemented consistently and effectively throughout the school. A good planning framework is used well and planning builds steadily from term to term and year to year in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The school continues to work hard in adapting the national and local authority guidance for subjects to suit the school's needs. It has made very good progress in developing the ICT curriculum. The music curriculum has been unsatisfactory until recently and new arrangements have not yet had time to impact fully on pupils' attainment. Good planning between year-teams and across year-groups ensures that pupils in different classes have similar curriculum experiences and that continuity and progression are consistent across the school. However, teachers do not plan for a systematic development of the multi-cultural dimension in the curriculum. Various awards such as the Basic Skills Mark testify to the strength of the school's curriculum provision, which has been a key factor in improving the quality of education for pupils overall.
26. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established. Strategies for teaching literacy are very effective, particularly in the infants. A very secure basis is created upon which to build and support pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. The school's strategy for teaching phonics is highly effective and now extends into Year 3 and 4 to build on pupils' earlier strengths. Reading and writing are well embedded into all teachers' work across the curriculum, so these aspects of English enable pupils to access other subjects. However, on occasions, activities for lower attaining and pupils with special educational needs lack the rigour and a close match, which adversely affects their achievement. Strategies for numeracy are good overall with some inconsistencies in the use of these strategies for the lower sets in the junior classes. In the infants, teachers make good use of daily routines, such as registration, and number rhymes and songs to consolidate number skills. In the lower sets there are missed opportunities for pupils to practise their number operations in their daily work. There are few opportunities for pupils to work out simple problems as they arise or to consolidate and extend their mental recall of number facts and develop agility in mental calculation strategies.
27. The school has established good links with the local and wider community. Through its work during the annually held 'Health and Fitness Week', the school maintains strong links with local clubs and community associations. Pupils' football, cricket and other sporting skills benefit from a range of professional coaches. Certified courses such as 'Right Start' and 'Passport to Safer Cycling' raise pupils' safety awareness, as well as teaching them useful life skills. Good links exist with the receiving secondary school.
28. The contribution of the community to the pupils' learning is good. A number of visitors come into school to support and enhance learning in the school and promote pupils' awareness of their role in the local community. For example, the local vicar leads school assemblies



on special religious occasions. The nurse supports the sex education curriculum and other health related issues. Story-tellers and theatre groups enhance pupils' experience of literature and extend their language skills. The school has established good links with the local and wider community. It makes effective use of the Internet to establish links beyond the immediate community.

29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2, is good. Provision for some pupils in the junior stage is unsatisfactory. Individual education plans are written in a similar way and are of a good quality. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups are very well integrated into the school's provision. The school continues to ensure inclusion for all its pupils and has regard to all the statutory requirements. It has very recently identified gifted and talented pupils in different subjects and aspects in every class to compile a register. The deputy headteacher who leads this aspect has been trained and has drawn up an appropriate action plan for the school to make quality provision in order to meet the individual needs of these pupils.
30. A good range of visits and of extra-curricular activities, including a residential opportunity, enriches and supports the curriculum. Pupils of all ages gain valuable historical, geographical, scientific and cultural stimulus and experience from visits locally and further afield. An annual residential visit to the Kingswood ICT Activity Centre by Year 6 pupils not only enhances the ICT curriculum but gives valuable opportunities for them to learn interpersonal and social skills. Pupils take advantage of the extra-curricular activities during the year. These include lunchtime and after-school clubs, such as team games of football, netball and cricket, and sewing club. Pupils take part in inter-school matches and tournaments with high level of enthusiasm and commitment. They have, for example, reached the regional team finals for cricket at Old Trafford for the past three years.
31. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection, in its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development, which is now very good overall.
32. The provision for spiritual development is very good. Opportunities for spiritual development are provided in assemblies and within the wider curriculum. For example, assemblies make a strong contribution through hymn singing, prayer and personal reflection. In subjects such as science and English pupils are introduced to the beauty of the world around them and are invited to think about and reflect on many important issues. In religious education lessons and in assemblies pupils gain understanding of the beliefs and principles of the world's major religions. They consider the achievements of others, and issues such as poverty and justice. Pupils care about the world and those less fortunate than themselves. For example, they often raise money for charities and good causes.
33. Provision for moral development is very good. It includes many opportunities across the curriculum to learn about moral concepts and values. Consequently, pupils have a very good sense of right and wrong. An outstanding feature of personal, social, health and citizenship education is how much and how effectively drama is used as a vehicle for learning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were given an excellent opportunity to explore peer pressure that they may face regarding smoking. Pupils are encouraged to understand the consequences of their actions, to be honest and to contribute to the welfare of others. Pupils are inducted into the school effectively and this includes frequent reminders about the code of conduct that is clearly displayed around the school.
34. Provision for social development is also very good. Staff provide very good role models for pupils to base their own behaviour and relationships on, and this contributes significantly to their social development. The recently established school council has made a very good start as a means of further promoting social development. The council has already made several good suggestions taken up by the school, for example, regarding school clubs and

further development of the 'buddies' system. During the inspection many Year 6 pupils gave up their lunchtime, as they often do, to help Year 3 pupils develop role-plays or just play. At the same time, several pupils tended to the library and others helped in the main office without fuss, illustrating the effectiveness of responsibilities on offer.

35. Provision for cultural development is good and includes many opportunities for pupils to find out about their own culture and other cultures in the world. For example, in the literacy hour the texts used often enable pupils to learn about their cultural values. School trips and visits make a strong contribution, helping pupils to find out about their heritage and to study particular aspects of their culture. For example, pupils regularly go to theatres to see classical and contemporary plays. Although there are several opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures in Britain, for example, through religious education, pupils are not getting enough direct experiences. For instance, visits to places of worship are limited and there is little contact with other communities. A similar issue was raised at the last inspection.

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

36. This is a very caring school where pupils are valued as individuals. The work done by staff to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence as learners is a major strength. There is a warm, family atmosphere and there are excellent relationships with pupils. The educational and personal support and advice given to pupils are good. These factors are effective in supporting pupils in their learning.
37. Arrangements for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The designated officer for child protection is appropriately trained and deals with any issues effectively. The school also has a designated governor. Staff are given very helpful written guidance about the school's policy and procedures and show vigilance at all times.
38. Risk assessments are carried out regularly for the premises, school trips and residential visits and are effective in identifying potential hazards. School governors are very well involved in premises checks and the whole governing body is very well informed about health and safety issues. Accident and emergency procedures, including arrangements for first aid, are very good. The school is commended in having 11 fully trained staff to administer first aid. A 'Health and Fitness Week' is held each year and many external agencies get involved in making it a very successful event. The school also offers safe cycling training for Year 6 pupils each year. A school governor organises 'pedestrian training' for infants and Reception children.
39. There are good procedures to monitor and improve attendance. A computer-based system is well used to produce management reports and identify any problems. The school works very closely with the educational welfare service where necessary. Newsletters regularly give reminders to parents about the importance of good attendance and punctuality in their children's learning. Rewards are well used to value high rates of attendance; for example, pupils are given certificates for good attendance at the end of term and end of year.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and for eliminating oppressive behaviour, are very good. Detailed records are kept of any problems. The 'yellow and red card' system is very well known by pupils and very effective in maintaining discipline. The behaviour policy is also very effective, resulting in very good behaviour management across the school. Much work is done on how to deal with bullying, for example through drama. Rewards are very well used to promote good behaviour, including special mentions and certificates at special assemblies. There is healthy competition for 'house points' in the juniors to qualify for a cup that is awarded each fortnight.

