

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **CHRIST CHURCH CHARNOCK RICHARD C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Charnock Richard, Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119463

Headteacher: Mr Michael Walmsley

Lead inspector: Michael Onyon

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> September – 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2003

Inspection number: 255796

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	145
School address:	Church Lane Charnock Richard Chorley
Postcode:	PR7 5NA
Telephone number:	01257 791490
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Thomas Heaton
Date of previous inspection:	16 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> March, 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is in receipt of the Department for Education and Skills Achievement award and the Basic Skills award and has also successfully participated in the local education authority's 'Healthy Schools' initiative. The school is actively engaged with its local community, encouraging the use of its facilities and sharing in Civic Society and 'Green Partnership' awards, effectively maintaining and enhancing the local environment. Socio-economic indicators are above the national average and attainment on entry is above average. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and none are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average and those needs identified are predominantly learning needs. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual time of the first admission is very low.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18146	Michael Onyon	Lead inspector	English as an additional language, Science, Art and design, History, Physical Education.
11077	Janet Harrison	Lay inspector	
23319	Vincent Leary	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs, Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Design and technology, Geography
8316	Jozefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Curriculum, English, Citizenship, Music.

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

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

Christ Church is an **effective** school, providing good value for money. Standards are well above average in Year 6 and pupils achieve well because the teaching is good. The school works very effectively with parents and the community, providing a good quality of education. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Leadership and management are good, with very good leadership from the headteacher, providing a clear vision for the future and a determination to continually improve.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- A very positive ethos has been created where pupils behave very well and are very keen to learn.
- The good quality teaching and the range of effective methods used to promote good achievement.
- The very effective way in which the school is led by the headteacher, supported by the deputy head and subject co-ordinators.
- The environment for learning could be improved in the Foundation Stage by focusing more on independent learning.
- Whilst pupils acquire sound basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT) standards could be higher and opportunities to use ICT to support learning in other subjects improved.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the trend in the school's performance has been in line with the national trend. Almost all the key issues identified in 1998 have been addressed well. The school's improvement plan includes appropriate strategies to raise standards still further in ICT. Subject co-ordinators now play an effective part in the leadership and management of the school.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	D	A	A
Mathematics	A	C	B	B
Science	A*	C	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Overall pupils' **achievement is good** and inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment are well above the national average. The school has achieved its targets for attainment in English, mathematics and science over the last three years. Children enter the Reception class with initial standards above those found nationally, in all six of the required areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress and enter Year 1 at above average levels. Progress and achievement in Years 1 and 2 are good and attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good, particularly for younger pupils, and inspection evidence shows that the present standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are also high in art and physical education. Standards in ICT have risen since the previous inspection but are currently at the national average. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in terms of their individual learning targets.

Pupils' **personal qualities are good**. Their attitudes are positive and they behave well. The school's strong, valuing ethos and the teachers' high expectations effectively support pupils' **good** overall, **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of **teaching is good overall** and is particularly strong in Years 3 and 4. Teachers show a strong commitment to the school and work effectively as a team. There are very good relationships with pupils and teachers use a very effective range of teaching strategies, with very good planning and organisation of lessons. Learning support assistants provide effective support and are fully involved in the preparation of work. Occasionally, in the Foundation Stage, there is too much adult direction of children's work, with limited opportunities for them to develop their independence.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and of good quality, with value placed upon worthwhile opportunities to develop art and music. Pupils' personal, social and health education is developed well and good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum, with a very good range of activities in addition to those in the classroom.

The care offered to pupils is very good, with good support and guidance. The school's partnership with parents is good, with a very effective partnership with the community and other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good**. The leadership of the headteacher is very good, resulting in improvements since the last inspection and a very clear educational direction based upon the desire for continual improvement. The school reflects thoughtfully on its work and seeks to work effectively with partners to move forward successfully. The management of the school is also good. Pupils' achievements are monitored and evaluated effectively, with action taken where necessary. The governing body provides good governance for the school and know its strengths and weaknesses well.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very pleased with the school. They feel their children make good progress, the teaching is good and staff are approachable. Concerns raised are dealt with quickly and equitably. Pupils are also very supportive of the school. They feel that their views are listened to and that they contribute to the life of the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- There should be more focus on developing children's independent learning in the Foundation Stage.
- The school should raise standards in ICT and provide more opportunities to use ICT to support learning in other subjects.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is good. Standards in the Foundation Stage are above average with satisfactory achievement. Standards are above average in art and physical education, where there is good achievement.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Consistently effective teaching and close teamwork is ensuring good achievement in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science throughout Years 3 to 6 as a result of very good planning of lessons and the effective match of tasks to pupils' capabilities.
- Because of the school's focus on 'creative and aesthetic' subjects, standards are above average in art and design and physical education and pupils achieve well.
- Whilst standards are above average in the Foundation Stage, pupils' achievement is satisfactory because many activities are over directed by adults and there are few opportunities for children to learn independently.
- Pupils acquire sound skills in most aspects of ICT but are not applying them sufficiently in some subjects to help raise standards.

#### **Commentary**

1. In 2002, standards by the end of Year 6 were high in English compared to both national results (see table below) and similar schools. Standards in mathematics were above the national average and average in science. The results of national tests for 2003 show improvements in both mathematics and science and the evidence of inspection indicates that standards are well above average in all three subjects. Average point scores in 2003 are English 28.6, mathematics 29.8 and science 29.5. The school met its targets and pupils achieve well. Test results indicated that boys achieve better than girls, however observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work during the inspection show that boys and girls achieve equally well.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (26.2)	27.2 (27.2)
mathematics	27.9 (26.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.8 (28.6)	28.6 (28.5)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The table overleaf shows that the school's standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above and well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, when compared with both national averages and with the results of similar schools. The 2003 results show that the high standards have been maintained across all three areas, with average point scores of 18.7 in reading, 16.7 in writing and 18.6 in mathematics. There has been a steady upward trend in results over the last five years.
3. Children in the Foundation Stage enter school with standards of attainment that are above average. Their achievements are good in the development of language and mathematics skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because of the quality of



teaching and the very good relationships between children and the adults. Children's achievement across the other areas of learning is satisfactory and the majority of children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They could exceed the learning goals if the curriculum was presented in a less formal way and in a manner more consistent with national expectations. The current arrangement for teaching reception age pupils alongside some Year 1 pupils is a barrier to learning.

4. Inspection findings confirm a steady pattern of improvement in the school's results at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and the school has increased the number of pupils achieving the higher National Curriculum Level 3. Assessments carried out by teachers also show that standards have been consistently above average in science. Currently standards are judged to be well above average and pupils achieve well. The co-ordinator for Years 1 and 2 provides good leadership, monitors and supports teaching and reviews pupils' progress. Teaching and learning are consistently good as a result.

