

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BARTON ST LAWRENCE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Barton, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number:119562

Headteacher: Mrs J McCartney

Reporting inspector: Lynne Read  
21199

Dates of inspection: 23 - 25 September 2002

Inspection number: 248033

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Jepps Avenue Barton Preston Lancs
Postcode:	PR3 5AS
Telephone number:	01772 862664
Fax number:	01772 862664
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs N Detko
Date of previous inspection:	15 October 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21199	Mrs L Read	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Music Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? School's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19343	Mrs M Howell	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17767	Mrs S Power	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services

Strathblane House  
Ashfield Road  
Cheadle  
Stockport  
SK8 1BB

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Barton St Lawrence CE Primary School is situated in the semi-rural village of the same name, close to Preston. With 53 pupils currently attending, it is much smaller than most primary schools. Several pupils travel some distance from surrounding areas to attend. On balance, social and economic circumstances are above average. Children entering the Reception class have a range of learning experiences that are average overall for their age group. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, at just over 11 percent. A total of 15 percent of pupils are on the school's list of special educational needs and this figure is below average. Some have emotional and behavioural difficulties whilst others are not making the expected progress in communication and language. One pupil has a statement of special educational need which is in line with the average percentage. Most pupils have a British background and a small number have Asian and Indian heritage. All speak English as their first language. The school has seen several changes of teaching staff and membership of the governing body since the last inspection and the headteacher had been in post for one year at the time of the inspection.

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

Barton St Lawrence provides a good standard of education for its pupils and has many very good features. These include standards in English, mathematics and science that are well above average by the time pupils leave the school and the very good teaching in Years 3 to 6. Leadership and management by the headteacher, senior manager and governors are very good and clearly focused on constant improvement. The school provides good value for money.

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

- By the end of Year 6 standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are well above average. In information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, history, geography and physical education, attainment is above the expected level.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good and sometimes excellent. In the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 it is mostly good.
- The headteacher, senior manager and governors have succeeded in driving the school forward, maintaining the high standards at the end of Year 6 and improving those for Year 2 over the last year. As a strong team, they provide very good leadership and management.
- The broad curriculum provides good opportunities for learning in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 and a very good programme in Years 3 to 6 where imaginative links between subjects allow pupils to consolidate and extend the core skills in English, mathematics and ICT.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development, underpinned by the school's Christian foundation. The emphasis on pupils' personal development results in very good relationships, very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour.
- There are well established and very effective links between home and school. Parents support the school well and are very satisfied with the standard of education currently provided.

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

- Teaching and learning in early reading skills in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2.
- The involvement of all appropriate staff in the checking of children's progress in the Reception class, according to the recommended 'stepping stones' of progress, and in planning the next steps in learning.
- The use of assessment information to set clear targets for pupils in Years 1 to 4 to match the excellent practice in place in Years 5 and 6.

*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 good improvement overall since the last inspection. In many areas improvement is very good, but there have been some disruptions to the continuity of teaching and learning for the Reception and Year 1 and 2 pupils. As a result, there has been satisfactory improvement overall for this class over the four years. The key issues from the 1998 report have all been tackled successfully. Tasks are well planned for pupils to move their learning forward. In Years 3 to 6 the success of the approach is seen in the very good standards achieved. In Years 1 and 2, the impact on learning is seen in the improved standards of the 2002 test results. Pupils' learning is regularly checked and in her Year 5 and 6 class, the assessment co-ordinator has developed an excellent system of using the information to plan the next steps. Resources are in place for the higher attaining pupils throughout the school to make sure that they are fully stretched. Other notable improvements include very good links with parents, the employment of specialist teachers, the very active involvement and support of the governing body and very good improvements to leadership and management.

## 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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	C	A	A*	A*
Science	A	B	A*	A*

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children make good progress in most areas of learning in the Reception class and the vast majority are achieving what is expected by the time they enter Year 1. There have been good improvements to pupils' attainment in the Years 1 and 2 class over the last year. The dip in attainment for this age group in 2000 and 2001 was due to there being a succession of teachers in the class and this led to a loss of continuity in teaching and learning. There was also a significant number of pupils who left or entered the class. The results for newly arrived pupils do not accurately reflect the provision at the school. Since the appointment of a permanent teacher, standards have begun to rise. All those pupils who were expected to achieve the level 2 grade did so in reading, writing and mathematics and an above-average percentage of pupils attained the higher level 3 in writing and mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that attainment for the present group of pupils is above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading and science. The pupils in the 2001 group where attainment was generally below average, have made very good progress in Year 3 because their learning targets were accurately set and they benefited from very good teaching. Their attainment is now generally above average. Attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 is well above average when compared to national and similar school results. Results in 2001 for mathematics and science were so high that they put the school in the top 5 percent in the country. The results for 2002 and the inspection findings show that standards remain well above average overall with a very good percentage of pupils working at the higher level 5. The very good quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 leads to very good progress in many subjects. Pupils' attainment in ICT, history, geography, design and technology and physical education is above expectations. Trends of attainment show that high standards are maintained over time. Differences in the attainment grades for boys and girls are explained by the small year group numbers that mean each pupil carries a high number of percentage points. Where there is an imbalance of genders in the year group, or a higher-than-average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, this can distort the figures. In class, boys and girls learn equally well, as do pupils from all ethnic groups.





## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They are well-motivated in their lessons, maintain very good levels of concentration and work very hard to complete their tasks. They take a pride in their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The standard of behaviour is very good, both in lessons and during playtime. Pupils show great respect and consideration for others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and contribute to the 'family' atmosphere in school. Personal development is very well promoted. Pupils have a high standard of self-discipline and confidence. They collaborate very well, readily sharing ideas and resources with their friends.
Attendance	Attendance rates are well above average when compared to schools nationally. Pupils arrive in good time for lessons, eager to start work.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	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 quality of teaching is a strength of the school and underpins the very good results achieved by the pupils by the end of Year 6. Good lessons were seen in all the age groups with mainly very good and excellent sessions seen in Years 3 to 6. An appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy starts early in the Reception class and is continued effectively throughout school. This ensures that pupils acquire the basic skills well although the teaching and learning of early reading skills is not as good as for writing. Where some lessons were satisfactory rather than good, for the younger age group, the pace of teaching was slower and activities were not as precisely planned to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Throughout school, teachers tell pupils what they are going to learn, setting a clear purpose for each lesson. In Years 5 and 6, sessions usually conclude with a review of pupils' work. This allows for the good development of pupils' self evaluation skills and helps the teacher to assess their learning. Consequently, she is able to plan the next steps precisely, building in challenge and support. A notable feature of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is the linking of subjects so that pupils are able to practise and consolidate their skills in English, mathematics and ICT. In all classes, teachers set extended activities for the higher achievers that lead to attainment at the higher levels. Focused support for pupils who have special educational needs ensures that they meet their individual targets and make good progress. Teachers keep a constant eye on the attainment of all ethnic groups to ensure that it meets expectations.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a broad range of interesting learning opportunities across the curriculum, enhanced by specialist tuition in music, visits to places of interest and opportunities to engage in whole-school productions. There is strong emphasis on practical investigation, research and personal study that makes lessons very interesting. Links between subjects are very effective in promoting literacy, mathematical and ICT skills. The staff are extremely successful in ensuring that all pupils have full access to every aspect of school life.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. They have individual education programmes and targets that are agreed with parents and regularly reviewed. All pupils share in the varied opportunities offered by the school. A specialist teacher provides focused sessions for pupils and good advice for staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good. The strong Christian ethos encourages pupils to respect other people's views, values and feelings. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and are polite and helpful. There is a great sense of belonging and pride in the school. Pupils have a good awareness of local culture and have varied opportunities for multicultural education through the breadth of the curriculum. Development in this area is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Adults in the school form very good relationships with the pupils and care for their individual needs effectively. Positive strategies and reward systems underpin the promotion of good behaviour. Established routines provide a good standard of safety. Progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6 is constantly checked. The information gathered is very effectively used to plan the next steps in learning in Years 5 and 6. The system is not, at present, extended to the other age groups. Assessment systems in the Reception class are not well enough developed to include all staff in the checking of progress and the use of information to set clear targets for future learning.

Parents have a very high opinion of the school and support their children effectively at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good, active leadership. She is very well supported by the senior manager and provides the main driving force in maintaining a clear direction for the school. Very good management ensures strong team work amongst all staff. Subject managers have a good overview of teaching and learning in their subjects. They are successful in directing the planning for improvement through their annual reviews and reports.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The current team of governors use their good range of expertise and experience to provide very good leadership and management. They have the interests of the school at heart and are constantly striving to ensure the best provision for their pupils. Through the link governor system, they have a very good overview of the school's work and support the staff very well. Their active involvement in improvement planning gives them a very good view of the strengths of the school and a secure awareness of the priorities for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher keeps an accurate overall view of the quality of teaching, pupil performance and trends in attainment, very ably assisted by the assessment manager. An annual cycle of evaluation is in place and governors continually monitor the success of the school development plan by gathering evidence on how standards and provision are improving.
The strategic use of resources	Resource management is good. The school's budget is carefully targeted to support the priorities for development and to maintain staffing levels. Best value is sought when ordering and governors evaluate expenditure in terms of improved provision, teaching and learning.

The accommodation is very good and the space is well used to provide facilities such as the library, ICT suite and practical areas for the Reception class children. Resources are satisfactory overall but there are some shortages in music and in the selection of early reading books. Day-to-day administration is very efficient.

