

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **CRAWSHAWBOOTH COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Crawshawbooth

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119313

Headteacher: Mr. Paul Gabriel

Lead inspector: Dr Alan Jarvis

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 255907

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	313
School address:	Burnley Road Crawshawbooth Rossendale
Postcode:	BB4 8AN
Telephone number:	01706 228664
Fax number:	01706 227339
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. S Snaith
Date of previous inspection:	6 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> July 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Crawshawbooth primary school is larger than most primary schools and is situated in Rossendale. There are 36 more boys than girls. It has a diverse social intake ranging from families that are socially disadvantaged to highly professional. About one per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic families, which is very low. All pupils speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is below the national average. Attainment on entry to school was average for the pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils when they were in the reception class, but this year it is below average. Thirteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. Most of these pupils have needs such as dyslexic, speech, hearing, physical and autistic needs, which can be tackled with in-class support. Six of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is average. Two pupils are in public care. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal time is a little below average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective** school. All groups of pupils achieve well, particularly in English, mathematics and science because of their good attitudes to learning, good teaching and strong leadership and management. There is a clear programme for development centred on challenging pupils through innovative teaching. It provides very good value for money even though the budget is tight.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The higher attaining pupils achieve consistently well and are the pace setters for other pupils;
- Parents are very supportive of their children. They ensure their children attend very regularly and are given encouragement in their learning at home and at school;
- Pupils achieve very well in mathematics because of the strong focus on practical activities, the consistently high challenge in lessons and very strong leadership of the subject;
- Pupils learn about the importance of courtesy, care, co-operation, consideration and concentration. This leads to them becoming confident, self assured and independent learners;
- Assessment procedures have considerably improved in English, mathematics and the foundation stage but remain underdeveloped in most other subjects;
- The school is well led but the interim arrangements in place for leading developments in the foundation stage, science and special educational needs are inhibiting further progress;
- Classrooms have been upgraded but the outside accommodation needs improving.

Good all round improvement is evident. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen. Most pupils now do well in these subjects because there is more challenge in teaching. Most key issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed well but assessment procedures are still not strong enough in all subjects. Unsatisfactory teaching is no longer evident. Weaknesses in art and design and design and technology have been addressed. Beneficial improvements have been made to classrooms. An information and communication technology (ICT) suite is to open soon. However, the outside accommodation is unsatisfactory. This is because it presents some health and safety issues which the staff do their best to minimise. In addition, there is no outdoor area for the reception classes and the field and playground are insufficiently used as a curriculum resource.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	C	C	C
Mathematics	C	C	A	A
Science	C	D	B	B

*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.*

**Achievement is good overall.** The table shows that results last year in the National Curriculum tests were average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. This represents good achievement from pupils' average standards on entry and a good performance compared with their peers in similar schools. In previous years some of the higher attaining pupils had not done as well as expected, but last year they did well.

Achievement is good in the reception classes. Standards are mostly in line with the goals children are expected to reach at the end of reception. The children are doing particularly well in their

personal, social and emotional development. However, standards are limited by the outside accommodation. By the end of Year 2 standards are average in English, science, ICT and religious education but above average in mathematics. Standards show improvement over the recent tests. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in mathematics, above average in English and science and average in ICT and religious education. Overall, achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and good by the end of Year 6. Pupils do well in mathematics throughout the school. Pupils are also now doing well in ICT as a result of the recently improved scheme of work, more confident teaching and upgrading of equipment. They achieve satisfactorily in English and science by the end of Year 2 but well by the end of Year 6. In religious education satisfactory achievement is maintained from Year 1 to Year 6. Higher and average attaining pupils are now consistently doing well, as are many lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in relation to their capabilities. Very few pupils underachieve.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.** However, more lessons could develop spirituality and pupils' awareness of life in multicultural Britain. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils willingly take responsibility and work with initiative and independence in lessons. Behaviour is good in lessons but occasionally marred during break and lunchtimes.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good quality of education. Teaching is good** overall and some good appointments have recently been made. Teaching in the reception classes is consistently good. Teaching is improving in Years 1 and 2 and is satisfactory overall. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is mostly good and outstanding in Year 6. Strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning are assessed very well in the reception classes and well in English and mathematics. In other subjects, systems for assessment are relatively under-developed and so teachers do not always set work which is challenging to individual pupils. Fewer teaching assistants have been employed this year but they are well deployed and effective in their work. There is a good, interesting and challenging curriculum which is effectively enriched. Pupils are cared for well. Good quality links with parents and the local community are supporting standards.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The headteacher and senior staff provide a good lead and weaknesses are systematically addressed. The governing body plays an effective role in guiding the work of the school. The budget has little flexibility and the school has made cutbacks this year which have slowed down further improvements. The interim arrangements in place for staff to lead special educational needs, the foundation stage and science are inhibiting further improvements to these already strong areas of the curriculum.