***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002***

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.3 (17.7)	16.0 (15.9)
Writing	15.9 (15.3)	14.5 (14.5)
Mathematics	18.0 (17.1)	16.6 (16.4)

*There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. Standards are well above average. The school has consistently met its past targets and the challenging targets for 2004 are likely to be met. Careful thought is given to the planning of lessons to ensure that tasks for all pupils are matched to their capabilities. The three classes each have pupils of mixed ages and activities are presented to challenge all pupils, enabling them to work at a level appropriate for them. Led by the headteacher, teachers analyse the content of the curriculum and plan its delivery in two-year cycles to ensure that each element is covered. In addition, the headteacher tracks the progress of individual pupils to ensure they progress as well as they are able to. Results in national tests in all three subjects have shown a rising trend, with the exception of a 'dip' in 2001 caused by the lower prior attainment of that year group of pupils. The results of tests for 2003 show improvements on those for 2002.
6. The school's mission statement includes a commitment to extend the curriculum beyond the key subjects of English, mathematics and science to offer high quality opportunities to pupils in 'creative and aesthetic' subjects, in particular art and design. Because of the commitment to creative aspects of the curriculum, standards are above average in art and design and physical education and pupils' achievement is good by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards have risen in art and design and been maintained in physical education since the previous inspection. Appropriate attention is focused upon planned opportunities to develop key literacy and numeracy skills through art and physical education, using the stimulus of the school's environment and in particular the woodland area that has provided the inspiration for good standards of work, developed through the involvement of professional artists. The recent involvement of a specialist teacher of music is beginning to have a similar impact in music.
7. Children enter the reception class with standards that are above average and move into Year 1 with standards across the areas of learning that are also above average. Their achievement is satisfactory. The planning of activities across the required areas of learning is often good and the nursery nurse contributes effectively to that planning. There are appropriate opportunities for children to experience different areas of learning but sometimes adults over-direct the participation of children and time is lost at the beginning and end of activities. Opportunities are missed when children might explore situations for themselves. For example, following physical

activity children returned to the class base and sat on the carpet, waiting for the teacher to organise them further, rather than being offered opportunities to 'play' games and develop their skills of communication. There are very good relationships between the teacher and children and a strong commitment to offer what is best for them.

8. Pupils acquire sound basic skills in ICT by Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement is satisfactory in most aspects, an improvement since the last inspection. However, more work needs to be done to offer opportunities to pupils to use and apply skills in control technologies. The school has acknowledged this area for development in its improvement plan and is planning actions to move the work forward. There are examples of ICT being applied effectively to support learning in other subjects, for example accessing information in science in Year 2 to consider the sounds made by different musical instruments, or in Year 4 and 5 using a word processing program effectively to illustrate how powerful verbs could be substituted for less effective verbs in a piece of text. However, such opportunities are not offered consistently and in some lessons the opportunity to use ICT effectively is not taken. There was limited use of the computer suite during the inspection. The main cause is the considerable variation in teachers' competence with ICT and awareness of its potential use to raise standards in other subjects.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Teachers use their assessments and objectives in very clear education plans for these pupils to adapt work to their needs and learning support assistants provide effective support and guidance when working with them. More able pupils achieve soundly in their literacy and numeracy where tasks are matched to their ability. The school identifies the particular gifts and talents of pupils and is beginning to provide a comprehensive range of specific opportunities for them.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils are happy to come to school, have very positive attitudes and behave very well. Attendance is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good standards of behaviour and high quality of relationships in the school enable pupils to learn effectively.
- Attendance levels are high.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and are keen to do their best.
- Spiritual and cultural development is good; moral and social development is very good.

### **Commentary**

10. Results from the questionnaire completed by pupils shows that they have very positive views about the school and this is reflected in their very good attendance levels. Attendance at the school in 2002/3 was above the national average and there were no recorded unauthorised absences. The school telephones the pupil's home on the first day of any unexplained absence.

#### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

11. Relationships throughout the school are very good. In classroom activities, at playtimes and lunchtimes pupils take time to help each other and to talk to each other about their approach to

work and play activities. Pupils are supportive of each other, for example befriending others on their first days in school, and show considerable respect for their teachers. Pupils feel secure in the school and are confident in the abilities of their teachers to sort out any conflicts that may occur. Bullying is rare and taken seriously by the school; any incidents are swiftly resolved.

12. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to school. Most are attentive and follow instructions well. They are generally confident, show enthusiasm for learning and work well together, supporting each other in their learning. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 science lesson pupils accepted responsibilities for different aspects of an investigation and respected the contributions of others. The school council functions very effectively and elected representatives effectively canvass the views of their class-mates, putting forward their ideas to improve facilities and resources. During the inspection there were many opportunities in lessons for pupils to share their ideas and support each other. For example, in a Year 6 ICT lesson a pupil with special educational needs worked in a productive partnership with another pupil in designing a 'multi-media' page.
13. There were three fixed-period exclusions in the last year for poor behaviour, but these were occasioned by one pupil and careful strategies have been put in place to cater for this pupil's specific needs. The school rules '*behave well, think about and respect the needs of others*' are effective and well understood. Teachers successfully establish an orderly and calm environment in class so that pupils can learn effectively. Teachers positively seek out good behaviour and achievement and reward it effectively, for example in lessons, in the way they respond to the contributions of pupils, and in the weekly 'achievement assembly' where good behaviour, contributions to the school community and academic achievement are recognised through certificates and team points. Pupils like the system of team points and take a pride in contributing to their team.

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	143	3	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

14. Assemblies are of good quality and make for a positive and calm start to the day. There are close links with the local church, for example the local vicar led an assembly during the inspection week. Pupils' spiritual development is also promoted by the tranquil and inspiring 'woodland garden', which is used for some lessons and activities. Cultural provision has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils have a good knowledge of their local community and worked effectively with adults from Liseaux Hall, a centre offering support for adults with learning difficulties, when constructing their woodland garden. There is a special focus on multi-cultural topics in a designated week each term. Last term pupils enjoyed learning about the music, arts and culture of Southeast Asia, when visitors demonstrated a range of crafts, musical instruments and cultural traditions, for the pupils to share. Pupils are active in charity work and are sponsoring a child and her family in Sri Lanka. Pupils are enthusiastic about social events at the school, such as the treasure hunt in the woodland garden and the after-school activities. A recent initiative offers pupils the opportunity to learn the sport of fencing, during a lunchtime session. They are very enthusiastic and the sessions, led by a qualified coach, are attended in large numbers. Pupils in Year 6 look forward to their residential trip to Patterdale, in the Lake District, which effectively teaches them to organise

themselves and rise to challenges. Pupils leave the school well prepared for secondary education.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is good. It is particularly effective in Years 2 and 6. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good. Provision for pupils' care is very good, with good support and guidance. The school's partnership with parents is good, with a very effective partnership with the community and others schools.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is particularly strong in Years 3 and 4. Teachers show a strong commitment to the school and work effectively as a team. The recent award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark reflects the improved calibre of teaching. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall, a range of effective teaching methods are used to promote good achievement.
- Very good planning and organisation of lessons.
- Support staff are fully involved in lesson planning and deployed well.
- Very good relationships between teachers and pupils.
- ICT is not used consistently to raise standards in all subjects and higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in the subject.
- Occasionally, in the Foundation Stage, there is too much direction, with limited opportunities to develop children's independence.

### **Commentary**

15. The overall quality of the teaching and learning in the school has improved since the previous inspection, reflecting the effective and strong leadership and management of the school.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (22 %)	19 (59 %)	6 (19 %)	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

16. Overall the quality of learning is good in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in the Reception class. Teaching methods are systematic and occasionally imaginative. This is because teachers make good use of what they know pupils can already do to build learning during each lesson and over time. They have realistic targets for pupils to aspire to, driving up standards. Work is often set in the context of everyday problems, which makes it meaningful to the pupils and helps them realise why they need to practise and develop the skills they are being taught. The work is exciting and because of this pupils work hard and achieve very good results. For example, in a very good Year 3/4 mathematics lesson on three-dimensional shapes and their patterns the higher attaining pupils were able to identify the patterns made by the faces, edges and vertices of a range of prisms and one pupil worked out an algebraic formula for the patterns identified.
17. Very good planning and organisation mean that lessons are always prepared well and run smoothly. Each lesson builds on what went before. Clear explanations secure pupils' understanding of what is going on and what they are expected to do. Teachers constantly

check pupils' progress throughout lessons and, if appropriate, adapt what they are doing to either revisit an idea or move more quickly on to the next stage of learning. The assessment systems in English, mathematics and science help teachers ensure that pupils' work is targeted specifically to individual needs so they move on quickly in their learning. The Year 6 pupils entered the school with standards above average. They have improved to well above the average and the school is likely to achieve the statutory targets set in English and mathematics. Likewise pupils in Year 2, who entered the school with standards above average, are currently working at well above average levels.