## 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 school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• There is a strong emphasis on personal as well as academic development and a 'family' atmosphere.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good and the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The teaching is good. Their children are expected to work hard and they make good progress.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents, they are welcomed at all times to discuss issues and are well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Children like coming to school and enjoy an interesting range of after-school activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small number of parents felt that their children did not have the right amount of homework.</li> </ul>

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The published results for the National Curriculum tests for Year 2 in 2001 showed a dip in attainment from 2000. This followed a period when, due to circumstances that were out of the control of management, several different teachers had taken the class of Reception children and Year 1 and 2 pupils and there had been considerable disruption to teaching and learning. In 2001 standards in reading were below the national average, for mathematics they were well below and for writing, they were the same as the average. Results were further distorted by a significant number of pupils leaving and entering this age group over the year and the fact that each pupil in the very small year group represented nearly 15 percent of the marks. The headteacher and governors made this class a priority for development. Good improvements have been made since January 2002 and the test results from summer in this year indicate better standards with over one quarter of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in reading, over 40 percent doing so in mathematics and nearly 15 percent in writing. The actual grades for the level 2 and above results were adversely affected by the fact that nearly one third of pupils had special educational needs. All the pupils who were expected to attain the average level 2 in each subject achieved their goal. Trends over time show that attainment levels for reading, writing and mathematics at the school were improving steadily until the recent dip. This year's results address that decline and, together with the inspection evidence, provide a strong indicator of improvement. For this age group, standards of attainment in the classroom for reading, writing, mathematics and science have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because their programmes of learning are carefully targeted to overcome problems and good support in class ensures secure levels of confidence.
2. Results of the tests in Year 6 in 2001 show attainment in English, mathematics and science that is well above the national average and that for similar schools. Very high attainment in mathematics and science put the school in the top 5 percent in the country. When compared to similar schools, attainment is equally good. The school exceeded its statutory targets for attainment in English and mathematics in 2001. Results from this year's tests, together with inspection findings, indicate that similar, high standards are maintained. In recognition of the high attainment, the School Achievement award was presented to the school in 2001 and 2002. One major factor in this impressive attainment record is the very good quality of teaching that pupils receive in Years 3 to 6. Trends over time show that attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is rising steadily and at a faster rate than the national average. Progress, as measured from the end of Year 2 to Year 6 is well above average. Those pupils who were in the Year 2 groups in 2000 and 2001 when attainment was lower, have made very good progress in Years 3 and 4 and are mainly attaining above-average levels at present.
3. During lesson observations, the team found no differences in the progress of boys and girls in relation to their prior learning. Indeed teachers make a great effort to find books and topics that will be enjoyed by all. There are major imbalances between numbers of boys and girls in some age groups and this can have a distorting effect on overall figures when one pupil equals 15 percent of the total marks. The same

applies where cohorts contain a higher-than-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are not expected to attain average levels. All pupils from different ethnic groups make equally good progress.

4. Children enter the Reception class with widely varying levels of prior experience and learning. Taking into account the skills identified on the baseline assessment when children enter school, attainment is roughly at the expected level at the start of the Reception year but some children have particular needs and require a substantial amount of support. By the end of the year, children have made good progress in personal and social development, communication and language skills and mathematical work. Many move onto the National Curriculum programmes of study in English and mathematics. Almost every one has achieved expectations in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in physical development and they have made satisfactory progress. Because it is so early in the term, there was not enough evidence to make a judgement about creative development. All adults in the class work hard to promote skills in personal and social education. Children settle in quickly and begin to develop independence. Planning shows a strong emphasis on the development of communication, language and literacy and mathematical understanding. These areas are constantly promoted through all activities so that children have good opportunities to practise and consolidate their developing skills. Learning for this age group is broadly similar to that at the time of the last inspection in spite of the problems encountered in 2000 and 2001.
5. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics and satisfactory progress in reading and science. Pupils progress at a relatively slower rate in their early reading than in early writing. This is because the teaching of phonics (sounds in the English language) requires further development and pupils are relying heavily on using just two out of the four strategies to tackle unfamiliar text. The problem is compounded by a restricted selection of early reading books and the fact that a learning support strategy for Year 1 pupils is not implemented. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read confidently but are still relying mostly on their skills of identifying whole words and in blending letter sounds to build up a new word. Their comprehension is satisfactory but few pupils 'read between the lines' to find shades of meaning. Pupils' writing is well sequenced, and accurately punctuated in most cases. They spell words by splitting them into sounds and know many irregularly spelt key words from memory. In mathematics, pupils compute accurately using pen and paper methods and mental strategies. They achieve satisfactory levels of knowledge and understanding in all areas of the science curriculum and use their investigative skills effectively. In information and communication technology (ICT), pupils develop the basic skills, for example in word processing, and use them when studying other subjects. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, their skills knowledge and understanding match national expectations in all subjects. Pupils' skills of speaking and listening are especially well developed and this adds to their confidence.
6. In Years 3 to 6, pupils often make very good gains in their learning. Pupils' reading becomes fluent and expressive. They enjoy a very wide range of styles and have favourite authors. They investigate a range of story structures and are beginning to experiment with different techniques to improve their writing. During the inspection, they were working at an advanced level as they experimented with the language of classic fiction as used by authors such as Dickens or the Brontes. Pupils give their own views about books, justifying them with examples from the text. They examine

non-fiction writing, analysing the structure and linguistic features effectively. Higher achieving pupils have a good grasp of punctuation and grammar and some have the confidence to experiment with extended sentences and the full range of punctuation to produce more sophisticated writing. In mathematics, pupils have a good understanding of number. Their skills of mental computation are very well developed and they have a useful range of strategies to use when problem solving. In science, pupils' skills of scientific enquiry, investigation and fair testing are now well developed and applied across the programme of study for the subject. Their knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes are very good. Pupils demonstrate proficiency in all areas of ICT and use computer facilities discriminately and successfully when studying other subjects. Their attainment is above expectations by the end of Year 6. They use CD ROMs and the Internet for research, program and control model vehicles and produce publications of a very high standard. They are confident in their multi-media work, including Powerpoint presentations and use electronic sensors to measure elements of the physical world. Pupils use spreadsheets to help with repeated calculations and produce tables, graphs and charts to explain their findings across a range of subjects. There are strengths in design and technology, history, geography and physical education, resulting in often very good progress and attainment that is above national expectations. In all other subjects except music, attainment matches expectations. In music, there was not enough evidence to make a secure judgement about attainment by the end of Year 6 but progress and achievement in the lesson seen in Years 3 and 4 was above expectations. Pupils identified as having special educational needs achieve the goals that their teachers set through focused, sensitive support. Good emphasis is given to challenging the higher attaining and talented pupils and this is reflected in the above-average number of pupils achieving the higher standards in their lessons.

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

7. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. Their behaviour is also very good, as are the relationships throughout the school. There have been no exclusions in the last or previous years. The attendance rates are well above the national average. This is a similar situation to that at the time of the last report, and the school has worked hard to maintain the pupils' very positive attitudes. All these aspects are strengths of the school and make a significant contribution to the development of the pupils.
8. The pupils show interest and enthusiasm for their lessons. They are very willing to join in discussions and answer questions. They fully participate in class activities and there is good support for the out of school clubs. A mixed after-school football session was very well supported, with the pupils joining in with enthusiasm. During a personal, social and health education lesson, which was to prepare for the elections to the school council, the pupils were confident to express their views. They had sensible and relevant ideas about the qualities needed for a council representative. The school lives out its mission statement, recognising and valuing each child's abilities and talents and ensuring good levels of self-esteem. As a result, all pupils regardless of special needs, gender or ethnic background, participate eagerly in the varied range of activities and enjoy their work.
9. The pupils' behaviour is very good. They come into school on time, and settle very quickly in the classrooms. They clearly understand and accept the standards of behaviour expected of them. This was particularly well demonstrated by the new

children in the Reception class. They already knew how they were expected to behave in the assembly, and joined in with the routines at the start of lessons. The pupils play and mix very well during breaks and at lunchtime. On the field trip for Years 3 and 4, pupils' behaviour was exemplary. They needed very little prompting as they carried their equipment sensibly, cooperated very well on some complicated tasks and kept to the safety instructions. Their attitudes were excellent and they worked with a very good degree of precision. There are very few incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour in school and any that do occur are dealt with very promptly, fairly and to the satisfaction of parents.

10. Relationships within the school are very good. All the pupils play well together. The older pupils are particularly attentive to the younger ones, encouraging them to join in games and helping to make them feel welcomed. The school council is effective in allowing pupils to express their opinions and to influence some aspects of their school life. The pupils are aware of the feelings and needs of others. This was clearly shown when pupils were asked to design a clock face. One pupil explained that a person with visual impairment would need a clock with larger figures and hands. Other pupils in class had also given thought to the way items can be designed with specific needs in mind. Pupils in all classes effectively carry out the responsibilities they are given, with the opportunities increasing for the older ones. They use the computers intelligently for independent learning and work hard on their research projects that they complete at home.
11. The attendance figures for the school are very good. There were no unauthorised absences over the last year and very few pupils arrive late to school. Lessons start and finish on time.

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

12. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 was very good with some excellent practice. In the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 it was mostly good. The standard of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection, and now includes a better percentage of good and excellent practice. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school and is directly responsible for the very good rate of learning by the end of Year 6 and good achievements of pupils with special educational needs. A specialist teacher for music provides very good lessons, extending pupils' creative experiences and promoting very good progress.
13. The majority of teaching in Reception class is good. This judgement relates to the one teacher seen; there were no opportunities to observe the other member of staff who works at the end of the week. A scrutiny of work shows a consistency of approach across the weeks. As a result of the good teaching, children in the Reception group progress well in their personal and social development, language and literacy and in mathematical skills. The majority of them achieve expectations in all areas of learning and begin working within the National Curriculum programmes of study in English and mathematics. Reception children often work alongside their older classmates and have specific tasks and questions to match their needs and prior learning. The teacher and adults work effectively together, paying good attention to establishing routines and to developing confidence and independence in their young charges. This sets a good foundation for later learning.
14. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is mainly good. Where some satisfactory rather than good lessons were seen, it was because the pace of learning was slower and the activities were generally based, rather than specifically aimed at promoting the



intended learning outcome. For example, when pupils worked on the similarities and differences between humans in a science lesson, there was too much time drawing rather than observing and evaluating. The teaching of reading strategies uses games and practical sessions to promote pupils' skills in discriminating and blending sounds in the English language and the pupils enjoy this interactive approach. There is, however, some confusion in the teaching that stems from the fact that the recommended programme for the teaching of phonics is not established and the present staff have not attended the necessary training. These two factors result from the instability in the classroom where seven teachers have practised in just over two years. Some initiatives during that time were introduced but not firmly established. The new teacher has made good improvements in the short time since her appointment but all staff and governors realise that it will take some further time to complete all the planned development. The subject manager for English is relatively newly appointed and has not received the training to manage this area. In recognition of the shortcomings, a focus on reading for the age group forms part of the school development plan for this year. The teaching of writing and speaking and listening is good for Year 1 and 2 pupils and ensures good progress. In a particularly good lesson, Year 1 produced some very interesting writing about a recent visit to the agricultural college. They used capital letters, full stops and began to extend their sentences by saying why they liked the animals. The teaching of mathematics is a good feature, with group activities well designed to build on the mental mathematics starter session. To ensure that pupils remain challenged, the teacher sets work at different levels in a way that builds on their prior learning and leads to good progress. During the inspection teaching in physical education, art and design and geography was good. It was not possible to see all subjects taught during the three days but the scrutiny of work from last year shows that teaching across the remainder of the curriculum is at least satisfactory. Pupils' developing skills in ICT are well deployed to support their learning.

