

# INSPECTION REPORT

## TRINITY SCHOOL

Skelmersdale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119406

Headteacher: Mr A Bain

Reporting inspector: Mr D S Roberts  
1743

Dates of inspection: 23 – 26 June 2003

Inspection number: 248013

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

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kiln Lane  
Skelmersdale

Postcode: WN8 8PW

Telephone number: 01695 723 878

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Rev M Neal

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1743	D S Roberts	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Religious education	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19669	F Kennedy	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?
17913	B Frost	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17767	S Power	Team inspector	Science Geography History English as an additional language	
7222	A Watson	Team inspector	Music Educational inclusion Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Trinity Primary School is situated in the town of Skelmersdale in the Lancashire Education Authority. The number on roll is currently above the average for primary schools. At present, the school provides full-time education for 240 pupils ranging from four to 11 years of age, and part-time education for a further 25 children in the Nursery class. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is similar to the national average. Currently, 19 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is similar to the national average. Eleven pupils have specific learning needs, which require external as well as additional school support. Their needs include those for moderate and severe learning difficulties, and emotional and behavioural problems. Nearly three per cent of pupils have statements of specific needs, which is higher than the average found nationally. On entry to the school, the children's attainment levels are generally below average and similar to those apparent at the time of the last inspection. At present, under one per cent of pupils are from families belonging to minority ethnic groups, none of whom speak English as an additional language.

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

This is a very good school. It takes very good care of its pupils and makes high quality provision for their personal development. The teaching is predominantly of at least good, and often of high, quality. It promotes good and often very good progress by pupils in most subjects, and is particularly successful in developing their key skills in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. The headteacher, governors and staff co-operate very successfully to create a welcoming and supportive atmosphere where the Christian ethos is emphasised very strongly. A very effective partnership has been developed with parents, who speak highly of the school. All staff work very effectively to include and challenge all pupils, taking full account of their needs in terms of gender, race, background and levels of attainment. The school is led and managed very effectively, and provides very good value for money.

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

- It enables its pupils to make good and often very good progress in most subjects, and is particularly successful in developing their key skills in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science.
- The pupils show very good attitudes towards their work and their behaviour is of a high standard.
- The teaching is predominantly of at least good, and often of high, quality.
- The school provides a very well balanced and relevant curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- The quality of leadership, provided by the headteacher and staff at various levels of responsibility, is of a high calibre.

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

- Standards in written English could be improved further.
- The provision for outdoor play for children in the Nursery.

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

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

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in 1997. During the four years up to 2002, the school's rate of improvement in the standards achieved by pupils in English, mathematics and science has kept pace with the national trend.

The weaknesses identified by the last inspection have been addressed very successfully. The curriculum for music has improved considerably and pupils now achieve standards which are above the average for their age by the end of Year 6. Provision for higher attaining pupils has improved significantly. This is reflected in the increasing proportion of pupils now achieving higher levels in National Curriculum tests, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching. The proportion of lessons judged to be good or better has increased from 36 per cent to over 80 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good or better from four per cent to 47 per cent. The school is now well set to continue improving by building on its many strengths and addressing areas which require attention.

## 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	D	E	D
mathematics	E	E	C	A
science	E	E	C	B

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

Inspection evidence indicates that children at the Foundation Stage, in the Nursery and Reception classes, make good progress, and achieve the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum before entering Year 1. By the age of seven and 11, pupils achieve standards which are appropriate for their age in speaking and listening, reading and writing, and above average in mathematics and science. This is a better picture than the National Curriculum test results for 2002 (shown above). The improvement is due to the continuing successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, guidance and advice provided by the local education authority, and hard work by teachers and support staff. Throughout the school, standards of literacy are generally appropriate and often high in reading. Although standards in writing are appropriate for the pupils' age, they are not as good as in reading and there is scope for further improvement. Standards of numeracy are above average for the pupils' age. Pupils achieve at least appropriate standards for their age in all other subjects, and above average standards in art and design and design and technology, throughout the school, and in history, music and physical education in classes for older pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards the school. They are enthusiastic, take a pride in their work and are keen to take part in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is of a very good standard.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show a very mature sense of responsibility when working independently and in groups. They show respect for other pupils' values and beliefs.



Attendance	Satisfactory.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Under fives	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Very 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 teaching is predominantly of at least good, and often high, quality. The good teaching of children at the Foundation Stage, in the Nursery and Reception classes, helps them to settle quickly and make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum. From Year 1 to Year 6, the teaching of mathematics is regularly of high quality and sometimes excellent, enabling pupils to make very good progress in extending their numeracy skills. Teaching of English is generally good and often of high quality, particularly in Years 1 and 2, promoting particularly good progress by pupils in speaking and listening and reading. Consistently good teaching in science promotes significant progress by pupils in all aspects of the subject. In other subjects, the teaching is generally never less than good. It is often of high quality in art and design, and design and technology, throughout the school, and in history, music and physical education in classes for older pupils.

Throughout the school, the high standard of provision made by teachers and support staff for pupils with special educational needs is a strong feature in the teaching, which enables pupils to make good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. Teachers also work hard to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met appropriately in terms of gender, race, background and levels of attainment, and that all pupils are involved in and extended by work in all aspects of the curriculum.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school is highly successful in providing a broad, very well balanced and relevant curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6. It provides a generally good curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes but the lack of an outdoor play area restricts learning opportunities for those in the Nursery.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision throughout the school. Highly effective work by support staff has a positive effect on pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are highly effective procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic and personal development and for ensuring child protection and welfare. Very successful strategies for promoting high standards of behaviour.

A very strong partnership has been developed with parents, who speak extremely positively about the school, and express the highest possible regard for the headteacher.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The quality of leadership and management is very good. The dedicated headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very effectively and liaise closely with the governing body to provide clear direction for the work of the school. They are well supported by all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very successful in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met appropriately.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good use is made of local and national comparative information to evaluate performance and set appropriately challenging targets in English and mathematics.
The strategic use of resources	Money is spent wisely on relevant educational priorities. All resources are managed very efficiently. The school is appropriately staffed and well resourced and governors apply best value principles effectively. Governors have identified the need to improve further the provision at the Foundation Stage by providing an outdoor play area.

## 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>• The children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects its pupils to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good and the school is helping the children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents who are well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	There were no significant issues for improvement.

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents and carers.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 The attainment levels of children on entry to the Nursery class, at the Foundation Stage, are generally below those found nationally. Pupils at all levels of attainment make generally good and at times very good progress during their time in the school, and by the time they reach Year 6 and the end of Key Stage 2, overall standards are above average for the pupils' age.
- 2 Inspection findings indicate that children at the Foundation Stage, in the Nursery and Reception classes, make good progress. Most achieve the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum by the time they enter Year 1.
- 3 Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 1, when pupils are in Year 2, indicate that standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are similar to those found nationally. In mathematics and science, standards are above average.
- 4 Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils are in Year 6, indicate that overall standards are appropriate for the pupils' age in English. However, pupils make better progress in speaking and listening and reading than they do in writing, which remains an area of relative weakness, despite significant improvements during the past year. In mathematics and science, standards are above average for the pupils' age.
- 5 At both key stages, the inspection picture is better than that indicated by the 2002 National Curriculum test results. These showed that overall standards in English and mathematics fell short of the national average, at the end of Year 2, although they were generally above the average for similar schools. At the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and science were similar to those found nationally but generally above the average for similar schools. Overall standards in English, badly affected by the pupils' weaker performance in written English, were well below the national average.
- 6 The improvements in standards, indicated by the inspection, have been brought about by the continuing successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and through hard work by teachers, supported by advisers and consultants from the local education authority. Particularly close attention has been given to raising standards in written English, which remains an on-going priority for the school.
- 7 Key Stage 2 national test results for the four years up to 2002, indicate a rate of improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science which has kept pace with the national trend. During the same period there were no consistently significant variations in pupils' performance in terms of gender.
- 8 In English, throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment make generally good progress during their time in the school. Pupils with special educational needs make consistently good progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans. Pupils, at both key stages, make good progress in speaking and listening. By the time they are in Year 6, they use their skills effectively to express ideas and offer answers to questions asked by their teachers. Their increasing ability

to vary expression, in order to engage the listener, and to pay close attention to what others say, are strong features in their learning. Throughout the school, pupils make very good progress in extending their skills in reading and, by the end of Year 6, reach standards which are at least appropriate for their age. Most read with increasing accuracy and good expression, and a growing number of higher attaining pupils read challenging books and talk enthusiastically about events and characters in the stories they have read. In writing, pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress and, by Year 6, most achieve standards which are appropriate for their age. They make increasingly confident use of new skills, acquired during literacy lessons, to write in an interesting way for a variety of purposes. An increasing proportion of pupils use an adventurous vocabulary in an imaginative and interesting way, and demonstrate accurate spelling and appropriate punctuation. Recent hard work by the school to improve standards in written English is proving effective but standards are not as good as those in speaking and listening and reading. In some lessons, the progress of potentially high attaining pupils in particular is restricted through lack of time to write at length about different topics.

- 9 In mathematics, throughout the school, pupils make very good progress and generally achieve high standards for their age by Year 6. They show a good grasp of place value when adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing numbers, and are able to use these skills accurately and effectively to solve problems. Their increasing understanding of the extension of the number system is reflected in their good grasp of negative numbers and in their knowledge of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils make good progress in work on shape, space and measures, and make accurate use of relevant terminology to describe the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. In work on handling data, older pupils collect relevant information and record their results, using a wide range of graphs, charts, frequency tables and diagrams. They interpret their findings, drawing accurate conclusions from the statistical information. The pupils show a good understanding of the use of measures of average, and make accurate use of terms such as "mode", "median", "mean" and "range" in relevant problem solving contexts.
- 10 In science, pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in the school and many achieve standards which are above those expected for their age by the time they reach the end of Year 6. The great majority develop a very good scientific vocabulary, and use this consistently in verbal and written explanations. They demonstrate good levels of understanding of life processes, and of materials and their properties, and their scientific enquiry skills are well developed.
- 11 In information and communication technology (ICT), pupils throughout the school make good and often very good progress. They achieve standards which are at least appropriate for their age in all aspects of ICT, and older pupils exceed these levels in some aspects of the subject. Throughout the school, pupils benefit considerably from well planned opportunities to use ICT in order to enhance their studies of other subjects.
- 12 Throughout the school, pupils achieve standards which are at least appropriate for their age in all other subjects. They achieve standards which are above average for their age in art and design and design and technology, at both key stages, and in history, physical education, and some aspects of music at Key Stage 2.
- 13 Taking into account their levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy, which are below average when they enter the school, pupils make generally good progress in

developing their literacy skills, particularly in speaking and listening and reading, and very good progress in extending their numeracy skills during their time in the school. The highly successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements. The governors set appropriately challenging targets for improvements in English and mathematics for future years, which take full account of the varying ability levels of different cohorts of pupils.