18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Most teachers have an appropriate understanding of the curriculum needs for pupils who have individual difficulties, especially in English and mathematics. They plan activities carefully to take account of all pupils' capabilities. Teachers' short term planning includes specific activities for pupils with special educational needs. This impacts positively on their learning, enabling them to make good progress. A notable feature of many lessons seen was how the contribution of pupils was actively sought and always valued. For instance, in a Year 3/4 history lesson a pupil with special educational needs shared with the class his feelings about the plight of refugees. Learning support assistants are aided by very close planning procedures. Most classes receive adequate support. The deployment of assistants in classes is good. Individual education plans are in place, and targets are more specific and more tightly focussed than they were at the previous inspection. The special needs co-ordinators provides assessment advice and resources where needed.
19. Effective and flexible deployment of support assistants to classes means that these adults do a good job in helping pupils of all abilities to do well. Their teaching of small groups is successful because they work under the direction of the class teacher with clear understanding about what pupils are to be taught and how to teach it. Their talents are put to good use, such as in a Year 4/5 ICT lesson, where the support assistant with particular skills in ICT spurred on the pupils with special needs, giving them the confidence to have a go at modifying a text. Sometimes during the introductory sessions to lessons, the support assistants sit with a small group of pupils, clarifying what the teacher is saying and offering more explicit explanations. This works well because it ensures that all pupils understand what is going on, especially those with special needs. This good support provided for pupils with special educational needs is typical of many lessons.
20. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. This means that throughout the school, there is a calm and purposeful ethos for learning. The very good relationships mean that pupils work hard to please the teachers and support staff. Pupils are encouraged to explain to classmates how they have done something such as how to solve a number problem in mathematics. Because pupils think carefully about what they could do to improve their work there is a positive impact on their behaviour. For example, in a Year 4/5 physical education lesson, pupils were encouraged to talk about why some pupils were more successful than others at throwing and catching a rugby ball. Similarly, teachers' comments in pupils' workbooks make pupils think about how well they are doing. However, the quality of these is inconsistent from class to class and subject to subject. They do not always give pupils a good enough indication of how they could improve their work next time.
21. The assessment of pupils' academic performance in English, mathematics and science is very good. The school uses a range of formal strategies to monitor pupils' progress and achievement. The results of pupils' performance in the national tests at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are analysed in great detail to identify what is done well and also areas in need of particular development in the future. This gives the school a very good indication of what it needs to do to improve standards. Other evaluation methods include classroom observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and class exchanges where co-ordinators gain valuable information on their subject by visiting classes and discussing with the pupils the work in a particular subject. This wealth of information is used for the setting of group and individual learning targets in the core subjects, targeting additional resources, and when appropriate the modifying of teaching

strategies. For instance, the school discovered a weakness in problem solving, so in the Numeracy Hour time is now being spent on the development of problem solving skills. These strategies are effective in driving up standards.

22. The quality of assessment is more variable in other subjects, notably in ICT. For example, in ICT lessons seen all pupils undertook the same task because their skills had not been assessed, resulting in the higher attaining pupils not being challenged sufficiently and extending their learning. Some teachers keep careful records of how well pupils are acquiring key knowledge, understanding and skills within each subject but there is inconsistent practice in this. Overall there is not a clear enough view of how skills are being built up through the school, for example in ICT, design and technology and geography. The school has recently made some improvements to its assessment procedures for these subjects. Qualifications and Curriculum Authority assessment materials have been introduced to bring greater consistency in assessment and record-keeping, but it is too early for these to have had a significant impact.

## **The curriculum**

The breadth of curricular opportunities is good and opportunities for curricular enrichment are very good throughout the school. Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The curriculum is underpinned by a very strong Christian ethos that guides all teaching and learning.
- There are good opportunities for curriculum enrichment in the Foundation Stage.
- Provision for children with special educational needs is good in Years 1 to 6.
- There are very good, well planned opportunities for enrichment outside lessons.
- The curriculum is very effectively enriched through creative arts.
- The school places strong emphasis on inclusion and equal opportunities; there are no barriers to pupils' learning.
- Accommodation is maintained well by the site supervisor and cleaning staff.
- There are areas for further development in the curriculum for reception class children, to ensure that it is soundly based on the principles of the Foundation Stage.

## **Commentary**

23. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection, which judged that the curriculum did not meet the statutory requirements in respect of ICT. This has now been addressed. In addition the school has very successfully increased the number of extra-curricular activities, which now include residential opportunities. There have been very good improvements in standards in English and mathematics, where the pupils' achievements are well above average. The school recognises the importance of these skills, as the foundation for learning. Very good examples were observed of pupils applying basic skills across other subjects. Provision for ICT is satisfactory, but, as yet, the teachers make insufficient use of it to support learning across other subjects.
24. The Christian ethos is very evident in all aspects of the curriculum. It pervades all teaching and learning. This is evidenced in the way that a warm and welcoming climate is created, in which everyone matters. In consequence, relationships are very good and make an invaluable contribution to pupils' learning.
25. While the six areas of the Early Learning Goals are represented satisfactorily and sometimes effectively, there is insufficient emphasis on well-planned play in which these children can learn with enjoyment. The curriculum for reception children is sound overall, but there are areas for further development, to ensure that it is based on the principles of the Foundation Stage

curriculum for children of this age. The formal arrangement limits children's opportunities to plan or to initiate activities themselves and, therefore, restricts independence of learning.

26. The national guidelines for subjects are well used as part of the school's efforts to ensure that there are no weaknesses in the curriculum, particularly in terms of the mixed age and ability grouping of each class. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators carefully monitor teachers' planning to ensure that there are no gaps and that there is no repetition of content for pupils, over the two-year period. Any identified weaknesses are immediately addressed and action taken to rectify matters.
27. Throughout the school, there are very good opportunities for curriculum enrichment in addition to classroom activities. Children in the Foundation Stage use their immediate surroundings and further afield, through which they learn about the wider world. Pupils in Year 2 to 6 have a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, in which they participate enthusiastically. They learn to play various instruments, participate in sporting activities with other schools, join in with the daily Out-of-School Club, and have opportunities to take up interests such as fencing. This is not an exhaustive list. In addition, the pupils have opportunities to participate in residential courses at an outdoor pursuits centre in Cumbria. These activities contribute very well to the pupils' personal development.
28. The woodland garden, created in conjunction with help from Lisieux Hall residents and older pupils, is an invaluable resource for learning. The pupils are justly proud of the work that they have put in, through planning and designing the garden. They worked with a sculptor to enhance the environment, producing a life-sized bear and a leopard out of wood. The pupils made very good use of their literacy skills by researching about plants and habitats on the ground and in the trees. They set up rules for using the garden and have also involved the local constabulary to provide notices and some protection from vandals. All the information, together with pupils' drawings and notices, is carefully displayed around the area. The attractively arranged wooden tables and benches provide extra facilities for the pupils' quiet reflection. This innovation successfully enriches the pupils' curriculum and their consequent learning across all subjects.
29. The curriculum is effectively enriched through visual arts. The pupils have regular opportunities to work alongside watercolour artists, potters, batik artists and art teachers from the local high school. These activities result in the high quality of pupils' work on display around the school,
30. Provision for special educational needs is good. Pupils are identified as early as possible and appropriate steps are taken to assess their needs, write individual educational plans and provide support. Individual educational plans are reviewed. Pupils' special educational needs are recognised and detailed in teachers' lesson planning and they are encouraged to play a full part in activities and to work at an appropriately challenging level. There is full access to all elements of the curriculum for the pupils and the school strongly promotes educational and social inclusion, being very committed to raising the achievements of all pupils. Pupils have full access to all areas of the building and to educational visits.
31. There are sufficient teaching and support staff with qualifications and continuing professional development to meet the demands of the curriculum. The very strong teamwork evident in the school makes a good contribution to an effective learning environment. Accommodation is satisfactory. In each area of the school there are attractive displays, which celebrate pupils' achievements and enhance the internal appearance. It is well maintained by the caretaker, who is a valued member of the team and the school community. Resources are satisfactory overall.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school cares for its pupils well. Relationships are very good and the school provides good quality support and guidance. The school seeks and acts upon pupils' views very effectively.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Child protection and health and safety procedures are thorough and effective. Pupils feel safe in a friendly school.
- The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good.
- Pupils are given good advice and guidance.
- The school values and listens to pupils' views very effectively.