15. A notable feature of teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is the challenging pace of lessons. For this age group, nine out every ten lessons were very good or excellent, leading to similar rates of progress, especially in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The quality of teaching is exceptionally high when compared to the national pattern. Teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' books show a very good emphasis on the extension and enhancement of oral communication, reading, writing, mathematical and ICT skills in other subjects. For example, pupils recount experiments in science or write reports about the different countries they have studied in geography. They produce plans and instructions in design and technology and write biographies as part of their history work. Teachers often set open-ended tasks that allow pupils to ask their own questions, investigate and explore. In practical sessions there are good opportunities for pupils to try out their ideas, make mistakes and find ways to solve the problems encountered. This is a very strong feature in Years 5 and 6 where independent learning skills are evident. In a very good science lesson, pupils developed their hypotheses, organised their investigative work and presented their findings clearly. In an excellent Year 3 and 4 geography lesson pupils organised the tasks within their groups very efficiently to finish in the time allocated. Teachers encourage pupils to think the problem out and skilfully channel their thoughts towards a solution. The quality of marking is very good in English and good in the other subjects. Teachers include helpful comments that show the pupils how they can improve. This is not always followed up by the pupil, however, which reduces its usefulness. Encouraging feedback is often given orally during lessons so that pupils know how they are getting on. Teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils and, throughout the school, they inspire an enthusiasm for learning.

16. Questioning techniques are good throughout school and often very good in Years 3 to 6. All pupils' replies are treated with sensitivity. This creates stimulating discussions and encourages all pupils to be involved. Teachers' planning is usually detailed and there is very good class management. Carefully chosen resources are organised and are readily available; pupils' books and other consumables are always to hand, and classroom routines are well established. This ensures that no time is lost. Homework is used successfully to consolidate learning mainly in reading, spelling and mathematics. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 engage in extended research or study opportunities where their knowledge and understanding are enhanced.
17. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good for the younger age group and very good in Years 3 to 6. This enables them to make consistently good gains in learning. The requirements of individual education plans are built into daily activities. Designated support staff provide targeted and unobtrusive support so that pupils can access the lesson fully. This ensures that all pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school community and that all develop good levels of self-confidence. A specialist teacher is employed to provide additional work where needed. Short-term targets are shared with parents and pupils and this system is very successful in helping them to realise their goals. Teachers know their pupils very well and this allows them to anticipate problems and to have solutions at their finger tips. Those pupils who are gifted, or show a particular aptitude for a subject, are well catered for through additional challenge and they make good progress. Teachers give good consideration to the interests of boys and girls and pupils from all ethnic groups in their planning to ensure full engagement in lessons.
18. Teachers make very good use of the local environment and community links, especially in the teaching of science, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. The very good school productions allow pupils to show off their talents in drama, dance and music and to develop their performing skills. Parents' returned questionnaires show that 100 percent are of the opinion that 'teaching is good' and that 'the school expects pupils to work hard'. The same glowing opinions were repeated at the parents' meeting and inspection findings confirm these views.

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

19. The school provides a rich and stimulating curriculum, which is broad and balanced and successfully emphasises the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. All subjects of the National Curriculum are included and the National Numeracy Strategy is fully in place. Some elements of the Literacy Strategy for early reading require further development. The school meets fully the statutory curriculum requirements, including the provision of religious education. There is a wide range of learning opportunities to support academic and personal development, which is enriched by music, drama, visits and sporting activities. Links across different areas of the curriculum are very good, for example in the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. This was illustrated well when Years 5 and 6 used multi-media computer technology to present their work about the geographical features of coastlines.
20. Since the last inspection, the quality of curriculum planning has improved and there is now more emphasis placed on challenging the higher attaining pupils. The school has adopted the nationally recommended programmes of work for the foundation subjects which are those other than English, mathematics and science. Staff have

worked hard and successfully to ensure that planning for lessons makes suitable provision for the complete ability range in all classes, fully including the gifted or talented pupils and those who have special educational needs. Curriculum provision is particularly effective in ensuring that all pupils, regardless of gender, background or ethnic origin, are able to take a full and profitable part in lessons. The school is fully committed to its policy for equality of opportunity and this is reflected consistently across the curriculum, developing positive attitudes in the pupils. A good example of this is seen in sporting activities where boys and girls are included equally in the very successful teams that represent the school in local tournaments.

21. The provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. Issues such as a healthy diet and lifestyle are explored thoroughly in science lessons and appropriate attention is given to sex education and drugs misuse. The pupils are taught essential facts and provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed choices about these matters. The moral and social issues explored in PSHE lessons provide good support for pupils in their personal development and make a significant contribution to their awareness of citizenship issues. For example, they carefully consider the qualities needed by representatives on the school council and those in public office in the adult world.
22. Extra curricular activities make a very strong contribution to the quality of the curriculum. The many after-school sessions are of high quality and complement learning in lessons, for example in the skittle-ball club, where the pupils made very good progress in developing their sporting skills. The quality of the school's productions was commended by parents. All pupils take part, having some good opportunities to build on their speaking and listening, drama, musical and dance skills. Visits to a wide range of destinations help to enrich and extend the quality of the pupils' learning. The annual residential visit to an outdoor adventure centre provides excellent opportunities for the older pupils to take part in activities such as abseiling and orienteering. The visit by Years 3 and 4 to the River Brock was of enormous benefit in the opportunities it gave the pupils to apply and extend their learning in geography, mathematics and science. Visits to galleries and museums are equally of benefit in generating interest and excitement in learning about the wider world.
23. The school does much to promote good links with the community. These links are particularly strong within the church community and help to give the pupils a strong sense of belonging. Visits to St Lawrence's Church, regular contact with the vicar in school acts of worship and the valuable support of members of the church community all make a positive contribution to school life. There are also established links with the wider community, with other small schools in the area and with local high schools and colleges. This brings benefits in terms of shared resources and expertise and helps pupils to make a smooth transition to their secondary schools. The school regularly welcomes students who are training to be teachers. They bring additional talents to the curriculum and find novel ways to present work. For example, one student used the World Cup as a starting point for pupils' economic and social studies of other countries.
24. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and their cultural awareness and understanding is good throughout the school. These areas of personal development are central to the life at St Lawrence's and reflect the strong Christian ethos contained within the school's mission statement. The pupils' spiritual development is promoted very effectively in all school activities. School

assemblies convey a strong sense of spirituality and are reverent occasions in which the pupils show, through tone and posture, the importance of prayer in their lives. They are given opportunities to reflect on a personal level in the prayers they write themselves. These show strong spirituality as pupils reflect on the concerns which are very close to them in their personal lives, such as a parent who is ill or a grandfather who has died. Many opportunities are created in lessons for pupils to develop their sense of spirituality through the stimulation of a sense of excitement, awe and wonder about the world around them. Educational visits out in the countryside provide very good opportunities for pupils to appreciate the beauty of the natural world.

25. The pupils' moral and social development is a significant strength. In accordance with its mission statement, the school is a caring community that promotes a strong sense of right and wrong in all aspects of its work. The teachers and pupils agree sets of class rules that reflect a moral code centred on honesty, integrity and respect for others. This is very successful in fostering a very caring and supportive environment in which the pupils can grow in confidence and self esteem. The teachers speak to the pupils with courtesy and respect and this is very successful in promoting a reciprocal courteous response from the pupils.
26. Pupils are given very good opportunities to carry increasing levels of personal responsibility as they move through the school. They are called upon to act as monitors and to take responsibility for carrying out many tasks that aid the smooth running of the school community. In assemblies the older pupils operate the overhead projector and the tape player and provide excellent role models for the younger ones. The school council plays an important part in the social development of the pupils, both in choosing and in acting as representatives, and has had a significant impact on the life of the school. The considerable fund raising efforts of the school for a wide range of charities successfully extend the pupils' awareness and concern for people outside their immediate circle. This was particularly evident in the school's commitment to the Bishop of Blackburn's appeal to help a children's AIDS charity in South Africa.
27. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. Studies in history and geography provide the pupils with opportunities to learn about ancient civilisations such as the Greeks and Egyptians and to recognise their influence on modern culture. In music, art and English lessons they are taught to appreciate a good range of creative media and learn about famous artists, composers, poets and authors from different cultures. Through its recently re-established links with a school in Uganda, the pupils are able to learn about pupils their own age in a contrasting culture to their own. Religious education lessons teach the pupils successfully to respect religious practices and beliefs other than their own, such as those of Judaism and Islam. Although the school has occasionally welcomed visitors from other cultures, there is scope for this aspect of school life to be developed further to enable pupils to appreciate more fully the diversity and richness of cultures other than their own.

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

28. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. A carefully planned programme of statutory and optional tests is in place throughout the school. The results are analysed in detail and used effectively to track pupils' progress and to set future targets for school performance. This represents good progress since

the last inspection. The school makes good use of the information from the testing programme to identify areas for improvement in curriculum provision and to monitor the progress of pupils identified as having special educational needs. It is also effectively used to ensure that pupils new to the school have the right work to do and that their learning is continuous. Teachers have begun to set group and individual targets to help pupils improve their work. An excellent system has been recently trialled and established by the assessment manager in her Years 5 and 6 class, but is not yet consistently applied in all classes.