- 14 The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, in relation to their prior learning, is good throughout the school. They make consistent progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. They benefit greatly from the setting of work which is appropriately challenging, and from the very good levels of support which they receive from class teachers and support staff. Very effective arrangements to identify, support and stimulate particularly gifted pupils, help them to work steadily towards their potential. The particular needs of all pupils in terms of gender, race, background and level of attainment, are met very effectively. This enables those in all of these categories to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 15 Since the last inspection, the school has made very good progress in raising standards. Throughout the school, standards in mathematics and science, judged to be similar to the national average in the previous report, are now above average. Standards in music, previously described as unsatisfactory are now above average at Key Stage 2. Previous high standards in art and design have been maintained, and pupils now exceed the national expectation for their age in design and technology, at both key stages, and in history, and physical education at Key Stage 2.

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

- 16 The pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards the school and this has a positive effect on their learning. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is very good and, during the inspection, there were examples of excellent behaviour in lessons, in assembly and in the playground. There has been one fixed period exclusion in the past year, for behaviour which the school considered to be totally unacceptable. There have been no permanent exclusions in recent years.
- 17 The pupils are friendly and caring towards one another, and relationships throughout the school are excellent. All of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire are of the opinion that their children like school. The pupils are very enthusiastic about all school activities. Their enthusiasm is evident at play times and lunch times, when they play together amicably in the playground or on the playing field. The Year 6 pupils help to organise games for the younger pupils and show them how best to use the play equipment that is provided for them. For example, they teach them how to skip and how to throw and catch a ball. During one very hot and sunny lunch time period in the inspection week they took them over to a shaded area, under the trees, and kept them entertained until it was time to go back into school. As well as making play times enjoyable, these activities teach the younger pupils how to share and how to make friends, while giving the older pupils a sense of responsibility and a thorough understanding of what it means to be a part of a caring, Christian community.
- 18 Behaviour in lessons is generally very good. An outstanding feature of the school is the way in which the pupils show caring and supportive attitudes towards those pupils who have special educational needs. The pupils are attentive in class. They respond

well to challenging tasks and show a good capacity to persevere when difficulties arise. When working with a partner or as part of a group the pupils are very co-operative. They share resources sensibly and are willing to help and learn from one another. The "Happy Helpers" in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 are eager to help their teachers. For example, in the Nursery, the day's two helpers helped the teaching assistant to set the table for snack while the rest of the children carried on with their group activity. Monitors in Years 3 to 6 have increased responsibility. They carry out a wide range of duties, including organising the class library, helping their teachers prepare for practical work and taking the lunch boxes to the dining room in time for lunch.

- 19 The Year 6 pupils contribute to the school community in a number of ways. For example, they help to supervise younger pupils in the playground, they set up the hall for assembly and, during the assembly, they operate the tape recorder and the ICT facility which projects an image onto a large screen. The Year 6 pupils also set a very good example to the rest of the school, both in their conduct and in their general appearance. Their loyalty was demonstrated in a whole school assembly, when they made sure a member of their class was not overlooked when the time came for celebrating birthdays.
- 20 Behaviour in assemblies is excellent. The pupils enter the hall in complete silence. They are attentive throughout the assembly, and reverent during prayers. During the inspection, the quality of their singing evoked a sense of spirituality, especially when they sang the verse "Someone's homeless, Lord" in an assembly led by the curate of St. Paul's Church. In the whole school "Worker of the Week" assembly, the pupils were proud to come forward to receive their awards for positive attitudes, hard work and good progress.
- 21 The school council adds significantly to the pupils' maturity and sense of responsibility, and gives them the opportunity to contribute to school improvement. The pupils themselves initiated the setting up of an environmental group, which aims to raise pupils' awareness of conservation issues, as they affect the school, the local area and the natural world.
- 22 The pupils take good care of their school. The school building and grounds are very well kept and entirely free from litter. Pupils are proud of their work, which is displayed very imaginatively in classrooms and other areas of the school. The links established with a number of charities foster a sense of caring in the pupils and an understanding of the problems faced by people in their own and other countries.
- 23 Attendance in the school is satisfactory, although slightly below the national average for primary schools. The rate of unauthorised absence is low, and compares favourably with the national median. Punctuality is good. The vast majority of the pupils arrive on time in the mornings and lessons start promptly.

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

- 24 The quality of teaching and learning is predominantly of at least good, and often of high quality. The teaching in over 80 per cent of the lessons observed was judged to be at least good. In 47 per cent of lessons, the teaching was very good or better and included some excellent lessons in mathematics, history and music. One lesson, in physical education, was judged to be unsatisfactory. Throughout the school, there is a close match between the quality of teaching and learning.

- 25 At the Foundation Stage, in the Nursery and Reception classes, the quality of teaching is generally good and sometimes of high quality. In all of the lessons observed, the teaching was at least satisfactory, in over 60 per cent it was of good quality, and some of the teaching in the Reception classes was of high quality. Effective teaching promotes good progress by the children in all areas of learning and helps them to make a good start to their education. However, the absence of a separate and secure play area for children in the Nursery places teachers at a disadvantage in promoting children's development fully, particularly in aspects of physical and social development. Teachers place strong emphasis on promoting the development of the children's personal, social and emotional development. This helps children to settle quickly, develop confidence in expressing themselves and learn to work sensibly and happily with others. As they progress from the Nursery to the Reception classes, children take increasing advantage of the range of learning opportunities presented to them and contribute with growing confidence during whole-group sessions.
- 26 At Key Stage 1, in classes for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, the quality of teaching is generally very good. Nearly 90 per cent of the lessons observed were at least good and 50 per cent were of high quality, including some outstanding teaching in mathematics. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is particularly successful in giving pupils a good grasp of the basic skills of learning.
- 27 The overall quality of teaching at Key Stage 2, in classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6, is also very good. All of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory, 88 per cent were at least good, and over 50 per cent were of high quality, including some excellent teaching in mathematics, history and music. A strong feature in the teaching of older pupils is the way it helps them to become mature and responsible, as well as enabling them to make significant academic progress.
- 28 Throughout the school, the teaching is particularly successful in promoting the development of speaking and listening, reading, numeracy and scientific skills. Much progress has recently been achieved in improving the teaching of written English, enabling most pupils to achieve at least appropriate standards for their age by the end of their time in the school. The very successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy contributes greatly towards the quality of teaching in English and mathematics. Homework is used effectively to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. It contributes particularly well towards promoting pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in the key areas of English and mathematics.
- 29 In English, the quality of teaching is generally good and often very good, particularly at Key Stage 1. Teachers have a very secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how pupils learn. Lessons are planned very carefully, and class teachers and support staff co-operate effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. This enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. In Years 1 and 2, the highly effective teaching of basic skills contributes significantly towards the pupils' good progress in reading and writing. In classes for older pupils, high quality teaching of English captures pupils' interest and increases their awareness of the need to adapt the way they talk and write for particular purposes and for different situations. All aspects of reading and writing are generally taught effectively throughout the school, but there are times when the enthusiasm of teachers to pack as much guidance and advice into the whole-class explanations leaves insufficient time for pupils to practise and extend their writing skills during group and independent activities.



- 30 The teaching of mathematics is generally of very good quality and at times excellent. The high quality support provided by classroom assistants is a significant factor in supporting the pupils' learning. Very careful planning of lessons means that an appropriate degree of challenge is presented to pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs. The very effective use of assessment to inform planning is a particularly strong feature in the teaching. Individual elements of numeracy lessons are taught confidently with due regard to the national guidance. Mental work is conducted in a brisk and challenging manner, and pupils enjoy the mental agility involved. The quality of direct whole-class teaching is often of a high order. A very strong feature in the teaching is the way pupils are given time to explain their strategies for solving problems, which helps to consolidate their learning. Questioning is a strong feature in lessons, and is used effectively to probe pupils' thinking and consolidate their learning. The increasing use of ICT to support pupils' learning is a very good feature in the teaching.
- 31 In science, consistently good teaching at both key stages enables pupils to make good and often very good progress during their time in the school. All teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and are successful in communicating scientific knowledge and understanding to their pupils. Classroom management is highly effective, promoting very good standards of behaviour by the pupils. The recent school initiative to increase the emphasis placed on learning through practical and investigative work has been very successful. As a result, teachers are now more effective in motivating and challenging pupils at all levels of attainment, and this has contributed towards an all-round improvement in standards.
- 32 In ICT, all of the lessons observed were of very good quality, and enabled pupils to make significant progress in relation to their prior learning. Thoughtful organisation of ICT provision by co-ordinators helps the school to overcome the disadvantage of not having a separate computer suite. The school draws effectively on the expertise of individual teachers. The commitment of all teachers and support staff to improve their personal level of expertise in ICT is reflected in their increasing confidence and growing subject knowledge. This enables them to plan work which challenges pupils effectively. Pupils make confident use of ICT facilities, and achieve standards which are at least appropriate for their age by the end of their time in the school.
- 33 In other subjects, teachers ensure that tasks are pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils, and opportunities are generally taken effectively to extend literacy and numeracy skills. Very good teaching in history enables pupils to make significant progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of the world. In art and design, music and design and technology, very good teaching promotes successfully the pupils' creative development. The teaching of older pupils, in particular, in physical education is highly effective in helping them to make very good progress in their physical development. Swimming is taught effectively, enabling nearly all pupils to swim at least 25 metres unaided, and some to achieve higher standards, before leaving the school at the end of Year 6.
- 34 In all subjects, throughout the school, teachers work very effectively to make good provision for pupils at all levels of attainment. They respond quickly to the different needs of pupils in terms of gender, race, background and level of attainment. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The effective co-operation between teachers and support staff is a strong feature which helps to promote good progress by pupils in this category. The work of all staff is guided effectively by good quality individual education plans. This enables the pupils to work systematically towards the realistic and manageable targets set for them.