## **Commentary**

32. Parents are pleased with the individual care and attention given to their children. There is a happy and friendly ethos in the school and relationships are supportive. Induction arrangements for pupils are good and enable them to settle into the school quickly. Comprehensive and effective arrangements for child protection are in place. The school is well maintained and the children are well supervised. The school encourages healthy living, for example through the provision of daily fruit and pupils' access to water. Health and safety procedures are good, with regular risk assessments undertaken and the involvement of all staff in identifying possible health hazards.
33. The teachers provide good support and guidance. In response to their questionnaire pupils positively indicated that they feel able to approach adults in the school when faced with a problem. The school has introduced group and individual targets for achievement in lessons and pupils are confident in their conversations about what they might aim to do next. This is helping to raise pupils' attainment, although more remains to be done to involve pupils themselves in drawing up their targets and discussing and evaluating their progress towards them. Teachers are proud of their pupils' achievements and there are lovely displays of pupils' work throughout the school and weekly achievement assemblies. There is a good programme of personal and social education, for example pupils in Years 3 and 4 openly discussing matters of concern to them during a 'circle time' session. The teacher and other pupils listened carefully and sensitively, offering solutions to issues raised.
34. The school cares well for its pupils who have special educational needs, dealing sensitively with their needs and involving other pupils in guiding and supporting their work. This caring attitude is promoted through the Christian ethos of the school. Pupils know they are very well cared for and valued and this has a positive impact on their learning.
35. The school council is very effective and helps pupils to feel a sense of ownership in their school. Pupils helped to design and develop their woodland area. Currently, pupils are helping to decide upon the décor and fittings for the renovation of the toilets. Pupils feel that the school listens to their ideas and consultation is now much more effective than at the time of the last inspection.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's good quality relationships with parents have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Good support from the community enriches pupils' learning. Very good links are in place with other schools.



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents regard the school highly; there is a good partnership.
- The different finishing times for pupils and children in the class for Reception and Year 1 make it difficult for parents and the teacher to talk.
- The school takes a very active role in community and church life.
- There are very good links with local high schools.

## **Commentary**

36. Parents are very satisfied with the education their children receive. There is a good partnership between school and home. The Parents, Teacher and Friends Association is very active and contributes both socially and financially to school life. The great majority of parents and carers attend the annual review meetings to discuss their children's progress. The school communicates effectively with parents. There are regular newsletters. The school prospectus is very good. It is professionally presented with photographs of the children in their classes and provides a welcoming insight into school life.
37. The school is receptive to parents' views and suggestions. The headteacher is outside in the mornings to talk with parents informally. Occasionally parents' views are formally sought, although this is not regularly established. The school has effective links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Liaison takes place on a regular basis and parents and teachers discuss progress and future targets at the parents' evenings.
38. The school takes good care of pupils and has organised the leaving times for some younger pupils to reduce traffic congestion. However, the side effect of this sensible measure is that the infant classes leave at different times. This means that the teacher is not available to talk with parents whose children leave in the first wave at the end of the day.
39. There are very good links with local high school, where pupils go for lessons in computing, design and technology and art. Teachers from the high school offer their skills in supporting the teaching of specialist subjects like art. Teachers have professional development links with a local beacon status primary school. These links enrich pupils' experiences and the quality of their lessons.
40. Links with the local community are very good and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Visitors from the local community offer skills in a number of curriculum areas, for example wood crafts and pottery. A number of local youth organisations use the facilities of the school in the evening, enabling pupils from the school to take part. There are very good relationships with the residents of neighbouring almshouses, for example the residents offering their views about life in the past, when pupils study topics in history. Pupils developed the woodland garden with help from adults with the community and adults at Lisieux Hall. Families take part in the services and social events at the local church and the vicar leads services in school each week. The governors organise enjoyable and very well attended community events such as the annual cricket match and 'Pop Idol' for the children.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, who has joined the school since the previous inspection, provides very effective leadership and a very clear educational direction for the school. The leadership of other key staff is good. Management has improved as a result of the development of clear roles and responsibilities for subject co-ordinators, and is good. The governance of the school is good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has been very effective in tackling the key issues identified in the previous report, clearly developing the role and involvement of subject co-ordinators.
- Arrangements for monitoring, supporting and developing teaching are good and have led to improvements in teaching quality.
- The senior management team and subject co-ordinators for literacy, numeracy, science and creative subjects provide good leadership and manage their areas well but the role of some co-ordinators needs developing further.
- The school's budget is monitored well and finances used efficiently within a very good school improvement plan.
- Governors are very supportive and fully involved in shaping school priorities. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses well.

## Commentary

41. The headteacher provides very good leadership and direction that has maintained and improved the school's performance. The school's culture recognises the value of all and encourages them to attain the highest possible standards. There are high expectations and a calm, caring and purposeful working atmosphere pervades the school. Pupils feel that they are valued and respected and are able to play a part in the school's development. There is a strong sense of teamwork, as evidenced through the outcomes of 'Lancashire Well Being', a programme for staff, emphasizing encouragement and support offered to colleagues, the value given to them, the recognition of their skills and competencies and a high degree of security and stability. The senior management team has been effective in developing the role of subject leaders, monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and sharply focusing on tracking the progress of pupils and monitoring the curriculum – effectively taking action to ensure that improvements are made. As a result, high standards have been maintained in English, mathematics and science and standards have risen in art and music. The school has focused effectively on broadening the curriculum to ensure that good quality opportunities are offered to pupils through the 'creative' subjects of art, music and physical education. Most subject co-ordinators now effectively monitor their subjects, enabling them to successfully judge standards. Whilst there have been considerable improvements in provision for ICT, the school acknowledges through its improvement plan that standards could be higher, particularly in developing control technologies and using ICT to support learning in other subjects. The environment for learning could also be improved in the Foundation Stage and there could be more independent learning. There are good links with parents, effectively involving them in the education of their children, and there is a valuing ethos built around strong links with the local community. Governors, teachers and support staff are very aware of the school's priorities, were fully consulted about them and understand their role in achieving them. The ethos, and the leadership provided by the headteacher and senior managers have created a shared commitment to inclusive education for all pupils.
42. Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection because teachers are monitored and supported regularly by the senior management team. For example there is a focused programme of lesson observations, with carefully considered feedback given to individual teachers and general points for development for all staff. Where effective strategies are observed they are shared amongst staff. Pupils' work is regularly monitored by subject co-ordinators, standards are compared with national benchmarks and action taken, for example, to improve the timing of the teaching of particular topics in science and history, to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school is aware that teaching quality varies and is targeting support where needed. Systems for tracking pupils' progress in key subjects are established and the school is effectively developing the process to enable pupils to be involved in setting their own targets for improvement. Staff are particularly mindful of the needs of pupils in mixed age classes and very effectively plan lessons to ensure their needs are met. The headteacher regularly monitors planning to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered. The school's commitment to, and impact on, inclusion and equal opportunities is very

good, for example in the range of opportunities available to all pupils outside classroom activities and the value placed on the deliberations of the school council, whose members offer sensible suggestions to improve ways of working in the school. As a result of the quality of its work the school has recently been accredited with the national Basic Skills award. The school provides a good quality of education for pupils with special educational needs. Whilst the special educational needs co-ordinator has only a half a day each term of non-contact time, there is a collegiate approach where support staff and teachers organise the provision to a good standard.