29. There is considerable variation in the use made of information from the assessment of pupils' work to inform the next stage of teaching and learning. In Years 5 and 6 the procedures for gathering and using assessment information are highly effective in ensuring that learning needs are met and that pupils know how well they are doing. This excellent practice makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved by the pupils in this age range.
30. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is carried out effectively in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and has improved since the time of the last inspection. The identification of an assessment focus in lesson planning is especially good in Years 5 and 6. Satisfactory procedures for monitoring progress in subjects other than those above are being introduced throughout school and are linked to the national programmes of work. They are not yet applied consistently in all classes and their effectiveness in improving the performance of pupils and providing for their future learning is due to be evaluated by the assessment manager. In the Reception class, a new planning sheet has been devised to show children's progress along the 'stepping stones' of learning. However, the assessment process is not fully implemented as yet and does not include the involvement of all relevant adults in tracking the day to day progress of the children.
31. Throughout school, there is good monitoring of progress for those pupils who have special educational needs. Records are shared between the co-ordinator, class teachers and parents and the information is used intelligently to plan the next steps of each pupil's individual learning programme. For pupils who have a statement of special educational need, records are included from all agencies involved so that each adult involved knows their specific role in the programme of support.
32. The school provides a very secure and stable environment. The pupils are valued as individuals, and their teachers play a significant role in their personal development. Measures in place to ensure pupils' health, safety and welfare are very good and guided by a good range of clearly written policies.
33. There is a very effective behaviour policy within the school. Pupils know how they are expected to behave and, as a result, very little teaching time needs to be used to correct unacceptable behaviour. The policy is used consistently and fairly. The pupils know they can turn to their teachers for help, and are confident they will be taken seriously. All the staff know the pupils and their families well, and this helps in the informal monitoring of pupils' personal development. Attendance rates are very good and there is hardly any need for the school to chase up unexplained absences. Nevertheless, there are very good links between home and school that make such investigations easy to follow.
34. There are very effective procedures in place for child protection issues and all teachers have received recent training. The school's health and safety policy and

practice is to be evaluated very soon as part of the governors' review process. This demonstrates the high profile that this area holds within the school. All the appropriate equipment checks are made on a regular basis and records kept. The school regularly carries out risk assessments and takes action appropriate to the outcomes but does not consistently keep records of this important work.

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

35. There was a good response to the parental questionnaire and good support for the pre-inspection parents' meeting. The over whelming majority of the opinions expressed were very positive and highly supportive of the school's work. There are very productive links with home and the local community that constitute a major strength at St Lawrence's. The only area where any concern was expressed in the returned questionnaires related to the amount of homework the school sets. The inspectors found that there is appropriate homework set for the younger pupils and that the provision for the older pupils is good. Inspection findings agree with the positive replies that can be seen in detail in Section C of this report.
36. The quality and information supplied to parents is good. There are leaflets provided for parents prior to their children starting school, and the new pupils are also given a booklet to help them settle in. At the start of each term the teachers supply parents with information about the subjects and topics their children will learn. A weekly newsletter keeps families up to date with forthcoming events and staff news. The annual reports clearly relate to the individual child, and the parents appreciate the information they contain. The school organises three opportunities each year for the parents to meet formally with the teachers to keep them well informed about their children's progress. At present, all parents speak English fluently but, as part of its inclusion policy, the school would provide bi-lingual support if it were ever needed. Parents appreciate the 'open door' policy that allows them to discuss any worries or concerns at any time with the relevant teacher, or the headteacher. The strong commitment to partnership between home and school helps parents to share in, and enjoy, their children's learning. Parents express confidence in the sensitive way that issues are dealt with, to the satisfaction of all concerned.
37. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in the life of the school. There are a number of parents and other volunteers from the community who regularly help both in the classrooms and with out-of-school activities. For example, two parents help when Years 3 to 6 go to the swimming baths each week and there are many who offer to accompany classes on educational visits. There is a very active 'Friends of the School' association that raises a significant amount of funds through the social events that members organise. The help and support provided by all the parents and members of the community makes a significant contribution to the learning and development of the pupils, both in school and at home.

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

38. The headteacher provides very good leadership, driving the school forward through strong team work. She is very well supported by the senior teacher and the governing body. Together, they have made very good improvements to leadership and management, creating a fresh, positive and stable approach following a difficult period in the school's history. They are very successful in promoting an environment where pupils work very hard, enjoy very good relationships, and show great respect for other people's feelings. All staff and governors are firmly committed to the

school's aims that are rooted in its Christian foundation and include a strong emphasis on personal as well as academic development. The essence of the school's mission statement is evident in all aspects of its work. The returns from the parents' questionnaires show that 100 percent are satisfied that the school is well led and managed. This view was strongly endorsed at the parents' meeting itself.

39. The delegation of responsibilities to the senior manager is effective and efficient and she actively shares in the smooth day-to-day running of the school. In this small school, there are excellent systems of communication. All staff, including the non-teaching personnel, have a flexible approach and readily take on jobs that need doing. For example, the site supervisor often covers reception and office duties as well as her own. This helps to maintain good communication with parents and outside agencies. There is a strong corporate feel to the school and all adults take a great pride in their work. Subject managers have a good overview of the quality of teaching and the standards attained. They are conscientious in their approach, regularly monitoring, planning and scrutinising pupils' work. They have opportunities to observe lessons and to provide support by working alongside colleagues. The subject managers have received training to enhance their leadership and management roles and are well supported in their work by link governors who take a keen interest. The school receives very good support from the local authority's adviser who has provided practical help during periods of staff turnover and for the headteacher as she settled into her new appointment.
40. The monitoring cycle covers all areas over time so that each subject is scrutinised on a regular basis. The annual reports produced by the managers are fed into the school development process. The success of this approach to subject management is evident in the very good attainment at the end of Year 6. The manager for special educational needs is knowledgeable and provides very good support for pupils and class teachers. There is a shared responsibility for ensuring that all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnic background, are included in all areas of school life and this is very successful. There is a clearly written policy to ensure racial equality. Day to day practice sees these policies effectively implemented.
41. The governing body, with its valuable range of expertise, is committed to ensuring the highest quality of education for all pupils and works very closely with the headteacher and staff to achieve this objective. Its members have worked hard to secure as much stability as possible during a time of major staff turnover that was mainly due to factors beyond their control. At one point, they secured the services of an associate headteacher to provide much-needed support. Through active involvement, they have kept a watchful eye on pupils' progress and have invested money and time into addressing the problems that arose in the Reception and Year 1 and 2 class following a succession of teachers. Provision in this class remains a priority area for development. Governors know and understand their roles clearly and maintain a successful approach to meeting their statutory responsibilities. The proceedings of the governing body are efficiently conducted and committees are well organised. Governors have the confidence of the parents. The chairperson is often in school and readily welcomes comments or suggestions. There is a very positive and productive relationship between the governing body and the staff which is especially important in a small school where each teacher carries many subject responsibilities and the headteacher has a heavy classroom commitment. Many governors take an active role in school life by helping in classes, on visits, by helping with administrative and financial matters and in taking a keen interest in school improvement. Governors' high level of effectiveness represents sustained good improvement since the last report.

42. This small school is staffed by an adequate number of teachers to cover the three classes. Governors employ a part-time specialist music teacher and special needs manager to enhance the range of expertise. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils' learning. Their deployment during literacy lessons in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 is not always efficient. Following several staff changes, the present assistants have not received training in the early reading support programmes and therefore generally assist the teacher rather than leading group work. There are established arrangements for staff development, guided by the agreed priorities of the school and the outcomes of staff performance management reviews. Barton St Lawrence is well served by appropriately skilled non-teaching staff, all of whom are totally committed to its aims and policies and have a versatile approach to their work. The site manager ensures that the buildings, grounds and resources are very well maintained. She also ensures a commendable standard of cleanliness and hygiene at all times. Her commitment to the job includes redecorating areas such as the pupils' toilets, providing an attractive environment and saving money. Administrative support is very effective and efficient. The secretary makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school, discharging a wide and diverse range of responsibilities.
43. The accommodation is very good and provides extensive facilities for the teaching of all programmes of study contained in the National Curriculum. The new outdoor area for the Reception children provides an attractive and safe resource for play and physical development. Pupils of all ages make very good use of the computer suite throughout the day. The hall, playground and large field provide very good facilities for pupils' leisure time, sport and after-school activities. Resources for teaching and learning are generally satisfactory but there are shortages in music and in the range of early reading materials and books. In music, the school makes very good use of the 'small schools cluster' facilities to borrow instruments and so pupils' learning is not affected. Subject managers are constantly improving their resources as units of work are covered. The facilities for information and communications technology have been vastly improved. They include a computer suite, an interactive whiteboard and a good range of peripherals. There is a good selection of fiction and non-fiction books, housed in the attractive central library and in class reading areas. For the older pupils, there is a very good selection of quality and classic fiction by significant authors. At present, resources for teaching pupils with special educational needs are often provided by the specialist teacher. The school's own resources are very limited and this could cause a problem if funding for this teacher was not available.
44. School development planning is thorough and illustrates clear educational purpose. Funding is linked to priorities, with implementation strategies, timescales and success criteria specified. Governors are highly involved in the planning process and in the evaluation of the initiatives taken, maintaining a clear overview of development and stepping in to help where problems are encountered.
45. The school's finances are effectively monitored and controlled. Spending is closely linked to the stated priorities. Members of the finance committee, led by an expert in the field, monitor the budget closely. Best value principles are well applied to all purchases and contracts. Governors monitor the impact of spending decisions by checking that new materials and equipment purchased lead directly to improved provision and pupils' learning. This is done through link governor work or the headteacher's termly reports. Governors have chosen sensibly to buy in services such as financial and administrative ICT support. This frees up the headteacher's time for educational matters. Specific grant funding is appropriately allocated and money provided for special needs pupils is very effectively used. The large reserve



brought forward from last year was to cover some major outstanding accounts for the school's share of building work. The current reserve, although above recommended percentage limits, is not high in actual terms, and is allocated to ensuring that the school can maintain the current staffing level, including the specialist teachers, should roll numbers fall. Taking into consideration the very good quality of provision, pupils' attainment and progress that is often well above national averages by the end of Year 6, together with the relatively high costs, the school provides good value for money.

46. The school is very well organised, with established and efficient routines making very good use of information and communication technology. All statutory requirements are met. The very good quality of leadership and management is a major factor in securing the very good level of provision, the very good relationships with parents and the high standards achieved. This area is a strength of the school.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. The school has made good improvements over the last year since the governing body has been at full strength, and with the appointment of the new headteacher and a permanent teacher for the younger age group. The quality of the school's recent self evaluation is reflected in the fact that two out of the three key issues below have already been identified as areas for development. These are marked with a star.