- 35 The school has made significant progress in improving the quality of teaching since the last full inspection in 1997. The proportion of lessons judged to be good or better has increased from 37 per cent, in the last inspection, to 80 per cent, and the proportion of high quality lessons from 4 per cent to 47 per cent. High quality leadership by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team, hard work by all staff, and the very successful implementation of initiatives such as the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, have contributed greatly towards better quality teaching throughout the school.

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

- 36 The overall curriculum makes very good provision for all pupils. At the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is of a particularly good quality in Reception classes. Curricular opportunities for children in the Nursery, however, are restricted significantly by the lack of a separate and secure outdoor play area. Throughout the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is based appropriately on the nationally agreed programme of learning, and the content of the work is generally planned effectively to promote good progress by children towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.
- 37 The school is highly successful in providing a broad, very well balanced and relevant curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6, which meets fully all statutory requirements. Since the last inspection, much improvement has been achieved in the music curriculum, which is now planned effectively to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- 38 Highly effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy underpin the school's continual drive to provide for high achievement. The whole curriculum is planned effectively to meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of the pupils, including those who have special educational needs.
- 39 Extra-curricular activities are mainly of a sporting nature, and are well attended by boys and girls. In addition, the school arranges a French club each week. It also provides a variety of visits to support the pupils' learning. For example, older pupils take part in residential visits to Scarborough and Llandudno. The most recent visit to Llandudno enabled them to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities and included the chance to learn skiing skills at the dry slope ski centre. The school also provides the pupils with a variety of opportunities to benefit from the expertise of visitors invited to the school. These have included visits from the local police, the fire brigade, and lifeboat personnel, together with other visits from music and drama groups; all of which served to enhance and enrich the statutory curriculum.
- 40 The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This represents continuing improvement since the previous inspection, when these aspects were judged to be good. The all pervading Christian ethos of the school contributes enormously towards the outstanding provision for the pupils' spiritual development. High quality assemblies and well taken opportunities in work across the curriculum make an outstanding contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. The policy for collective worship, drawn up in consultation with the two churches, strongly emphasises the importance of spiritual development. Christian principles and values are central to acts of worship. Pupils sing with joy and are encouraged to listen, pray and reflect quietly. The requirements for collective worship are met fully. Opportunities to develop feelings of spirituality are taken in lessons. For

example, in a lesson on education in Roman times, pupils expressed wonder and excitement at the discovery of artefacts by archaeologists. Music also makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. For example, they listen to and are helped to appreciate good quality music such as, "Sheep May Safely Graze", by J.S.Bach.

- 41 The provision for pupils' moral development is outstanding, contributing considerably towards the pupils' very good behaviour. Skilful teaching in assemblies, and well taken opportunities in registration, circle time and lessons, contribute significantly to the pupils' moral development. For example, such initiatives as, "Environmental Friendly People", help them to develop thoughtfulness and care for the world in which they live. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Promoting respect for others and fostering positive, caring relationships within and beyond the school, are central to the school's approach. The pupils benefit from very good role models provided by the headteacher, staff and other adults. They are encouraged to take responsibility, and this helps to raise their self esteem and enables them to contribute in a mature manner towards the school community.
- 42 The development of pupils' social skills is very good. In lessons, the pupils work sensibly as individuals, in small groups and whole class situations. The high quality of relationships within the school is a major factor which contributes to the pupils' social development. For example, Year 6 pupils help to look after Year 1 pupils in the playground, and Year 2 and Year 5 pupils are linked as reading partners.
- 43 Provision for cultural development is very good. The curriculum makes a strong contribution in such subjects as art, English, music and religious education. For example, there are good quality displays of pupils' work based on the great paintings of Monet. In religious education, opportunities are provided for pupils to extend their knowledge of other faiths. For example, Year 3 pupils enacted a visit to a Sikh temple. They paid particular attention to a wide range of artefacts and showed much interest in their significance. In music, pupils are introduced to African and Indian music as well as the works of classical composers, such as J.S. Bach. Each year the school arranges a holiday in Llandudno or Scarborough, and as part of the programme, pupils visit museums and places of interest.
- 44 The school's commitment to meeting the particular needs of all pupils in terms of gender, race, background and level of attainment, enables those in all of these categories to make good and often very good progress in their work throughout the curriculum. The governing body's policy for equality of opportunity is implemented consistently in all subjects. Additional policies, such as that for the gifted and talented pupils, have recently been put in place and provide further impetus to the school's aim of providing a fully inclusive education for all pupils.
- 45 The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Early identification of the pupils' needs enables the school to plan effectively for the pupils in this category. The co-ordinator works closely with teachers to provide well focused individual education plans with a realistic number of manageable and achievable targets. Individual educational plans are of very good quality, easily accessible and reviewed regularly. They are used very effectively by teachers and classroom assistants to provide work which is pitched at the appropriate level for the pupils. The pupils' files are well maintained and thorough. They are regularly updated to show pupils' progress in all aspects of work. Meetings to review pupils' progress, and the outcomes of discussions with parents and outside agencies are documented clearly. Classroom assistants co-operate very effectively with teachers to provide very good quality support for the pupils in this category. Very good arrangements are in place to support gifted and talented pupils. They are identified quickly, challenged effectively, and their progress in monitored carefully.
- 46 The school is particularly successful in promoting the pupils' personal and social development. Opportunities occur through well-planned circle time, the planning of

work modules as part of the school's health skills programme and through work across the curriculum. A well-conceived health education programme is taught throughout the school. This gives appropriate attention to sex education and drug misuse. The pupils are taught essential facts and provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed choices now and in the future. Valuable support and advice is provided by the school nurse in this respect.

- 47 The very effective links established with the Methodist and Church of England churches contribute considerably towards the strong Christian and community ethos which permeates the whole curriculum. The school also has good links with the secondary schools to which the pupils transfer. Good induction procedures are well established and help to make the process of transfer a positive experience for the pupils.

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

- 48 The school continues to place strong emphasis on caring for and meeting the needs of its pupils. A very friendly, happy atmosphere exists in the school and relationships between pupils and staff and between the pupils themselves are excellent. The school is strongly committed to encouraging the pupils to give of their best in everything they do. Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and the school is highly effective in providing equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or level of attainment.

- 49 Particular attention is paid to ensuring the pupils' health and safety. The school building is bright and clean, fire drills are carried out regularly and accidents are recorded appropriately. Child protection procedures are thorough, adhering to guidelines provided by the local education authority. The educational welfare officer and the school nurse give very good support to the school in matters concerning the pupils' attendance, health and general well being.

- 50 Very good procedures are now in place for assessing pupils' progress and attainment. This represents significant progress since the last inspection, when some aspects of assessment were judged to be unsatisfactory. A carefully planned programme of statutory and non-statutory tests are set throughout the school. The results are analysed carefully, and used effectively to track pupils' progress and set appropriate targets for future attainment. Targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy are set for groups of pupils and shared with their parents. These give pupils a good self-knowledge of their own learning in English and mathematics, and have a positive effect on their progress. The pupils' work is marked constructively, recognising what pupils have attained and setting appropriate new challenges. Information gathered from the assessment of pupils' work is used very effectively to inform the next stage of teaching and learning. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and recording pupils' progress in all subjects.

- 51 Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are also very good. The Christian ethos of the school is central to all of its work and the pupils are taught that they have a responsibility to be kind and caring towards one another. School assemblies contribute significantly to the pupils' all-round development. The superintendent minister of Trinity Methodist Church and the vicar of St. Paul's Church come into school regularly to lead assemblies and are well known to the pupils. The programme of study for personal, social and health education is well co-ordinated and includes discrete lessons on citizenship, nutrition, road safety and safety in the home. Aspects of personal, social and health education are also promoted through religious

education, science, history, geography and English. During the inspection the parents expressed their appreciation for the way in which school productions and assemblies are used to promote the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. They also spoke very highly of the many events, such as the Easter bonnet parade and the May Day celebrations, which make school a happy place in which to learn.

- 52 Induction arrangements for children entering the Nursery and Reception classes are very good. The children are visited in their homes, prior to starting school, and this helps their parents to prepare them for the Foundation Stage of their education.
- 53 Arrangements for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are very good. Staff set an excellent example to the pupils by treating them with respect at all times. This encourages the pupils to have respect for one another and to show courtesy, kindness and helpfulness to everyone in the school community. Hard work and caring, helpful attitudes are rewarded fairly and consistently with praise, smiley faces, stickers, the opportunity to show a piece of work to the headteacher or the deputy head and recognition in the "Worker of the Week" assembly. In addition, pupils in Years 2 to 6 can win 'house' points for good work and behaviour. This helps to foster healthy competition and good teamwork among the older pupils.
- 54 Arrangements for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Pupils are taught that bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated by the school. An appropriate system of sanctions is in place for dealing with minor misdemeanours and with more serious incidents of misconduct. Parents are involved at an early stage if an individual's behaviour is giving cause for concern.
- 55 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Registers are marked in accordance with statutory requirements and pupils who achieve 100 per cent attendance over the academic year are presented with an award at the special end of year assembly. Illness and holidays account for almost all absence and the rate of unauthorised absence compares favourably with the national median.