43. The school's three-year improvement plan is very good and is very securely based on its self-review procedures, its links with a partner beacon school and local education authority review reports. Planning is then effectively broken down into specific action points around particular priorities for each school year. All staff are aware of their role within the plan and what resources are made available to them, including time to monitor teaching and pupils' achievements. The headteacher and the governors monitor the school's finances carefully and spending is closely linked to agreed priorities in the improvement plan. They have also been successful in attracting additional funding to support particular projects, for example the excellent woodland area, which has provided a stimulus for good standards of work in art. The school has invested in training focused on developing the role of support staff, and in enabling co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching. Major spending decisions are put out to competitive tender and the school seeks best value in its purchases. The budget surplus is committed to support building works, planned to commence in January 2004, to increase the size of classrooms for older pupils. Spending on pupils with special educational needs is fully accounted for and used appropriately.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	348200
Total expenditure	365476
Expenditure per pupil	2520

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20195
Balance carried forward to the next	15607

44. Governors are very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties well. The governing body receives regular and detailed reports from the headteacher and other key staff and they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including how its standards compare with national standards and with schools in similar circumstances. A number of governors, in particular the chair and vice chair, visit the school regularly on focused visits to learn, at first hand, about the work of the school and to act as 'critical friends'. There is a clear focus on inclusion and a desire to be able to serve the community as well as they can; their aim is to be 'the best'. Governors work with teachers to help shape the school's direction and to consider its effectiveness. They have taken difficult decisions, particularly in relation to staffing matters when faced with a reducing budget, always bearing in mind the impact of their decisions on provision for the pupils. Such considerations have had a considerable positive impact on pupils' achievements.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

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

The previous report judged that quality of education for children in the Foundation Stage was sound. The findings of this inspection indicate that the curriculum provided is satisfactory overall, because the children make good progress in the development of language and mathematics skills, and in knowledge and understanding of the world. However, the provision is not sufficiently linked to the Early Learning Goals for children of this age. Children do not have enough access to a curriculum, where they can learn through a carefully structured programme that includes play.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with broadly above average attainment. They learn in a mixed age and ability class, with a part-time nursery assistant and a class teacher. This arrangement poses considerable problems for the planning and delivery of a curriculum that is suited to both the Foundation Stage and to Year 1. As a result, the curriculum is too formal, especially at this time of the year, so soon after children's admission into the reception class. There are not enough opportunities for children to plan and to initiate activities themselves, because the rooms are not set out for activities suitable for the development of the areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. This arrangement restricts children's independence and joy of learning.

There are good induction procedures in place to ensure that transitions between home or playgroup and school are smooth. The teacher regularly meets playgroup staff and parents prior to the children's admission. The teacher and the nursery assistant provide a welcoming atmosphere, through which the children feel secure. Relationships are very good and both adults value all children equally.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The staff enable the children to develop a positive sense of themselves through the care and guidance they receive from the adults.
- The learning environment does not encourage independent learning.

#### **Commentary**

45. The teacher and the nursery assistant expect the children to behave well and gently encourage them to show their best sides. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children's behaviour observed during the inspection was good. They all get on well together, line up to go into the hall sensibly, and in assemblies, they sit quietly and listen. When they sing number rhymes with their teacher, they participate with actions enthusiastically. They show considerable self-confidence when talking with adults, in the full knowledge that all their contributions matter equally. They are clearly valued by the teacher and her nursery assistant.
46. Standards are satisfactory, but the learning environment does not consistently provide children with experiences where they can explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves. The classrooms are not set out with stimulating materials and equipment, to inspire the children to initiate their own learning. There is a small home corner, which the children use for setting the table for a 'birthday party', for example. This is often used specifically to consolidate learning, for example in mathematics. While these planned opportunities are valid, with a specific purpose in mind, they do not offer the children many opportunities to initiate or to plan for themselves. This arrangement limits children's independent learning.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher and the nursery assistant are skilled in developing children's language skills.
- They carefully plan sessions to develop all aspects of children's skills.
- There are too few opportunities for the children to plan for themselves, with uninterrupted time to work in depth.

### Commentary

47. The teacher and the nursery assistant are both skilled in developing children's knowledge, understanding and skills in language. As a result, the children achieve well in this area of their learning. Their progress was observed during the inspection, when the nursery assistant effectively encouraged the children in speaking and listening, reading and writing, on the theme of a birthday party. She used resources such as invitation cards to encourage discussion. The children soon noticed that day, time and place were missing from the card. This led them to writing their names on their own cards, with good links across all aspects of children's language development. Both the adults encouraged the children to greater endeavours through well-deserved praise. Through this effective atmosphere, the children feel valued and fully included.
48. While there are carefully planned opportunities for adult-led language sessions, there are presently not many child-initiated activities such as role-play that the children plan for themselves. The environment set out in the classrooms presently limits children's experiences in which they can explore, investigate, discover, create, practise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills and understanding through playing and talking. However, the teacher has plans to develop the shared area specifically suited to the children in the Foundation Stage. With well-organised resources that are easily accessible, the environment will encourage the children to make choices and to explore. This will allow the adults to work alongside children and to interact to support development and learning, and for the children to make links across all areas of their development.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher and the nursery assistant provide good opportunities for children to develop their mathematical understanding, particularly in number.
- Good links are made with other areas of children's learning, such as knowledge and understanding of the world.

### Commentary

49. The children make good learning gains and achieve well in number. During the inspection, they were observed sorting numbers on the washing line, from zero to ten and beyond. The teacher held the children's attention very effectively by using a hand puppet who mixed up number labels. The children enthusiastically informed the teacher where numbers should be hung consecutively on the washing line. They were delighted to sort these correctly. The children arranged birthday cards in order correctly, even if there were gaps in numbers. They also used ICT to consolidate their number knowledge. The children checked the number of spots on a computer screen to ensure that these correlated with the numerals. Throughout the day, the

teacher seizes opportunities for counting, such as the number of children present, or to use number songs to consolidate learning.

50. The teacher makes good links with other areas of children's learning. For example, the children decided which fruit they liked best and represented their findings in a block graph, using colouring pencils. They use a sand tray and explore containers available. They observe how the remote control toy moves in different directions and explore the school surroundings, which provide them with opportunities to investigate space. The children were keen to observe what Year 1 pupils managed to achieve, using the toy and counting the steps it moved in any direction.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children learn about the world from first-hand experience.
- The teacher and the nursery assistant plan suitable activities for children's learning.

### **Commentary**

51. The children learn about the world from first-hand experience. For example, they use the locality to explore their immediate surroundings and are introduced to the different areas within it. The children learn where to take the register, where the head's office is and the woodland garden, which offers unlimited opportunities for them to explore and investigate. The children plant pansies and daffodil bulbs and observe their growth.
52. The teacher and the nursery assistant plan suitable activities to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The children use their senses to explore their immediate surroundings, listening to the sounds outside and identifying them, with the help of the nursery assistant. During the inspection, the children were involved in taking photographs, with their parents, of their home environment. This is one example of the way that the school involves and informs the parents about their children's learning. The children learn early mapping skills, through checking what they see along routes to school and marking them on the large drawing of Charnock Richard. Festivals such as Easter are well celebrated, providing the children with opportunities to learn about their own culture and beliefs. The children also have opportunities to visit places further afield, such as Chester Zoo. These experiences effectively widen children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The staff provide the children with appropriate physical challenges, within the limitations of the accommodation.