**In order to improve further, the school should:**

**(1) \*Improve the teaching and learning of early reading skills by:**

- planning daily phonic lessons according to the guidance provided in the nationally recommended literacy programme;
- introducing the early intervention programme for Year 1 pupils who would benefit from an acceleration to their learning;
- providing training in both areas above for the subject manager, class teachers and classroom assistants;
- improving the selection and quality of the early reading materials and books to support pupils' learning in all the four reading strategies at an early age. (paragraphs 5,14,43,58,60,62,65)

**(2) Improve the gathering and use of information about children's progress in the Reception class by:**

- developing a system of checking children's progress along the recommended 'stepping stones of progress' that involves all relevant staff;
- developing shared planning sessions with Reception class staff so that this information can be used to set the next steps in children's learning. (paragraphs 30,49)

**(3) \*Improve the use of information about pupils' progress in Years 1 to 4 to set targets for learning by extending the excellent practice established in the Year 5 and 6 class. (paragraphs 29,30,64,72,79)**

**In addition, when drawing up their action plan, the governors should consider the following:**

Take steps, during the planned review of the health and safety policy, to ensure a consistent method of recording and filing the risk assessments carried out.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	9	8	4	0	0	0
Percentage	9	39	35	17	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four 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)	N/A	53
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	7

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	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

Authorised absence

%
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Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	4	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	7	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (100)	78 (100)	89 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	7	8	7
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (100)	89 (100)	78 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	3	9	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (81)	100 (88)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (94)	100 (88)	100 (88)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

The numbers for boys and girls are omitted because there are 10 or less of each. This is to ensure that individual pupils cannot be identified

## Ethnic background of pupils

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

## Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
50	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	17.7

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	38

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

## Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	170,348
Total expenditure	186,555
Expenditure per pupil	3,391
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,806
Balance carried forward to next year	15,599

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	53
Number of questionnaires returned	28

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	86	14	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	75	25	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	75	25	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	64	18	18	0	0
The teaching is good.	93	7	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	82	18	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	93	7	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	25	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	39	0	0	0

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

At the pre-inspection meeting parents expressed great satisfaction in the work of the school. They commended very highly the school's commitment to developing the 'whole child'. They value the quality of academic, physical, creative and personal development that is offered to their children.

## **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**

48. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class varies widely though it is broadly in line with that expected for their age. Many start their school life demonstrating a confident command of spoken English and an interest in, and an awareness of, the world around them. However, there are a number who have very particular needs or speech and language problems. Children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in communication, language and literacy, personal and social development and in mathematical understanding. One teacher is in the class for four days and another for one day. There is a useful timetabled session for the two teachers to share records and to plan together, ensuring continuity of learning for the children. The Reception children are taught alongside pupils from Years 1 and 2. Two classroom assistants provide support for those with special educational needs and enable a suitable range of practical activities, according to the recommended guidelines. Overall, the quality of teaching is good.
49. Over the last two years, there have been many different teachers in this class, some on a temporary basis. As a result, there have been many changes to organisational patterns and the implementation of the recommended curriculum has been disrupted at times. The new headteacher and governors have made the Reception class a priority area for improvement and much progress has been made. There are better resources and the new class teacher has made good improvements to the classroom environment. Planning covers all the areas of learning. A new outdoor area provides an attractive space for play and physical development. A basic system for checking children's progress towards their learning goals is in place. Classroom assistants record progress on separate sheets and the information is transferred onto the main record. This is time consuming and could be improved if all members of staff were trained to use a common format of recording that shows what children can do and what they need to learn next. A newly produced record is intended to chart each child's progress along the recommended 'stepping stones' of learning but has yet to be fully implemented.
50. At the time of this inspection the Reception children were attending part-time in the mornings only as part of their good induction programme. Before starting school they attend one afternoon a week for the last half of the summer term. During this period, their parents have opportunities to visit school, meet staff and learn about school organisation during two parents' evenings. Because it was so early in the term, additional evidence about attainment in the Reception class was gathered by talking to the Year 1 pupils who were just three weeks into the term, by looking at work from this and last academic year and by scrutinising some early assessments. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about creative development by the end of the year but children made good progress in the one dance lesson seen. By the end of the Reception year, most children have achieved their early learning targets and are making good progress with the early work of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Although there have been some staffing problems since the last inspection, the overall provision and attainment in the Reception class is now roughly equal to that seen in 1998. Children who have special educational needs are well supported and make equally good progress to that of their friends.
51. Links with parents are good and there are many opportunities for informal chats with the teacher at the start and end of school times. At this early stage in the year, the

children have settled into routines well. They enter school eager to start work and one wanted to stay for the afternoon session because he liked his new classroom so much. At the meeting, parents were pleased with the improvements to this class that have taken place over the last two terms.

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

52. Teaching is good in this area and children achieve what is expected by the end of the year. The activities and the organisation of the classroom are planned to foster personal, social and emotional development. Children listen with great concentration to their teacher and friends. They are all keen to take part in discussions and willing to try out new experiences. They show delight in their accomplishments. Children take turns sensibly and share space and equipment readily. They are very sensitive to the needs of those who have special educational needs and offer help almost instinctively. Through sensitive prompting by adults, they develop responsibility and independence organising their belongings and tidying away at the end of sessions. Children are encouraged to consider others' needs and problems through stories. There is also time for quiet reflection, which helps to develop children's spiritual awareness. Children who have special educational needs in their personal and social development receive additional support from classroom assistants and teachers that is aimed at helping them to cope with the new social environment and to develop confidence.

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

53. Children achieve their learning targets in language, literacy and communication by the end of the Reception year. Some begin to make good progress along the National Curriculum programmes of study, especially in speaking and listening and in writing. Class routines ensure that there is a good deal of opportunity to reflect and talk. Most children make themselves clearly understood using a good range of vocabulary. The shared discussion times that include pupils from Years 1 and 2 provide a good learning context for those who are finding it more difficult to express themselves. Children who have difficulties with speech and language receive good support and encouragement and progress well. Throughout the day children use spoken language effectively to collaborate and to organise their ideas. They are keen to explore books, enjoy stories and know that text is written from left to right. By the end of the year, they talk and write about the characters, for example, in the Three Little Pigs, saying which is their favourite. Most recognise rhyming words and can think up some of their own. All are tackling simple reading books but relying heavily on the two strategies of whole word recognition and phonics (blending letter sounds). Their skills in using comprehension cues and basic grammar to read unfamiliar words are not as well developed. Children are introduced to sounds and letters and the way in which these combine to make words. However, lessons are not planned according to the recommended Progression in Phonics guidance for this age group. There are not enough resources and the staff have not received the necessary training. As a result, there is confusion in the teaching of phonemes (sounds of letters) and graphemes (the way those sounds are represented in print). Most children make good progress with their independent writing. By the end of the year they spell commonly used words and rehearse how they will get their ideas down on paper before beginning to write. Most children use capital letters and full stops and this attainment is well above average. Higher attaining children begin to extend their sentences to include some detail, working well within the National Curriculum programme of study. Handwriting skills are systematically developed with a good emphasis on shape and positioning.

## **Mathematical development**

54. The teaching is good and often based on situations and activities that are purposeful for the children. Nearly every child reaches the early learning goals before moving into Year 1. Staff seize many opportunities for counting and for using mathematical language, such as 'longer' or 'shorter'. When deciding which beds belonged to which teddy bears, the children compared the length and width of both. This effectively promotes progress and is a good foundation for later mathematical work. By the end of the year children count confidently, recognise coins, combine sets of numbers together in early addition work and compare a range of measurements. The higher attaining children work at an advanced level for their age and begin more formal recording of addition and subtraction sums. Well planned activities ensure that children have continual opportunities to apply their mathematical understanding and that they are using it to solve everyday problems.

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

55. Just one session was seen but planning, displays and children's completed work from last year indicate that teaching is at least satisfactory. Evidence shows that most children are likely to achieve what is expected by the end of the year. The children learn about themselves and the world through topics that link in with the Years 1 and 2 work. During the history topic on famous people, they learned about the story of Grace Darling. The teacher provides many opportunities for learning within the classroom, during outdoor activities, and on visits out of school. Children are encouraged to find out about living things and to investigate and question why things happen. By the end of the year, they have a sense of the passing of time through sequencing significant events of the day and days of the week. They classify plants and animals and take a keen interest in the life of the school's pet rabbit. They recognise features of the environment such as the park and have completed some early work on habitats. Children enjoy using their ICT skills and make good progress. Even at this early stage in the year, they follow the on-screen prompts to find their way around the program. Children are already confident in using the mouse and arrow keys.

## **Physical development**

56. Children are making satisfactory gains in developing physical skills. In the dance and outside play session, the teaching and support was good. The new, secure outdoor area is a very good addition to the resources and was used well during the inspection. The children take turns on the wheeled toys and share resources considerately. They learn to develop control and co-ordination, to express their feelings and emotions and to work co-operatively in groups through play, dance and physical education. The children acquire satisfactory skills in movement, and have a developing sense of space. Evidence from the Year 1 art lesson shows that they have learned to use tools and equipment with precision during their Reception year. Their manipulative skills are developing appropriately because of the good attention given to this aspect of the children's physical development. By the end of the year children draw, colour and cut, showing good dexterity. Skills in letter formation are well promoted through short exercises and practice sessions that the children enjoy.

## **Creative development**

57. There was very limited evidence for this aspect during the inspection and therefore a secure judgement on teaching and attainment cannot be made. However, some evidence from last year shows that children draw from observation and have a well developed sense of colour and form. They have opportunities to enjoy music and learn the tunes and words of rhymes and songs. In the dance lesson seen, children imitated the movements of Burglar Bill by walking quietly on tip-toe. They gained inspiration by watching the older pupils in the class and this supported their development further. They interpreted the music creatively as they 'moved through the air' to the playing of 'Snowman'. Good progress was made in this lesson. Role-play is planned in a separate area to provide more space and so that the classroom assistant can make an input into learning. Sessions extend social, personal and communication skills alongside the creative. Children explore media by using sand, different types of paper and fabrics in their collage work to gain the intended effects.