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

- 56 The school has built successfully upon the strengths identified in the 1997 inspection report and has firmly established a very good partnership with parents and carers.
- 57 Parents and carers have extremely positive views of the school. In particular, they appreciate the strong and purposeful leadership provided by the headteacher and the high level of commitment, shown by all the staff, to providing the pupils with very good support, guidance and pastoral care.
- 58 All of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are of the opinion that the school is well led and managed, that it expects its pupils to work hard and that it helps them to become mature and responsible. They all agree that their children like school and are making good progress. The vast majority consider teaching to be good. They are comfortable approaching the school with problems or questions concerning their children and feel the school works closely with them and keeps them well informed in relation to their children's attainment and progress. Almost all parents are of the view that behaviour in the school is good. The great majority consider the school provides an interesting range of activities outside the classroom and gives pupils the right amount of work to do at home. Inspection findings support all these positive views.

- 59 Parents and carers make a very good contribution to their children's learning inside school and at home. A number of parents help in the Nursery and in the main school, with reading, art and design, role play activities and information and communication technology. Grandparents come into school to talk to the pupils about their lives, as part of the programme of study for history. During the inspection, a grandmother talked to the Year 6 pupils about her work and experiences during World War II. The pupils were enthralled at her account of how a bomb had been dropped on Skelmersdale and how, at a later stage in her life, she had met Winston Churchill. The lesson was of the highest quality and the pupils' response was excellent. Parents and carers give strong support to the home-school reading scheme and to homework in general.
- 60 The overall quality of the information provided for parents and carers is very good. The governing body's annual report, weekly newsletters and regular correspondence help to keep parents fully informed with regard to the life and work of the school and its policies and procedures. Information provided in the prospectus includes details of the aims of the school, the curriculum and the special educational needs policy. A very helpful "Get to know your child's teacher" evening is held in the autumn term, when teachers talk to parents about the curriculum for the coming year and provide them with written information about the topics to be covered during the year. This information equips parents to support their children's learning by, for example, visiting places of interest, retrieving information from the internet or borrowing books from the library.
- 61 Parents and carers are kept well informed in relation to their children's attainment and progress. A formal parents' meeting is held in the spring term, when parents can discuss their children's progress with class teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs meet with teachers at least twice a year, to review their children's individual education plans. Pupils' annual written reports are helpful and informative. They include details of the pupils' personal and social development, as well as their attainment and progress in all areas of the curriculum. Parents and carers are encouraged to bring their children into school in the mornings, and this gives them ample opportunities to speak to the headteacher, look at their children's work and talk to class teachers.
- 62 Parents' and carers' views are sought regularly, through questionnaires. This gives the school a good insight into what pleases parents most and what they would like to see improved. The school values the parents' views and ideas and the contribution they have made to school improvement. During the inspection the parents voiced their appreciation for the courses and curriculum meetings which are arranged for them. These help to keep parents informed of new teaching methods, particularly in English and mathematics.
- 63 The parents and carers are very supportive of initiatives to raise funds for charity, for school funds and for the Year 5/6 holiday fund. Following a recent incident of vandalism, parents, friends of the school and local residents generously donated money to help replace the broken windows. Their response to the incident has been overwhelming, giving an indication of how highly the school is valued by parents, carers and the local community.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 64 High calibre leadership and management are provided by the headteacher and staff at different levels of responsibility. The dedicated headteacher sets the tone for this school. He provides strong, purposeful leadership, and is supported very effectively by a knowledgeable and committed deputy headteacher and hard working staff. The headteacher works closely with the governing body to provide clear vision and direction for the work of the school. The high calibre of leadership and management is an important factor in the school's very good progress since the last inspection in 1997.
- 65 Appropriate governing body committees are in place, and they work very effectively to ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Governors show a very good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement, and their constructive involvement in the work of the school contributes significantly towards continuing improvements. The careful attention given to monitoring school performance is a good feature in the work of the governing body. The headteacher provides regular information to enable governors to compare the school's performance with similar schools as well as the national picture. The information from this analysis is used to identify appropriate targets for improvements. The governing body seeks to secure best quality and value when purchasing resources and arranging for work to be completed. In recent years, work to develop Nursery provision and the initiative to replace classroom furniture provide good illustrations of the governing body's success in securing best value and quality on behalf of the school.
- 66 The school's mission statement includes the following aims:  
The school sets out to:
- provide a caring Christian environment with a happy, friendly and calm atmosphere;
  - encourage good Christian values and high moral standards;
  - provide standards of excellence in teaching, learning and working together;
  - encourage each child to grow into the best young person he or she is capable of becoming.
- The school's commitment to these aims is reflected consistently in all of its work.
- 67 Co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of the curriculum play an important part in producing and updating subject policies and schemes of work, which help teachers to set appropriately challenging work for pupils at all levels of attainment. Very good procedures are in place to enable co-ordinators to monitor provision and standards in their subjects. These include regular observation of teaching in all subjects.
- 68 The school is highly successful in ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or level of attainment, are included and challenged appropriately during work in all aspects of the curriculum. The governing body is very successful in ensuring that the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are addressed successfully.
- 69 Very effective arrangements are in place for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, which form an important part of the school's strategy for performance management. Senior managers and relevant co-ordinators visit classrooms regularly to evaluate teaching and the quality of curricular provision. Criteria for evaluation are agreed with class teachers in advance. The feedback from lesson evaluations is



considered during interviews with individual teachers, and personal targets for improvement are agreed for the year ahead. The standard and quality of work produced by pupils are monitored at regular intervals by the headteacher and relevant co-ordinators. Highly effective use is made of information technology to store information, track pupils' progress and support the day-to-day running of the school.

- 70 Very strong emphasis is placed on the professional development of staff. Teachers, support staff and governors are given opportunities to attend relevant training, and there are appropriate procedures for supporting the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff who are new to the school. The requirements for staff appraisal are met very effectively through the annual personal interviews, which form an important part of the school's performance management procedures.
- 71 A well established school development planning process enables staff and governors to suggest issues for attention. Parents' views on various matters are sought through questionnaires as well as on-going informal consultations, and are taken into account before priorities for the school plan are confirmed. Subject co-ordinators produce their own action plans which are appropriately fed in to the main school plan. Priorities for improvement are listed clearly in the school development plan. Action plans are well presented and include appropriate information about timescales, personnel with particular responsibilities for initiatives, cost implications and criteria for measuring success.
- 72 Effective school development planning means that educational priorities for attention are accurately identified, and this results in very good use of all available funding. Good use is made of the element within the school's budget for making provision for pupils with special educational needs. The governors' finance committee liaises closely with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, local education authority's finance support service and highly effective school administration, to oversee financial matters efficiently and effectively. Very good use is made of information technology to monitor spending and ensure effective financial support. The most recent audit of finance, carried out by the local education authority, found financial systems operating in the school to be satisfactory. All of the recommendations for improvements made by the auditors have been implemented.
- 73 The highly effective management of all resources contributes significantly towards the school's efficiency and the very good provision it makes for its pupils. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education; they are managed and deployed very effectively. The establishment of a Nursery class since the last inspection represents a significant improvement in provision. However, the absence of a separate and secure outdoor play area for children in the Nursery restricts important aspects of their physical development. Lack of space prevents the school from developing a central library. Throughout the school, standards of cleaning are high, and the quality of the internal environment is considerably enhanced by displays of pupils' work, which are of a high standard and used effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements, support their learning and promote enquiry.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74 In order to raise standards and quality of work further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- i) \*improve further the standards achieved by pupils in written English by:
    - ensuring that sufficient opportunities are created, and time allowed, for pupils to write at length for a variety of purposes;
    - avoiding over dependence on unchallenging work sheets, particularly in history and geography lessons, and providing appropriate opportunities for pupils to write in their own words about their studies.  
(paragraph references: 8, 29, 96, 97, 98, 100, 125, 130)
  - ii) improve outdoor provision for children at the Foundation Stage by:
    - creating a separate and secure play area for children in the Nursery class.  
(paragraph references: 25, 36, 73, 85)
- \* Improving standards in written English is included as a key priority for attention in the current school development plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	21	19	10	1	0	0
Percentage	9	38	34	18	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	240
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	46

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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	17	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (79)	81 (87)	88 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (79)	88 (95)	92 (71)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

\* As the number of boys or girls is fewer than 10 the data on pupils' performance in terms of gender is not published.

### 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	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	12	14
	Girls	12	14	14
	Total	21	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (71)	79 (61)	85 (71)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	13
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	25	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (68)	79 (62)	82 (76)
	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	203	1	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	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.83
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	210.5

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	609,526
Total expenditure	607,567
Expenditure per pupil	2,292
Balance brought forward from previous year	56,968
Balance carried forward to next year	58,927

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.57
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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	253
Number of questionnaires returned	72

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	21	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	82	18	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	79	20	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	35	4	3	2
The teaching is good.	81	18	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	75	24	1	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	11	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	88	12	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	79	20	0	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	90	10	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	90	10	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	31	6	0	7

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

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

75 At this stage of their education, the children are taught in the Nursery and Reception classes. School records reveal that on entry to the Nursery, attainment levels are generally below those found nationally.

76 Good quality teaching, at the Foundation Stage, particularly in the Reception class, contributes significantly to the good progress made by the vast majority of the children, including those with special educational needs. Most are on course to achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals in all areas of learning by the beginning of Year 1.

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

77 This area of learning is emphasised strongly, so that the children quickly demonstrate confidence working with adults and each other. From their earliest experiences, the children are helped to develop an increasing understanding of appropriate behaviour and of what is right and wrong. The children enjoy the activities provided and respond positively to the rules and routines that are in place. Sensitive teaching throughout the Foundation Stage helps the children in the progressive development of their social skills. Over time, the children learn to share equipment, take turns and co-operate sensibly with each other and with the adults who help them. Very good relationships exist at the Foundation Stage. All of the adults provide good role models for the children. Staff have a good understanding of the children's needs and activities are generally well organised, relevant and interesting. A strong feature in the Reception class is the way children are encouraged to exercise an increasing degree of choice in selecting activities, which helps them to develop a measure of independence in their learning. This is not so apparent in the Nursery, where teaching is sometimes over-directed and creates insufficient opportunities for children to show initiative.

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

78 The Nursery children enjoy listening to stories. These are well chosen and capture the interest of the children. For example, they listened carefully to "The Rainbow Fish", which was read in an exciting way. They concentrated well but few were able to use their own words adequately when responding to the questions about the story line. They needed much prompting and encouragement. The Nursery children are not inclined to turn readily to books. As a consequence, there is scope in the daily planning of activities to encourage a greater interest in books than the children currently display.

