

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ABBAY VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Abbey Village, Nr Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119307

Headteacher: Mr S Knight

Reporting inspector: Mrs Heather Evans  
21374

Dates of inspection: 14 – 17 October 2002

Inspection number: 247993

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bolton Road  
Abbey Village  
Chorley  
Lancashire

Postcode: PR6 8DD

Telephone number: 01254 830489

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Richardson

Date of previous inspection: 26 January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21374	Mrs H Evans	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Foundation stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The schools results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9874	Mr M Milwain	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?
30559	Ms J Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics English Geography History Music Religious education Education inclusion Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a smaller than average primary school in Abbey Village and pupils are provided with a bus service to bring them from other surrounding villages in rural Lancashire. There are 96 pupils on roll aged between four and 11. Of these, three claim their entitlement to free school meals a level that is well below the national level and does not reflect the social make-up of the surrounding villages, which is average. There are 11 pupils with identified special educational needs, mostly because of difficulties with language, communication and reading. Of these, two have statements of special need. All of the pupils speak English as their first language. There is no nursery but most children have attended some form of pre-school education before entry. The last groups to be assessed were shown to have attainment on entry that was typical for children of the same age nationally. A new headteacher was appointed to the school at the start of the present academic year.

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

This is a good school with some very good features. Standards fluctuate because of the smaller than average numbers in some years. At the end of the Foundation Stage, those children who do not have special educational needs attain all of the expected Early Learning Goals. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, most pupils attain or exceed the expected levels for pupils of the same age nationally. The quality of teaching is predominantly good across the school and the management of the pupils, finance and resources is good. The leadership of the new headteacher and the governing body is good. Pupils' attitudes to work and learning, as well as their behaviour, are good in lessons and around the school. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. For these reasons the school is judged to provide good value for money.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are rising and are above national expectations.
- Standards of attainment in physical education, music and information technology exceed expectations.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and learning are very good, and their behaviour is good.
- Relationships are very good.
- Teaching is predominantly good.
- The leadership and commitment of the headteacher and the governing body are good.

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

- The roles of the subject leaders are underdeveloped.
- The provision for secure outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage is in need of urgent review.
- The school playing field is too far away for pupils to make full use of it.
- The library is poorly sited and this limits opportunities for personal research and private study by pupils.

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

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

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in January 1998. The school has addressed all of the issues listed with considerable but not total success. The introduction of the national strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has been undertaken successfully along with an audit and revision of the school's curriculum in line with national recommendations. Assessment strategies have been revised

thoroughly and are good. These procedures are used in a practical way to set and review targets. Governors and staff make good use of the information gathered to judge the effectiveness of teaching as reflected in the results of tests and work in class. The governing body now operates an effective committee structure that enables them to play a fuller part in the production of the school development plan with the headteacher and staff. This clear document is influential in the school's strategic management planning. Staff training, and the monitoring of work in classrooms, by both of the headteachers in turn, has been successful in raising teachers' awareness of new requirements. This increased understanding has improved the match of work, challenge and expectations for pupils throughout the school. As yet, other teachers with subject responsibility have not taken on a sufficiently active role in supporting one another in lessons. The accommodation has been improved. There are new toilets; and the provision of sinks in classrooms has helped to improve work in art and science. The 'rooms of endeavour', now available for teaching and learning, provide valuable additional space. With smaller than average groups in each year, sometimes as few as eight, all of the classes contain pupils of more than one age band. The attainment of children in the Foundation Stage, the results in Years 2 and 6 in 2002, and inspection evidence, indicate that the tasks designed to help individual pupils to reach the best level possible are well organised, and are proving to be successful.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	C	A*	A
Mathematics	D	C	A	A
Science	C	E	A	C

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

Standards have fluctuated in English, mathematics and science for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The results are erratic because some year groups have significantly more pupils with low prior attainment or special educational needs than others. In some years the numbers in the class taking the tests were very small and then, the comparative scores do not reflect the achievements of individuals. At the end of 2002 the results in Year 2 for all subjects were well above national expectations in Reading and mathematics and matched the standards nationally for writing. They were above those in similar schools. The inspection findings are that attainment levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 are already on course to exceed national expectations. At the end of Year 6 the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were well above average in English, where they were in the top five per cent of schools nationally and were well above average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools they were well above average in English and mathematics and similar for science. Inspection findings are that attainment at the end of the present Year 6 is on course to exceed national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Overall the rate of improvement is broadly in line with national trend. The school has agreed challenging targets for raising standards in the present year and pupils' performance during the inspection indicates that they are on course to meet these targets. Pupils' levels of attainment in religious education match the requirements of the local education authority agreed syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology are good across the school. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is instinctive and is producing very pleasing results. In all other subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding. In physical education and music, pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain at an above average level. In the Foundation Stage, children make good progress in all of the areas of learning.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school; they like school and treat the building and the learning resources with great care and respect.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good because pupils are managed very well. From the youngest class they have a deep understanding of how the school expects them to perform within the agreed behaviour policy.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good; older pupils readily support those in younger classes. All pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of the beliefs and values of others.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. Unauthorised absence is much lower than in most schools nationally.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection and in lessons observed was never less than satisfactory. It was good or better in eight out of every ten lessons. The percentage of very good and excellent lessons has remained at around two in ten. The pattern of good teaching is more consistent because planning has been made more thorough. As a result, learning is never less than satisfactory and is most frequently good in lessons across the curriculum. The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics has been strengthened as a direct result of the effective training in the literacy and numeracy strategies. This shared training has also had a positive effect on teaching in other subjects. The planning of lessons is good and the support for those pupils with special educational needs is much improved. This improvement in identification and teaching now enables them to learn well, at a similar rate to that of other pupils in their class.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is good. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The extra provision through clubs, visits and visitors to the school enriches the curriculum very well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for all of the pupils with special educational needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is well organised and their personal skills are well developed. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development and the school provides very well for the moral, social development of pupils. The provision for the cultural

	development of pupils is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very effectively for all its pupils through all its policies as seen in practice. The policy and procedures for child protection are satisfactory.

Parents are pleased with their links with the school and share in an effective partnership with the teachers. Policies and plans of intended work are reviewed regularly and there are no significant curricular weaknesses.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The good leadership and management of the previous headteacher continue under the new head, with the full support of the staff. There is a shared vision for the development of the school and their enthusiasm, care and commitment motivates all of the people involved in the life of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is fully committed to the school and provides good support. It is dedicated to the standing of the school in the community and is fully involved in decision making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's awareness of its strengths and weaknesses is good. This knowledge enables staff and governors to make good progress in addressing identified areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Every initiative is linked successfully to the sensible use of resources in order to support the priorities listed in the school development plan.

There is a good level of qualified staff who are deployed effectively. The school building is old and presents many challenges to which the staff respond well. It is well maintained but some facilities such as the position of the library inhibit the opportunities for pupils' independent learning. The long distance from the field continues to limit the time available for extending pupils' skills in physical education. The facilities for the Foundation Stage are adequate but there is no separate, secure outside play area. Learning resources across the school are adequate and funds are identified to enhance them over time. The governing body is becoming increasingly alert in seeking to find the best value possible in all its spending. Whilst all subjects are managed well, the leadership role of teachers with responsibility remains underdeveloped.

## 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>• Pupils attain to the limit of their capacity.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Pupils like school.</li> <li>• The staff are all approachable and helpful.</li> <li>• Pupils are expected to work hard, make good progress and grow in maturity.</li> <li>• The wide range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents would welcome clearer information about pupils' progress in the annual reports.</li> </ul>

The team agrees with parents that there are many positive aspects to celebrate. The parents want the

annual written reports to be more useful so that they can provide specific help for their children. The team agrees with parents that the formal written reports should be presented in a more interesting way so that they contain more specific information about what their children have achieved. The school also agrees with the parents, and the teachers are already planning new ways of presenting all of the required information.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

##### **Strengths:**

- *children's success in achieving or exceeding all of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year in the Reception Class;*
  - *standards and achievements in the national statutory tests and assessments by the end of Years 2 and 6;*
  - *the overall good learning and progress made by pupils including those with special educational needs;*
  - *pupils' instinctive use of information and communication technology to support other subjects.*
1. The attainment of children entering the school varies with each group but the most recent indications from the teachers' assessments, using a well-established system, show the overall attainment level to be about average when compared with children of the same age nationally. Good teaching enables all of these children, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. Most children reach the expected levels in all of the officially recommended early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1.
  2. In the statutory National Curriculum tests in 2002, pupils' achievements in English at the end of Year 2 showed that standards were well above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics were. In these subjects pupils' performance compared favourably with that in similar schools. The teachers' assessments in science placed the pupils as being above the national average. These comparative grades need to be viewed with caution as with such a small group one child performing at a below average level on any given day distorts the percentages by seven per cent and does not always reflect pupils' achievements. In the national tests for 11-year-old pupils, the standards in English were high and the number of pupils attaining at the higher than expected levels placed the school in the top five per cent of school nationally. Standards were well above the national average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was shown to be well above those schools for English and mathematics and similar for science. When the low percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is set against the social make-up of the locality these results are impressive. All pupils including those with special educational needs achieved levels of attainment that were as good as could have been expected.
  3. At the end of 2001 the school has reviewed the test results carefully along with those of voluntary tests carried out in other years. As a result, the school identified a need to increase the amount of practical, experimental and investigational work in mathematics and science. This was to help pupils to deepen their understanding in these subjects rather than just learning and remembering facts. The increased facilities provided by the 'rooms of endeavour' enabled the school to organise more opportunities for practical work, which have brought about pleasing successes for many pupils. The improved standards in Year 6 and in Year 2 in the most recent tests in 2002 have shown this work by teachers to be very successful. Inspection evidence indicates that even at this early stage in the year pupils are well set to maintain the standards at a well above average level in these subjects. Pupils' skills in mental arithmetic are being developed systematically across the school and they readily

apply their knowledge in problem solving in other subjects such as science and design and technology.

4. Good and very good teaching in the classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2 enables them to gain skills in personal research and in working independently. This is because the match between work expected and pupils' prior attainment is very good. Together with the strong development of observational skills, pupils are enabled to build on the good start they have had in the Foundation Stage and to achieve levels that are frequently above those for pupils of the same age nationally. In classes that cater for two age groups, standards in information and communication technology are above those found in most schools at the end of in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils attain at least nationally expected levels in all other subjects. Attainment levels in religious education match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In music and physical education, pupils exceed the levels of attainment normally found for pupils of the same age because their confidence and experiences are so well supported by additional opportunities outside lessons.
5. None of the pupils speak other than English as their first language, but a tiny number have grandparents from other than traditional white backgrounds. The school is very aware of the additional knowledge of these pupils and regards them as having much to offer to others. The provision for those pupils identified as being gifted and talented is seen best in the opportunities provided for them to develop their talents in reading, scientific investigation, sport, and music. The school is developing ways of celebrating such talents. Teachers are aware that the satisfactory start to providing opportunities to extend pupils is at present within a narrow range and they have plans to extend this work further.
6. The school is successful in fostering the achievements of those pupils with special educational needs. Early intervention was found to be missing at the time of the previous inspection but needs are now identified at an early stage, which has greatly improved this aspect of the school's performance. All such children have individual education plans that are tightly focused on areas for improvement and targets to be achieved. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in classes across the school. This is because of the quality of teaching, the careful match of tasks to pupils' interests and prior attainment in all subjects. The role of the classroom assistants, the attitudes of their peers and all staff as well as the support from their parents helps these pupils to make progress alongside their friends. The school has improved resources for information and communication technology for everyone and pupils with special educational needs have good opportunities to work with other pupils which ensures that they make good progress in their learning. Pupils use the computers throughout the day. Some pupils with special educational needs use computers very readily, compensating to an extent for the difficulties they often find in communicating in speech with adults and their peers. Across the school the systems for tracking pupils' achievements and progress are good.
7. Every class caters for two year-groups, but teachers and support staff collaborate well so that all pupils are appropriately challenged. All pupils are expected to work hard and to do their best. This effort has been supported very well by the introduction of booster classes for pupils preparing for statutory tests and by specific additional support in skills in literacy and numeracy. The school has every intention of repeating this process in the present academic year.