## **ENGLISH**

58. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, all those who were expected to achieve the level 2 in reading and writing did so and there was a pleasing increase in the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher level 3 in both areas. For Year 6, the percentage gaining level 4 and above was well above average, following the very good trends of recent years. Lesson observations during the inspection indicate that these high standards are maintained by the end of Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, standards in writing and speaking and listening are above average whilst attainment in reading is around the average. During the implementation of the literacy strategy, there has been a succession of different teachers in this class. As a result, some elements of the reading strategies have not been embedded and there are no remaining teachers or assistants who originally received training in the early literacy support strategy for Year 1 pupils. The teaching of phonics (i.e. the sounds within the English language) does not follow the recommended guidelines. The good standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained and further improved for pupils at the end of Year 6. In Year 2, attainment in speaking and listening and writing has been maintained at a good level but skills in early reading are not as good as in 1998.
59. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school are above average. Pupils express their ideas clearly and listen well to others. All readily engage in conversation about their work. In a Years 1 and 2 writing lesson, pupils rehearsed their thoughts out loud, changing the order of words and extending the meaning of their 'oral sentences'. In Years 3 to 6 pupils talk at length about a range of topics and respond sensitively to their classmates' ideas. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, pupils offered opinions about the way that the information was presented on the page and justified their views clearly. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils speak with clarity and assurance. In a Year 6 history lesson, for example, pupils showed maturity as they presented their findings to the class. Some were confident enough to use their notes as prompts and to speak directly to their audience whilst others used drama techniques such as improvisation. In another lesson on classic fiction, pupils offered their opinions on passages from Jane Eyre and Dickens, explaining their likes and dislikes. Their presentations were thought-provoking and relevant. Progress for all groups of pupils is very good with the higher achievers able to clarify statements and respond to opposing views with courtesy.

60. Pupils' achievement in reading is generally average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Progress is often very good in Years 3 to 6 but variable in Years 1 and 2. Guided reading is used in Years 1 and 2 but there is not a consistent match of texts to pupils' prior attainment and developing expertise. Where the group is larger than six pupils, the pace of learning is too slow. Some young pupils are relying on using only two out of the four reading strategies to tackle new text and the problem is compounded by a limited choice of early reading books. Pupils' skills in the recognition and articulation of letter sounds are not always secure. This is because parts of the literacy strategy have not been implemented fully and an early reading programme for Year 1 pupils is not in place. By the end of Year 2, most pupils talk about the plot and characters in a story, predicting what will happen next. They recognise the features of both fiction and non-fiction books and know how to use the contents and index sections to find information. Without exception, pupils take reading books home regularly and are well supported by parents. This makes a good contribution to learning. Volunteer helpers hear pupils read but the school is aware of the need to evaluate the effectiveness of these short practice sessions, especially where pupils miss parts of other lessons. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and show very good levels of comprehension. The majority of pupils recall in detail what they have read, and skills of inference and deduction are very well developed. Pupils state their preferences for favourite books and authors across a very wide range of genres and styles. They extend their reading experiences by borrowing from the school libraries and bringing books from home. They understand library classification systems and can locate information effectively and efficiently. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, due to the very good quality of teaching and the positive attitudes fostered by the school. Those who have special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate in relation to their prior learning and make good progress.
61. In Years 1 and 2, pupils practise writing in logically sequenced sentences. They apply their knowledge of letter sounds effectively when spelling simple words. By the end of Year 2 writing is well structured. Capital letters and full stops are used to demarcate sentences. Many pupils are also using speech, question and exclamation marks correctly. Writing shows a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction work. Pupils write about their visits to a local agricultural college, making their sentences interesting by using adjectives and changing the word order. Good examples of writing from the higher achievers in Year 2 included some interesting connecting words and longer sentences containing detail. In Years 3 to 6 pupils write imaginatively in different styles, including poetry. Pupils have a secure grasp of basic punctuation and grammar. Those in Years 3 and 4 model their myths, legends and traditional tales on works they have read together. In Years 5 and 6 pupils write some high quality mystery and suspense stories. The higher achievers show good awareness of the reader and choose words carefully for greater effect. There is very good use of subordinate clauses to add detail and interest. Excellent links with the history topic provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to consolidate their non-fiction writing skills. They recount events during World War 2, and report on social and political aspects of the time. With support, the pupils wrote and produced a play about the era that was presented for parents and very well received. By Year 6 pupils' poetry is often lively and thoughtful with evidence of imaginative word play in pupils' limericks. The standard of spelling is very good and reflects the school's emphasis on this area. From Year 3 onwards pupils are taught to split words into prefix, root and suffix and to spell by analogy. Later on they study the origins of words and investigate traditional and official language, discovering how spelling and

language rules work. By Year 6 they have a good number of different strategies to use when tackling a new word. Handwriting is usually of a high standard. Some pupils develop their own style and pay great attention to the presentation of their work.

62. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual programmes of learning are used to plan work and pupils have focused support sessions to help them meet their targets. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and analysed to check whether they are making the expected gains in learning. Results show that boys and girls and pupils from all ethnic groups are achieving equally well. The learning support programmes that are recommended by the National Literacy Strategy for pupils who need a boost to their reading and writing are not in place. This is because the staff who had the relevant training have now left the school. Alternative interventions and support are offered to pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 using other resources, but these are time consuming and relatively more expensive than those linked to the National Literacy Strategy.
63. Most elements of the literacy hour have been very successfully implemented in the school. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching of speaking and listening and of writing is good. In reading, the teaching is satisfactory and could be improved with the implementation of the missing elements of the Literacy Strategy and better resources. The high quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 positively and directly impacts on pupils' learning, resulting in the high standards of attainment in the school. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use it very effectively to plan and prepare lessons. Expectations are very high. Consequently pupils are challenged by the pace of learning and the work prepared for them. Careful planning ensures that tasks are matched to pupils' prior learning and are set at appropriate and different levels. Very good attitudes are evident. In one Years 5 and 6 lesson, the pupils worked hard and persevered with some very challenging work based on the use of traditional language in classic fiction. The combination of the teacher's high expectations and the pupils' determination to succeed led to rapid progress.
64. There is a strong emphasis on the extension of speaking and listening skills, including drama, throughout school. Non-fiction reading and writing skills are cleverly consolidated, especially in science, history and geography lessons in Years 3 to 6. Marking is very good in this subject. Detailed comments point the way forward for pupils and congratulatory remarks show them how well they are progressing. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly but the excellent practice of using this information to plan learning targets is seen only in Years 5 and 6. Other classes could benefit from adopting this approach. There is a good emphasis on self-evaluation in the older junior class. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning by reviewing their success at the end of lessons. They also review each others' work, making sensitive and constructive comments.
65. The subject manager for English provides good support for colleagues and has a useful overview of standards and teaching in the subject. She is aware of the reading issues in Years 1 and 2 and is keen to secure the necessary resources and training for staff so that provision can be improved. Plans to improve reading are included in this year's school improvement document. The use of information and communication technology to support learning is very good and is often excellent in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' drafting and editing skills are greatly enhanced by using the word processing facilities, work is attractively presented using different media and

the Internet is a constant source for research work. Resources for English are adequate overall but there are variations. There is a satisfactory selection of big books and guided reading sets that teachers use within the literacy hour. However, resources for children and pupils who are just beginning to read is limited and the books do not allow for good development of all the reading strategies. The class teacher often makes her own materials and books but this is an extra burden to an exceptionally demanding workload. The quality and range of fiction books in the main library and class reading areas are good and well chosen to meet pupils' tastes. They cover tales from around the world and feature characters from a good range of social and ethnic groups. The selection and quality of dictionaries and thesauruses, especially for the older pupils are very good. A wide selection of non-fiction and reference material for pupils is well organised. Facilities for personal study work are enhanced by the good range of CD ROMS and easy access to the Internet.

## **MATHEMATICS**

66. The 2001 National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 show standards to be very high in relation to the national average and in relation to similar schools. The unpublished test results for 2002 indicate that the school has been successful in maintaining its high standards, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5. This represents a steady improvement over time and a much better picture than at the time of the last inspection. Progress since the last inspection for pupils aged seven, has been more uneven due to the recent instability in staffing for this age group, but standards are still better than in 1998. The 2001 National Test results for pupils aged seven were well below the nationally expected levels but the 2002 results indicate a much better picture. All pupils who were expected to attain level 2 were successful and over 40 percent of pupils attained the higher level 3.
67. The findings of this inspection are that attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average. At the end of Year 6 attainment is well above average and this represents very good progress for pupils in Years 3 to 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment due to the carefully focused support that they are given in lessons. Boys and girls and pupils from all ethnic groups achieve equally well in the classroom.
68. By the end of Year 2, most of the pupils have acquired a good knowledge and understanding of basic number work. They show confidence in their ability to read, write and order numbers to 100 and beyond. The pupils demonstrate good skills in the recall of basic number facts and are able to apply these very successfully when working with larger amounts for example, when finding combinations of numbers to make 50. The pupils develop a growing understanding of place value and make good progress in their calculations. They select and use appropriate addition and subtraction methods from a range that they have learned. Their understanding of measurement is developing well and they were able to use centimetre rulers with reasonable accuracy to measure the length of different items of cutlery. They were then able to apply the correct method to find differences in length and to calculate the combined lengths of different items.
69. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have built very successfully on their prior learning. They make very good progress in their understanding of place value and demonstrate increasing accuracy in computation using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They develop rapid recall of essential facts and are able



to apply these successfully in their mental calculations. They know and use a wide range of strategies to solve problems and are able to explain how they have worked out their answers. The pupils demonstrate an increasing grasp of the number system, reflected in their understanding of negative numbers and in their knowledge and understanding of the relationships of fractions, decimals and percentages. In work related to shape, space and measure they are able to describe different shapes accurately, talking about the length of sides and size of angles. They are confident in measuring angles to the nearest degree. The pupils make satisfactory progress in handling data. They know how to organise the information they collect on appropriate graph structures but there is scope for providing more opportunities for pupils to construct their own graphs and to interpret the information they contain.