79 The Reception children take more interest in books. Most of the children enjoy books. They know how words and pictures carry meaning. They are beginning to build up a bank of words that they can read confidently. Some of the higher attaining children demonstrate a good knowledge of letter sounds. They use this knowledge to good effect in writing simple, regular words and to make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words. Almost all of the Reception children can write their names using upper and lower case letters correctly. Throughout the Foundation Stage, good assessment procedures result in the early identification of children with special educational needs. Good quality planning and helpful adult interaction enable these children to play a full part in lessons and their progress is monitored carefully.

### **Mathematical development**

- 80 Well planned activities enable the children to make good progress from a low starting point on entry to the Nursery. They can recall a growing repertoire of number songs and rhymes which they enjoy. However, they find it more difficult to count, sort and order objects through their play. Good adult support in the 'seaside café' helps the youngest children to make progress saying and using number names and handling money, although few can record correctly when writing numbers. The adaptation of the National Numeracy Strategy is very successful in the Reception classes. The children demonstrate a growing understanding of the order of numbers. Most demonstrate reliable counting skills and show confidence in recalling number bonds to 10 with much accuracy. They demonstrate increasing skills using terms such as 'more than' and 'less than' when ordering numbers. Many are beginning to realise the efficiency of starting with the larger number when totalling amounts. The older children make increasing progress in developing their understanding of shape, space and measures, through well taught formal activities and through exploratory play. During such occasions the children are helped to develop their language relating to size and position. For example, this occurred during outdoor play where the storyline required the children to drive a range of numbered vehicles and to come to the garage to fill up with petrol. As one child remarked, "You stay behind me because I only want £23 of petrol!"

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

- 81 Many of the Nursery children show developing confidence and co-ordination when engaged in computer work selecting and clicking onto screen images. By the Reception stage, the children use various programmes successfully to support their literacy and numeracy learning and to work creatively. For example, two pupils demonstrated good ICT skills designing a rainbow in full colour, manipulating the mouse effectively and matching colours very well to their desired intentions.
- 82 At the Foundation Stage, the children are helped to understand the passage of time through talking about the days of the week, birthdays, the changing seasons and events in their own lives captured through photographs. Through these activities, the children are beginning to understand more fully the concept of past and present.
- 83 Many of the Nursery children have fairly limited dexterity and poor co-ordination and, as a consequence, find construction work quite difficult. However, they make good progress during the Foundation Stage and demonstrate increasing skills in shaping, assembling and joining materials by the end of their time in the Reception classes. This is because of the good teaching they receive. Here they are taught basic skills and they also have time to explore and experiment with the materials available.
- 84 The teaching introduces the children to many interesting features in the world around them. For example, in Reception, one group with their teacher observed carefully how their beans had grown over a period of time. They were extremely interested in their observations and were excited by their examination of the root system and the height of the beans after three weeks. They used relevant vocabulary when talking about their observations, including roots, shoots, leaves, stems and growth.

### **Physical development**

- 85 In the Nursery, the development of the children's skills in this area of their learning is restricted because there is no secure outdoor play area. This is a major weakness of the provision, although staff do what they can to provide some outdoor experiences which they supervise closely. Inside the main building, in the large hall, the Reception children make good use of the available space during physical education lessons.

Outdoors, the children move confidently and show good awareness of space. The Reception children demonstrate good ball skills during throwing, striking and catching activities.

- 86 In the classroom, the Nursery children, although starting from a very low baseline soon respond to the activities provided. They make progress in handling a variety of mark-making tools, modelling tools and malleable materials. In the Reception classes, they demonstrate developing skills of control and co-ordination. They show increasing confidence and understand how to use equipment safely.

### **Creative development**

- 87 Throughout the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching is generally good. Well-planned, appropriately resourced and effectively organised activities enable the children to make good progress in their learning. Frequent opportunities are provided for the children to paint, model, engage in imaginative play and experience a range of musical activities. For example, some of the Reception children were helped to produce their own storyline in the 'giant's house'. They used much imagination and lively language, with one child in the role of the giant remarking, "I'll grind your bones". Another child mischievously retorted, "Well you won't find the golden eggs", as he hid them in the very large Wellington boots he had chosen to wear.
- 88 Although the teaching generally promotes the children's creative skills to good effect, the planning of work in three dimensions is under-emphasised. When this does occur, the work is often over-directed so that the children have too few opportunities to develop their own creative ideas during the Foundation Stage.
- 89 The provision for music is generally good. In the Nursery, the children acquire increasing skills singing a growing repertoire of songs and playing a range of percussion instruments. However, too little attention is given to helping the children to identify and name accurately the instruments they use. Through practical experiences, the Reception children demonstrate increasing skills naming and playing a range of appropriate instruments. In general, there is scope for creating more opportunities for children to examine and explore different musical instruments.
- 90 In the creative, as in all other areas of the curriculum, the outstanding contribution made towards the children's learning by highly competent and committed support staff underpins the good progress made by the children.

## **ENGLISH**

- 91 By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are similar to those found nationally. This indicates a better picture than the 2002 National Curriculum test results, which found the pupils' overall performance in English to be below the national average, although better than that of pupils in similar schools. Overall standards in English at the end of Year 6 are also similar to the national average. This again is a better picture than that indicated by the 2002 national tests. At both key stages, the improvements are due to the hard work of staff, drawing effectively on the advice and guidance provided by advisers and consultants from the local education authority.
- 92 Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment make very good progress in relation to their prior learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. They benefit greatly from very good quality support provided by teaching and support staff, and

from the setting of work which is appropriately challenging. The programme of work in English meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum. All pupils are included and extended appropriately in all aspects of the work, and care is taken to meet their needs in terms of gender, race, attainment and background.

- 93 In speaking and listening, pupils throughout the school make good progress. By the time they reach Year 2, most achieve standards which are appropriate for their age, and a significant proportion achieve higher standards. The increasing confidence and skills of younger pupils are apparent during literacy lessons, when they respond quickly to questions arising from the text and interact enthusiastically with their teachers. Regular opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to engage in role play activities contribute significantly towards their progress. In Year 2, for example, groups of pupils, using the puppet theatre, created stories and played the parts of various characters with confidence and very good expression. By the age of seven, most pupils show a capacity to listen carefully and respond appropriately to what others say, and some higher attaining pupils show a growing ability to talk and listen confidently in different contexts.
- 94 Pupils continue to make good progress at Key Stage 2, in Years 3 to 6. They show a growing ability to vary the use of vocabulary and the amount of detail during discussion, taking account of the purpose and audience. The pupils benefit greatly from regular opportunities to contribute during literacy lessons. In Year 6, for example, pupils communicated their ideas successfully and accurately, when asked to suggest how different types of imagery could be used to create effective description. By the time pupils reach the age of 11, they talk and listen confidently in a wide range of contexts, including whole-school assemblies and whole-class and group settings. Participation in school productions enables many of them to enhance and extend their skills. The ability of an increasing proportion of higher attaining pupils to vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listener is a strong feature in their learning. This was apparent, for example, when they talked about the books they had read. They conveyed their love of reading and their preferences for various authors very successfully, and talked enthusiastically about the characters and events in their favourite books.
- 95 In reading, pupils make good progress during their time in the school. By Year 6, most achieve standards which are at least appropriate for their age, and a substantial proportion of pupils exceed these levels. The school's strong commitment to working with parents in order to raise literacy standards is reflected in the pupils' progress. Many benefit considerably from the support of parents, particularly during the early years of their education. The strong emphasis placed on the development of phonic and spelling skills, during literacy lessons for younger pupils, contributes significantly towards the good progress made by pupils up to the age of seven. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, the class focused on words containing the long vowel sounds "oa". In Year 2, pupils added the suffixes "ful" and "ly" to words such as "joy" and "sad". In both lessons, the pupils completed these tasks successfully, demonstrating a good grasp of key sounds and a growing understanding of spelling and the use of language. By the age of seven, most pupils use appropriate strategies to help them read unfamiliar words, and a substantial proportion of higher attaining pupils read with increasing fluency, showing a good understanding of what they read. Older pupils build successfully on this good start. An increasing proportion read expressively a wide range of stories, plays and poems, and show growing competence in finding information from reference materials and the Internet. By Year 6, a significant minority of higher attaining pupils achieve standards in reading which are above those expected for their age. They read challenging novels of their own choice, and discuss

the plot, characters and style of books, confidently, showing a good understanding of their reading.

- 96 In writing, although pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to prior attainment, standards are not as good as they are in speaking and listening and reading. The school has identified written English as a continuing priority for attention and initiatives for bringing about improvements are beginning to have a significant effect. Throughout the school, most pupils now achieve appropriately for their age, and an increasing proportion achieve higher standards. Younger pupils benefit greatly from the attention given to developing skills in writing for different purposes. For example, pupils in Year 2 showed a good early grasp of simple instructional writing when they produced sets of guidelines for various tasks, such as planting and caring for a seed, and explaining the route to school. They produce good quality writing about personal experiences, incorporating new learning, such as the use of connectives, to enrich their writing. By the time they are seven, most pupils are able to write in a sequence of sentences, making appropriate use of capital letters and full stops, and generally spelling simple words correctly. An increasing number of higher attaining pupils write with growing imagination, showing good skills in spelling more complex words.
- 97 At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on previous work. Most achieve appropriate standards for their age by the end of Year 6, and a smaller proportion exceed these levels. By the time pupils reach the age of 11, their writing is generally lively and thoughtful. Most use an appropriate range of punctuation with accuracy, and understand how to construct paragraphs. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils benefit greatly from good and, at times high, quality teaching during literacy lessons, which challenges effectively those at all levels of attainment, particularly during the whole class elements of lessons. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, for example, pupils considered how the appropriate use of adjectives, similes, metaphors, alliteration, onomatopoeia and personification might enhance and enrich their writing. Pupils work productively during group and independent activities, but are sometimes not allowed sufficient time to develop their ideas during writing activities, and this restricts progress, particularly of higher attaining pupils. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, their handwriting is increasingly neat and fluent, spelling generally accurate and punctuation usually used correctly. A growing number of pupils organise their writing in a particularly imaginative way, using increasingly adventurous vocabulary.
- 98 The well planned use of ICT contributes greatly towards the development of pupils' literacy skills. Pupils enjoy seeing good quality presentation of their work, often incorporating illustrations downloaded from the Internet or other sources, to complement the text. Pupils extend their research skills significantly by using the Internet and CD-Rom facilities to search for information for work in subjects such as history and geography. Many lessons in other subjects provide valuable opportunities for pupils to use and apply their growing writing skills. However, this is not a consistent feature in all subjects. In some history and geography lessons, for example, over dependence on worksheets, which too often require single word answers, restricts opportunities for pupils to write in their own words about their studies.
- 99 Throughout the school, the quality of teaching in English is generally good and often very good, particularly at Key Stage 1. Careful preparation helps teachers to be secure in their subject knowledge, and very good quality lesson planning is a strong feature in the subject. The increasingly effective use of ICT to present lessons, using interactive whiteboards, is a growing feature in the school and outstanding in some classes. Texts for the introductory element of the literacy lesson are carefully