### **Commentary**

53. There are limitations in the accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage. There is a very small discrete area, which is used well for play with wheeled toys and balls, but there is no large apparatus for climbing and balancing. The children share the playground designated for Year 1 and 2, during breaks, where they can move and run freely. While this arrangement enables the children to mix socially with older pupils, the opportunities for physical development

are limited by the lack of large apparatus. The teacher plans suitable activities in the hall, where the children learn to co-ordinate and control their bodies, as they move around. They use the space and show concern for the safety of others, when moving or throwing and catching their beanbags.

54. The children improve their physical skills through using crayons, pencils and other resources, such as scissors. They dexterously cut out the T-shirts for their washing line and use crayons to colour them in their favourite colours. When using the computers, the children show good control of the cursor, for example, to drag their picture or number to the desired place. Overall, the children reach the expected Early Learning Goals.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for children's creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are insufficient opportunities for children for play, where they can to explore ideas and to engage their imaginations and creativity.

### **Commentary**

55. The children make satisfactory progress in their creative development through the sound teaching they receive in the reception class. They achieve satisfactorily and reach the expected levels for their age. There is evidence that the children are involved in drama, such as Paul being shipwrecked, which indicates good links with other areas such as knowledge and understanding. In a very effective music lesson, taken by a peripatetic teacher, the children responded very well to singing songs from memory and adding actions of their own choice. The children enthusiastically volunteered to act as conductors.
56. The teaching is sound, but it is over-directed for children, thereby limiting their creativity and imaginative development. This was observed during the inspection when the children used stencils to decorate their invitation cards, rather than creating their own designs from imagination and using a variety of media. Often, the children are told to go into the home corner or to use the sand tray, after completing tasks. However, the teacher is aware that this area of children's development is in need of improvements and has plans to develop the learning environment with this in mind. Once in place, with thoughtful and creative planning of experiences, opportunities and the environment, the children should be able to express their creativity to the full.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Since the previous inspection, the school has made very good improvements in pupils' standards; they are now high.
- The National Literacy Strategy is adapted well so that pupils can work at their own levels in the mixed age grouping.
- Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- Teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching observed.
- The good leadership and management by the co-ordinator, in conjunction with the head, make a positive contribution to the overall standards.

- Literacy skills are well used to support learning in other subjects.

## **Commentary**

57. The previous report judged standards to be average for the majority of the pupils, and below for the more able pupils. Since then, the school has made very good improvements in standards. The main contributory factors to the continuing rise in standards are the challenging tasks for all ability groups, good teaching, high expectation of what the pupils can achieve and good leadership of the subject. In addition, there are good systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and the overall standards in all aspects of the subject. Results are carefully analysed and action taken to address any identified weaknesses. The headteacher oversees the progress of all pupils in English and discusses action with the co-ordinator and the senior management team. Presently, the pupils achieve well above average standards by the time they leave Christ Church School.
58. Throughout the school, teachers create a climate where speaking and listening can take place successfully in English and in other subjects. This was observed in a good history lesson in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class, where the pupils described the feelings of the evacuees during World War 2. One pupil noted that it must have been 'like moving into another country', successfully empathising with the evacuated children. The pupils are encouraged to talk about their reading and they do so, in the full knowledge that their contributions will be valued. In consequence, they talk confidently, providing detailed explanations and opinions about the text they are studying, for example, the Diaries of Adrian Mole in Years 5 and 6.
59. Throughout the school, the teachers pay close attention to the development of reading. Consequently, the pupils increasingly develop reading strategies in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class and continue to build on these through regular reading in literacy and across other subjects. The pupils enjoy reading because their teachers are enthusiastic about literature, including poetry. The support assistant for literacy encourages her pupils to read with expression, to 'make your voice like a question', for example.
60. Teachers provide their pupils with exciting and meaningful opportunities to develop writing skills. In the class containing pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, for example, the pupils take Edward Bear home and record his activities in a diary form. The teachers' strong focus on the quality of writing is seen in the way that skills are progressively built, so that, by Year 6, the pupils' writing is varied and interesting, where words are chosen imaginatively, precisely and to good effect. The displays around the school celebrate pupils' good achievements.

## **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

61. Language and literacy skills are well developed throughout the school, through careful cross-curricular planning by the teachers. In a very good science lesson in Class 2, the teacher successfully provided the pupils with opportunities for them to talk about the experiment. There are examples of ICT supporting pupils' writing skills, through pupils' evaluations of CD-ROMs and the way in which text is presented. However, ICT is generally underused in lessons. Consequently, opportunities are missed to consolidate learning further in both English and ICT. The teachers take care when planning their lessons, to ensure that they use subject specific language on which the pupils can model their own speaking. Drama is underused, especially in the humanities, where the pupils could profitably use dramatic techniques such as 'hot seating' to investigate characters and issues.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.



## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of leadership in the subject is very good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and is particularly strong in Years 3 and 4.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is adapted well so pupils work at appropriate levels.
- The school's assessments of pupils' progress are thorough and accurate and the emphasis on problem solving is improving pupils' mathematical understanding.
- Opportunities to practise and extend numeracy skills across the curriculum are not sufficient.

## Commentary

62. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress. Curriculum leadership and management are very good because the co-ordinator is a very good practitioner and is effective in monitoring and evaluating the provision for mathematics in the school. The school has made significant improvements in its assessment procedures, in particular target setting as an effective tool in helping to engage staff and pupils in the task of raising standards. In consequence standards are high, a significant improvement since the previous inspection where pupils' attainment was in line with the national average. Currently, standards are well above average in the present Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils are likely to meet the demanding targets set for them. In consequence most pupils achieve well because they enter the school with above average standards.
63. The emphasis on problem solving is resulting in pupils improving their understanding of mathematics and in the acquisition of skills. This was observed in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 3/4 on three-dimensional shapes and their patterns, where the higher attaining pupils were able to identify the patterns made by the faces, edges and vertices of a range of prisms. One pupil worked out an algebraic formula for the patterns identified. Effective learning took place as the pupils were asked to explain to the class their reasoning and predictions.
64. The scrutiny of the previous year's work and interviews with pupils indicate that most Year 2 pupils are confident with place value to 1000, can add and subtract two-digit numbers and apply simple division and multiplication accurately. Their awareness of properties of shapes is good. They can construct and interpret bar charts. Similarly, in Year 6, the more able pupils efficiently calculated multiplication and division of decimals by 1000 and 10000. They show a good understanding of percentages and factors. They gather and interpret data and present their findings using the correct type of graph and appropriate scale.
65. The mental mathematics sessions are generally effective, particularly in lessons where the teaching of mental calculations included solving problems such as those seen in Years 3/4 and Years 5/6. A shortcoming within some lessons is where the sessions do not have a sharp enough focus and questioning does not encourage pupils to explain their strategies for calculating.
66. The quality of teaching is good and particularly effective in the Year 3/4 class. In lessons observed teachers have a good knowledge of how well pupils have mastered the previous work and have clear targets for what they want individuals and groups to be able to do by the end of the lesson. This provides a clear focus. Skilful questioning challenges pupils to respond at their own level. An improvement since the previous inspection is a much stronger emphasis on problem solving, resulting in pupils improving their understanding of mathematics. Imaginative use of stimulating resources such as an interactive projector helps to keep pupils' interest and involvement. Class management is very good. A supportive, positive atmosphere is created and teachers use praise well to motivate the learning and reinforce good behaviour. The final part of the more effective lessons is used well to summarise key learning objectives, check understanding and point up future learning. Occasionally, opportunities were missed for pupils to express their own opinions on what they think they achieved in the lesson.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Although there are some good applications of mathematics in science and history, for example, not enough opportunities are currently taken to practise and extend pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum. ICT is not used consistently as an aid to raising standards and supporting learning in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in their acquisition of scientific knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly through scientific enquiry.
- Teaching and learning are good, with very good teaching in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- The progress of pupils is monitored well, with good monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, to ensure that pupils are able to build on their knowledge and skills.