41. There are good procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development. Staff know pupils very well and give much informal advice and guidance. This has been instrumental in raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence to do well. Pupils' records include many aspects of their personal development. For example, attitudes, behaviour, attendance and any individual issues are noted. Pupils' annual reports give much information about pupils' personal and social development.
42. The school's procedures for assessing how well pupils are performing have been improved considerably over the last few years. The current systems are good, but they have not been in place long enough for full impact to be seen on pupils' progress. Assessment concentrates on the standards pupils attain in English, mathematics and science. Most of the information collected comes from tests set at the end of a section of work. This is a manageable system which helps identify pupils who need extra help or who could move forward even faster with the right support. It also helps to ensure that pupils make the right amount of progress each year, whereas in the past, progress has been much more rapid in Year 6 than in the earlier junior years.
43. Procedures for identifying pupils with special education needs and monitoring their progress are not secure enough. The most recent Code of Practice has not yet been fully adopted and this leads to some uncertainty about the criteria for including pupils in this category and to uncertainty about the action that teachers should be taking with them. Most of the special needs assessments are reviewed correctly, but the system is flawed with the result that two pupils have been dropped off the register despite still needing support.

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

44. Links with parents are good and their involvement has a good impact on the work of the school. The contribution of parents to children's learning, at school and at home, is also good. This is a similar picture to that of the last inspection.
45. Parents have a high opinion of the school. Although few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and less than 20 per cent of parents returned the questionnaire it is clear that parents are highly supportive of the school and its work. Almost all parents say that teaching is good, the school helps their children to become mature and responsible and they feel comfortable about approaching the school regarding any problems. Similarly, they say the school has high expectations for their children, children make good progress and like school, behaviour is good and the school is well led and managed. Inspection findings agree that parents' positive views are well founded. A few parents are unsure about whether the school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. The inspection team judged that provision is good.
46. Although a few parents feel that their children do not get enough homework, the inspection team judges that provision is satisfactory overall. A few feel that perhaps the school could work more closely with them, although the inspection team did not identify this as an issue. Parents are made very welcome, for example, at special assemblies where many attend to celebrate their children's work.
47. The quality of information to parents, especially about pupils' progress, is sound. Annual reports to parents are sufficiently detailed and give them a clear account of their children's progress and include targets to aid further learning. This forms a good basis for discussions between the class teacher, parents and their child. However, a few reports describe the work done as opposed to saying how well pupils perform. Also, a few reports, especially in mathematics, contain too much educational jargon. New parents to the school receive a helpful information pack about policies and provisions. Other good information

includes leaflets about helping with learning at home, including 'homework suggestions' to support learning in mathematics and literacy. The school provides sound information about forthcoming work in the curriculum and has recently established a useful computer website of information about the school.

48. The school organises workshops and special events for parents that contribute well to the very good relationships that exist. For example, many Year 2 parents recently took part in a series of drugs-education events. The Parents' Association organises several successful social and fund-raising events. These funds are used to support learning and personal development. For example, parents recently contributed generously towards improving the school's accommodation. Many parent helpers give their time generously to supporting school activities. For example, they listen to readers, give general help in lessons and accompany school trips.

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

49. The leadership and management of the school are good. The overall leadership provided by the headteacher is good and has made a significant contribution to the improvement of the school since the last inspection. The school has responded effectively to what needed to be done. He is very well supported by the deputy head and other key staff. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, key staff and governors have supported all the staff very well through a period of challenging circumstances and kept the staff morale high. They have successfully established a purposeful and caring environment, which is underpinned by a strong commitment to raising standards of attainment and providing quality education for all the pupils in the school.
50. The priorities in the governors' carefully structured action plan have mostly addressed the issues identified in the previous report. The roles of the subject co-ordinators have developed well. Effective monitoring systems have contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching, with good arrangements for feedback to sharpen staff's professional skills. Processes in school's self-evaluation are beginning to take effect and this is evident from the knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development at different levels of staff responsibilities. Steps have been taken to analyse and improve standards. The school is now in a secure position to extend the role of the subject co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning of their subjects in classes. This will bring their role in line with the numeracy and literacy co-ordinators, who effectively monitor classroom practice. The non-contact time given to the senior management team members has been used well to effect school improvement; the school now needs to review the future use of this time in conjunction with its organisation and priorities.
51. There are now effective procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. A clear management process is in place for reviewing pupils' performance and setting targets but as yet this has not been implemented fully across the school. Analysis of assessment information is used effectively, for example to identify the need for more emphasis on investigative work in science and reading; this has led to marked improvements. However, this practice is not extended to analyse attainment in mathematics in order to address the relatively weak performance of lower ability pupils in the junior classes.
52. The governing body, which has a clear committee structure and terms of reference, continues to be very supportive of the school. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities. Governors are now well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses through being involved in subject reviews with the co-ordinators, senior management team members and regular reports from the headteacher. The most recent school improvement plan is produced to a sound standard format and includes all essential

elements. The governors' action plan and the national agendas such as the National Grid for Learning have driven recent priorities. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well embedded throughout the school, although the part of the numeracy sessions devoted to mental mathematics is not fully effective and provision for the lower attaining junior pupils in literacy sessions is not always well matched to their needs. The school has, however, worked in addition on worthwhile and successful school-wide projects such as setting up a school council. There are satisfactory arrangements to ensure that steady ongoing development in priority subjects is maintained.