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

### **Strengths:**

- *pupils have a very good attitude to school;*
  - *behaviour in lessons and at other times around the school is good;*
  - *personal relationships are very good;*
  - *as a result of the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development they are becoming kind, caring, confident and responsible individuals;*
  - *attendance is above the national average.*
8. Pupils are confident, cheerful and enjoy coming to school. They have very good attitudes to lessons. They respond well to questioning and most are confident when discussing their work with adults. In an information and communication technology lesson, pupils in Year 5-6 were enthusiastic and involved when using a database to access information about work in science. The positive attitude which pupils have is reflected in the content and presentation of their work. Pupils are courteous and friendly to visitors to the school.
9. Pupils behave well as a result of the high expectations and positive examples set by adults. In the few instances where restless or disturbing behaviour does occur, staff deal with it calmly and effectively. Pupils are taught to understand the negative effect of irresponsible actions on themselves and others. In a drama lesson in Year 1-2 the teacher used the story of Hansel and Gretel effectively to illustrate why we need to think about what we are doing. During the period of the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or any form of oppressive behaviour.
10. Because social and moral issues are so well promoted, pupils have developed a strong moral conscience and regularly work to help those less fortunate than themselves. Through involvement in assembly they have become aware of the impoverished conditions that affect the lives of others such as those who harvest tea, in comparison with the lifestyle of the consumers in the western world. The school raises a significant amount of money annually for a range of charities. Much of this fund raising is the result of pupils' own initiatives and their direct involvement in activities such as the 'Bog Eyed Jog'. This event is held annually in November and parents, teachers and pupils run laps around the school field in the dark to raise money for the Children in Need appeal. The enjoyment of the early morning run is celebrated later with breakfast in school. Last year this effort raised more than £1000, which is a tremendous sum for such a small school.
11. Pupils show how they have been taught to respect the feelings of their peers. They are encouraged to act on their own initiative and to make well-balanced democratic decisions. For example, pupils been very involved in planning their own code of conduct in class and in establishing ways to ensure that their environment is litter free, through serving on committees such as the 'Eco Award Scheme'. They also work to promote the aims of the 'Tuck Shop committee'. This committee allocates the money raised through the sale of toast at break to a variety of purposes throughout the school, in response to formal requests from pupils in all the classes. Through taking on responsibilities in this way, pupils understand that their views are valued. This in turn builds their self-esteem.
12. Pupils co-operate well with one another. In lessons they willingly share resources, and when working in pairs or in groups they confidently discuss and develop ideas. Each class has a system through which pupils take turns in accepting responsibility for tasks in the classroom. Pupils respond well to the range of opportunities provided.

There is a very good relationship between the staff and the pupils. Staff are totally committed to including pupils with special educational needs, in all aspects of the life of the school. All of the involved adults see these pupils, like all its pupils, as an integral and valued part of the community. Pupils with special educational needs take a positive approach to all subject activities and work with commitment.

13. Parents ensure that pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time. Many travel a considerable distance to get to school. The attendance rate, which, during the last school year was 95.9 per cent, is above the national average. Pupils like school and there is very little unauthorised absence. Self-discipline is strongly encouraged and pupils try hard to rise to teachers' high expectations. Parents report that their children leave the school very well prepared for life in the much bigger secondary schools where, they say, their children do well. There have been no exclusions in the last few years.

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

### **Strengths in teaching and learning:**

- *teachers' planning is clear and effective;*
- *day-to-day assessment is used well to evaluate progress and extend learning;*
- *pupils are organised well and learning opportunities match their individual needs;*
- *the quality of teaching is predominantly good;*

### **Weaknesses:**

- *the introduction of work for the mixed age bands sometimes takes a long time and this then prevents activities being completed;*

14. Teaching is predominantly good across the school and there are examples of very good teaching. In the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching is significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection and there is now a good understanding of how children under five learn through a process of structured play. There is a good range of rich learning experiences. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science teaching is almost always at least good. Teaching was observed in 37 lessons or parts of lessons during the inspection. In all of the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In eight out of ten lessons teaching was judged to be at least good, and of these two in ten were very good and one lesson was graded as excellent. The growing understanding of their management role by the subject co-ordinators has led to improved planning and extended the teaching skills of the staff, which has had a positive impact on the overall quality of teaching.
15. The school has implemented and developed the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy successfully and this has improved the overall quality of teaching because the organisation of lessons is now consistent in all classes. The training in planning and evaluating work, undertaken in the preparation for new initiatives, has had a positive effect on planning in other subjects. There are very few weaknesses in teaching. Sometimes, in a very few lessons, setting up activities for the mixed age bands takes too long in the attempt to ensure that all groups of pupils understand totally what is required. This then causes the interest of a few pupils to wane and they become less attentive. This delay then means that some pupils are unable to complete the planned activities or the end review session is cut short. When this happens pupils do not share what they have learned with pupils in other groups. Teachers' instructions and guidance in lessons are detailed and clear. Pupils of all ages and attainment levels know very well what they are doing and why.

16. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and this forms the firm foundation on which pupils' learning is based. Lessons are well structured and follow the recommendations of relevant national guidance. They begin with an introductory session, after which pupils work collaboratively or independently within matched attainment groups. Teachers select methods well fitted to the purpose for teaching the whole class, for instance by using an overhead projector so that all can join in reading a shared text. Activity groups then complete relevant work carefully matched to their particular needs. Written tasks are tailored to the pupils' needs. This match of work to prior attainment is essential as every class is made up of pupils from more than one age group.
17. Basic skills are taught well. Teachers discuss issues with pupils using carefully structured questioning designed to extend pupils' thinking and to promote their learning. Pupils are learning to use resources systematically and to examine results carefully. They are encouraged to search out relevant information and to record their findings systematically. This was seen to good effect in a science lesson in Year 5/6. Pupils had carried out a set of investigations and measurements over time on the relationship between the rate of evaporation of different kinds of liquids. This was part of a study about the movement of particles.
18. In a lesson with Year 2 pupils, one boy became so involved in developing his own test procedures that the teacher modified the lesson to include his ideas and strategies, as they were so good. The intended work was then continued on the following day to good effect. Pupils enjoy being "science sleuths" and the increased amount of work being undertaken by pupils, using experimentation, is proving to be a key factor in helping to increase their achievements. In 2002 this detailed practical work was seen to be very successful in raising standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. To support this investigational work, pupils use the Internet through a secure search engine and learn to sift the most relevant information from the quantity presented to them by the initial sweep.
19. Across the school, teachers' personal knowledge, interest and enthusiasm together with their increasingly high expectations are challenging pupils well and are helping them to develop their skills across a range of subjects. The drive for higher levels of achievement and attainment is an important part of every lesson. In the best lessons, although teachers require pupils to complete a great deal of work, learning remains fun. The teachers' control, organisation and management of pupils are good. Teachers' expectations are getting higher. Work is challenging and, because of the consistently interesting and effective teaching that they enjoy, most pupils are already on course to maintain the above average standards of attainment gained in 2002, across the curriculum. Pupils of all ages and attainment levels benefit from reflecting on the purpose lessons and, when used best, the end of lesson review session helps them to evaluate what they have learned and how to use this new knowledge in other lessons. Subject co-ordinators do not as yet observe other teachers' lessons sufficiently. Skills and good practice in some classes are not therefore always shared fully with other teachers across the school. Further monitoring by subject leaders is needed, to ensure that the review of learning at the end of lessons is used effectively in all lessons.
20. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special need, make good progress overall with their learning in all areas of the curriculum. These pupils are identified in the first year of school and appropriate action is taken. Pupils' needs and personal targets are well known to teachers and any potential difficulties posed by lesson content or materials are foreseen. Plans are then adjusted



so that these pupils are fully included in all learning tasks. Teachers provide good support for pupils with special educational needs in all classes and they have adopted successful strategies. A range of methods and techniques is employed. Individual education plans are well prepared with the help of the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO). Targets and achievements are shared with pupils and their parents. Pupils usually work with their friends in the mainstream class, supported very well by trained classroom assistants. Pupils' learning is promoted well. Support staff enable the identified pupils to share in class discussions and to record their work. There are practical teaching aids available that promote independent learning. A specialist teacher from the Lancashire Inclusion Support Service visits school each week.

21. Homework is used satisfactorily to support learning. It is designed to enable pupils to revise or consolidate learning and following its completion is used to good effect in subsequent lessons.
22. The marking policy is clear and the majority of marking is good but is not always used consistently. In the best instances the teacher's written commentary indicates where and why a pupil's work has been particularly successful and there are constructive comments that indicate how work might be improved. In other books this helpful commentary is not a regular feature of marking and then the marked work is much less use in the process of assessment and evaluation and does not provide a prompt for pupils as to how work should be developed. Where teachers mark work alongside individuals, offering oral advice and encouragement, this is seen too to be a useful way of sharing practical ways forward with pupils.

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

### **Strengths in Curricular Provision:**

- *the quality and range of learning opportunities;*
  - *the breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum and ensuring all pupils are included;*
  - *effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy;*
  - *provision for extra-curricular activities, particularly sporting opportunities, French and music.*
23. The school provides a good quality and interesting curriculum, which is broad and balanced. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with personal, health and social education. The provision for religious education fully complies with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and all subjects have an appropriate time allocation. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The quality and range of the curriculum is good and has improved since the previous inspection.
  24. Children in the Reception class (the Foundation Stage) work towards the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals. The learning opportunities provided for these children are stimulating, interesting and of good quality. Children are motivated effectively and so they learn well.
  25. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They have equal access to all areas of the curriculum including extra-curricular activities. Support staff work very closely with teachers to plan and deliver an appropriate curriculum for pupils who experience difficulties including those with statements of special

educational need. The support is usually provided within the classroom. In lessons, classroom assistants clarify teaching points and questions asked by the teacher so that pupils fully understand the work being introduced and what they are expected to do. The additional support encourages those pupils who find learning more difficult to join fully in class discussion. As a result they gain in confidence and self-esteem. This support is most evident in literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers know their pupils very well and this is reflected in well-structured lesson planning in all subject areas. The work is carefully matched to pupils' earlier attainment so that they are supported but challenged at an appropriate level and so make secure progress.