### Commentary

68. Standards seen during the inspection by Year 6 are well above average and have improved compared with the previous year. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of key facts and principles are very good and they are particularly proficient in carrying out scientific investigations, ensuring that they construct a fair test to measure their hypotheses. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and especially so in Years 3 and 4 where the teaching is particularly stimulating and challenging.
69. Standards by the end of Year 2 are also well above average, sustaining improvements of the previous year and representing an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress as a result of consistently good and challenging teaching and a well-balanced curriculum. Year 2 pupils investigating different ways of making sounds made key decisions about how to make their tests fair as the result of carefully focused questioning from their teacher. For example, 'What are your first impressions about the sounds these materials might make?' Pupils used appropriate scientific vocabulary to describe how they sorted and classified different instruments to make comparisons between the sounds they made. Pupils developed their skills and knowledge well because adults encouraged them to make decisions for themselves.
70. Pupils build on their knowledge and skills in later years so that by Year 6 they have a very good grasp of scientific concepts and are able to plan investigations themselves, make predictions and draw conclusions from evidence. However, there are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to benefit from ICT in developing their science work, for example in analysing data and using control technology equipment to support their experiments.
71. Teachers take many opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils learning about friction and water resistance accurately timed objects being dropped into water, measuring in seconds, tenths of seconds and hundredths of seconds. They recognised that the 'area' of the shape had an effect on its speed of travel through the water. Year 4/5 pupils explain the differences between insulators and conductors using a range of accurate words when reporting their experiments. They carefully considered a definition for a fair test and agreed on 'keeping all the factors the same'. Teachers asking a series of questions and encouraging thoughtful responses and explanations extend pupils' vocabulary effectively.
72. Teaching and learning are good overall, with very good teaching and learning in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4. Lessons are planned very well, with activities matched well to the prior attainment of different groups of pupils. Most lessons are challenging and inclusive because assessment is

used well to adapt tasks to pupils' capabilities and learning support assistants provide effective support to pupils with special educational needs. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and present information in a confident manner, motivating pupils to do their best, carefully explaining the expected outcomes of lessons and using time well to indicate, to pupils, what is expected through each part of the lesson. In the Year 3 and 4 class the teacher very effectively structures activities to enable all pupils to take responsibility for tasks during group activities. As a result pupils learn very effectively.

73. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator leads the curriculum and manages resources effectively. Because there are mixed age groups in classes the curriculum is successfully planned over a two-year cycle and the co-ordinator has very effectively tracked the experience of a number of pupils to ensure that they have access to all aspects of the subject. Pupils' work is reviewed and a careful analysis undertaken of the outcomes of end-of-year national assessments, to successfully inform the future planning of lessons. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is regularly monitored and evaluated with effective actions taken to improve any perceived weaknesses.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Whilst standards are average and achievement is satisfactory overall, some more able and talented pupils are not achieving enough.
- Teachers are more confident in planning opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in subjects like English and science but it is insufficiently developed in other subjects.
- Pupils throughout the school have had limited experience of controlling and monitoring elements of ICT.

### **Commentary**

74. Standards overall, by the end of both Years 2 and 6 are average. Satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection, where standards were found to be below average and progress unsatisfactory. However, there are few opportunities for pupils in Years 3 –6 to learn how to use sensors, to monitor events or control devices. Whilst pupils with special educational needs receive good support from other pupils in their class and benefit from being taught as members of a smaller group and make satisfactory progress, some more able and talented pupils could achieve more.
75. The school's ICT facilities are very well used to teach and develop pupils' basic skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 learnt to use a database program to sort and classify sounds made by a range of instruments. They are able to use picture and text to create simple labelled diagrams. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils, with confidence and competence, use the internet as a research tool and are able to use a variety of programs creatively, to enhance the presentation of their work in a wide range of subjects. For example, in an ICT lesson the pupils in Year 5/6 used their developing skills in combining text and graphics to construct a front cover for their topic on 'Themselves'. Some pupils used a digital camera effectively to enhance their texts.
76. Teaching and learning are mainly satisfactory but there are strengths in Years 4 to 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers now have a better knowledge and understanding of the subject. For example, in a Year 5/6 ICT lesson to develop pupils' understanding of using a multi-media package the teacher instructed the pupils in well-organised sequenced steps. She used precise technical language whilst expecting the pupils to respond accurately using the correct ICT vocabulary. Throughout the lesson she carefully evaluated pupils' progress. Planning is detailed and provides appropriate learning objectives

that are shared with the pupils. These cater well for most pupils' needs although higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged, resulting in these pupils sometimes underachieving in the development of their ICT skills. Lessons are organised efficiently with classes often being taught in two groups. This means that pupils have ready access to computers during the taught sessions in the ICT suite. Teachers make good use of the available resources and support staff. For example, in a Year 4/5 lesson the teacher organised the pupils so that she could provide tightly focused instructional teaching to a small group of pupils in the computer suite, at the same time as the well-briefed support assistant was providing well-sequenced ICT activities to the other pupils in the classroom. A notable feature of the teaching is that pupils are encouraged to try things out and accept disappointments, so they show application and persevere with tasks. Pupils are well motivated and behaviour is very good. Pupils' work is monitored in lessons; however, their knowledge and skills are not consistently assessed, although a framework for doing this has been adopted recently. The school has acquired new interactive projectors but a lack of training has prevented some teachers from exploring fully their use in improving teaching and learning across subjects.

77. The relatively new co-ordinator is skilled and knowledgeable and provides sound leadership. Teachers have benefited from training to improve their confidence and skills but some need more. The co-ordinator is aware of what needs to be done and a good action plan is in place.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

78. ICT is increasingly used to assist pupils in other subjects. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. They use databases to process and display data, for example in science, when testing the water resistance of different objects. In a class for pupils in Years 4 and 5 the teacher used cut and paste techniques to illustrate the use of 'powerful' verbs in an English lesson. Some teachers make good use of video and CD-ROMs to develop pupils' research skills. However, the use of ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent and teachers' confidence varies. Pupils' skills in controlling devices and using sensors are underdeveloped and there are limited resources for this aspect of ICT. The school is aware of this and teachers are currently involved in developing their expertise in this area.

## **HUMANITIES**

History was inspected and is reported in full below. Geography was only sampled as no teaching was seen, so judgements were made on the basis of scrutiny of displays around the school and samples of pupils' work, and discussions with teachers and pupils.

### **Geography**

79. Standards seen at the end of Years 2 and 6 match the levels expected nationally. These findings broadly reflect the judgements made at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 make good use of the school, the local area and visits to other places, and as a result Year 2 pupils talk confidently and knowledgeably about their own locality and contrasting locations. They talk about their holidays in different countries and are developing skills in noting differences in climate and food. By Year 6, pupils have learnt how to use a range of maps confidently and to draw their own including a key and scale. They have sound knowledge of other communities, such as life in different parts of India and know that climate and geographical features affect lifestyle. As part of a residential visit to Patterdale Hall in Cumbria, pupils in Year 6 looked at how the environment can be protected and improved and investigated the local river. As a result, most pupils know about 'erosion', 'source' and 'current'. They are able to identify and sequence the components of a Water Cycle.
80. Leadership and management are sound. A striking feature of the curriculum provision is the strong commitment to promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects. In the school grounds, for example, the high quality woodland trail helps pupils to develop sensitivity about the quality of the environment. Other improvements have been made in the management of

geography since the previous inspection. The subject now has an appropriate scheme of work that takes account of national guidelines. The co-ordinator has opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but more use could be made of the information to improve pupils' attainment.

## **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The majority of pupils reach standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement is satisfactory.
- Pupils' chronological understanding is good and their skills in historical enquiry and interpretation are satisfactory.
- The marking of pupils' work, whilst consistently undertaken, could offer more guidance to pupils about future improvements to their work.