70. Throughout the school the pupils make good progress in using and applying their mathematical skills in a range of relevant situations. They know how to organise their work effectively and present their findings in a clear and organised manner. The use of ICT to develop and consolidate mathematical understanding and to present work is a particularly strong feature of the provision. The subject makes a considerable contribution to the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills through the demands made on pupils to explain how they have worked out their answers.
71. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. There were some examples of high quality, inspirational teaching in Years 5 and 6 that captivated and challenged the pupils, promoting a rapid rate of learning. Lessons are well planned and based appropriately on the national numeracy format. The lesson content is well matched to the pupils' different needs and the highest attaining pupils are provided with challenging tasks that develop and extend their mathematical skills. In the best lessons the introductory mental work is brisk and lively, generating high levels of interest and involvement in mathematical learning. The occasional lack of pace in this part of the lesson in Years 1 and 2 fails to engage all pupils in the learning. Questioning is a strong feature in lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and is used effectively to assess and extend the pupils' level of learning. Classroom assistants work closely with the teachers to support pupils with special educational needs and they make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and progress.
72. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has played a significant part in raising standards in numeracy in Years 3 to 6 and is beginning to have an impact in Years 1 and 2. The subject is well managed and resourced. Assessment information is carefully analysed and teaching is monitored effectively on a regular basis. The use of assessment information in setting challenging learning targets for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is excellent. The system has not, as yet, been extended to the other classes. Mathematics makes an important contribution to other subjects, for example in science and geography. The subject meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **SCIENCE**

73. The latest published national test results for 2001 show the pupils' attainment in science by the end of Year 6 to be very high in relation to both the national average and that of similar schools. The most recent test results for 2002 indicate that this

high level of performance has been maintained, particularly in relation to the proportion of pupils reaching the level above that expected for their age (level 5). This represents very good improvement from the time of the last inspection in 1998 when attainment was below the nationally expected levels.

74. Present inspection findings show that, by the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those found nationally. Since the time of the last inspection, there has been instability in staffing for this age group that contributed to a drop in achievement as seen in the 2001 test results. However, this situation has recently been resolved and levels of attainment are improving steadily. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in all areas of the subject. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those from all ethnic groups make good progress in relation to their prior attainment due to high quality teaching and classroom support. In Years 5 and 6 these pupils make very good progress. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls during their lessons.
75. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils reach the nationally expected level in all areas of the subject and a significant proportion of pupils reach the higher level. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of life processes. They can name parts of the body and know how their senses help them to interact with their environment. They can identify basic similarities and differences between themselves and others. They know how plants grow and have a basic understanding of life cycles, such as that of a frog. In their studies of materials they are able to classify common materials according to their observable properties. In their investigations of how toy cars travel, they are developing sound ideas about forces and movement. The recent, increased emphasis on the development of scientific enquiry skills has resulted in rapid progress in levels of knowledge and understanding about the scientific process. For example, in their investigation of what would be the best material to make an umbrella for teddy, the pupils showed that they were able to make simple predictions, test the materials, record their results in an organised way and draw conclusions from their findings.
76. By the end of Year 6, most pupils achieve standards of scientific enquiry, knowledge and understanding that are well above those expected for their age. They develop a very good scientific vocabulary and apply this accurately in their work. In their studies of the human body they gain a good understanding of bones, muscles and the function of the principal organs; they know about balanced diet and how to keep healthy. Pupils understand how green plants produce food and reproduce and are able to name and describe the function of parts of a flower. In their work on materials they can name common gases and describe changes of state such as melting and dissolving. Through practical exploration they develop a good understanding of forces, such as the effects of gravity on falling objects, friction and magnetic attraction. They know how electrical components function in different circuits and can construct series and parallel circuits. The pupils' scientific enquiry skills are well developed. In their investigation of the factors affecting how far a person can jump, they showed good levels of understanding of the principles of fair testing. They tested the hypothesis that leg length affects the distance jumped with appropriate regard for control of variables, accuracy of measurement and reliability of results. However, there is scope for further development in the interpretation of results, particularly in the use of graphs and the ability to state findings in scientific terms.

77. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The best teaching is very well planned to give maximum opportunity for pupils to take part in practical investigative work that fully challenges and extends their scientific thinking. The very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 demonstrates high expectations and very skilful questioning of pupils that encourages them to think for themselves, in stimulating and interesting contexts. There is a clear focus on the desired scientific learning and the pupils are engaged in purposeful tasks that promote the development of the required skills and knowledge. In the less successful lessons, there is insufficient focus on the teaching of specific scientific skills and knowledge. In all lessons the teachers ensure that all their pupils are fully included in the learning. Pupils with special educational needs are often given high quality support according to their learning targets. Boys and girls and pupils from all ethnic groups are given equal opportunities to be included in lessons. Provision for pupils of high ability is particularly good.
78. Science lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their numeracy skills through activities such as measurement, data collection and graph construction. Speaking and listening skills are developed particularly well and science reports make a significant contribution to the development of the pupils' writing skills.
79. The management of science is satisfactory overall but there is scope for further improvement in the way in which the subject is monitored to ensure that the recent improvement in standards in Years 1 and 2 is maintained and that there is sufficient emphasis on the development of scientific skills at the lower end of the school. The excellent system for using assessment information to set clear, future targets for pupils that is in operation in Years 5 and 6 is not extended to all classes. The resources for the subject are sufficient and of good quality.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

80. The great majority of pupils throughout the school achieve standards that are in line with those expected for their ages and in Years 3 to 6 some pupils achieve high standards. This is a similar picture to that existing at the time of the last inspection and indicates that the school has been successful in maintaining standards. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior ability. Boys and girls and pupils from all ethnic groups make equally good progress.
81. By the end of Year 2 the pupils have made satisfactory progress in the development of their artistic skills and knowledge. They are able to use an appropriate range of media, with confidence, to produce satisfactory drawing, painting, printing and collage effects. Their evaluation skills are particularly well developed due to the good opportunities they are given to express preferences and talk about their work.
82. By the end of Year 6 the pupils have widened the range of expressive media they employ to include three-dimensional work, for example in the use of papier-mâché to create credible imitations of Greek vases. Their drawing and painting skills are developing well and they show an increasing awareness of line and tone. The pupils develop a good range of knowledge about the work of other artists and are able to imitate the styles of artists such as Modigliani and Van Gogh to great effect. Sketchbooks are used effectively to explore ideas for later studies.

83. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The pupils are given adequate opportunities to explore a wide range of creative media and have suitable opportunities to explore a good range of creative art. Lessons are well planned to teach the necessary skills within a climate that allows independent expression and exploration. Teachers are very successful in promoting confidence and enjoyment in artistic expression.
84. The subject is appropriately managed and resourced but there is some room for improvement in the range of resources available to support the study of other artists' work. Art lessons make a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' speaking and listening skills and effectively promote the pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures. Visits to galleries, such as the Storey Gallery in Lancaster, make a particularly effective contribution to the pupils' learning in art and design.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

85. Standards are in line with nationally expected levels for pupils at the end of Year 2 and above expectations by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection when standards were broadly average throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, regardless of gender or ethnic background, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment.
86. By the age of seven, the pupils have gained appropriate designing and making skills using simple materials and tools. In creating a design for a playground, the pupils made appropriate choices of materials, used Lego to test prototypes, solved problems and modified their designs so that the finished product met their stated requirements. The finished models showed imagination and ingenuity in interpreting their original design proposals.
87. By the age of eleven, the pupils have built very successfully on these early experiences and have widened their understanding of the designing and making processes. They are able to evaluate existing products, such as clocks, in order to develop their own design proposals that successfully take into consideration the taste and needs of the person who will use the product. They use computer software very confidently to formulate their designs. The pupils' making skills develop at a good rate. They are able to cut and join materials with accuracy, using appropriate tools. They develop a good understanding of a range of mechanisms. In making working models of vehicles, they were able to design and construct a simple wooden chassis and incorporate an electric motor linked to an appropriate drive mechanism.
88. The teaching of design and technology is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. All teachers plan lessons that promote high levels of interest and enjoyment in the designing and making process. In the best teaching there is sufficient emphasis on the evaluation and disassembly of existing products in order to discover the factors that influenced their design. High levels of demand are made on pupils' ingenuity in creating design proposals. Good emphasis is placed on evaluating the finished designs against the original specification and intentions.
89. The subject is well managed. Teachers' planning is effectively supported by the guidelines adopted from the nationally recommended programme of work. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy and

numeracy skills. The use of information communication technology, to support the design process and to control the movement of models, is a particularly strong feature of the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

90. Only one lesson of history and two lessons of geography were available to be seen during the inspection week. Additional evidence was gathered from discussions with the manager, talking to pupils, looking at completed work and viewing a range of displays around the school. Pupils' attainment in both subjects matches national expectations at the end of Year 2 and is above expectations by the end of Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection in Years 3 to 6 and are maintained in Years 1 and 2. There is a strong emphasis on practical experiences throughout school and on enquiry, personal study and investigation in Years 3 to 6.
91. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about the passage of time and how things change. They investigate famous people in the past and how they have shaped our present day lives. For example, they found out about Florence Nightingale's work and identified how she has influenced modern day medical practice. They investigated the coming of steam by learning about George Stephenson's work and evaluated its impact on the course of history. Pupils found out about holidays in the past and discovered how people used to amuse themselves. This work promoted learning in history and geography. Pupils study their local environment and learn about places. As part of their field work study pupils compare and contrast the village of rural Barton with the seaside town of Blackpool. They explored the differences in shops, transport and scenery and were able to explain why these existed. In the geography lesson seen, pupils studied the island of Struay and were able to identify the physical and human features of the place.
92. During Years 3 to 6 pupils study life at various times in history, comparing and contrasting the main characteristics of the different eras. They recall facts accurately and ask sensible questions as a starting point for historical enquiry. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a very good knowledge of Victorian times and confidently discuss the fashions and inventions of the nineteenth century. As part of their social history work, they investigate the lifestyles of rich and poor children of the time. Through this enquiry, they realise the present opportunities of education, health and recreation that they have today, promoting their appreciation of modern-day society. Pupils talk knowledgeably about events and everyday life during the time of World War 2. They understand the reasons for the evacuation. They adopt the role of an evacuee and write some moving letters home, showing very good empathy with the children of the time. Their biographies of famous people such as Hitler or Churchill are evidence of some in-depth personal study on the subject. Older pupils learned about the political situation and discover how the past can be represented in different ways and from different viewpoints. As a culmination of their work, the pupils wrote and produced a presentation based on life in World War 2, including dramatic sequences and music.
93. In geography, pupils learn about settlements and investigate the origins of village and town names. They contrast life in Lancashire with that in Jamaica. Skills in map work develop well and older pupils use Ordnance Survey maps effectively. During the inspection, the Year 3 and 4 pupils carried out some field work as part of their topic on rivers. This was an excellent lesson where they investigated the flow of the water, plotted the cross section of the river and tested for pollution. Their scientific knowledge was extended as they found out that the creatures they caught were

intolerant of pollution and from this they were able to conclude that the water was clean. Pupils who have special educational needs do well in practical lessons and have help to record where necessary. There is no difference in attainment between pupils of different ethnic groups or between boys and girls, with all progressing well.