26. The revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs has been adopted. All of the pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans and the targets set out in these have recently been revised. There are facilities for physically disabled pupils who attend school on a part time basis to follow a social integration programme.
27. Planning is at least good and there are instances of very good planning. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented successfully. The framework of these strategies has been adopted in other areas of the curriculum and has improved the structure of all subjects. Advice from the local education authority and recent national guidance has enabled the school to develop plans to ensure that there is continuity in learning and progress within and across the mixed age classes. Since the previous inspection all of the subject policies have been reviewed successfully. The teachers have now identified some of these policies as needing further review. These plans provide clear guidance and practical support for teachers. The very careful planning identifies what pupils of different abilities are expected to learn, understand and do in lessons. The targets set out on the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are also taken into account so that tasks are well chosen to meet their particular needs.
28. Information and communication technology is included in all planning making clear when it can be used to enhance learning. Planning ensures pupils have good opportunities to practise skills learned in one subject to support learning in another. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use the skills taught in literacy very well, for example in history, when they write their opinions about past and present forms of local transport. Their research and writing was particularly informative about the contribution of the railway to the development of rural communities.
29. Extra-curricular provision is extensive. There are many clubs and activities that take place after school and these are led by the small but dedicated team of teachers. The clubs and activities are mainly available to older pupils but there are plans to involve the younger pupils more fully. The school is also involved with extra-curricular activities within the local community and is well supported by two of the local professional football teams. Blackburn Rovers extend their support beyond football training to offer other facilities such as for information and communication technology. Particular strengths are French and music. Work in conversational French is planned according to well-established guidelines. There are short sessions of French language tuition, which take place frequently during the week within the school day. Pupils of all ages are given the opportunity to develop their conversational speaking skills in an interesting and enjoyable way. During these lessons pupils are questioned at ever increasing speed to respond quickly and accurately, often in a play situation, for example 'Jacques Dit,' conducted entirely in French. There are many opportunities for musical tuition and about one quarter of the pupils play regularly in the school orchestra. The school orchestra is involved in musical productions during the year,

particularly at Christmas. The choir visits local care homes for the elderly to entertain them with music and singing.

30. There are numerous other clubs, such as football, rugby, kwik-cricket, basketball, tennis, skittleball, running and athletics. Talented pupils are very well cared for; for example particularly good swimmers are coached at the local swimming club. Talented musicians benefit from specialist tuition although this extra help has to be funded privately. Older pupils are taken on an annual residential visit to enable them to experience more adventurous activities, which would not normally be available to them. This experience further develops their personal, social and health education. Pupils also enjoy visits to places of interest as part of their studies in history. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have visited the Manchester Science Museum and have benefited from visiting an art exhibition at Turton Tower. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited a large local supermarket as part of their studies. They looked at how food is stored and how the store uses information and communication technology for stock control and pricing food using bar codes. The school includes all pupils in the activities it offers. Girls and boys have equal access to the full curriculum.
31. The school works closely with other neighbouring primary schools for support, development and training. There are regular meetings between subject co-ordinators to share experiences and develop their skills and expertise for the benefit of all pupils. There is regular contact with the two high schools that receive pupils from this school. There are opportunities for social contact with the high school through regular quiz nights and five-a-side football competitions.

### **Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

#### **Strengths:**

- *the provision for personal education is good;*
  - *provision for spiritual development is satisfactory;*
  - *provision for moral development is very good;*
  - *provision for social development is very good;*
  - *provision for cultural development is good.*
32. The provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. As at the time of the previous inspection this provision is well established and remains a positive feature of the school, which is at the heart of the local community. At Harvest time pupils collect food to distribute to the elderly within the community. Pupils are involved in the Eco-schools award that encourages them to be involved with initiatives and issues that may affect the community; for example, creating play facilities or providing bird tables and boxes. The pupils are elected to form a committee that meets regularly to discuss current issues and plan appropriate action. It informs the community by regular newsletters and press releases. There are many occasions when the pupils and community come together for social activities. Pupils take part in extended walks after school in the summer and look for ways of keeping the locality litter free and pleasant to share with others. They also take part in local festivals; for example, the fancy dress competition at the local Brinscall Festival. They also join with the Wheelton Family Fun Orchestra, in a nearby village, which is for all the family and takes place each week during the summer.
33. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. This provision has helped to promote positive attitudes and good behaviour. Teachers have worked hard to develop pupils' self esteem. The 'buddy system' whereby younger pupils are

supported by older pupils makes a significant contribution to the high standards of behaviour and to the care shown to one another. The school takes part in the Lancashire Healthy Schools Programme. The school nurse makes a valuable contribution to this work. There is a policy and planned programme of work for teaching about sex education and drugs awareness that the school has listed as a priority for revision in the coming year.

34. The good provision for pupils' personal development makes a very positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development through assemblies and the day-to-day life of the school. In assembly there are opportunities to reflect on prayers and readings. Older pupils discussed the value of a cup of tea and made comparison with the wages paid to a plantation worker. This was followed by a period of reflection about people who are less fortunate than pupils at the school. In one class assembly, pupils studied a photograph of a child who looked afraid and unhappy. They followed this with a sensitive discussion about sadness, fear and despair. Although opportunities for spiritual development were part of some lessons, there were missed opportunities in others when more time could have been taken to enable reflection and consideration of feelings. These omissions were because moments arrived in lessons that were not fully exploited because they had not been an intentional part of the planning.
35. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are expected to show great care and respect for one another. All staff set out what they mean by good behaviour and pupils have a clear understanding of the rewards and sanctions procedures. As a result, behaviour is predominantly good and is sometimes very good. Pupils know right from wrong and are set a very good example by all staff. Pupils from the Foundation Stage on are encouraged to discuss what is right or wrong. Staff then help them to understand that persuasion by others, to take part in wrongdoing, might be difficult to resist. The expectation that pupils and staff will respect the beliefs of others is an important part of what is Abbey Village School.
36. The provision made for pupils' social development is very good. There are many rich and varied opportunities for pupils to share in a wide social life centred on the school. Social values are promoted well by adults throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to care for and take responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils often work in small groups or pairs in class. For example, pupils in a music lesson in Years 5 and 6 were required to work in small groups to compose a score using rhythm and melody by clapping and using percussion instruments. Pupils regularly work harmoniously in small groups as when using the computers. They have no problems sharing and taking turns. Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibilities within the classroom or to help distribute or collect resources. Pupils in Year 6 are encouraged to organise and run a 'toast club'. Here, other pupils may purchase a round of toast at morning break. The 'Tuck Shop' committee, that is a small committee of pupils, reviews requests from other groups and decides how the funds will be spent to benefit the school. The teachers expect these pupils to organise themselves and to provide evidence as to how the proceeds of the enterprise are managed. The wide range of extra-curricular activities provides good opportunities for pupils to work and play together. There are other contributions from visitors, including local clergy, members of the professional football clubs, officers from the fire service and members of the community who share their skills and expertise with pupils. The total inclusion of pupils with statements of special needs, and those visiting from a special school, supports the pupils' social development very well. This strong policy promotes very positive attitudes to people with special needs.

The pupils are encouraged to initiate support for a range of charities.

37. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. It is strong in supporting local customs and traditions. Parents state that they are pleased at the increased awareness of other cultural issues. These are developed through music, art and world events. Pupils have a growing awareness of cultural diversity through studies in history and geography. The provision to promote a greater awareness of multi-cultural and multi-faith issues is improving and the school intends to develop this element of its provision further. The teaching of French makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development. The swift interaction that takes place during these times of learning is a model of how to involve pupils totally in a French experience. In school pupils have opportunities to encounter and understand the traditions and values from different cultures in poetry, literature, music, art, history and geography. In religious education, pupils learn about other faiths such as Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.
38. The school shared in the 'Spirit of Friendship' project with specialists from the South Lancashire Arts Partnership. This was linked to the recent Commonwealth Games and was supported by teachers from many schools. Pupils were involved in a drumming festival with specialists and artists from Ghana and other African countries. With other children they created flags and banners from all seventy-two of the participating nations using silk painting techniques. They took part in performances played to other schools and visitors from all over the north west of England.

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

### **Strengths:**

- *the promotion of good behaviour;*
- *the personal development of pupils;*
- *the provision of ramps and facilities for pupils with physical disabilities.*

### **Areas for development:**

- *the formal training of new mid-day supervisors in child protection procedures.*

39. There are clear policies, and very good procedures, in place for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development. A satisfactory system for child protection is in place and all of the teachers and classroom support staff are aware of the procedures to be followed in this area of childcare. The headteacher recognises that there is a need to provide formal training for a small group of newly appointed mid-day supervisors. There is one designated first-aider on the school staff, and several other members of staff have received first aid training.
40. Staff members individually show a commitment to the welfare of the pupils in their charge. This is evident in the way in which pupils are dealt with both in the classroom and at break or lunchtimes. On occasions during the inspection when a pupil was seen to be unwell or upset, the staff dealt with instances speedily and sensitively. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' personal development, and these are well implemented.
41. There is a straightforward behaviour policy in place; the successful implementation of this policy is exemplified by the good behaviour of the pupils both in lessons and around the school during break and dinner times. Bullying or other forms of harassment are very rare and are never tolerated. Parents state that they know that any reported incidents will be dealt with effectively by the headteacher. The ethos of the school promotes good attendance, and the school provides a wide range of

activities beyond the national curriculum. As a result of this the attendance rate is well above the national average. Registration is carried out quickly and accurately at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions.

42. Through the Health and Safety Committee, the governors are made aware of any issues affecting the welfare of the pupils and staff. The headteacher keeps a record of any health and safety matters reported to him to ensure that action is planned and taken. The age and nature of the building creates more than the average number of problems for accommodating pupils and adults with physical disabilities. As the need has arisen the school has made good efforts to bring the levels of access up to the required standards including the provision of ramps and upgrading toilet facilities.
43. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by their teachers and support staff. They benefit from working alongside their peers. There are regular times for the review of pupils' individual education plans. Pupils' views are taken into consideration when targets are set. The requirements of the statements of special educational need provision are being fully met. The school benefits from the support of the school nurse as well as a range of specialists from other agencies including the Local Education Authority.

**Strengths in assessment procedures:**

- *good analysis of children's attainment on entry;*
  - *the analysis and use of the results of statutory and voluntary tests is very good;*
  - *the assessment of progress and learning in other subjects is good;*
  - *the identification of special educational needs and the ways of supporting these pupils are good.*
44. The school has improved its assessment procedures, which were identified as an area of weakness in 1998, and has developed effective, practical and detailed strategies for monitoring the academic performance of pupils, using statutory and voluntary test results. Trends in test results are analysed year-on-year, and good use is made of the information in the setting of individual and school targets and to identify areas for improvement. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 know what they need to do to reach or exceed the expected standards. The system devised, organised and managed by the previous headteacher, involves individual and group predictions for attainment being made and regular checks, each half-term, to track individual progress towards the intended targets. Achievements and attainments are recorded and dated. This data presents a very thorough picture of each pupil's successes or problems that are easy to follow. This ongoing record of attainment makes very good sense because it is difficult to compare the results of the smaller than average year groups in this school with data from national results about average size schools.
  45. The school's assessment policy is clear and helpful. Teachers use brief assessment procedures after lessons each day in order to ensure a good match of work and to help in the revision of short-term lesson planning. Pupils are rewarded in a range of ways for outstanding effort, good work or progress. Pupils delight in being awarded certificates and stickers and being mentioned in the celebration assemblies each week for their efforts in writing, mathematics and for behaving responsibly or meeting challenges with effort and good humour.
  46. Collected work is used very well in subjects that are not tested formally in order to assess levels of attainment, learning and progress. This is done very well and is particularly effective in planning for continuous progress when numbers are such that the nature of classes changes each year. Teachers meet with marked samples and

make clear decisions as to the standard and quality of the pieces of work being moderated. The shared highly structured review of this work in the foundation subjects, information and communication technology and religious education prevents sections of work being missed or repeated as the class groupings change. In the mixed Reception and Year 1 class, the teacher uses a well-established assessment system to help the staff to plan individual and group work so that all children are helped to work towards the recommended Early Learning Goals. This process enables teachers to check the progress of children from entry onwards and to measure the learning and development that has taken place.