selected. Careful explanation and highly effective questioning skills help to capture pupils' attention and interest. Teachers convey a strong sense of their own enjoyment, and use humour effectively to stimulate, encourage and introduce a sense of fun into pupils' learning. This creates a positive context for learning, where pupils know that their efforts will be valued and are not afraid of making a mistake.

- 100 In many classes, the very effective contribution of support staff is of particular benefit during group work, achieving a high level of interaction between pupils and adults, and helping pupils to work productively. The high expectations which teachers have of their pupils is a strong feature in many lessons. They use a rich and varied vocabulary when introducing new learning and questioning pupils, and encourage their pupils to use correct terminology when referring to rules and conventions of the English language. This enables pupils to extend their vocabulary significantly as they progress through the school. The enthusiasm of teachers to cover as much ground as possible during the whole-class elements of lessons is a consistent feature throughout the school. However, there are times when this results in too little time being allowed for pupils to engage in learning activities. This sometimes restricts the performance of higher attaining pupils, who are often not given sufficient time to develop their ideas and achieve the quality of which they are capable.
- 101 Very good class management is a strong feature in the teaching throughout the school, and contributes significantly towards the high standard of behaviour in lessons. Pupils show very good attitudes towards their work and are keen to achieve their best. During all aspects of the work, teachers take care to include and involve all pupils. Their questioning takes care not to favour either gender, and learning activities challenge pupils at all levels of attainment effectively.
- 102 Hard work by the subject co-ordinator contributes very effectively towards good improvements in provision and standards in the subject. Arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching throughout the school have been strengthened significantly since the last inspection. These arrangements, together with the very successful implementation of the National Strategy for Literacy, contribute towards continuing improvements in the quality of teaching in English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 103 In Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above those found nationally. This represents a better picture than the most recent National Curriculum test results which showed the pupils' performance in Year 6 to be similar to the national average although well above the average for pupils in similar schools. Throughout the school, the great majority of the pupils, including those with special educational needs make very good progress during their time in the school. The improvement in pupils' progress and attainment is due to the highly successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the very good quality of the teaching overall.
- 104 By the age of seven, the pupils have a very good understanding of basic number work. They know how to read, write and order numbers to 100 and beyond. The pupils of high attainment are particularly adept when inserting missing numbers on a 1 to 100 grid. Very effective teaching gives careful attention to mental work and the Year 2 pupils demonstrate quick recall of basic number facts. The pupils progress very well in their understanding of place value. They know that the position of a digit signifies its value and use this concept well when ordering numbers in various sequences. The pupils make very good progress in their calculation work, selecting and using appropriate addition and subtraction processes.

- 105 The older pupils continue to make very good progress in numeracy. This reflects the high quality of the planning in Years 3 to 6, where the work builds successfully upon the pupils' previous learning. In addition, the teachers employ effective strategies for teaching numeracy. As a consequence, the pupils develop an increasing understanding of place value and show very good progress in computation work using accurately the four rules of number. By Year 6, the pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the extension of the number system. This is reflected in their work using negative numbers and in their knowledge and understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages.
- 106 In each class, the pupils benefit from a range of well-planned activities and experiences which support effectively their work related to shape, space and measures. The teachers introduce the pupils to precise mathematical language. As a result, the pupils develop a good knowledge of associated terminology which they use effectively when describing the properties of three and two-dimensional shapes. Many of the older pupils understand how to read scales with increasing accuracy and can record measurements using decimal notation. By Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of perimeters, area and volume and know how to use simple formulae when calculating solutions to problems. They know how to measure angles to the nearest degree and show good accuracy and understanding when calculating the third angle in a triangle when only two angles are given.
- 107 Throughout the school, the teaching provides the pupils with appropriate challenges. The older pupils are introduced to handling data. They make good progress collecting information, recording their results and interpreting their findings using an appropriate range of graphs, charts, frequency tables and diagrams. They are able to draw conclusions from the statistics and they also reveal their developing understanding of measures of average. The pupils understand how to use correctly appropriate language such as mode, median and range in the course of this work.
- 108 The pupils benefit from carefully planned activities which consolidate their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in science, older pupils constructed graphs to record differences in pulse rate after various activities. In a class of younger pupils they used the Terrapin Logo programme to draw a variety of shapes, devising accurate commands and eventually progressing so that they could turn their shapes in various ways.
- 109 The overall quality of the teaching is very good. High quality planning, coupled with the teachers' expertise in teaching numeracy, are significant features of the provision in mathematics, which enable the pupils to make very good progress during their time in the school. Assessment is an integral part of the planning. It is used very successfully to keep a close check on progress and to set the pupils clear and realistic targets in their work. Individual elements of the numeracy lessons are taught confidently and with due regard to national guidance. The mental starter is generally lively and challenging and the pupils enjoy the mental agility involved. They take much delight in explaining the many different strategies they use. The quality of the direct teaching element of the lessons is often of a high order. For example, in Year 5, very effective use of the ICT 'Powerpoint' programme helped the pupils develop their problem solving skills using decimal fractions to three places. By the end of the lesson, the pupils could estimate reliably, calculate accurately and check their results using inverse operations with much confidence and competence. Group tasks are very well organised and the work is usually set at just the right level of difficulty for those at different levels of attainment. Although the final plenary part of lessons helps the pupils to consolidate learning and celebrate good achievement, its use to extend the



pupils' thinking does not receive enough attention in some classes. The high quality of the support provided by well briefed classroom assistants and volunteer helpers is a significant feature of the provision which does much to support the pupils' learning and progress. This is particularly so for the lower attaining pupils and for those who have special educational needs.

- 110 The school has made much progress since the last inspection. For example, work is now matched more accurately to the needs of the pupils at different levels of attainment. As a consequence a good proportion of Year 2 pupils now reach Level 3 and more Year 6 pupils reach Level 5 in the National Curriculum tests. In addition, the teaching has improved and is more successful in helping the pupils acquire improved skills using and applying mathematics in a range of contexts.
- 111 The subject is extremely well co-ordinated by the highly competent deputy headteacher. Assessment results are analysed carefully and the results are used effectively to raise standards even further. The organisation of the subject enables all of the pupils, irrespective of gender, race, social background or level of attainment to have access to all aspects of the subject. Mathematics makes an important contribution to the aims of the school. The subject is resourced adequately and is allocated an appropriate amount of time. The content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **SCIENCE**

- 112 Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected for the ages of the pupils, and higher than at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress in relation to their prior learning. Higher attaining pupils achieve particularly well, due to the challenging work they are given. Their very good performance is consistent with the 2002 national test results, which showed that 45 per cent of Year 6 pupils achieved Level 5 in science. The improvement in standards is due to the school's hard work in improving provision for pupils to engage regularly in relevant and challenging practical work in scientific enquiry. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets, due to the good quality support they are given in lessons.
- 113 By the age of seven, the great majority of pupils have made good progress in all areas of science. They gain good levels of understanding about life processes and know that all animals have life processes in common. For example, in their work about snails, pupils in Year 2 made very good progress in learning about the snails' preferred living conditions and their food preferences. Most pupils make good progress in their understanding of commonly found materials and their properties. They can name the visible properties of common materials and know about the processes by which materials may be changed, such as heating and cooling. In their own investigations, such as chocolate and ice melting and bread toasting they learn effectively that some changes are reversible while others are not. They use appropriate vocabulary to describe the changes they observe. Most pupils develop good levels of knowledge about physical processes in the world around them. They know that pushes and pulls cause objects, such as toy cars, to move at different speeds, and are beginning to be aware of forces such as gravity and friction. They know that electricity will make components such as a bulb or a motor work. In their practical investigative work, pupils make good progress in developing their science enquiry skills. The great majority of pupils can make simple predictions based on everyday experiences and record their observations in tables and charts. Although

most pupils are able to use standard and non-standard measurements in their observations, more opportunities could be provided for pupils to develop this aspect of scientific enquiry.