94. Teaching in both subjects is at least good and it is very good in Years 3 to 6. Activities are very well planned and prepared with a practical emphasis. There are many opportunities for pupils to gather information both from first hand investigation and from secondary sources such as books and other documents. Visits to places of interest are very well used. These include an exciting trail around Ribchester and local field trips. Visitors, including members of the community come into school to give talks and add another dimension to learning. Links with other subjects are very good and help to promote essential skills. Pupils have good opportunities to extend their mathematical skills by sequencing events using a 'time line'. They collect and organise data for geographical study and present the results using charts and graphs. During the field trip, they calculated the mean figure after testing the speed of water flow several times. Links between the English and history curriculum are especially strong. For example, when learning about the Romans, pupils investigated the Latin derivations of words to help their spelling. In one history lesson, pupils presented their findings to the rest of the class, using speaking and listening and drama skills to very good effect. Some imaginative ideas excite the pupils' enthusiasm, for example, the World Cup was used as a starting point to learn about different countries, languages and nations. Pupils make very good use of ICT in both subjects for research, producing charts, representing data and making Powerpoint presentations. Much of the work recorded on the computer includes graphics that the pupils have downloaded from CD ROMs or the Internet, or pictures that they have taken using the digital camera. Their 'guidebooks to Barton' mimic professional publications and are very well illustrated. They provide an interesting read and good reference material for the visitor.
95. The manager for history and geography has a very good level of expertise and has developed a good scheme of planning based on national guidelines. It is well organised in a two-year cycle to take account of the mixed ages in the classes and the varying levels of prior learning. Teachers check pupils' attainment at the end of each topic unit and the information is used to evaluate pupils' progress and the success of the planning. Resources are satisfactory and the subject manager is constantly improving them as further units are studied. The school makes very good use of the local authority's book loan scheme to supplement the library stock.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

96. Attainment in information and communication technology matches national expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2 and is above expectations by the time they reach the end of Year 6. This is a better level of attainment than that noted in the inspection of 1998. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good, with some examples of very good learning, in Years 3 to 6. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is the same as that of their peers.
97. By the time they reach the end of Year 2 pupils are aware of the uses of information and communication technology in the world at large. For example, they have a basic understanding of its use in shopping, the Internet and e-mail. They are proficient in the use of the standard keyboard and the mouse. When using computers they

confidently find the facilities or programs they require by using the on-screen prompts. Pupils experience the use of control technology, for example, when entering a series of instructions to direct a floor robot.

98. Pupils, by the end of Year 6, are confident in using information and communication technology to handle, analyse and present information. In one investigation, they tested different fabrics to see which was best at keeping out the light. Using computer sensors to measure the amount of light, they logged their results and produced a graph to illustrate the findings clearly. Pupils have a very good level of awareness about the use of technology in their everyday lives. They create spreadsheets to work out total shopping bills and the change required, as used in supermarket checkouts. The older pupils use 'Powerpoint' facilities to make presentations about their recent adventure holiday. Younger pupils know that it is important to ask the right questions and follow the right path in order to interrogate a data base or find information from the Internet. Those in the older class make excellent use of websites and CD ROMs to engage in research. Pupils have a secure understanding of multi-media applications, for example, they combine text and pictures in their geography work. Good use is made of the digital camera to include pictorial evidence for their work and these images are often used very effectively. Pupils are confident in using desk top publishing facilities to create booklets, news items or simply to refine the presentation of their work. Skills in control technology are advanced through using the programmable construction kits. Pupils build model vehicles and programme them to move in a specific way using their skills in logo. There is discriminate use of e-mail facilities with pupils giving thoughtful consideration to which method of communication is most efficient. All pupils show very positive attitudes to their work and help each other willingly.
99. The school has done a great deal to improve its provision for the subject and this work is having a positive impact on the level of pupils' attainment. Pupils experience a very interesting range of learning experiences based on nationally recommended subject guidelines that are adapted to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. One of the strengths of the school's provision for the subject is the emphasis now placed on consolidating and extending skills when studying other subjects. For example, older pupils used the computer in a design technology lesson to model their clock designs before making them. Those in Years 1 and 2 use a Starspell program to practise and speed up their spelling skills. Throughout school, word processing skills are very well applied for drafting, editing and presenting work and for ensuring accuracy using the spell and grammar checkers. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. There is good, direct teaching of information and communication technology skills now that teachers' knowledge and confidence have improved. Teaching for the older pupils is inspired and very good. There is an excellent level of subject knowledge in this class and the teacher explains complex concepts in ways that are easily understood. The interactive whiteboard allows for good demonstration. During the inspection it was cleverly used in literacy so that all pupils could share a text, discuss the style of writing and highlight specific words.
100. The subject manager is extremely knowledgeable, enthusiastic and provides very good support for colleagues. She is an experienced trainer for ICT and has produced some excellent guidance for teachers in the school showing which programs can be used with the units of study in each subject. She is in the process of gathering together examples of pupils' completed work for each unit so that teachers can use these as a stimulus in teaching and to set the standard expected. The resources for

ICT have been carefully chosen, with the manager ensuring that all hardware, software installations and cabling meet her exacting requirements. Resources are good and there is good attention to health and safety matters with a filter installed to prevent pupils from accessing unsuitable sites as they surf the web.

## MUSIC

101. No music lessons were observed in Year 2 or Year 6 and thus there is insufficient evidence on which to make a judgement about attainment. The school employs a specialist teacher who works with all age groups. The scheme of work covers all elements of the National Curriculum with a suitable balance of time allocated to listening, performing, rehearsing and evaluating. Re-occurring elements such as pulse and tempo, pitch and volume are addressed at progressively more sophisticated levels as pupils move up through the school.
102. During assemblies pupils of all ages sing in tune, demonstrating good tempo and duration. When singing to the piano accompaniment, pupils' voices have good expression. However, they find it much more difficult to sing to the recorded music, largely because there is no starting note or good introduction to guide their pitch. The playing of music as pupils enter and leave the hall creates a calm, spiritual effect and they show good concentration as they listen and appreciate. The experience could be enhanced by some mention of the name of the piece played and reference to the composer. In the one lesson seen in Years 3 and 4 pupils' attainment was above average and learning was very good. Pupils worked on playing simple tunes using the pentatonic scale. They created simple compositions, rehearsed their part and played together in the form of a class performance where all joined in the 'head tune'. One group worked together very successfully to devise the rhythm. Very well developed skills of collaboration and co-operation were evident. When playing together, pupils maintained their own part well and corrected the mistakes that they detected by ear. ICT was used effectively to record the compositions so that pupils could evaluate them at a later stage. By the end of the lesson, there was a strong sense of achievement and pupils had obviously enjoyed their work.
103. There was very good teaching in the lesson seen. The teacher's expectations were high and the very detailed planning clearly mapped out a series of activities to take pupils' learning forward at a very good pace. Lots of praise and helpful comments contributed well to pupils' progress. Attitudes to learning were very good and evident in the way that some pupils persevered when they found the task difficult. Those with special educational needs thoroughly enjoyed this creative subject and learned very well.
104. Music has a good profile at the school with opportunities for pupils to perform for audiences. Productions include a mixture of drama, music and dance so that all pupils can be fully involved. The local music service provides additional tuition in brass to extend pupils' experiences. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting commented on the good quality of school shows and expressed their satisfaction of the school's commitment to developing the creative and imaginative talents of their children. Resources are unsatisfactory at present because there are insufficient tuned percussion instruments and the range of recorded music is very limited. Staff overcome these problems by bringing tapes and CD's from home and by borrowing instruments from other small schools in the cluster so that pupils' education is not adversely effected. This is time-consuming, however, and adds to the workload.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach the expected standards in gymnastics. In swimming and games they exceed these levels. Overall, attainment at this age is above expectations. This represents good progress since the time of the last inspection when standards were found to be satisfactory overall and confirms the views of parents that the pupils do well in this subject. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils from the minority ethnic groups make particularly good progress. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
106. By the end of Year 2, the pupils move confidently with appropriate body control and spatial awareness in executing skipping, running and jumping movements. In a dance lesson, the pupils moved imaginatively and expressively, varying their movements to interpret the mood of the music. They were particularly sensitive in their interpretation of 'The Snowman' music, using scarves effectively to extend and refine their movements. They are beginning to co-operate appropriately in pairs and small groups and know that it is important to warm up before physical activity.
107. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have made good progress in developing their physical education skills. In games they demonstrate good ball control, throwing and catching with accuracy. In small team games, such as skittle ball, they are good at passing the ball, using space well and obeying the rules of the game. High levels of sportsmanship are evident. In gymnastics the pupils understand safety factors and know about the effects of exercise on the body. The majority of pupils demonstrate reasonable control over different movements on the large apparatus, although the movements of a small minority are unrefined, for example in executing jumps and landings. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 attend swimming lessons and all become suitably proficient in the water. By the end of Year 6, the great majority have developed proficiency in a number of different swimming strokes and all can swim twenty-five metres unaided. Pupils in Year 6 have opportunities to develop their outdoor and adventure skills, such as orienteering, abseiling and canoeing, during an annual residential visit to an activity centre. Parents talk with great pride about the sporting achievements of the school. The teams of boys and girls are competitive and their successes are shown by the impressive number of trophies on display in the entrance hall. Pupils demonstrate very good gamesmanship and fair play.
108. The quality of teaching in physical education lessons is good throughout the school. Lessons are carefully planned and the teaching provides suitable opportunities for the pupils to warm up and cool down at the beginning and end of lessons. Safety factors are given appropriate consideration and teachers exercise close control over their pupils during lessons. Teachers give clear directions and make suitable demands of the pupils' performance. However, there is scope for the pupils to be given more opportunities for self evaluation during lessons in order to identify areas for improvement. The digital camera is used to record work, especially during the activity holiday. The pupils then use the images to develop Powerpoint presentations, describing their work and achievements.
109. The subject is very well managed and adequately resourced. The manager makes excellent use of assessment information in order to track the progress of pupils and raise standards.