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

### **Strengths:**

- *parents have very positive views of the school;*
- *there are good and effective links with parents;*
- *communication with parents is good.*

### **Areas for development:**

- *whilst meeting all of the legal requirements, the pupils' annual progress reports for parents are too bland and need to be reviewed.*

47. At the pre-inspection meeting and in the replies to the questionnaire, parents showed a very positive attitude towards the school. Parents appreciate its open door policy. They feel that they can approach the headteacher or any of the staff with their questions or concerns, and that they will be listened to. Parents say that any shortcomings are more than outweighed by the standards and friendly atmosphere that is promoted by the staff. As a result of its very positive ethos, many parents travel considerable distances to bring their children to Abbey Village.
48. Parental help in the classroom makes a good contribution to the work of the school. The headteacher believes that there is scope for furthering this form of partnership with the parents. There is a home/school agreement in place. The range of homework set consists of reading at home and learning new words, practising multiplication tables and learning number bonds as well as research using family members, the library and, increasingly, the Internet. Sometimes there are written exercises to support and extend work undertaken in lessons. Parents say that they check what work has been set using e-mail between families when their children profess to have no homework. Most parents support their children well and use these opportunities to good effect to develop their child's reading and number skills. Parents would welcome clarification as to what work is to be set each week. One parent suggested that the school might post it on the web-site.
49. The Parent Teacher Association provides much practical support for the school through fund raising. Social events are held very regularly and these help to strengthen relationships between the school, parents and the wider community. The independently operated, 'after school club', works closely with the school to provide a useful child care service for working parents.
50. Parents are kept very well informed of events in school and the local community through weekly newsletters. Letters from the headteacher supplement these about specific issues when appropriate. The headteacher is aware of the importance of good communication between the school and parents. There is a well-produced and very informative school prospectus that is kept under annual review. The governors' annual report to parents is interesting, easy to follow and provides all of the required

statutory information. The above average number of parents who attend the annual meeting of parents and governors indicates the degree of interest which parents take in the life of the school.

51. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed and involved in the progress of their children. They are invited to attend meetings when the targets are set in the individual education plans for those pupils who are at the "school action" stage of the Code of Practice. Parents participate in review meetings to discuss the needs and progress of their child. When statements are reviewed parents and pupils are expected to take part.
52. Parents value the regular opportunities provided to discuss with teachers their children's behaviour, work and progress. Some do this informally on a more regular basis and others are pleased that staff are very approachable and will speak to them on the telephone should they have any concerns. The annual written pupil progress reports are very bland, though they provide all of the required information and follow a pattern found in many schools. Except in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the format does not make it easy for parents to track exactly what their child can and cannot do. Detailed personal comments within the overall summary are greatly appreciated but these are not always directly related to specific subjects. The school is aware of parents concerns about the style of previous reports and is currently reviewing the format. The revised draft shows that they will be more useful to parents and contain more personal and individual information in the future.

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

### **Leadership strengths:**

- *the previous headteacher and the new headteacher, with the chair of governors, have shared a clear vision for the future development of the school;*
- *with the present and the previous headteacher, the governing body is proving to be very effective in its leadership role.*

### **Weaknesses in leadership:**

- *regular opportunities for subject co-ordinators to work alongside colleagues in the classroom in all subjects to develop the leadership of subjects as shown in the school development plan are being missed;*
- *there are not sufficient opportunities for subject leaders to plan and manage spending, within designated budgets, for their subject areas, as set out in the school development plan for the next financial year.*

### **Management strengths:**

- *the school has effective strategies in place to evaluate strengths and weaknesses;*
- *literacy, science and mathematics are managed well;*
- *the plans for strategic management and shorter term development are clear and are well-structured;*
- *the budget is managed effectively and governors are showing skill and sensitivity when evaluating best value as part of their decision making;*
- *the teaching and support staff are suitably qualified and experienced;*
- *the management and use of assessment systems is clear, practical and is now useful and effective.*

53. Since the last inspection the headteacher and the governing body have worked hard together and have devised and implemented a range of useful strategies designed to



improve their shared management of the school. These have resulted in a good improvement in the overall pattern of leadership and in the management structure of the school.

54. The former headteacher and the new headteacher, who took up his post at the start of the present term, together with the teachers and the chair of the governing body, have a clear purpose and a shared vision for the future development of the school. The purposeful leadership of the previous headteacher has enabled the school to remedy most of the areas of weakness identified during the last inspection. The governors have continued to work with the new headteacher, in a systematic way in planning for the long-term future. This involves undertaking a critical review of the changes that have already been put in place as well as working to improve the few areas of remaining weakness. They have a shared understanding of the strengths of the school and governors are providing effective guidance where action is still required. The overall good standards attained by pupils of all ages and prior attainment in 2002 are evidence of their commitment to working towards high standards.
55. The governors' committee structure works well and, with the headteacher, provides a positive educational direction for the school. The school development plan and the longer-term strategic management plan, drawn up in consultation with staff, are now useful documents that list priorities, track improvements and identify areas for future development. Together they present a clearly defined programme for sustained improvement. The newly introduced style of planning used by the present headteacher includes regular review dates to enable the monitoring of progress towards established success criteria. There is now built-in provision for evaluating steps towards completion, and opportunities to plan the next step forward. The governing body provides informed support and is meeting its statutory requirements well.
56. The governors are alert to the strengths and weaknesses of the school and understand the issues concerning target setting and their individual and collective responsibilities in these aspects. There are named governors who play active roles in supporting pupils with special educational needs and monitor provision for literacy and numeracy. These governors have attended appropriate training.
57. Arrangements for financial management and control are good. The school's administrator and the headteacher work well with the budget officer from the local authority to ensure that the budget is tightly controlled so that the requirements of the governing body are met. The finance committee's experience and expertise ensure that the school seeks to secure the best value that it can in its use of learning resources, the accommodation and personnel. The chair of the finance committee and members of that committee are particularly well-informed and fully understand the financial implications of school management. They have a clear understanding of the principles of 'best value'. An example of this is their commitment to maintaining staffing levels and providing skilled staff for booster classes, with the intention of raising standards at the end of Year 6 in 2002. This proved to be successful and money has been allocated to repeat this strategy in the present academic year. The recommendations of the most recent internal financial audit have all been implemented successfully. The use of unofficial funds is recorded meticulously and the accounts are audited annually.
58. The quality of plans for intended work, including detailed curriculum planning, has been addressed successfully and has been improved since the previous inspection.

The headteacher and the subject leaders have accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and have used their findings to guide the organisation of subjects that are tested and of those that are evaluated and assessed in school. This improvement is reflected in the use made of their analysis of pupils' work and the resultant changes in planning and teaching. Teachers manage their areas of responsibility well and offer informal support for colleagues willingly. The leadership of subjects by teachers is still underdeveloped and too much of this leadership role is left to the headteacher. The opportunity for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning has been very limited and this means that the skills demonstrated in the classroom by one teacher are not shared by others. In this way some expertise is lost to pupils in other classes. Skilled and accomplished subject leaders need to make more use of the time allocated for this work in the school development plan in which to work alongside colleagues in other classes. This would enable them to share their considerable expertise and to promote their individual specialist subjects. Co-ordinators need to be more positive in handling the budget for their own subjects, promoting and leading initiatives, and devising ways of raising the attainment levels in all subjects to those of the best.

59. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. He monitors planning and observes practice in the classrooms to ensure that the needs of pupils are being met. The policy guidelines are followed carefully and all of the recommendations of the new Code of Practice are being implemented. Liaison between the school and external agencies is good. The provision outlined in pupils' statements of special educational need is met through the targets set out in individual educational plans. There is effective organisation and implementation of the identification, support and monitoring procedures. The small amount of time that pupils are taught outside the classroom is used very effectively. The governing body is kept very well informed. All pupils with special educational need are fully included in the life of the school. The school benefits from the management of a dedicated team of classroom assistants who provide very good support. The Governor with responsibility for special educational needs visits school regularly and through the governing body ensures that all funds allocated for special educational needs, including additional funding from within the school budget, are spent as specified. For anyone with physical difficulties, there is access to the school via mobile ramps.
60. The procedures for and management of assessment were led by the former headteacher until her retirement at the end of the summer term. Assessment information has been used very effectively to set targets aimed at improving future performance for groups and individuals. The methods used to track progress towards these targets have been thorough and have resulted in a complete picture of where individuals have gained success and where they have needed additional help. The targets agreed for pupils' performance in the statutory tests in the current year are challenging and exceed those expected nationally. Nevertheless, teachers and pupils alike consider them to be achievable. The action plans for the academic years 2003 to 2006 are relevant to the pupils' needs, especially in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology but these are to be reviewed by the new headteacher with the relevant governor committees.
61. Space is at a premium and the school is seeking to find a way to improve its use. They want to enhance provision for the Foundation Stage and to create a more useful and pleasant place to site the library, so as to increase opportunities for pupils to engage in private study. The school library is situated on a raised platform that is part of a communal area that is also used as the staff room. Access to the school library

is difficult and this creates problems for pupils, to use the library for independent research. The very restricted facilities make it difficult for pupils to use the library as a natural source of information. The limitations for the curriculum caused by the long distance away from the school of the playing fields and the cramped conditions in the temporary classroom are prevented from harming pupils' progress only by the imagination and total commitment of the staff. Pupils undertake personal research well because the grouping of computers and the regular and practical use of a bank of networked 'lap-tops' enables easy access during most lessons. The apparent surplus in the money carried over from last year looks to be excessive. In fact most has already been committed to pay the school's share of enhancing the play facilities and to ensure that money for teachers' salaries is available in a year when the intake has been small, as well as for listed training and development programmes. A very small amount has been set aside to enable the new headteacher to promote initiatives that will help him to set his seal on the school.