- 114 By the age of eleven, many pupils achieve standards of scientific knowledge and understanding that are above those expected for their ages in all areas of the subject. The great majority develop a very good scientific vocabulary and use this consistently in class work and written explanations. Most pupils develop good levels of understanding about life processes. In their studies of the human body, they gain a good understanding of skeletal structure and the functions of the principle organs. In a lesson about habitats, pupils in Year 5 made good progress in understanding the factors involved in survival in different environments and could explain how animals such as seals are adapted to exist in extreme conditions. The pupils gain good levels of understanding about materials and their properties. The great majority understand the processes of evaporation and condensation and know that water can exist as a solid, liquid or gas. They know that heat and cold can bring about both reversible and irreversible change in different materials and higher attaining pupils recognise when chemical change has taken place. The pupils learn very successfully about physical processes. In many investigative contexts, they learn how forces such as gravity and friction affect the movement and position of objects, such as spinners. They learn very effectively about magnetic forces and the effects of different components in a circuit. Scientific enquiry skills are well developed throughout the key stage, in a good range of investigative contexts. In practical investigations, such as the increase in pulse rate after exercise and the correlation between the size of parachute and rate of drop, pupils learn very effectively how to plan and carry out reliable scientific enquiry. In Year 6, pupils demonstrated good scientific skills when they investigated the strength of different plaster of Paris mixtures. They were able to plan and carry out a fair test, make predictions, measure variables and record results with reasonable accuracy. In other work, they show good interpretive skills and are able to draw conclusions from their findings and graphs, expressed in appropriate scientific terms.
- 115 The quality of teaching in science is consistently good throughout the school and is a significant factor in the above average attainment of the pupils and the good progress they make. All teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and are successful in communicating scientific knowledge and understanding to their pupils. They have high expectations of what their pupils can do and are very successful in planning appropriate learning activities for the ages and abilities of the pupils. Throughout the school, teachers have very effective strategies for managing their pupils with the result that inappropriate behaviour in lessons is rare. The recent focus on the development of practical, investigative contexts for learning in science has been very successful in motivating and challenging pupils at all levels of attainment, and has created a very positive climate for learning. The teachers know their pupils well and use assessment very effectively to provide appropriate levels of challenge in science lessons. Most teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy and literacy skills in measuring variables, constructing graphs, writing independent reports of their investigations and explaining their findings. Although ICT is used appropriately for research purposes, there is room for further development of its use, particularly in environmental sampling and data handling.
- 116 The subject is well managed and co-ordinated. The co-ordinator carries out her role conscientiously and thoroughly. She has a very good overview of standards and teaching in science, through regular monitoring and detailed analysis of test results at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. As a result of this careful monitoring, the school's priorities for the subject are entirely appropriate to continue to move the

subject forward. Assessment arrangements for tracking the progress and learning needs of individuals and groups of pupils are good. Books and resources for teaching science are only just adequate to meet the needs of the subject, and there is scope for improvement.

## **ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 117 By Years 2 and 6, standards in art and design and design and technology are above those expected for the pupils' age, and pupils at all levels of attainment make very good progress during their time in the school. The programme of work in both subjects meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum. All pupils have access to all aspects of the curriculum and the school is successful in ensuring that their needs in terms of gender, race, level of attainment and background are met fully.
- 118 In art and design, pupils at Key Stage 1 respond to and explore ideas enthusiastically. They use a variety of materials very effectively to design and make their own illustrations and models. They produce good sketches, using pencil and charcoal, and use colour confidently and effectively to complete pictures, which are often of a very good standard. Careful preparation by teachers and support staff, who draw well on ideas from famous artists, provide pupils with a rich variety of stimuli. This often contributes towards high quality work by the pupils, such as the whole-class version of Van Gogh's "Sunflowers", which is displayed in the classroom. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to benefit from a rich variety of experiences and make consistently good progress. They work effectively with a wide range of materials in both one and two dimensions. In Year 6, for example, pupils were inspired by the work of John Constable. They gathered visual information from close observation of the colours in the trees, in the school grounds, before producing very good quality sketches as a basis for their final landscape work.
- 119 In design and technology, pupils make very good progress in extending their skills in designing and making a product and evaluating what they have produced. By the age of seven, pupils are able to generate ideas and plan what to do next. They draw well on their prior learning to help them make decisions. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, make increasingly realistic plans which indicate a growing understanding of the design brief. As pupils progress through the school, their ability to meet certain criteria becomes a common feature in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 4 designed a battery powered light to meet given criteria. Older pupils make very effective use of techniques for creating movement. In Year 5, for example, pupils explored ways of changing rotary motion into linear motion through the use of a cam mechanism, before completing their designs. During the course of the year, pupils in Year 6 use electric motors to drive models, such as a fairground ride, which they have created.
- 120 The teaching in both subjects is of high quality, promoting consistently good progress by pupils and high standards. Very careful planning and preparation of lessons in art and design, provide pupils with a rich variety of stimuli. The teaching of design and technology achieves a good balance between designing, planning, making and evaluating, and gives pupils access to a wide range of materials. In both subjects, class management is a very strong feature, which promotes an excellent response by pupils and contributes towards their outstanding behaviour. The very effective co-operation between class teachers and support staff results in a good level of intervention in the work of pupils, and this has a particularly positive effect on the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

- 121 Since the last inspection, the school has continued to improve provision in both subjects. High standards in art have been maintained and the range of learning experiences increased. Standards in design and technology, previously satisfactory, have improved significantly and are now above average for pupils' age.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 122 Standards in geography at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are generally appropriate for the ages of the pupils and a significant proportion of pupils exceed the expected levels. Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress in relation to their prior learning.
- 123 By the age of seven, the pupils have developed satisfactory levels of knowledge and skills in studies of their own locality and are beginning to be aware of other localities at home and overseas. In their work on the local area, the pupils learn that maps and plans can represent features of a place and express preferences about local amenities such as shops and transport. In their study of a locality overseas, the pupils develop a good understanding of how their own lives and surroundings differ from those of a family in Mexico. The pupils' geographical skills develop at an appropriate rate. In their work on Mexico, they used a CD ROM to research the location of Mexico and in their local studies they were able to plot routes on simple maps and plans. In a local transport survey, the pupils were able to collect information on forms of transport by making good use their mathematical tally skills.
- 124 By the age of 11, the pupils have built successfully on these early experiences and have developed satisfactory levels of knowledge and understanding of localities at home and overseas, geographical themes such as water and environmental issues in the local area. They make appropriate progress in developing their geographical skills but could do better in mapping skills and fieldwork. Pupils in Year 6 develop a satisfactory geographical vocabulary and are able to express views clearly on issues such as river pollution. However, they are less confident in describing the physical features of river systems. They have a sound grasp of the location of their own area within the British Isles and are familiar with the World Mercator. They are able to identify countries and continents with reasonable accuracy but are less competent in the identification of features on maps and plans and their mapping skills are not as well developed as they should be.
- 125 The quality of teaching in geography is generally satisfactory throughout the school, with some good teaching evident in some classes. Teachers have appropriate levels of subject knowledge and manage their pupils well in lessons. Most teachers use appropriate teaching strategies that give satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop their geographical skills, but there is room for more emphasis to be placed on this aspect in lessons. The teaching of geographical knowledge is usually satisfactory but sometimes fails to motivate the pupils. In lessons where teachers provide vivid learning experiences, the learning comes alive and is reflected in the quality of the work the pupils produce. In Year 5, some good work on the Indian village of Chembakolli motivated and interested the pupils because of the way in which they were able to respond to the learning on a personal basis, without over direction from the teacher. The work was well planned to provide an appropriate balance of knowledge and geographical skills and the pupils were able to apply their literacy skills to good effect in communicating their learning, without recourse to worksheets. In Year 2, a very good lesson about a Mexican family enabled the pupils to identify similarities and differences between their own lives and those of people in a small

Mexican village. The interest and excitement stimulated by the lesson was further enhanced when the teacher gave the pupils the opportunity to taste Mexican tortillas. A weakness in the teaching of geography in some classes is the over use of unchallenging worksheets. This tends to limit the progress pupils are able to make, particularly in the development of their geographical skills.

- 126 The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the priorities needed to develop the subject further. She has rightly identified the need for more fieldwork opportunities and the development of ICT to support the subject. Lessons and curriculum plans are being regularly monitored and reviewed. The school is planning to include more units from the national scheme of work to create better continuity and quality in the subject. Although resources are adequate for supporting learning in geography, there is a need for some replenishment, particularly of globes, aerial maps and photographs and materials for fieldwork and local area studies.

## HISTORY

- 127 Standards in history by the end of Year 6 are above those expected for the age of the pupils. The great majority of pupils make good progress in developing their history knowledge and understanding during the key stage and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is a similar picture to that found by the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, standards are generally appropriate for the pupils' age, and they make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding. However, the development of the skills required to learn about history is uneven throughout the school and is better in Years 3 to 6, due to the greater emphasis placed on skill development in these classes. In other year groups, the tendency to rely on worksheets places limitations on the pupils' learning and inhibits the progress they can make in the development of their history skills. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress but occasionally the work they are given is not matched well enough to their needs and they do not make as much progress as they should.
- 128 By the age of seven, the great majority of pupils develop satisfactory awareness of past lives and events, through topics such as The Great Fire of London, Florence Nightingale and Princess Victoria. They know some of the ways in which past lives differed from their own, such as in the jobs people did and in children's toys. Pupils in Year 1 brought the work of Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale vividly alive through role-play and pupils in Year 2 used photographic sources effectively to learn about nurses in the past. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in finding out about the past but there is room for better use of artefacts and ICT sources of information in this key stage.
- 129 By the age of 11, the pupils have made very good progress in their learning about the past and are developing a good sense of chronology. They build up a good knowledge base in their studies of past civilisations, such as the Romans and Ancient Greece. They learn in great detail about the lives of rich and poor in Victorian Britain and write with great empathy, in character, about what life was like for ordinary people. The pupils' history learning skills develop at a satisfactory rate throughout the key stage, and by Year 6 pupils have gained a very good understanding of the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence. They use sources such as the Internet, contemporary documents and living memory very effectively to find out about the past and know that not all evidence is reliable, due to different interpretations of historical events, such as in the use of propaganda in World War 2.