53. The deputy headteacher gives a good lead in curriculum development and ensures that the teachers' continued professional development is well linked to learning outcomes for the pupils. This has contributed well to improving subject knowledge and teachers' overall professional practice and, consequently, to improvements in standards of attainment. This is clearly evident from the standards attained by pupils in the infants and to some extent from standards attained by the end of Year 6. There has not been enough time for improvements to impact fully on the oldest pupils in school. There are effective procedures for co-ordinating and monitoring the quality and range of the whole curriculum. However, the forward planning for in-service training and setting of priority areas is appropriately focused and linked to the school improvement plan.
54. The school continues to explore a range of strategies and organisation of classes to take account of fluctuating number of pupils in each year group and the admittance of a significant number of pupils who join and leave the school at other than normal times. However, the school does not at this stage have a forward plan for dealing with uneven number of pupils in each year group and has not as yet made decisions about class organisation for the next academic year. This provides little time for teachers to collaborate with colleagues about the individual needs of the pupils.
55. The deployment of teaching staff is generally satisfactory and much of the organisation of teaching is successful. However, there are no agreed criteria for the deployment of additional support staff or procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the support in relation to pupils' progress. The school prioritises the needs of Reception children and the infant pupils and consequently places most of the available additional teaching support in these classes. Reception children and Years 1 and 2 pupils are split into smaller teaching groups in the mornings to maximise teaching support. The nursery nurses and other support staff are also allocated to these classes. This contributes very effectively to pupils' learning and the quality of teaching provided in the Foundation Stage and the infants. The special needs co-ordinator and a part-time teacher work with a mixed age group of higher attaining Reception children and lower attaining Year 1 pupils. The junior classes are not allocated a similar level of support. Too frequently pupils are taught in large classes with very little or no support. While the junior pupils are set by ability for mathematics, additional support is not targeted according to individual or group needs. Consequently, pupils in the lower mathematics sets make slow progress. Similarly, lower attaining pupils and those with special needs in junior classes do not always make the progress that they are capable of in some of the literacy sessions.
56. Management of special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall, although good administration procedures are in place. The co-ordinator has sound knowledge and understanding of pupils' needs. The requirements of the Code of Practice are not fully in place and the school continues to use some of the previous practice. For example, stage one and two are still used as terms of reference. Procedures for early identification of special educational needs are well placed but monitoring of pupils' progress is less secure in the junior classes. This constrains pupils' progress and consequently some pupils with special educational needs and some of those identified as causing concern but not registered for school action make unsatisfactory progress.

57. The budget is planned carefully and prudently. Senior staff and the governing body consider a wide range of options before making spending decisions, although the current budget has very little scope for varying spending after staffing and other commitments have been covered. Governors have decided to maintain the current relatively high proportion of expenditure on support staff for the benefit of the pupils by using reserves. Spending decisions are matched well to the school's priorities for development. The recent major investment in ICT provision has played a significant part in the rapid improvement in pupils' performance in this area. Other grants are also used efficiently to support the school's work. Financial control is very good. The school has very secure systems in place and procedures are followed correctly. Good use is made of ICT systems to monitor expenditure and to model the effect of possible changes. Governors receive regular, helpful reports from the bursar and ensure that their spending decisions are carried out correctly.
58. Accommodation is good and this supports the curriculum well. The school has two good-sized halls. In addition, the 'blue room' is being put to very good use. This new facility along with the new corridor connecting the main buildings represents good improvement since the last inspection. Outdoor facilities are good with a full-size, grassed football pitch and a 'wildlife area'. Access to the buildings is an issue for wheelchair users since there is no lift to the Year 5 and 6 classrooms. The whole school is kept clean and tidy.
59. There are adequate learning resources to teach the curriculum effectively except for mathematics in the junior classes. The library is well stocked and very accessible, being housed in one of the new rooms. The computer suite provides a good resource for ICT skills development.
60. The school makes overall satisfactory provision for the education of all its pupils and provides satisfactory value for money.

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

In order to improve further the school should:

1. Increase the rate of progress in mathematics for the lower attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 by:
  - Setting achievable yet challenging targets for pupils and assessing their progress against these targets;
  - Ensuring that planning is informed by assessment and closely matched to pupils' learning needs;
  - Improving the range and quality of resources;
  - Reviewing the allocation of additional support/teaching time.  
(Paragraphs 7, 18, 26, 51, 52, 59, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91)
2. Improve the provision for special educational needs by:
  - Improving the system for identifying and assessing the progress of pupils with special educational needs;
  - Ensuring that they receive work that is well matched to their prior attainment and that they receive adequate, well-targeted support.  
(Paragraphs 7, 9, 21, 26, 29, 43, 56, 78, 90)
3. Ensure equitable distribution of additional teaching and support time between the Reception, infants and juniors.  
(Paragraphs 21, 50, 55, 78, 90)
4. Raise standards in music by:
  - Improving teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject;
  - Ensuring that all aspects of the National Curriculum are fully taught.  
(Paragraphs 16, 22, 25, 123, 124)

Minor issue for improvement identified during the inspection was:

The provision of a range of opportunities that promote awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity around the local and wider communities.

(Paragraphs 22, 25, 35, 137)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

72

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

32

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very
Number	2	15	36	17	2		
Percentages	2.8	20.8	50	23.6	2.8		

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	381
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	80

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	106

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	60
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34



**Attendance**

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.08
National comparative data	5.7

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 02- 2003.*

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	19	31	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	27	27	30
	Total	44	44	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (87)	88 (87)	96 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	19	17
	Girls	28	29	28
	Total	45	48	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (89)	96 (94)	90 (92)
	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**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	36	28	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	19	33
	Girls	20	20	25
	Total	43	39	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (84)	61 (75)	91 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	21	31
	Girls	20	20	26
	Total	43	41	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (85)	64 (82)	89 (87)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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



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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	387
Number of questionnaires returned	72

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	24	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	35	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	60	13	4	1
The teaching is good.	53	46	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	42	14	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	38	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	28	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	39	46	13	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	58	36	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	42	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	26	6	3	19

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

61. Children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage. This is due to the quality of teaching and good leadership with particular strengths in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development.
62. When children start in the Reception class, their attainment is broadly typical for their age with a significant minority of children being below average. Children achieve well and reach the levels expected in mathematical, creative and physical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. They progress beyond the levels expected in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development.
63. The school admits children at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Most children gain pre-school education in the local nurseries and playgroup. Induction procedures are good; children visit the Reception class several times in the term before they are due to start school. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher is confident in her planning which takes account of children's individual needs and includes valuable opportunities for structured play. This enables children to make important gains in their learning and prepares them well for Year 1. Assessment is used effectively to identify children's needs and for tracking their progress from the time they enter school. The co-ordinator manages the Foundation Stage well.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

64. Children make good progress because of the very good teaching and they exceed the early skills and attitudes expected for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage. Throughout the Reception year, teachers promote children's personal development well. They do this by establishing routines and encouraging children to be independent in their day-to-day activities by, for example, expecting them to find the equipment they need to complete a task. As children's concentration and awareness improve, they participate fully in all the activities available. They are encouraged to make friends, share and play with one another. For example, when children dress up and go on a 'journey' together, teachers and other staff present themselves as good role models. The clear rules and routines help children to settle quickly, to follow instructions and to know the difference between right and wrong. Teachers frequently praise children for trying hard. This raises their self-esteem and motivates them to learn. As a result, children behave very well and understand what is expected of them and everyone benefits from working in a calm and settled environment.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