62. The commitment and clear-sightedness of the former headteacher and chair of governors, who have worked very closely together, has meant that the school has made good progress since the last inspection. The new headteacher has already had a very strong influence on the thinking and planning of the governing body and, together, they are well set for continued progress. Very secure systems for moving the school forward have been set out. There is strong evidence of good and very good teaching so that standards are improving. There are very good attitudes to work and learning and the relationships between all the people involved in the school are very positive. Taking these factors into consideration with the good behaviour of pupils set against the slightly above average financial resources that are normal for such a small school, the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to raise standards and to make further improvements the headteacher, governors and staff should:
- (i) increase the leadership role of the teachers with responsibilities for subjects to include:
    - (a) working with, and observing colleagues in the classrooms, in order to share skills and expertise, as set out in the school development plan;
    - (b) planning the budget expenditure for subjects, so as to promote initiatives, using the money allocated under subject headings by the governors;

*Paragraphs: 19, 58, 89, 106, 112, 125*

- (ii) liaise with all possible agencies to improve the quality of the accommodation, in particular:
  - (a) to provide enhanced, secure outdoor play facilities for children in the Foundation Stage so that their physical development can be extended;
  - (b) provide sporting facilities nearer to the school than the existing field to minimise the loss of teaching and learning time and to increase sporting opportunities for pupils across the school as identified in the school development plan;
  - (c) undertake a full review of the use of the accommodation in order to enhance the scope of work for pupils in the temporary classroom and to increase the provision for private study and personal research by looking to find ways of relocating the library.

*Paragraphs: 61, 71, 81, 129*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

37

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

12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	25	4	0	0	0
Percentage	3	19	68	11	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	96
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

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

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.9
National comparative data	93.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	10	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	9
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	17	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (93)	84(100)	100(100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	8
	Girls	10	9	8
	Total	17	18	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (87)	84 (100)	84 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	7	8	8
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (87)	100 (67)	100 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	7	8	8
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (80)	100 (80)	100 (80)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	92	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2
Average class size	24

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

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	98

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	307,926
Total expenditure	307,976
Expenditure per pupil	2,990
Balance brought forward from previous year	49,774
Balance carried forward to next year	49,724

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	96
Number of questionnaires returned	64

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	28	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	28	5	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	58	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	47	11	2	2
The teaching is good.	55	39	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	39	16	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	14	9	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	34	11	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	50	36	0	5	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	2	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	33	3	0	5

## **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**

64. There has been good improvement in the overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. There is no nursery and children join the Foundation Stage in the reception class in the September of the year in which they will be five. This year the number of new entrants is low and they have joined a mixed age class with some of the younger Year 1 pupils. Some of the children have attended the local playgroup that meets in the school. Others have been to other nurseries and playgroups. The assessment procedures undertaken in the autumn term, soon after entry to the school, indicate that overall attainment on entry is close to that found for most children nationally. The school follows a programme of work that covers the six areas of learning leading to the officially recommended early learning goals. As children achieve the expected levels for pupils at the age of five, teachers begin to introduce elements of the National Curriculum into the work planned for the class in a gradual way as individuals and groups are identified. This is easily accomplished in the mixed class but good provision is made to ensure that formal work is not introduced too early.

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

65. Evidence from looking at pupils in Year 1 indicates that attainment in personal, social and emotional development for the majority of children is above average by the age of five, with the children mixing and socialising well. On entry, most of the children have already had some experiences in a local playgroup and are able to work together. They share resources and are beginning to learn and understand the need to take turns and listen to each other. Children were observed working together well. They behave well when working and playing, and most are able to concentrate and persevere with their learning during activity sessions. Lessons in personal, social and emotional education enabled pupils to learn about waiting for others to finish speaking and listening to their views. The teacher and nursery nurse create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels they are special. There are high expectations of behaviour and the children are eager to please.

#### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

66. The children's attainment in this area is about average on entry and for most it is above by the age of five. They become increasingly confident, and respond well to the teacher's and nursery nurse's questions. In lessons they are encouraged to develop their vocabulary and listen carefully. The children enjoy books and take pleasure handling them and talking about the pictures. They take great care of them. The youngest children are able to talk about the book they are reading, and the most confident predict what might happen. The children are beginning to recognise initial phonic sounds and a few key words. Most can talk about their books and retell their favourite stories. Many of the children can write their name and a few are beginning to write and spell some known words correctly. As evidenced by the scrutiny of the work of pupils in Year 1, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are able to write short sentences with an acceptable level of accuracy. The writing of most children is well formed and legible but one or two still have difficulty forming letters and tend to scribble. Children have joined with the Year 1 pupils to create their own story of 'The kind giant'.

## **Mathematical development**

67. As seen in the retained books and folders and the observed work of pupils who have just started Year 1, by the age of five the children's attainment in this area of the curriculum is as expected and their progress has been good. Children recognise numbers to five and can sequence them correctly. They are also able to understand 'more' or 'less than' when counting to 10. They accurately name two-dimensional shapes such as 'circle', 'square', 'rectangle' and 'triangle'. These shapes are used successfully to create interesting pictures. Work scrutiny of last year's under fives shows that by the end of the year a few children are able to count in pairs and perform simple addition and subtraction sums up to 10. They have experience of using appropriate vocabulary such as 'taller', 'shorter', 'lighter', and 'heavier'. They support this work using the computer. The children enjoy working and playing together and readily join in the class sessions. They share resources and like to help each other. They are interested in talking about their work and make good progress. During the inspection children showed how they count in ones and twos and demonstrated some of the number rhymes that they know. These involve counting games and that practise how to count backwards from five or ten.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

68. The children's attainment at the age of five in this area is average. They understand about which objects will float and which will sink, gaining scientific knowledge through water play. They know that wet sand will build and dry sand is good for pouring. Displays on the walls illustrate the fact that the children have been working to develop their knowledge of their senses. Printing and text demonstrate the work they have done to experiment with tastes and textures. The language developed from these activities is prompted and supported by skilled intervention of the nursery nurse. The range of activities available for the children gives them good opportunities to learn. They are interested in the activities that are prepared for them. Their imaginative play links experiences in counting and literacy very well as they act out their made up story of 'The kind giant' and enjoy playing role play games inside the giant's castle. They have been on a walk around the village and have collected a range of stones and building materials that reflect the old and new houses around the school. Children are developing ideas about times past and know that their school is very old, and that it was where their parents, grandparents and some of their great grandparents came when they were children. Children enjoy using the computer in the classroom to paint and to label their work as well as for games involving colours, words, shapes and numbers.

## **Physical Development**

69. The children's attainment in this area is in line with that found in most classes for children at the end of the Foundation Stage. They are able to use scissors and cut carefully around shapes. Most hold a pencil correctly and are beginning to have good control. Most of the children are able to write their own name with a high level of accuracy but a few still have difficulty even when copying. In play in the school hall and in the playground, they are able to run around with care and find spaces without bumping into each other. When joining in a movement lesson in the hall, children follow the music and work well alone as individuals dancing to their own imaginative thoughts and as a group following the teacher's directions. The outdoor activities using tricycles and trucks as well as climbing blocks enables them to experience jumping, peddling and running. Although the infant playground is available to them there is no secure designated playing space outside. This lack of provision means

that teachers have to plan their activities around other people's use of the available space, which they do well, rather than by making full provision for the day-to-day needs of the children. The opportunities for climbing are limited to the use of the school hall, which is also used by the other classes and the privately organised pre-school playgroup.

### **Creative Development**

70. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children's attainment in this area is average. They rise to the challenge of making puppets on sticks in a creative session, and particularly enjoy demonstrating how they work during a drama session and in much of their language work. They readily use shapes to make pictures and have helped to make the giant's castle using empty tubes and cartons. Children play to a beat using percussion instruments; some made by themselves and know when to join in as part of a band. The children enjoy the creative activities and are totally enthralled when working in the play areas using dough or working at the paint easel. They are enthusiastic about music and singing and already know a range of nursery rhymes, which they say and sing well. They are exposed to music making all around the school and derive great pleasure from live music played by their friends and from recorded music in the listening area.
71. Since the previous inspection the official requirements and recommendations for outdoor facilities have been revised. The school has access to outdoor play areas and a garden area but these do not meet current recommendations. The school recognises that as the intended review of the school's accommodation is undertaken the provision of a specifically designated area must be made. Children use the computer as a natural part of each day's activities although some still need help to select from the available programs. Printing their completed work has been a quickly learned process for most of this small group. The ease with which pupils in Year 1 manage their learning using the computer indicates that the work in the Foundation Stage is very well matched to children's needs.

### **The quality of teaching**

72. Teaching is good across the six areas of learning because of the teacher's careful planning and her greatly increased understanding of the revised curriculum and the needs of young children and how they learn. Teaching to promote children's personal development is very good. The work planned is organised effectively and the staff arrange a practical range of opportunities for children to extend their experiences and develop ways of learning through play. This helps children to build effective relationships with one another and with the other pupils who work on other activities in the same classroom. The quality of teaching is also good in mathematics and English, where well-planned lessons show a clear understanding of the early learning goals. The activities planned to support the selected topics ensures that the children have good experiences and develop their understanding of the world around them. There is a suitable selection of activities provided to enable children to develop aspects of their creative development that match their needs and abilities. Throughout the day the range of available learning opportunities is varied and children are able to choose between paints, construction toys, dough and other media and to enjoy music of all types. In physical activities, the staff use good movements and shapes demonstrated by some children to show others how they might improve their own performance. Pupils with special educational needs who are taught alongside their classmates make equally good progress.

## ENGLISH

73. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6, the school's performance was well above the expected level. All but one pupil attained the expected level (Level 4), with more than half of the group attaining the higher level (Level 5). The groups attainment placed the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Over the previous five years results for pupils in Year 2 in National Curriculum tests for reading and writing fluctuated. The results achieved by pupils in Year 2 in 2002 were well above national expectations in reading and in line with national averages in writing.
74. At the time of the previous inspection, the judgement was that pupils at the end of Year 2 made good progress and their attainments in reading and writing were above national expectations. By the end of Year 6, pupils made satisfactory progress and obtained results in the statutory National Curriculum tests that were close to the national average. There is only a limited amount of pupils' work available for scrutiny and analysis at this stage in the autumn term. Inspection evidence and the results of the voluntary tests taken in Year 5, indicate that the pupils now in Year 6 are on course to attain at a level above national expectations. Progress at this stage of the term is good. Except that in some years the balance of girls and boys is very uneven, there are no significant difference in the work and attainment levels of girls and boys. The standards and interest in learning are well promoted because:
- *teachers make effective use of the National Literacy Strategy to plan and structure lessons;*
  - *assessment is used well to inform future planning and to ensure that tasks are well matched to the prior attainment of all pupils;*
  - *there is effective use of questioning to establish pupils' understanding;*
  - *teachers make it clear that only well presented work is acceptable.*

### Areas for development

- *only the best marking really informs pupils how they should improve their work;*
  - *review sessions at the end of some lessons are rushed.*
75. All pupils including those with special educational needs learn well and make good progress. Individual educational plans and targets support pupils who have special educational needs. The teachers and the skilled support staff support these pupils very well. Staff from the local support service make regular visits to assist with assessment and to offer advice. Nearly all the pupils in this group make good progress and attain levels in national tests similar to their peers by the end of Year 6. The team of teachers and classroom assistants work closely together to provide good learning opportunities for those experiencing difficulties. Teachers and support staff work closely to plan work to match the abilities and needs of all pupils.
76. Across the school standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to explain their thoughts and their work to the class. At the school productions, pupils speak to wider audiences with good diction and a strong sense of projection and performance. Pupils learn to listen carefully to their teachers and to one another. They respect each other's opinions and older pupils can sustain reasoned and mature debate. In other subjects teachers use the chances that arise for pupils to extend their skills in speaking, for example, in music, pupils were asked to describe the 'tempo' of the tune and in history they expressed their opinions about life 'then and now'.
77. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading as shown by the most recent test

results are well above those expected for pupils at the same age. The standards seen during the inspection show that most pupils in Year 2 have already achieved above average standards in reading. Most are able to read accurately, fluently and with understanding. Pupils show a great interest in books and read with good expression. Those pupils who still experience some problems reading more difficult or unfamiliar words are able to use their reading skills well. They make good use of their understanding of the context of the story and of picture clues. They use their knowledge of the sounds of letters to build words to help them to understand the text. Younger pupils, in Year 1 are eager to read. Reading is taught with the whole class or in smaller groups. Pupils enjoy sharing 'big books'. They read with obvious pleasure. They seek clues from the illustrations or meaning of the story to help them understand unfamiliar words. Their understanding of the sequence of a story is regularly reinforced through drama. Puppets are used to enact the characters. Pupils understand what is meant by the title of the book, explain who the author is and talk about their favourite stories. They understand the story of 'Hansel and Gretel' and can identify it as 'fiction'. Most pupils recognise and can explain that a fairy story usually begins and ends with a conventional phrase such as 'Once upon a time' Or 'Long, long ago.' When reading poetry they gleefully identify words that rhyme, for example, 'snail and rail'. Information and communication technology is used very well to support the teaching and learning of reading. Younger pupils use a program that enables them to match 'flying' sentences with images and to identify and select the correct punctuation. Pupils use reading record books for reading both at home and in school.

78. Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Year 2 is close to the nationally expected level. Pupils are encouraged to record their own ideas from an early age and to write independently. They are provided with many opportunities to write in different forms. By the end of Year 2, pupils write clearly and legibly. They spell the words they need with a high level of accuracy. They readily use a 'word wall' or their individual spelling lists, to help. Pupils are encouraged to experiment with writing less familiar words in their 'Have a Go' books. They are beginning to recognise writing as a form of communication through simple words and phrases. Even very young pupils, who are at the very early stages of writing, understand that the marks they make have meaning. These pupils read their 'story' to the teacher. Those pupils capable of higher attainment confidently write short stories, accurately using simple punctuation. Pupils' workbooks show that they have the opportunity to write for a wide range of purposes, for example, instructions, recording events and character descriptions. Retained work and inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Year 2 is above national expectations.
79. Presentation is of a high standard and pupils write in a legible, joined handwriting style. They apply their knowledge of writing in other subjects, for example in history, where they present arguments and opinions for or against past and present forms of transport in the local community. Pupils read independently and make good use of the visiting library. They name their favourite authors, for example JK Rowling and JRR Tolkien and give reasons for their choice. They like poetry but only a few were able to name a favourite poem or poet. Pupils have a good knowledge of books and some stated that they preferred to use books for research rather than the internet as the internet provided them with too much information from which to make choices. Pupils achieve well from Year 3 onwards and overall their attainment is above national expectations. During Years 4 and 5 they build systematically on earlier achievements. Pupils experience a wide range of texts including poetry. Older pupils studying the story 'The Hammer and the Cross' identified impending problems and dilemmas. They understand the setting of the story and the characters. Their knowledge is used to form the structure for their own composition of a thrilling story. Pupils use

paragraphs and inverted commas correctly when recording dialogue.

80. The quality of teaching is at least good with examples of very good teaching in classes across the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge that enables them to teach with confidence. Lessons are well planned and a good range of strategies is used. Teachers use questioning well to challenge, interest and involve pupils. Lessons follow the pattern outlined in the National Literacy Strategy having a balance of whole class teaching, group and individual work. Pupils work very well in small groups and pairs to share their learning experiences. Teachers know their pupils very well. This enables them to challenge, stimulate and motivate pupils. They use their knowledge of the pupils' prior attainment to match the tasks to the prior attainment levels and the needs of individuals. Very good relationships within the class enable the pupils to deepen their understanding and widen their knowledge. When teaching is very good, teachers communicate their knowledge and enthusiasm in a lively manner that quickly engages the interest of the pupils. Teachers plan additional, different experiences and skilled support to enable pupils with special educational needs to practise the basic skills and to access the mainstream curriculum at a level they understand. Those pupils capable of higher attainment are challenged well and are provided with additional learning activities to extend and develop their knowledge and understanding.
81. The principles of the National Literacy Strategy are taught well throughout the school. Teachers' planning is good and reflects their understanding of the needs of pupils. Work is planned to take account of previous learning. The management of pupils is very good and this promotes good learning. Access to the school library is difficult and this creates problems for pupils, particular younger ones, to use the library for independent research. The library uses a simplified system to classify books. There is a range of good quality non-fiction texts. The limited facilities make it difficult for pupils to use the library as a natural source of information. Pupils use their class libraries or the visiting mobile library that visits school in alternate weeks to borrow fiction books to read for pleasure. In English pupils use information and communication technology very well to further their learning of basic skills and to provide opportunities for individual learning. It is also used very effectively to stimulate and motivate those pupils experiencing learning difficulties.
82. Books and other resources for teaching reading are recent and in good condition. There is a wide range of structured reading books as well as many storybooks so that pupils can practise the reading skills they have acquired. Pupils like reading and these books are readily accessible. Pupils use word banks, dictionaries and thesaurus efficiently.
83. The subject is well managed throughout the school. There is close monitoring of standards and detailed analysis of pupils' performance, but the work undertaken in classrooms by the co-ordinator to share good ideas and the expertise of the different teachers is only just being developed. The role of the subject co-ordinator is just beginning to be developed so as to improve the monitoring of teaching and learning. Further monitoring by the subject leader is needed to identify and share good teaching skills and good assessment practice. Work is always marked and in the best instances this contains a useful commentary about what it is that pupils have done that merits praise and how the next piece of work should be improved. Sometimes however, a simple tick denotes that the work has been seen but gives no clues for the improvement of performance next time. Again, regular monitoring by the subject leader should ensure that the best practice is followed across the school.

## MATHEMATICS

84. In the results of the 2002 national tests standards in Year 2 were well above those in all schools nationally and above those in schools with a similar low level of claiming free school meals. In Year 6, Standards were well above those in schools nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs attained the expected level (Level 4) and 7 pupils attained the higher level (Level 5). There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment are on course to be above expectations in comparison to those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
85. Standards are above average because:
- *the results of national and optional tests are analysed in great detail to identify and remedy any gaps in teaching and learning;*
  - *teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and how to deliver this efficiently in mixed age classes;*
  - *planning that makes good use of on-going assessment is very detailed to ensure that all pupils are provided with challenging tasks that match their prior attainment;*
  - *teachers have high expectations of what pupils should be able to achieve;*
  - *learning support assistants and teachers provide very effective support for all pupils, but particularly those who have special educational needs.*
86. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good. In Years 3 – 6 teaching is never less than satisfactory and is predominantly good. Very secure knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy underpins the good teaching. Teachers' plans are detailed and clearly identify what it is that pupils will learn. In a few lessons these objectives are not shared with the pupils. As a consequence, the use of plenary session at the end of these lessons is not sufficiently precise to review with the pupils how far they have progressed in their learning.
87. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils took part in problem solving activities associated with the addition of money. The task was adapted to meet all attainment levels. Whilst some pupils used coins to support their work those pupils capable of higher attainment readily added three or four coins up to a total 100p using their knowledge of mental arithmetic. In Year 6 pupils were questioned orally to ensure they could calculate pairs of numbers to total 100 and multiples of 50 to total 1000. In this lesson the teacher employed good strategies whereby the pupils indicated the missing number by displaying the appropriate digits using a 'number fan'. This was a fast part of the lesson where pupils responded to questions instantly. Later pupils reviewed their previous learning about the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils all completed their well-matched allotted tasks.
88. In the best lessons learning takes place at a lively pace and activities change as the lesson progresses to capture and maintain pupils' interest. Teachers' have high expectations of all pupils. In one less successful lesson, the jump between the known facts and the challenge posed by the next part of the work was too great and pupils began to flounder. In this case the work was too demanding for most of them although, because they persevered so well, and worked so quietly, their difficulties were not spotted immediately. Once additional support was provided, the work progressed well. Teachers develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding by encouraging them to explain how they arrive at an answer and asking whether anyone else has found an alternative method. All teachers use the skilled help of the learning support assistants well. The assistants work within the classroom offering support for all pupils but most are linked particularly to those with



special educational needs.

89. The school is very successful in its development of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning. It is being included in most lessons and pupils move easily between conventional activities and the more recent technology programs. They often have the support of classroom assistants to help consolidate their ICT skills and their mathematical learning. Most are now so confident that this help is rarely needed in the classes for older pupils.
90. The subject co-ordinator is the recently appointed headteacher who is continuing very well the work begun by his predecessor. He has considerable experience and already has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the attainment levels of pupils. Current practice is being reviewed and his newly developed action plan is closely linked to the school development plan. He has already monitored teaching and learning in all classes. He intends to develop this leadership role by encouraging other teachers to share their expertise so that pupils make consistently good progress across the school.

## SCIENCE

91. In the national curriculum tests in 2002 pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was well above the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Following disappointing test results in 2001 the school introduced a programme of increased investigational and experimental work. The success of this work is reflected in the most recent results when all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, attained at the expected level, and, of these, more than half attained the higher level (Level 5). For this reason teachers are extending the opportunities for pupils to pursue investigational work rather than just learning and repeating facts.
92. The school believes that this improvement is because:
- *there has been attention to detail when reviewing and analysing the results of statutory and voluntary tests and making changes in the way science is taught;*
  - *teaching is good because teachers have good knowledge and understanding and plan carefully;*
  - *all work is matched carefully to the prior attainment of pupils; this is vital in the mixed age classes;*
  - *pupils are encouraged to learn through investigation, experimentation, personal research and independent enquiry, well supported by the teaching staff.*
93. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve well as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their friends because of the good support they are given by the teachers and learning support assistants. For example, in a lesson in Year 2 pupils investigating the properties of plastic decided to investigate the relative strength of different types of flexible plastic. They pulled and twisted samples and one pupil began a structured testing approach that showed maturity beyond that expected for a child of six. He used a template to acquire samples of exactly the same size and devised ways of pulling that enabled him to extend the samples for double the length of most of his friends. The teacher accepted his reasoned explanation that to test without twisting or jerking the samples achieved a more consistent result. She then modified the lesson and changed her plans in order to support his work. The intended work was continued the following day but the entire group learned something about developing a 'fair test' that had real

meaning for them.