## **Commentary**

81. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when standards were also judged to be satisfactory. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The scrutiny of pupils work undertaken in Year 2 indicates that they use historical language well and clearly distinguish between aspects of their own life and lives of the past, for example looking at the conditions in hospitals now and the conditions in hospitals at the time of Florence Nightingale. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate good factual knowledge of historical events, particularly in relation to the local history of their village. They very accurately describe the characteristics of the village and recognise the changes that have taken place, effectively linking cause and effect, for example why the old school building, close to the current school site, could no longer be used as a school.
82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and lead to satisfactory achievement because pupils are learning how to research and locate historical information for themselves. For example a small group of pupils in Year 2 under the supervision of the teacher, successfully accessed an internet site, to discover the answers to questions about the life of Florence Nightingale, later reporting their findings back to the whole class. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 were encouraged to "go and research some more", when looking at the experiences of evacuees during World War Two. Teachers mark pupils' work, regularly, but opportunities are not always taken to offer guidance as to how the work might be improved.
83. Leadership and management are good. The curriculum has been adapted well to include a strong focus on the history of the local area as well as further afield. The co-ordinator monitors the planning of lessons well and successfully evaluates whether particular topics have been covered effectively. Individual pupils' progress against the expectations of the National Curriculum, is recorded appropriately. Within the schools development plan, there are plans to involve pupils in setting targets to improve their work. Displays, in classrooms and around the school, are of good quality, illustrating the value placed on pupils' contributions.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Physical education was inspected and is reported in full. Art and design, design and technology and music were sampled.

## **Art and Design**

84. Good improvement has taken place since the previous inspection and standards are now above average. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment, including those with special educational needs and those who are artistically able, achieve well. Whilst staff have not yet identified the artistically gifted pupils, there are very effective examples on display, where some pupils show considerable flair. Pictures in the entrance area, based on batik and watercolour, effectively explore ideas selecting visual information from the stimulus of the school's woodland area. The work was undertaken with Jill James, a local batik artist, and Linda Mellin, a professional watercolour artist. Evidence on display in the hall indicates that pupils are beginning to use ICT to extend their work in art and design, by using programs to modify and improve patterns and the use of colour.
85. Educational visits and visitors provide further stimulus to link learning, as exemplified in Year 2, where pupils developed glass painting, with Linda Mellin, and in Years 5 and 6 where pupils modified and improved their clay work with professional potters Brian and Maureen Rawlins. Pupils learn about many other cultures, where they depict the art of particular eras and cultures in their own style. Pupils in Year 3 display their successful interpretation of the works of the Austrian artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser and older pupils have effectively painted in the style of Monet, also learning about where he lived and the traditions of France. The school's recently reclaimed woodland area contains large-scale three-dimensional wood carvings of a bear and a leopard, the outcome of a project effectively linking art and design with other subjects in the curriculum.

## **Design and Technology**

86. By the end of Year 2, pupils have been given the opportunity to plan and make a range of products. For example, in Years 1 and 2 they used their own ideas successfully to plan and make mobile vehicles. Pupils are challenged to resolve practical problems. For example, a pupil experiencing difficulty in stabilising his wheels resolved it in the following way: 'I decided to wrap elastic bands round either side of the wheels to stop them sliding.' In Year 4 and 5 they have planned and designed purses to a good standard. They carried out a product analysis, including strengths and weaknesses. They produced well-labelled drawings including details of construction and materials used. On completion they produced a written evaluation giving sensible reasons why they would or would not change their design. Their vocabulary is developing and words like chassis, axle and textiles are well understood. The examination of pupils' work and discussion with the co-ordinator show those pupils make satisfactory progress.
87. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and has successfully disseminated her own design and technology training to her colleagues, advising them and providing support for them in their planning. The school has a good quality policy and has adopted the government's recommended guidelines for the subject, an improvement since the previous inspection. Planning shows these are central to the teaching of design and technology throughout the school. Pupils are formally assessed, using National Curriculum levels. Resources are satisfactory but with gaps in control and modelling elements.

## **Music**

88. The quality of teaching seen was good and enabled the pupils to enjoy music. During the inspection, the pupils were observed learning to play African drums. They successfully captured the rhythms, together with the beats, using their voices. They showed competence in varying the sounds of the drums, much to their own delight. In Year 2, the pupils sing tunefully, enunciating words carefully, in singing hymns. There are good opportunities for them to listen and to appreciate music by a variety of composers. During the inspection, the pupils enjoyed the Carnival of the Animals, by Saint-Saens. When asked which animal the excerpt represented, the pupils offered their own interpretations. In the mixed Year 3/4 class, the pupils

recognised and explored the ways in which the sounds and the combination of sounds are used expressively to illustrate movement. The pupils were enabled to be completely engaged through the teacher's effective modelling of sounds and movements. The teacher seized this opportunity to encourage discussion and to enable the pupils to articulate their appreciation. The pupils offered comments such as, 'I can imagine swans swimming on the lake'. Music contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

89. The subject is enriched by visiting teachers. They provide expert tuition to pupils, such as violin and guitar, for which the parents pay. The after-school clubs, such as keyboard, offer further opportunities for the pupils to extend their interests. The school takes every opportunity to enrich the pupils' curriculum. The leadership and management of music are good. The skills of a specialist peripatetic teacher are used well. Other teachers, effectively supporting their professional development and supporting the ongoing development of the subject, observe sessions led by the specialist. The enthusiastic leadership reflects the quality of provision and the place of music in the wider aspect of creative arts in the school.

## **Physical Education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- A very good range of physical education activities is provided for pupils in addition to those in lessons.

## **Commentary**

90. At the previous inspection standards were above those expected nationally and they have been maintained at that level. At the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 standards are above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The level of challenge is realistic and pupils, in Year 3 and 4 for example, extend dance sequences by effectively linking together a range of movements – demonstrating co-ordination and control. In Years 4 and 5 pupils use their understanding from comparing and commenting on the throwing and catching skills, techniques and ideas in their own and others' work to improve their own performance in accurately throwing and catching. As a result pupils enjoy the activities and experience success.
91. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan well and effectively include all pupils, for example a disabled pupil played a full and active part in a lesson. There are clear, sharp beginnings to lessons with well-focused and interesting warm-up activities. Relationships are very good and pupils are encouraged to join in and motivate each other. By modelling movements and skills teachers effectively demonstrate expected outcomes and successfully challenge pupils to critically analyse their own and others' work. Lessons move at a brisk pace and teachers take many opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills; for example, in Year 3 and 4 considering the symmetry of shapes made by partners and in Year 4 and 5 encouraging pupils to explain how skills are developing and what they have learned from others. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 imaginatively responded to musical effects, illustrating moods and feelings through their dance sequences.
92. Many opportunities are offered to pupils in activities outside normal lesson times and several pupils join such activities. For example, a fencing club is very popular and pupils are developing and extending their skills in the sport. The school's intention is to offer the activities as 'tasters', successfully introducing pupils to a range of sports and enabling them to establish contacts

with local clubs to further develop their skills. Sporting achievements are effectively recognised in the weekly 'achievement' assembly.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

93. Personal, social and health education was sampled. The school has successfully introduced Circle Time, when the pupils have opportunities to talk about the important aspects of their lives. In the mixed Year 1/reception class, the pupils considered the important things in their lives. They sensibly took turns and showed respect for what each one was saying. The pupils in Year 6 considered the democratic processes of this country, through a topic about the Parliament. They learned that they can play an active part in citizenship, through activities such as being involved in the school council. The school participates in the Healthy Eating scheme, in which pupils have fresh fruit for their snacks each day and water is readily available to them. The school is applying for an accreditation for this scheme.



## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*