65. Very good teaching ensures that the children make good progress in this area of learning. They learn at a brisk pace and achieve well during their time in the Reception class. As a result, most children will exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception year. A strength of the teaching lies in the way staff constantly talk to the children and expect them to listen carefully. Every activity involves staff asking questions, leading discussion and encouraging every child to take part. Children enjoy talking to adults. For example, when wearing one of the many costumes available they are keen to explain who they are pretending to be. Teachers provide a range of good opportunities for children to become independent writers. Most recognise their names and letter sounds. They act as real writers in imaginative play, for example, when 'the policeman' records 'crimes' in his notebook. Children have many opportunities to practise their writing and by the end of the

Reception year, many children write short sentences without help. Teachers tell and read stories to children every day. Consequently, children learn to enjoy books and handle them with care. They are interested and keen to know what happens next. Children understand 'title', 'author' and 'illustrator'. Most children behave as readers, pointing to the words and telling the story. Higher attaining children read confidently, understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction and use the contents' page correctly.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

66. Good teaching in this area ensures that children achieve well and most reach the levels expected by the time they leave the Reception year. High attaining children exceed the standards expected. Teachers develop children's understanding of the relationships between numbers through carefully planned practical activities. This prepares the children well for future work in mathematics and supports their learning. Teachers make mathematics exciting. For example, children are keen to work out the number of eggs under the 'wizard's' hat. Children identify first to seventh positions when they race in their vehicles and win a rosette. They understand words such as 'big', 'small' and 'less than'. Children become familiar with shape as they play with construction kits and a few children can identify a cube, cylinder and sphere and use the correct name. Teachers use every available opportunity to use mathematics and mathematical language. They do this through stories, songs, games and imaginative play. Enjoyable activities, such as singing and performing the action to number rhymes, give children an understanding of adding and taking away.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

67. Children progress well in this area of learning because of good teaching and the variety of experiences planned for them. They achieve the expected goals by the time they leave the Reception class. The frequent first-hand experiences that teachers and other staff provide help widen children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children examine the mini-beasts they find and discover many things about them. For example, children were amazed to learn that a spider not only had eight legs but eight eyes as well. The children are taught to handle the insects carefully and place them back in their habitat quickly. Teachers plan visits to local places of interest to widen children's knowledge of their community and to begin to understand about travelling on a route. For instance, during their current work based on the theme of journeys, children visit a beach, a farm and the local church. Exploring the church and its many parts helps children to appreciate its importance in the Christian faith. Through regular opportunities to use the computer children learn to open and close programs, use a computer mouse with increasing control to move objects around the screen and write simple text. Children begin to understand the passing of time as they look at photographs of themselves as babies, toddlers and as they are now.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

68. Teaching is good and staff ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to engage in physical activities, both indoors and when playing outside. Children develop their physical skills well and meet the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception year.
69. Children use tools appropriately when they paint, join objects together and cut shapes from paper. Adults do not intervene too quickly when the children have difficulty in manipulating materials but guide them, enabling them to practise their skills and enhance their learning.
70. Outdoor activities using the wheeled toys are well planned and develop children's co-ordination and balance. Teachers plan lessons in the hall where children increase their confidence in moving in a large space and where they develop their climbing skills. Children

enjoy physical exercise tremendously and staff supervise these activities closely. They are careful to impress upon the children that they need to take turns and behave sensibly and safely.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

71. Good teaching in this area of learning ensures that by the time children leave the Reception class they achieve the goals expected for their age. Children take part in a suitable range of art and design activities, such as painting, collage and pattern making and engage in imaginative play in which they take on different roles. They enjoy experimenting with different textures and shapes. For instance, a group of children chose a variety of materials to decorate their 'Humpty Dumpty'. They have good opportunities to act out roles and create imaginary scenes in 'The seaside café' or in 'The dinosaur den'. These activities are planned well so that adults are sometimes involved and the children's spoken vocabulary is extended. Teachers put a great deal of emphasis on children learning traditional rhymes and songs, and singing or joining in with action songs takes place almost every day. Children use the percussion instruments to accompany a nursery rhyme in tune.

## **ENGLISH**

72. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are now above average. This high attainment arises because of very good, and on occasions, excellent teaching of all aspects of English in the infant phase. Much higher attainment is now feeding through the school because the quality of teaching has improved significantly. By the end of Year 6, attainment is average. Assessment records show that progress for these pupils has been inconsistent as they moved through Years 3 to 6. Their achievement at Year 2 in 1999 was unsatisfactory given their average standards on entry to the school. They started Year 3 from a low base and did not make enough progress in their early junior years. Their progress began to improve in Year 5, and an analysis of their work shows that in Year 6 they made very good progress, enabling them to reach average standards. Pupils with special educational needs are not always provided with additional support systematically and as a result do not make the progress that they are capable of.
73. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' progress is now very good and standards are high. Most pupils achieve well above average standards in writing and above average standards in reading, speaking and listening. Pupils are confident, very articulate speakers who listen well. In Year 2, pupils' humorous poems and other writing are often well above average. Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary, with higher attaining pupils in both Years 1 and 2 employing more advanced terminology and complex sentences in their writing. In Year 1, higher attaining pupils use an imaginative, extensive range of expressive vocabulary and reach a much higher standard than expected, well exemplified in their story about an under-sea adventure. Lower and middle attaining pupils' writing is also effective and they understand and use a good range of words for their age.
74. Pupils are also above average in reading. Most middle and higher attaining pupils read expressively, confidently and fluently. Lower attaining pupils use effective methods of sounding out new words, linking this method with "what words look like" in their heads. By Year 2, pupils' understanding of phonics and sound-patterns is very good. A key feature of the high attainment in Year 2 is pupils' unusually good understanding of the links between sounds and written language.
75. Analysis of school assessment records show that the rate of pupils' progress in English in the early junior years has improved and pupils' progress is at least satisfactory and often good, and attainment is higher. For some pupils, standards are above average at the end of Year 3. Orally, pupils in all these years are above average, able to enter into sensible, well-

structured discussion with peers and adults. They can alter their style of speech sensitively according to the audience. Pupils read well, with interesting, expressive intonation. Attainment in Years 4 and 5 matches the national average range in all the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Although pupils' handwriting, punctuation and spelling are good in these years, the content of their writing is average. Higher attaining pupils can write swiftly and effectively, while lower attaining pupils are relatively slow at getting their thoughts down on paper. In general, attainment through Years 3 to 5 is now in line with the standards expected for this age range.