94. Work in files supported by discussion with pupils in Year 3 indicates that by the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding and in their investigation skills. They know the different parts of the body and identify these by drawing labelled diagrams. Through their study of healthy foods, as part of the annual health week and their involvement in green issues, they know which foods are important for the body. They are skilled in relating different materials and their properties to different uses in commercial or daily life, and how they have been used at different stages of building the village. They understand and can explain which materials are translucent, transparent or opaque.
95. By the end of Year 6, photographic evidence and work in books shows that pupils know more facts about the human body and how to keep healthy. They develop their knowledge and understanding of a fair test by investigating, for example, what happens when different liquids are kept in varied conditions and their rate of evaporation is recorded. Their collections of different kinds of rocks and building materials have led to studies about wind and water erosion. Pupils investigate different plant habitats around the school and in their lessons in the Eco-friendly garden area around the pond. They formulate hypotheses, carry out the investigation and draw conclusions based on careful detailed observation and measurement. The school uses information and communication technology well to support learning in science through the use of videos, spread sheets and CD ROMs. Pupils use stored data and present it to the class in the form of pie charts, line graphs and bar charts. They are confident when explaining their findings to other groups
96. Teaching is consistently good in all classes and was seen to be very good in two out of four lessons. Learning is dependent on the very secure knowledge and understanding of the teachers and is developed from a well-structured set of plans that set out exactly what pupils are expected to learn in each class. These plans are based on the latest national guidance and have been adapted in conjunction with a well-structured commercial scheme. Teachers collaborate sensibly to ensure that work in each year builds on that completed earlier. They use time towards the end of the lesson to assess learning and to ensure that pupils know what they have learned. This was demonstrated well in a lesson in Year 3-4 when individuals shared charts showing their results with pupils in other groups. They discussed how they would record this investigational work and add animation using the computers.
97. Lessons are well organised and well managed. In classes for younger pupils, learning support assistants are used to support the learning of all pupils including those with special educational needs. There is effective questioning that draws on pupils' previous learning and extends their thinking. Teachers motivate pupils by their own enthusiasm. Pupils' concentration as they work co-operatively in their groups has a positive effect on their learning during lessons. Pupils work together well and, because classes all contain pupils of mixed ages, teachers plan that groups are required in turn to undertake some element of independent learning. Overall, pupils have very good attitudes to science and behave well. The relationships between pupils and between pupils and all staff are very good.
98. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator who has good personal knowledge and a clear view of where the development of science should go across the school. Equipment and resources are adequate at the present time but as more of the new plans come on stream new equipment will be required. The governors have made

provision for this in the current school development plan. Test results and teachers' own assessments of attainment are carefully analysed to identify any weaknesses in pupils' learning. Subsequent planning takes account of this work. This information is used very carefully to track the progress of individual pupils and groups and to set targets for these pupils. The school is far more aware of the learning and progress of pupils than it was at the time of the previous report. During assessment meetings teachers together monitor completed work. There are plans for the subject leader to observe lessons in other classrooms and to work alongside colleagues to share their experience and expertise. Personal illness has meant that the planned observations have not taken place although the new headteacher has already undertaken such observations.

## **ART AND DESIGN WITH DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99. These subjects are taught as separate elements within a combined programme. A greater emphasis is placed on one or the other each half term. During this term the emphasis has been on design and technology. An analysis of work, displays and policy documents, lesson observations and discussion with pupils indicates that standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Both of these subjects have maintained the standard reported at the time of the last inspection, when more time was spent on each one than is now possible. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The standard of design seen during the inspection was good and is considered to be a very important element in the process. This increased emphasis as shown in pupils' sketch books is helping to make the making process more effective and in turn enables better informed evaluation. The retained work and photographic evidence demonstrate that pupils are attaining at a satisfactory level because:
- *the school works hard to ensure that within mixed age classes all of the requirements of the National Curriculum are met;*
  - *pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding are tracked carefully;*
  - *teachers are gaining in knowledge and plan well;*
  - *imaginative tasks challenge pupils' thinking; skills learned are transferred readily to other projects;*
  - *Information and communication technology is used very well to support learning.*
100. The school's planning for these subjects provides structured guidance on the skills and techniques required for developing and recording pupils' progress. This is achieved through a well-organised pattern of topics that enable pupils in mixed age classes to have a suitable range of experiences without repeating work as the class groupings change.
101. The quality of teaching observed was never less than good and was very good in one lesson in design and technology. In this lesson the teacher was particularly skilled in working with different groups in turn so that there was very little time wasted by pupils waiting for attention. This was possible because groups were engaged at different levels of tasks and in most cases were able to work independently. Across the school teachers are well organised and their knowledge helps to inspire and motivate pupils.
102. Teachers' planning is well-ordered and lists the different skills and techniques to be learned or extended. Pupils in Year 1 in a food technology lesson discussed how to weigh and balance ingredients as part of the selected recipe. They noted how the mixture looked and behaved at every stage and understood that the changes brought

about by mixing were small compared with the change made by cooking. The intention to make strong cross-curricular links was also part of the thinking that encouraged pupils to design, make and wear helmets for Viking warriors as part of a history project. Other projects have included making picture frames and money containers. In Year 3-4 the challenge for pupils was to design make and race a lightweight car that had an integral method of propulsion. All of the pupils chose to drive their cars using twisted elastic bands and the care taken to select lightweight cladding so as not to add to the weight was part of detailed and animated discussions within the separate groups. The teacher questioned pupils about their ideas and, pupils also questioned their own decisions and those of their friends as they worked.

103. Evidence from a portfolio of retained work and from art displayed around the walls showed good development in skills and techniques from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. Following a visit to an art exhibition, pupils had drawn careful pencil studies and portraits of themselves and their friends. Pupils in Year 1-2 had been experimenting with painting in the style of Seurat, creating pictures with dots and had compared this with examples of Australian Aborigine art. Older pupils had created interesting work using a range of styles. These included work in the style of Monet, Van Gogh and Picasso, amongst others. The retained work and scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks showed how their skills understanding and techniques had developed over time. The work demonstrated pupils' experiences using different materials as well as their use of colour, light and shadow. Evidence of three-dimensional work was only available in photographic records and this was always linked to activities in design and technology.
104. Teachers work to challenge pupils' thinking. Well-used sketchbooks are maintained as useful tools to plan new work building on past experiences. Pupils automatically seek additional information from the Internet or the school library where the selection of books although limited is of good quality and from block loans from the local authority library. Pupils readily explain their findings to the class sharing the results of their research.
105. Teachers inform their colleagues about completed work This shared information is vital for subsequent planning to ensure that with the school's variable numbers in each age group work is not repeated. Information and communication technology is used very well to support learning and includes videos and CD-ROMS. Pupils regularly undertake additional research at home using the Internet with their parents.
106. The co-ordinator for both these subjects is knowledgeable and skilled. She frequently offers her time and advice to support colleagues. In such a small group, expertise is shared readily and completed work is displayed very well with good records of successful projects being kept. The school development plan includes time allocation to increase opportunities for the co-ordinator to work with other teachers in the classrooms but as yet these subjects have not had high priority, and the opportunities have been missed. This has limited the potential for developing the subjects to an enhanced level across the school although some very good examples of individual work have been achieved.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

107. Inspection evidence, including an analysis of work, displays and policy documents, lesson observations and discussion with pupils in Year 6, indicates that standards of attainment are in line with the national expectations in both history and geography.

Standards in both subjects have been maintained at this level since the last inspection, despite a reduction in the time allowed for them. Currently history is being taught this half term and will alternate each half term with geography. Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment learn well and make steady progress as they move through the school. Pupils achieve well as they become familiar with the traditions and ways of life of people long ago or those that live in other countries and have to cope with different climates.

108. Standards are similar to those expected nationally for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because:
- *the school has adapted the latest national guidance to ensure that all requirements of the National Curriculum are met, for skills as well as knowledge and understanding;*
  - *teachers capture and maintain the interest of the pupils in every lesson;*
  - *teachers plan well to cover skills as well as knowledge and understanding;*
  - *challenging tasks match the prior attainment of all pupils and draw on learning in other subjects;*
  - *assessment is clear and purposeful;*
  - *information and communication technology is used well to support learning.*
109. The school policy documents for these subjects provide guidance on how to meet the requirements of the subjects for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The policies are based on national guidelines to ensure continuity and progression. This results in the careful selection of topics to be studied so that there is no unnecessary repetition for pupils. This is because the numbers in each year group vary and the mixed-age classes change from year to year.
110. During the time of the inspection there were no geography lessons taught therefore there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about teaching in geography. The teaching of history is good in Year 1-2 and Years 5 and 6. In years 1 and 2 the topic of 'then and now' was introduced imaginatively. The teacher invited the pupils to be contestants in a game show and they were asked to identify which of the objects they thought belonged to 'then' or 'now'. Many of the artefacts were paired so that pupils were able to contrast and compare. For example pupils considered a wind up record player as belonging in the past, as there were no wires for the electricity. In Years 5 and 6 pupils participated in lively debate about the social changes which had taken place in their village, for example did they prefer lots of individual shops as 'then' or to go to the supermarket as 'now'. There were several sensitive comments about how lack of facilities in the village made life more difficult for the elderly. When giving reasons for their answers to searching questions, they made very good use of their speaking skills. In all lessons observed the teacher captured the interest of the pupils at the beginning of the lesson, engendering enthusiasm and interest that facilitated learning.
111. Lesson plans are usually detailed and include challenging activities to enable pupils to consolidate and extend their skills as well as their knowledge and understanding. Teachers assess learning through skilful use of questions as well as through written work. Assessment informs subsequent planning. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning. Older pupils work in pairs to find search engines to allow them to discover more detail about their current topic, for example, Victorian railways.
112. These subjects are managed well. Co-ordinators ensure that the resources match the curriculum requirements. Planning is reviewed and informal advice is provided for

teachers. The opportunity for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning has been very limited and this means that the skills demonstrated in the classroom by one teacher are not shared by others. In this way some expertise is lost to pupils in other classes. The school has set aside some funding in the school development plan for such work with the aim of sharing this expertise and thereby promoting higher standards of attainment.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations overall although a few pupils with computers at home exceed expectations. In Years 5 and 6, demonstrations by pupils indicate that they are well set to exceed national expectations by the end of Year 6. This is chiefly because:
- *teachers are all confident about the use of computers and encourage pupils to make good use of them in lessons across the curriculum;*
  - *the school has shared in a successful programme of training, teaching and learning;*
  - *the school is very successful in providing as many ways as possible for pupils to access hardware and software in all subjects;*
  - *the regular use of laptop computers in many classes has enabled many pupils to use computers to support their independent learning.*
114. All of the teachers have benefited from a range of training; both government funded and that organised locally. As a result, pupils are learning complex skills, for instance using a range of programs to organise their work and research and present it to the whole class.
115. A small number of whole-class information technology lessons across the school, were observed. Evidence from these observations and from observations of pupils working at computers in classrooms in other curriculum areas indicate that pupils are making good progress and, by the end of Year 6, achieve above the national expectations for their age.
116. In this very old school building there is no space for a computer suite but teachers have grouped computers very effectively in classrooms and shared spaces that enable pupils to use them instinctively as part of their programmes of study across the curriculum. Teachers are skilled at finding ways that enable whole classes to learn skills together, despite the limitations of the building. The imaginative use of networked laptop computers in classes for older pupils allows up to ten or a dozen pupils to work collaboratively or independently at any time. The majority of pupils from Year 1 upwards understand how to 'log on' to the system and are able to use the 'mouse' accurately, highlighting and selecting icons and changing fonts. Older pupils are adept at negotiating their way through complex 'menus' with confidence.
117. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use a paint program to create patterns and add pictures to illustrate their stories. Using a word-processor program, they write stories and create imaginative labels for their work or design covers for collected stories. Pupils enjoy demonstrating how they program a 'floor robot', working in pairs and estimating how many lengths it will take to get to a certain point and programming this into the robot machines. Pupils make informed estimations and race their robots up and down the room using combinations of two or three moves to reach the winning post. When plotting ways up the beanstalk, actually spread out along the floor pupils' calculation speed and ability to enter the relevant distances caused great pleasure and the fun

increased the speed of learning. In tasks involving data handling, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were seen developing their understanding of the use of ICT to sort and store lists of information. In Year 5 and 6 these data handling skills are almost automatic and pupils experiment with different programs to display stored data in the best way for their purpose. Sometimes they using pie charts or select line graphs or bar charts. The selection of different colours to separate a range of findings when comparing graphs enabled them to make rapid but sensible deductions about their work in science. Pupils readily change the font type, size and colour, resize the graphics and move them around the page. Work saved from the last Year 6 class shows how by the age of 11 pupils use a 'Logo' program to draw regular geometric shapes, writing a procedure to do this and enabling others to replicate their work by following written instructions. Pupils understand how to select appropriate 'icons' for tools, adding additional elements and changing colours. Their work has needed them to use the 'scroll bars' and 'menus' as well as the colour palette and 'zoom' lens to good effect.

118. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT lessons throughout the school is good. Where learning was good or better, this was due to well-planned and well-supported activities that motivate pupils well. Teachers have good classroom management skills and plan their lessons with good purpose and clarity. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good because they are eager to work on the computers for as long as possible and would willingly work through break times. Pupils of all ages work together appropriately, persevering, taking turns, and working independently where required.
119. The effective leadership by the subject-co-ordinator and the adoption of a set of well organised teaching and learning plans for the subject have ensured that clear and steady progression in the required skills is now firmly in place through the whole school. The nationally funded in-service training undertaken by all teachers has led to a significant improvement in their confidence in the subject and, in turn to the quality of teaching. Additional ICT equipment such as programmable floor robots and a digital camera are used very effectively. Very good use is made of ICT in, for example, English, mathematics, science, history and geography lessons.

## MUSIC

120. Evidence from this inspection indicates that standards of attainment exceed the national expectations by the end of Year 6. The school's timetable arrangements meant that only a few lessons could be observed. During the inspection by the end of Year 2 although pupils sang well there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about music making. Retained evidence from video recordings of lessons and productions and the way that pupils sing in assembly and in French classes indicates that by the end of Year 2 the standards of attainment are above those found in most schools. At the time of the previous inspection standards were well above those expected nationally at seven and above expectations by the age of 11.
121. There is a weight of evidence that indicates that music remains a strength of the school. This is because:
- *pupils sing together in tune with obvious skill and pleasure;*
  - *they manage a wide range of tuned and untuned instruments carefully and know how to play them properly;*
  - *they recognise a wide range of styles of music including classical compositions,*

- *African rhythms and contemporary works;*
  - *they are skilled, imaginative and very confident when composing tunes and rhythms;*
  - *they perform confidently before parents and strangers, demonstrating a wide range of musical skills.*
122. Pupils show great interest and musical ability. Throughout the school they have many opportunities to learn to play a wide range of musical instruments including percussion, strings and wind instruments. About a quarter of the pupils make music together as part of the school orchestra. They accompany school productions and join with other schools and local music groups to form larger orchestras. In the summer many pupils took part in the 'Spirit of Friendship' festival, an initiative that was a part of the Commonwealth Games celebrations. They joined with other pupils to receive tuition in African drumming and later took part in an imaginative and successful joint schools production for a large audience in the north west region.
123. No lessons were seen in the Year 1/2 class but in other lessons, in class and during school assemblies, as well as in video recordings, it is clear that pupils sing tunefully and play instruments successfully with obvious enjoyment. They clap rhythmically and readily copy a musical pattern that a teacher uses to attract their attention.
124. In Years 5 and 6 pupils composed, practised and performed a rhythm with a strong beat using crotchets and quavers. They form small groups and work co-operatively to compose a score that they first perform by clapping. This work then moves on to the use of a range of percussion instruments. All pupils are familiar with simple conventional notation. They were seen to evaluate the work of other groups knowledgeably and sensitively and discussed the pace of the beats accurately using correct musical terminology; for example, tempo, allegro, andante. The quality of teaching and learning seen in this lesson was very good.
125. The co-ordinator is new to the position and as yet her role is still being developed. The curriculum and the plans for intended work follow national guidelines. The policy has been reviewed but as yet there are only basic agreed assessment procedures linked to the suggestions from the adopted guidelines. Strategies are now being developed to inform teachers of pupils' prior learning and attainment. Opportunities for skilled teachers to work with colleagues in lessons in order to share knowledge and monitor teaching and learning are very limited except when the school prepares for productions for parents when everyone is involved. The range and level of resources are good. There is a wide selection of musical instruments and other equipment that is available in the 'Room of Endeavour' where most music tuition takes place.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

126. In physical education, pupils of all abilities make good progress across the school. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above those expected for pupils of the same age nationally. Standards in swimming by the end of Year 6 greatly exceed those in many schools, as the pupils in Year 6 already swim at least double the expected distance using breaststroke, backstroke and freestyle all with very good body positions in the water. The improvement of style is the present focus. Pupils in Year 5 are already approaching the standards attained by the older group. Standards in the subject are enhanced through the good leadership of the co-ordinator and the involvement of specialist tuition and support including help from leading professional football clubs. Teams from the school compete successfully in a variety of sports. These positive outcomes are because:



- *teachers are knowledgeable and manage pupils well;*
  - *teachers give generously of their time to encourage sporting achievements;*
  - *pupils listen carefully to instructions and comply with requests quickly without wasting time;*
  - *skills are taught well, assessed and evaluated regularly and are reinforced systematically;*
  - *the co-ordinator supports colleagues well and is ready to offer advice when required;*
  - *specialist help is sought and is used wisely to enhance the skills of the very small staff.*
127. By the time they are seven, pupils develop their balancing skills very well when creating a sequence of movements and when controlling their bodies in a confined space. They demonstrate that they can move safely as they leap, curl, twist and stop quickly in a balanced position on a command or the beat of a tambour from the teacher. They are very trusting when developing opposing balances with a partner as part of a paired sequence pattern. Pupils develop confidence, co-operative skills and spatial awareness as they find imaginative ways to move. By watching the performance of others, they are skilled when evaluating what they are doing, what works well and where improvements can be made. They then use these observations to improve their own efforts.
128. In Years 3-6, pupils refine and increase the ways in which they can move in a confined space. They understand how to increase the elements within the sequence. Gradually, they develop these sequences to a high standard and perform them well using larger apparatus such as benches and mats. Pupils evaluate their own performances by comparing what they do with demonstrations given by other members of the class. In all classes, pupils have a good understanding of safety and how to move apparatus with care. They appreciate the importance of warming up and cooling down when exercising. The quality of the work in one particular lesson was very high because the planning and teaching was so good and the way that instructions were communicated was so compelling. Pupils are involved in other sporting activities such as football, netball, cross-country running, rounders, Kwik-cricket and athletics at appropriate times of the year.
129. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They know that the subject has a very high profile and they work hard to achieve and perform well. They are willing to learn from one another and are happy to give demonstrations of their skills. They are very conscious of safety aspects when moving around in the very small hall and on the playground. The playground is a good size, but the surface is poor and the slope makes work in teams very difficult. The sports field is a considerable distance from the school and the governors are actively seeking to find a suitable nearby venue to minimise the time lost to teaching caused by the walk before and after every lesson. Pupils are aware of this and cheerfully walk the distance to the school field after lessons in order to increase their skills and improve their performance. They know that to continue doing well, when numbers are so small, that everyone counts, and so, they listen carefully to the teachers' instructions and follow them instantly.
130. The quality of teaching and learning is always at least good, most is very good and one lesson was judged to be excellent. Lessons are carefully planned and move at a brisk pace, with little time wasted. The teachers have good subject expertise. When necessary, some give appropriate demonstrations and handle pupils' responses very effectively. This gives the pupils a very positive understanding about performance

techniques and enables them to work purposefully in order to enhance their skills. Relationships with pupils are very good and all lessons provide opportunities for pupils to extend their health and fitness. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress.

131. The co-ordinator has a very strong knowledge, understanding and commitment to the subject and has clear objectives. She has developed the curriculum well, with planning based, in part, on national guidelines. She is very enthusiastic, supports colleagues well and takes every opportunity to promote the subject within the school and through competition with pupils from other schools. The school's ethos is boosted by the spirit of fair play and shared commitment to success that pupils show in games, sports and the effort they put into taking full part in outdoor activities. Physical education makes a very good contribution to pupils' social and moral development.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

132. Standards in religious education by the end of Years 2 and 6 are satisfactory and have been maintained at this level since the previous inspection. They meet the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. At this early stage in the school year there is only a limited amount of recorded evidence of pupils' work and it was possible to see very few lessons during the time of the inspection. Other evidence was gathered from the scrutiny of teachers' files and from discussions with pupils and teachers. The school has identified areas for development that include:

- *increased opportunities to study traditions and practices from other than the Christian faith;*
- *more and better quality objects of interest to encourage learning about religion;*
- *opportunities to visit places of worship in the neighbourhood that reflect other traditions.*

133. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning about festivals that are part of the Christian faith, for example harvest and Christmas. Pupils know about Jesus as a friend and storyteller. They delight in acting out the story of the miracle of the loaves and fishes. They understand the importance of sharing, and time was allowed in one lesson for pupils to reflect about looking after friends and being grateful that they have enough to eat. They know the story of Noah's Ark and why it is necessary to protect animals.

134. In Years 3 and 4 pupils consider the impact that their actions have on others and how to deal with issues of conflict in a way that typifies Christian teaching. By the end of Year 6 pupils show an understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and have increased their knowledge of a range of other religions including Judaism and Islam. During the inspection they shared in a school assembly where they began to understand the story of 'Rama' and 'Sita' and the origins of the Hindu festival of light, Diwali. Pupils' attitude to the subject is good and the subject contributes well to their personal development.

135. The quality of teaching was good in the lessons seen in the reception and Year 1 class and in Years 3 and 4. Planning files indicate that lessons are well planned and that all pupils including those with special educational needs are given appropriate support to enable them to fully participate in class lessons. Good subject knowledge was shown during the discussion of the miracle of loaves and fishes, highlighting the importance of sharing. Important relevant words were taught clearly and vocabulary was well chosen. Teachers ensured that pupils of all prior attainment levels were fully

involved. The use of puppets to enact the story provided further opportunity for pupils to revise, know and understand the story. In assemblies the revision of work undertaken in religious education showed how these occasions make a good contribution to linking pupils' understanding of the Christian faith to their new knowledge of other faiths and cultures. The work planned and undertaken is well matched to pupils' understanding and enables all pupils to consolidate their learning and make progress.

136. The new headteacher has taken on the role of subject co-ordinator. Whilst the management of the subject is satisfactory, he is aware that there needs to be a full review of the work in hand in order to help pupils to develop further. The resources, including the range of religious objects, are adequate to support teaching and learning, but are far from generous. A member of the local clergy visits the school to work with pupils each half term and the new subject co-ordinator is keen to extend this work through the involvement of knowledgeable adults from other than the Christian faith. The school is very alert to the fact that visits to local places of worship are very rare and since the start of this term personal contacts have been made with religious communities in the locality as part of a planned programme of work aimed at correcting this omission.