- 130 The quality of teaching in history is generally good overall but varies from satisfactory to excellent throughout the school. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers generally plan their lessons well to meet the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment, although occasionally the use of worksheets makes insufficient intellectual challenge for the higher attaining pupils and restricts the progress they are able to make. The teachers use appropriate strategies for teaching history to younger pupils, such as role-play, and learning is set in appropriate contexts for the ages and interests of the pupils. At Key Stage 2, the best lessons focus on developing the skills required for learning about history. A very good example of this was seen in Year 3, when pupils experienced what it was like to be archaeologists and used evidence from an 'archaeological dig' very effectively to find out about life and beliefs in Ancient Egypt. In a very successful lesson in Year 6, pupils made great strides in learning about World War 2 by questioning a visitor about her memories of wartime in Skelmersdale. They were amazed to discover that she had seen Winston Churchill and witnessed bombs dropping, and they realised the importance of first hand evidence in giving an accurate view of the past. In lessons where pupils are given opportunities to respond to learning in their own words, the subject makes a good contribution to literacy. At times, however, teachers rely too heavily on unchallenging worksheets, which provide pupils with too few opportunities to respond to learning in their own words and therefore restricts the development of writing skills.
- 131 Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and provides a good role model for teaching history. She has a very good understanding of her role in leading and developing the subject and has identified accurately, priorities for development. The school plans to make visits to museums and other historical sources a more prominent part of the history curriculum. Resources for teaching the subject are adequate but there is room for more artefacts and books to be made available in order to enrich learning still further. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 132 Standards in Years 2 and 6 are at least appropriate for the pupils' age, and are above average in some aspects of communicating information. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs make good progress during their time in the school. The programme of work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and ensures that all pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or attainment, have full access to all aspects of the curriculum for ICT. Valuable opportunities are created for pupils to extend their ICT skills during work in other subjects of the curriculum.
- 133 By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate good skills in using the keyboard to produce text, which they amend confidently by deleting or correcting mistakes, adjusting space or changing to capitals from lower case letters as required. They begin to recognise the importance of adopting an appropriate style for a particular purpose and are able to alter the size and colours of letters. Pupils at Key Stage 1 extend significantly their skills in handling information. They use ICT very effectively to present information, gathered during class surveys, in simple graphical forms. In Year 1, for example, pupils produced graphs to show their favourite pets and car colours. During the course of the year, pupils increase their understanding of control technology, and are able to enter a set of instructions to programme a robotic toy to travel certain distances and change direction.

- 134 At Key Stage 2, pupils build very effectively on the good start provided at Key Stage 1, and benefit greatly from regular lessons in ICT. They show increasingly good keyboard skills and are able to incorporate illustrations to complement the text. As they progress, pupils show increasing competence in editing and refining their work, and are able to highlight and move parts of the text to re-structure their writing. The increasing ability of older pupils to take advantage of ICT's potential for presenting information is a very impressive feature in their learning. They incorporate sound, pictures and text to produce impressive multimedia presentations. The way in which these facilities and the pupils' skills are used to enhance other aspects of school life, such as assemblies, is another very good feature of the ICT curriculum. High quality presentation is now a consistent feature in daily assemblies, helping to capture pupils' attention and stimulate interest. Pupils make very good progress in handling information, and recognise the need for care and accuracy when searching the Internet for information. By the end of their time in the school, pupils search for, enter, retrieve and interrogate information, and use various graphs to present information appropriately. Older pupils make effective use of spreadsheet to support their studies. In control technology, pupils extend their skills through the use of computer programs which involve the control of a screen image. They are able to enter a set of instructions to draw some quite complex geometrical shapes on screen. They make increasing use of ICT as a monitoring device. For example, as part of the work in science, older pupils used light and sound sensors linked to the computer to carry out accurate measurements in support of their investigations.
- 135 The quality of teaching is very good. Regular use of ICT facilities contributes significantly towards the good progress which pupils are making in extending their skills. Work is pitched at a level which indicates the teachers' high expectations of pupils. Pupils respond positively to challenging work and show confidence in learning through trial and error. Throughout the school, clear explanation and good questioning by teachers give pupils a good understanding of their own learning and help to stimulate interest. Pupils concentrate well and are able to apply effectively the guidance provided by their teachers. This helps them to make good use of opportunities to have access to computers. Class management is very good in all lessons, and this promotes very good behaviour and a high level of productivity by the pupils.
- 136 At both key stages, teachers take great care to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, background or level of attainment, have access to all aspects of the work in ICT and are included and extended by their learning experiences. The work in ICT is co-ordinated very effectively. This is an important factor in the very good progress achieved since the last inspection. Considerable improvements to resources, have contributed significantly towards a broader and more relevant curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

- 137 By the age of seven, pupils achieve standards in music which are appropriate for their age and similar to those found in the last inspection. By the age of eleven, standards are above the national expectation, which is a significant improvement on the previous inspection when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress during their time in school. The programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and ensures that all pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or level of attainment, are appropriately included and involved in all aspects of the work in music.

- 138 Younger pupils make satisfactory progress. They recognise how sounds can be made and changed, and they are able to repeat short rhythmic patterns. They can hold instruments correctly and keep to a steady pulse. They sing such songs as, "This Old Man", to their own accompaniment, and show a good sense of beat with appropriate rhythmic body movements, when singing such action hymns as, " I Reach Up High".
- 139 Pupils make very good progress in Years 3 to 6, increasing significantly their knowledge and skills in music. This was apparent, for example, when a class of older pupils successfully combined sounds in different layers to illustrate a picture of sunset over the sea. The pupils co-operate successfully in groups to perform their own compositions for the whole class. They use a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments to represent positive and negative images. Their ability to appraise their own and each others' performances effectively is a particularly good feature in their learning. Older pupils have a very clear understanding of pitch, dynamics, timbre and clusters of sounds. They demonstrate a capacity to listen attentively to the work of different composers and identify specific aspects within the music. In Year 5, for example, pupils listened to, 'More tranquillitas' and were able to identify a range of instruments accurately.
- 140 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and of how pupils learn. Lesson planning is detailed and follows the guidance provided by the National Curriculum. Teachers use a good variety of methods to stimulate pupils and sustain their interest. The pupils' work is assessed very effectively as the lesson proceeds, and good use is made of assessment information to inform planning and teaching. The pupils are well motivated and enjoy the subject. They collaborate effectively in composition and performance work and show respect for the instruments and resources they are using.
- 141 Music is co-ordinated very effectively. Good guidance is provided for class teachers. The subject is well resourced with a good range of instruments, although some are a little worn. The pupils' very good quality singing greatly enhances whole school assemblies and contributes towards the strong sense of spirituality which pervades the school. Their musical experience is enhanced significantly through their participation in school productions, such as "Oliver", and participation in events organised by local churches for celebrations such as Christingle, Harvest Festival and Education Sunday.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 142 By the time pupils reach the age of 11, standards are above those expected for their age, and similar to the findings of the last inspection. The vast majority of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress. Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements it was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to make a judgement on pupils' standards at the age of seven.



- 143 The older pupils demonstrate increasing skills in gymnastics. For example, in a Year 3 class, well structured teaching enabled the pupils to develop good control and fluency in their movements. As a result, the pupils were able to create and perform high quality linked sequences on the floor and on the apparatus. Their sequences included variations in the level, speed and direction of their movements.
- 144 By Year 6, the pupils develop very good skills in games. They are taught appropriate skills and are given sufficient time to practise and improve their techniques. For example, during a small-sided competitive game, the pupils in Year 6 demonstrated very good progress throwing, striking and catching with increasing control and accuracy.
- 145 At other times in the year, the pupils take part in dance and athletics. The older pupils participate in outdoor and adventurous activities. This occurs as part of a pattern of residential visits to areas such as Scarborough and North Wales. In addition, the juniors are taught swimming. By Year 6, almost all the pupils can swim 25 metres unaided and many perform at a higher level.
- 146 The quality of teaching is usually very good and reflects the high level of subject expertise. The pupils are taught an appropriate range of skills and techniques and are helped to refine and improve their movements. Classes are generally well managed and the pupils are provided with appropriate challenges. A good balance is achieved between teacher direction and purposeful activities which give the pupils adequate time to practise their skills. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the work was not sufficiently challenging to extend pupils appropriately and, as a result, the lesson lacked pace and the pupils lost motivation. In most lessons, however, the pupils respond enthusiastically. They change into appropriate dress and move to and from the hall, yard or field in an orderly manner. The teaching makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and enables all pupils, irrespective of gender, race or background to be included in all aspects of the work.
- 147 Physical education makes a good contribution to the aims of the school. The subject is well managed and is allocated an appropriate amount of time. The content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 148 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths. Pupils learn to have respect for points of view, values and customs that are different from their own. In the wide range of topics studied, many opportunities are created for promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils' very positive response to these is reflected in their attitudes, values and behaviour. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in the school.
- 149 In Year 1 and Year 2, religious education is linked closely to the themes for assemblies. The pupils study Christianity, and have a good knowledge of the Christmas story, the Easter story and the early life and work of Jesus. They have visited St. Paul's Church and they know the names of the altar, the font, the lectern, the pulpit and the organ, and understand their use. The pupils have a sound understanding of the Islamic faith. They know, for example, the importance of the Qur'an to Muslims, and understand that it should be treated with respect. They know

that the mosque is a place of worship and that Muslims have a duty to pray five times each day.

- 150 As part of their work in religious education, the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils learn about family life and friendship. As a result, they understand that they can talk to God through prayer and that they can ask God to help them to be kind and caring. They know it is important to ask for God's forgiveness when they have been unkind to someone.
- 151 By the end of Year 6, the pupils' understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths has increased significantly. Year 6 pupils are familiar with stories from the Old and the New Testaments and can see the relevance of these stories to their own lives. They understand why we have rules in society and know that Christians look to the Bible for guidance on how to live their lives.
- 152 The programme of study this year, for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, includes work on Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Pupils gain an increasing knowledge of the ways in which beliefs and practices have developed. The subject contributes effectively to the pupils' understanding of how different religious beliefs can affect the way people live their lives. It emphasises the importance of enabling people of all faiths and cultures to live together in peace and harmony.
- 153 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons carefully to avoid duplication of work across year groups and to ensure tasks are suitably differentiated for pupils at different levels of attainment. They make good use of resources and prepare interesting lessons which motivate the pupils to work hard. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on Sikhism, the teacher used a wide range of resources to teach the pupils about the activities that take place in the gurdwara. The pupils responded with a high level of interest and made good progress during the lesson.
- 154 The leadership and management of religious education are very good. The co-ordinator works hard to ensure that teachers' planning takes into account the requirements of the local education authority's new syllabus for religious education, which came into effect in September 2002. The vicar and curate of St. Paul's Church and the superintendent minister of Trinity Methodist Church come into school to lead assemblies and this helps to foster strong and vibrant links with the local Christian community.