76. In Year 6, pupils' progress is accelerated and they make up well for time lost in the early junior years. Pupils make very good progress and achieve overall average standards with above average skills in speaking and listening. They have good understanding of the protocol of discussion and debate and are selective and sensitive in the evidence they present to support their points of view. For example, in a dramatic interpretation of Macbeth's opening scene of the three witches, pupils acted the scene effectively using the Shakespearean language with intonation and understanding. Pupils have written interesting, well-structured poems based on these themes, which they are using as lyrics in their music lessons. Pupils' writing is well organised into paragraphs, and punctuation and spelling are generally correct. They read well in these and other contexts. Boys' and girls' handwriting remains above average, with even, regular script and good spelling. The content of their written work is often good. Recently published test results for Year 6 groups show their attainment in English overall to be in line with the national average, with high standards in reading often boosting the grades of many pupils.
77. Pupils use English effectively in other subjects of the curriculum, with consistently good handwriting now a feature of all work across subjects. Spelling is also good now. They write well, using cursive script with confidence and accuracy. From an early stage their handwriting is neat and pupils form letters evenly and present their work well.
78. Pupils' attitudes towards all aspects of English throughout the school are now very positive. This is particularly so in their infant years and in Year 6. They enjoy reading and writing of all kinds and are keen to get on with set tasks. Younger pupils, especially, feel highly confident about their abilities to put ideas and thoughts on paper. Pupils generally read with enjoyment and pleasure. Year 6 have developed a sense of excitement about *Macbeth* and will take with them positive attitudes, even towards difficult aspects such as this, into the next phase of their education.
79. Pupils with special educational needs in the infants make good progress. In the junior classes, pupils with statements of special educational needs are appropriately supported in lessons, but lower attaining pupils and those with lower levels of special needs often lack sufficient help to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable. These pupils often find the instructions on worksheets and the texts difficult to understand and therefore are unable to work independently in unsupported groups. They sometimes waste time in these parts of the lessons because teachers lack classroom assistants' help. Overall this constrains their progress over time.
80. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 have a very good understanding of how to teach phonics, which provides pupils with a very secure base for learning. They apply these skills well in all their teaching, so pupils very quickly learn about the key relationships between what they hear and say, and how things are written or read. These key strengths now provide pupils with very secure language skills on which to base all their work.
81. The strong focus on developing pupils' oral skills, through a wide variety of opportunities to talk to others about their ideas, ensures that pupils become articulate and able speakers.



Teachers insist that pupils listen attentively and patiently to others in the infant years, so this becomes a highly positive attribute of their skills base. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 also demonstrates a good level of knowledge and understanding about the intentions of the National Literacy Strategy.

82. Basic skills of phonics are now embedded into early junior years, reinforcing pupils' very good learning from earlier in the school. Handwriting and spelling are taught well. The teaching of reading is now secure, with most pupils becoming independent readers by Year 5. Teachers' expectations are high for the standards pupils produce in their work. Where classroom assistants are present, they work effectively with the pupils and other adults in the class. Additional support given by the classroom assistants is effective in helping those pupils to make the same progress as their classmates. Teachers' management of large classes is very good; pupils learn to be sensitive to the needs of others in their classes. Teachers know pupils' needs well at an individual level and do their very best to meet these, often with no classroom help in literacy in the junior years.
83. Assessment is good, both in teachers' marking and in their oral feedback in lessons. This helps pupils to know how to improve and most pupils know what their targets are in English. Although teacher assessment is regular, for example through end-of-year non-statutory tests, assessments need to be analysed much more intensively to identify individuals and groups who are under-performing so that appropriate support and help is allocated for these pupils. The school is working on these issues and progress to date is good. Homework, particularly reading, is suitable, especially in the lower part of the school.
84. Management of the subject is good. English has improved a great deal in the last three years, with good improvement since the 2001 report. Staff recognise that not everything in the English action plan has been accomplished, but the building blocks for significant improvement are now securely in place. Standards have improved significantly in the infants creating a positive challenge for junior staff. The issues related to the slow-down of progress, sometimes resulting in regression in standards in the early junior years, have also been identified. Staff have not always been held sufficiently accountable for the progress of individuals in their classes in all years. Too much reliance has been placed on Year 6 teachers to pull standards up at the end of pupils' time in the school, rather than on all staff ensuring steady progress throughout.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. The work seen during the inspection shows standards by the age of seven are in line with national expectations. Overall standards by the age of eleven are below average. In Years 3 to 6 lower attaining pupils do not make the progress expected for their age. More able pupils make better progress. Overall boys have made less progress than girls.
86. Standards in the national tests for seven year olds in 2002 were well above average for all schools. Standards for eleven year olds in the national tests in 2002 were below average for all schools although the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is close to the national average. When compared to similar schools, eleven year olds' performance was average. Standards for seven year olds have risen at a higher rate than the national trend. Standards for eleven year olds have declined overall since 2000.
87. By the age of seven, pupils are able to read, write and order whole numbers to 100. They can recognise odd and even numbers to 30. They are able to count up in fives, tens and twos. They can add two-digit and one-digit numbers but find subtraction in the context of finding change from 50 pence difficult. They can name common two-dimensional shapes and can measure and compare lengths. They are over-reliant on counting in ones and need to further develop their mental recall and mental strategies.

88. By the age of eleven, pupils vary considerably in their knowledge, skill and understanding, More able pupils are confident in multiplying decimals by 10 or 100, adding and subtracting four-digit numbers, converting fractions to decimal equivalents and solving problems using conversion graphs. Average and below average pupils are able to add three and four-digit numbers, multiply whole one-digit numbers by 100 and solve one-step problems. They are not confident with subtraction and division. They have slow recall of number facts and limited mental strategies beyond partitioning. They do not have sufficient opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in practical situations or solving problems.
89. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. It varies from excellent to unsatisfactory. All lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 were good or better. In Years 3 to 5 most of the lessons seen were satisfactory. The good teaching observed demonstrates thorough planning, clear lesson objectives, appropriate questioning, good subject knowledge and interesting work well matched to the pupils' needs. For example, in Year 2 the use of the empty number line was used to good effect in helping pupils to find change by counting on. Also in Year 5 the importance placed on estimation, and early intervention to address pupils' lack of understanding of place value when adding decimals, contributed well to a good pace in the lesson. However, pupils' progress in unsatisfactory lessons is limited through unsatisfactory day-to-day assessment, low expectations, insecure subject knowledge, insufficient attention to developing mathematical vocabulary and a lack of appropriate resources to meet the needs of all learners.
90. All teachers have secure class management skills and have high expectations of application and behaviour. Pupils' attitudes are very good and pupils' relationships with each other and other adults are excellent. They take care when recording and show pride in their finished work. Individual and group targets are not sufficiently rigorous across the school and pupils are rarely aware of their targets. Homework is generally unsystematic which limits its impact on reinforcing learning.
91. Support staff work hard with groups of pupils to enhance their learning. Their effectiveness in whole-class lessons is not yet maximised. In junior classes with a high number of pupils some lower attaining pupils do not always have the time with their teacher that they need and assistance from support staff is limited because of the time allocated to junior classes.
92. Co-ordination of mathematics is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is currently on secondment from the school and the headteacher has taken responsibility temporarily for this subject. The monitoring of the subject and work on action plans have impacted positively on standards in Years 1 and 2 but have not as yet taken effect in the junior classes. There is evidence of tracking pupils' progress and the analysis of test results. However, this is not yet being used to allocate teaching resources and identify aspects of the curriculum or groups of pupils in order to improve their attainment, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The range and quality of resources in the juniors are unsatisfactory.

## SCIENCE

93. Attainment in science is better than in most schools and standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average with a significant percentage of Year 2 pupils achieving Level 3 and Year 6 pupils attaining Level 5. The national assessments for eleven year olds in 2002 were average compared with all schools and above average when compared with similar schools. The results represented better progress from the end of Year 2 than in most schools. The results for 2003 are considerably higher. For example 52 per cent achieved the higher Level 5 compared to 31 per cent in 2002. This reflects the standards of work seen in the school, which are above average, and represents good improvement since the last inspection.
94. These standards have been achieved because the school puts considerable emphasis on pupils understanding the work thoroughly and on providing a good range of opportunities for practical application. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions about their work; they have many opportunities to try out their ideas through investigations and discussions, which are an important part of many lessons. As a result they learn well, find science exciting and are developing a strong grasp of the subject. For example, a Year 6 group who were exploring how the heart works by making models quickly realised that it must be more than a simple pump because it has to send blood to the lungs to pick up oxygen before pumping it round the body. This led them to the idea that the heart must have two parts and that there must be valves to make sure the blood flows the right way. Pupils also explained that the pulse we feel must be from the side of the heart pumping blood round the whole body. This level of understanding and reasoning is much better than usually found at this age and is typical of standards throughout the school.
95. Pupils in the infant stage develop a good understanding of the importance of making fair tests. They learn to observe carefully. By Year 2 their factual knowledge of the subject is good; for example, they can name the important parts of a flower and say what they do. The way they learn science also helps them to develop interest and a sense of excitement. For example, a group of pupils worked very well to explore how a bulb could be connected to a battery and went on to look at the connections for a motor, noticing that the polarity of the connections determined the direction that the motor turns.
96. Pupils continue to make good progress in the junior stage. They appreciate how to make tests fair and by Year 5 they are using line graphs to show what they have found. Their knowledge of science is very secure and they can use their knowledge in new situations; for example, pupils from Year 6 explained how it is that rain water is relatively pure although it comes from the salty sea. In their explanations, they expressed their ideas very clearly and used technical vocabulary correctly to explain evaporation and condensation.
97. Teaching is good. Teachers know their subject well and have the confidence to encourage pupils to ask questions. Lessons are planned well and teaching is lively so that pupils' interest is stimulated. This results in the good development of knowledge and skills described above. Lessons make a good contribution to numeracy through the use of graphs and frequent use of number in results. Literacy is emphasised well through the use of technical vocabulary and the opportunities that pupils have to explore ideas and explain their views through discussion. Science contributes to pupils' use of ICT through data-logging with scope to extend this work further, particularly if computers in the classrooms were linked to those in the computer suite.
98. Leadership and management in the subject are good. Schemes of work are helpful, contributing ideas from national guidance, the local authority and the school's own work. Analysis of the school's performance has led to an increased emphasis on investigation

and more work on the physical aspect of the subject. As a result, standards have risen overall and the subject is well placed to continue moving forwards.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. Standards in art and design are improving and pupils reach the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The recent improvement has resulted from the good teaching and good management of the subject but these have not as yet had sufficient time to drive standards higher.
100. A strength of the teaching lies in the way that teachers plan challenging work which enables pupils to acquire a sound range of artistic skills. In Years 1 and 2, pupils become increasingly skilled in using a wide range of techniques and materials including pencils, crayons, charcoal, paints and fabrics. Their observational drawings and work on pattern become progressively more detailed. Pupils benefit from teachers' encouragement to explore texture, colour and line. In a good Year 2 lesson, the teacher checked carefully that each pupil systematically experienced each technique as they experimented with a printing tool they had designed and made themselves.
101. Pupils know how some significant artists worked in the past and use the artists' techniques to bring interest to their own work. For example, pupils in Year 3 study the variety of brush strokes Vincent Van Gogh used in his famous painting *Sunflowers*. They try out their observations in their own paintings. Pupils in Year 5 were inspired by a number of famous artists from across the world. Pupils interpret and adapt the pictures of Claude Monet, JMW Turner and a selection of artists from Japan and Russia to create the mood for their own paintings.
102. By the time they are eleven years old, pupils demonstrate a broad range of skills, which they use effectively to support work in other subjects. For example, as part of their study of India in geography, pupils in Year 4 use the rich colours and textures associated with India as a starting point for their collage work. Literacy is developed well in art and design as pupils extend their vocabulary of colours, materials and techniques. Mathematical shapes and patterns are developed as pupils explore texture and design. Pupils' skills in ICT are extended as they experiment with shapes, lines and colours to produce their own abstract art designs.
103. The quality of teaching is good, Teachers are developing good knowledge of the subject with the support of the co-ordinator and use a wide variety of materials. Artistic techniques are taught well so that the pupils are able to express their ideas in many ways. Teachers encourage pupils to use their imagination and explore materials and colours to create interesting effects. From the work seen, pupils are keen on art and design. They strive to improve and present their finished work with pride. Teachers value pupils' efforts and present their work carefully to make an attractive display.
104. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a good overview of the needs of the subject and the pupils. She has recently written a very useful guidance for teachers to use and this will include assessment of pupils' attainment in the future. The school has recently been involved in the 'Arts in School' initiative and the co-ordinator is very clear about the development of art and design in the school. Plans for the future include inviting an 'Artist in Residence' to school and enabling pupils to visit art galleries.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105. Pupils' standards by the age of seven and eleven are satisfactory. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils are able to identify the needs of different users and the appropriateness of materials for purpose. For example, in Year 1, pupils made fruit salad for a baby; they knew the properties of a wide range of fruits and were able to articulate the need for the salad to be soft and have no skin or pips. Pupils can justify choices and have opportunities for focused practical tasks. For example, in Year 2 when making puppets, pupils carried out a wide range of joining techniques, which they graded for strength and were able to identify appropriateness of use for different parts of their puppets. Pupils' technical vocabulary is limited and their skills in oral explanations and reasoning choices are consequently underdeveloped. The quality of the finished products indicates that pupils' practical skills are sound. However, there was limited evidence of product analysis and disassembly. Pupils are able to evaluate products against their designs and suggest improvements. For example, in Year 2 a pupil said, "Next time I would stitch on the tail of the cat because it would look better and be stronger than sellotape".
106. Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers plan, prepare and organise lessons very well. For example, in Year 6 while pupils were making cam-operated toys the teacher placed good emphasis on health and safety and clear illustrations for pupils on how to cut their cams and the techniques needed for the use of clamps were explained well. Teachers encourage pupils to use their literacy skills in writing instructions and labelling their plans and sketches. Good use of ICT was evident in Year 3 when using text and graphics with packaging. Pupils have very good attitudes, behaviour and concentration. This enables good use of pair and group work to discuss, make, analyse and evaluate their products. This good practice is the result of the school's effort to improve the quality of provision overall. However, there has not been sufficient time to impact pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6.
107. The subject co-ordination is sound. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about her subject. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and has effectively worked alongside colleagues and the LEA advisor to develop the subject. This has impacted most positively on standards in Years 1 and 2 and is beginning to raise standards across Years 3 to 6. She has a clear action plan and is now evaluating the implementation of the national guidance to maximise cross-curricular links. She has introduced a sound system for assessment and is developing a portfolio of moderated pieces of work to ensure consistency in standards. Resources are adequate and are clearly stored and accessible for all pupils and staff.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

108. Standards in geography are higher than usual at the end of the infant stage and at the expected level by the end of Year 6. This difference is because the much improved teaching and curriculum in the infants have not yet had time to work through the junior stage.
109. The school now places a strong emphasis on pupils collecting first-hand information for themselves and developing a firm understanding of the subject, rather than simply learning facts. This approach is working well, so that pupils enjoy the subject and are making good progress.
110. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand how to use a map and can point out features on maps of the local area. They appreciate that some features in the landscape, such as hills and rivers, are natural and others, such as roads, have been built. As a result of the

consistent approach to teaching, they use the correct technical vocabulary of physical and human landscape to describe these differences. Similarly, the teaching approach has encouraged them to ask questions and look for patterns, for example finding out that the bigger houses were allocated to the more senior jobs in the mill-village they have studied.

111. These strengths are continuing to be developed in the juniors and pupils are extending their skills and understanding into the wider world, for example comparing life in a southern Indian village with their own. This topic is handled particularly sensitively with examples of sophisticated life in Indian cities considered alongside the village to avoid too distorted a picture being presented.
112. Teaching in geography is good and pupils learn well as a result. Teachers know the subject well and this gives them the confidence to encourage the pupils to ask questions and discuss the ideas they are meeting. This makes the pupils enjoy the subject more and strengthens their understanding of what they are learning.
113. The subject is co-ordinated effectively. There is a helpful scheme or work, which has been developed thoughtfully using material from the local education authority and national guidance. Resources are matched to the curriculum and include a good range of local maps and support for a good range of field trips.

## **HISTORY**

114. No history lessons were seen in Year 1 and 2. Analysis of work in pupils' books shows that standards are in line with expectations, with some good writing and spelling in the recorded work. History and geography are linked together sensibly in infants and in Years 3 and 4. Skills develop appropriately, with young pupils gaining a secure sense of when events occurred, and of time in general.
115. Attainment in Years 3 to 6 is also average, with good standards in pupils' written work. Pupils progress well in lessons and much good learning happens through talking and discussions. By Year 6, some aspects of pupils' understanding about life in the Victorian period are good. In a lesson seen, for example, pupils could put an opposite viewpoint to one which the teacher was narrating to them in the role of a wealthy child of that period. They empathised well with poor people in this era. By looking closely at photographs, Year 3 pupils understand how a local landmark building has changed in different periods of recent history. Field trips make learning meaningful for pupils. Year 5 pupils, in their study of the Aztec Empire, experience difficult concepts such as 'invasion' and 'massacre' with understanding. However, on occasions, the text in worksheets such as using words like 'motivation' make it difficult for pupils to understand the task and this constrains some pupils' progress in lessons.
116. Pupils' attitudes towards history are good and their behaviour in lessons is often very good. Pupils enjoy opportunities to experience history 'first-hand', such as the visits to local castles as part of their class project in the infants. Good displays of work and visits to historical places in infant and junior classes enliven the subject.
117. Teaching in the three lessons seen in junior years was good overall. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge. They planned pupils' learning effectively, so the periods of time studied moved increasingly further away from the present as pupils get older. These ideas were reinforced by good use of time-lines, which were often used in other areas of pupils' curriculum as well. In Year 5, for example, pupils studying Wordsworth and Shakespeare placed portraits of these writers on their historical time-line. The teacher related this learning very effectively to their history studies of the Tudor period. Analysis of work in books shows that making comparisons between 'then and now' is

taught well; pupils become adept at recognising similarities and differences. Teachers make good use of resources, such as toys and clothing linked with Victorians, enabling pupils of all abilities to make good progress in understanding the differences between 'then' and now.

118. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. In the absence of the co-ordinator, history is temporarily managed by the deputy head. She is making effective contribution to development in the subject. Curriculum plans are sound. The school has made a start with making end of unit assessments, and a portfolio of moderated work is being developed to ensure consistency in standards through the school. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

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

119. Standards in ICT are higher than in most schools and above national expectations in all year groups. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection and reflects the considerable investment and effort the school has put into the subject.
120. The strengths in the subject are the result of the successful combination of several factors that the school has put in place:
- The school has converted a disused kitchen into a computer suite and installed a network of modern computers.
  - Teachers have raised their skills in ICT and many have become enthusiastic about the subject.
  - The co-ordinator has planned an imaginative scheme of work, which provides a good range of challenging activities for pupils to learn from.
  - The school has employed a technician to keep equipment working and to help in lessons. This makes the teachers feel much more secure.
  - The computer suite has an interactive whiteboard installed. Teachers and pupils use this very effectively. It makes demonstrations and explanations much clearer, lets pupils show their work and adds an extra 'buzz' to lessons.
121. Most ICT is taught in the computer suite. This gives the pupils much more time at a computer and this time is used very productively because their work is under the direct control of the teacher. As a result, pupils learn to use the equipment correctly and grow in confidence and competence. For example, children in Reception are already launching programs, saving their work and using the computer mouse competently. By Year 2 most pupils use the keyboard fluently and need very little help to find their way around new programs. Year 6 pupils have well-developed skills and see ICT as a normal part of their learning. They access information from CD ROMs and internet as a matter of course and discuss with maturity the advantages and disadvantages of these sources compared with information from books.
122. The subject is taught well. Lessons are well planned and often lively and stimulating. Teachers provide a good balance between direct instruction, opportunities for the pupils to investigate for themselves and discussion to reflect on what they have learnt. They value pupils' contributions and respond very well when pupils find alternative ways of doing things. As a result, pupils develop well-placed self-confidence and enjoy the subject.
123. Subject co-ordination is very effective. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has produced a good scheme of work, which is supported by well-chosen programs. There are currently some effective links with other areas of the curriculum, such as data logging in science, but there is scope for more, and this development would be supported if the computers in the classrooms were also on the network and there were more of them.

## MUSIC

124. Standards of attainment are below national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The unsatisfactory standards are due to too few opportunities in the past, for pupils to develop the skills of composing music or playing an instrument. Whilst the quality of singing is good, pupils' skills in creating, developing and processing their own musical ideas through to a conclusion in order to produce their own unique compositions are not high enough.
125. Recently the school has tried hard to teach the full music curriculum. Support staff with the required expertise and visiting teachers assist the teaching staff by sharing the teaching and giving advice. The teaching seen in lessons is satisfactory and pupils now making satisfactory progress. However, all this has not yet had sufficient time to raise standards throughout the school.
126. The present satisfactory teaching is characterised by well-managed lessons in which pupils work hard, concentrate well and make sound progress. Pupils in Year 2 enjoyed clapping to the beat of the song 'Little Raindrops' and by the end of the lesson succeeded in clapping and pausing in the correct places. They enjoy singing, which is obvious by the effort they make within a communal atmosphere. The teachers made a good assessment of how pupils were performing and gave clear advice on how to improve their work. Pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of the pentatonic scale and rearrange the notes to create their own tunes. They work well in groups, co-operate well and try out their ideas on the percussion instruments. Pupils in Year 6, as part of their work on *Macbeth* practised their own musical accompaniment to a poem about the play written by two pupils in the class.
127. Music contributes well to the development of pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills as they read and learn and sing the words to new songs. Pupils join together to sing their favourite hymns. The quality of the singing is good. Pupils sing tunefully with awareness of the mood and melody. As a group, pupils refine and adjust the sounds, as they become more familiar with new words and tunes. Good links are made with design and technology through designing and making their own musical instruments.
128. There are opportunities for pupils to listen to a variety of music written by famous composers and from a variety of cultures. In one assembly, older pupils listen to the singing of Bob Marley and identify his home country of Jamaica. Pupils' appreciation of music is enriched by the opportunity to hear a brass quartet from the orchestra from the local high school. All these occasions add greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
129. The music co-ordinator has only very recently taken on the role. He has taken appropriate action and made a thorough assessment of the present position of music provision in the school and how to move forward. New guidance for teachers has been introduced and other suitable plans have been made in order to raise the future standards in music throughout the school.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Standards attained by the end of Year 2 are above national expectations. By the end of Year 6, most pupils achieve standards in line with expectations. Swimming is given a high priority and pupils are allocated appropriate opportunities for swimming in Years 3 and 4. Many pupils take swimming lessons outside school time and most reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. For example, many Year 3 pupils achieve the 100Metre certificates and beyond. The good teaching in physical education has a positive effect on standards achieved in the infants, although there has not been sufficient time as yet to raise



standards in the juniors. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the infants. Progress in the juniors is satisfactory overall.

131. The school has made good improvement in the quality of provision for the subject. Effective planning is consistently based on a customised scheme of work with well- focused objectives and subject-specific vocabulary clearly identified for each unit of work. Warm up and cool down activities systematically build on pupils' skills and understanding of why this is necessary for physical activity. The quality of activities provided in the infants and Year 6 classes is good.
132. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop a range of skills and engage in imaginative work, showing increasingly refined movement, timing and rhythm. They demonstrate good control and co-ordination when running, jumping stopping and starting while moving at speed in different directions. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are capable of extended activity and enjoy a challenge. Junior pupils practise, improve and refine their skills and make evaluations of their own and others' performance, suggesting improvements. They follow instructions correctly and use demonstrations well for example, to improve their techniques in running for distance at a pre-determined pace. They know and understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and maintain rigorous activity for suitable periods of time.
133. Pupils show a high level of enthusiasm and good attitudes to the subject. They show persistence in learning new skills. Extra-curricular activities add considerably to the quality of learning. Sporting activities and games such as netball, football, cricket, rounders and badminton skills are extended through after school clubs and experienced coaches. The school promotes equal opportunities well and this is evident in boys and girls practising skills together. Good links are established with other subjects through promoting speaking and listening and literacy skills in lessons and using science topics such as the effect of vigorous activity on the heart and lungs. Pupils and teachers are proud of the annually held 'Health and Fitness Week' aimed at raising pupils' awareness of the importance of physical fitness. The activities are well supported by parents and the community and provide opportunities for pupils to work and play with others from school and outside. For example, the whole school walks a few miles to the 'Local Leisure Centre' where many of the events take place.
134. Teaching overall is good in both infants and juniors. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge. They plan lessons well and explain objectives clearly. They make good use of demonstrations to set high expectations for pupils' performance. Teachers teach the safety aspects well. Good management of pupils in well-organised lessons results in pupils being well behaved and well aware of the need for rules. This contributes well to pupils making good progress and thoroughly enjoying their activities.
135. Leadership and management of the subject are good with the co-ordinator updating the curriculum guidelines to promote a good balance in all the required elements of the subject. Good support is given to colleagues to improve the quality of learning experiences. Skills are introduced appropriately and an assessment strategy has been introduced to monitor and record the development of skills. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the curriculum and has high expectations to improve further the quality of skills' development and learning in gymnastics. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

136. No teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2, but several lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. From the work seen, discussions with pupils and lessons observed, it is possible to judge that standards are sound across the school and in line with the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The co-ordinator has successfully introduced the new agreed syllabus and this is so far having most impact on standards in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have yet to have the full benefit of this scheme to enable them to make good progress.
137. By the end of Year 2 pupils know some stories from the Bible and about the Christian celebrations of Easter and Pentecost. They are familiar with aspects of the Jewish faith and can describe the importance of artefacts such as the Sedar Dish and Tallit. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an understanding of aspects of Hinduism. Pupils can begin to describe Hindu artefacts and their meaning within the Hindu faith. Pupils know that different faiths have different places of worship. In Year 3 pupils are introduced to Buddhism and they understand how stories can be used as teaching tools. In Year 5 pupils have an understanding of the Bible as a help to Christians in giving them guidance. However, pupils' overall ability to know and use subject specific vocabulary is under developed.
138. From the lessons seen the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Planning for lessons sets out clearly what pupils will learn and good use is made of role-play and artefacts to aid understanding and to stimulate the pupils' interest. For example in Year 4, pupils enacted a role-play in order to know how some churches celebrate the Eucharist. Teachers are able to effectively draw on pupils' own experiences, make links with other subjects and consolidate prior learning. Displays in classes and corridors promote positive images of other faiths and key vocabulary. However, planning for visits to places of worship and for visitors from other faiths to come into school needs to be developed further. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are able to work collaboratively and demonstrate respect for others' points of view
139. Co-ordination of the religious education is sound with some good features. The co-ordinator has received training and worked along side the LEA advisor to develop her expertise. She has made good progress through rewriting the policy, implementing the new syllabus and introducing a new assessment and record keeping system. She has monitored pupils' work and displays and through evaluation has a clear action plan. Resources are adequate and are clearly stored.