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

Parents are satisfied with the school but improvements could be made to pupils' reports. Pupils like school and value the recently introduced school council.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Strengthen the systems for assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve the outside accommodation, including the establishment of an outdoor area for learning for the reception classes.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

*Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.*

Achievement is good overall for all groups of pupils and is improving. Pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 6, from average standards on entry.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make a strong start in the reception classes.
- Standards have been rising at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The achievement of the higher attaining pupils has been improving and is now good.
- Standards have not been as high as they should have been in ICT but there has been good recent improvement.

#### Commentary

1. Standards are higher than at the last inspection. Weaknesses have been tackled one by one. Improvement has also been brought about by systematically improving the quality of teaching and learning and rectifying weaknesses in leadership and management.

*The tables shown in this section give average point scores for pupils. Each level in the National Curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term. So, if a school's points are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.*

#### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.7 (16.1)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (15.2)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.1 (16.7)	16.4 (16.5)

*There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. At the last inspection standards were average in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Since then standards have been improving quite quickly. This is partly accounted for by the rising standards on entry but also is a result of better teaching. The point scores in the first table show that standards in the recent tests were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Average and lower attaining pupils have generally done well. The higher attaining pupils also did well last year, which was better than their satisfactory achievement in previous years.
3. By the end of Year 6, standards have also been rising, particularly in English and mathematics. The pattern is less even in science tests because there have been several changes of subject co-ordinator and less emphasis has been placed on this subject. Standards have not been as high as they should have been in all three subjects because the higher attaining pupils were not consistently achieving as well as other groups of pupils.
4. The second table (below) illustrates the improving standards. In 2003 they were above average overall. The point scores show that the pupils were a term ahead in mathematics and science.



Standards were well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. The improvements were due to staff targeting the higher attaining pupils, where nearly all did well in all three subjects. Standards also rose because of the especially strong teaching in Year 6, the use of booster classes in English and mathematics and more emphasis being given to practical mathematics and scientific enquiry.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (27.1)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.4 (27.1)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	29.7 (28.2)	28.8 (28.3)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Children make a good start in the reception classes. Standards on entry are below average this year. Very good induction arrangements, very strong links with parents and good quality teaching are ensuring that they are doing very well in their personal, social, and emotional development and well in other areas of learning. The children also do well in their physical development but further improvement is limited because of shortcomings in the external accommodation.
6. Standards in the current Year 2 remain above average in reading and average in writing; average overall. Pupils continue to do well in mathematics, where standards are above average. This is because of a good focus on practical mathematics and consistently good teaching. Standards in science are average. Pupils are doing better as the teachers give more focus to scientific enquiry. Standards in ICT have not been as high as they should have been. They have only recently benefited from the new equipment which has been purchased and the better scheme of work which has been introduced. However, pupils are now doing well this term and are reaching average standards. In religious education, pupils reach average standards.
7. By the end of Year 6 standards show further, steady improvement. Standards in mathematics are a strength of the school and are well above average. These high standards are a result of a rich mathematical curriculum, consistently good teaching and challenging work which is set for individual pupils. Standards are above average in both English and science. In ICT standards are average but again rising as the programme of work and facilities are being strengthened. The average standards reached in religious education in Year 2 are sustained through to Year 6.
8. Overall, achievement is good. The pupils in the current Year 6 entered school with average standards. They have reached above average standards and are likely to consolidate the above average performance that last year's pupils reached compared with similar schools. The children in the reception classes are doing well. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is generally satisfactory but good in mathematics and ICT. Achievement is generally good in most classes in Years 3 to 6 and the school's own analysis confirms this. Boys and girls do equally well. The higher attaining pupils now do consistently well and are the pace setters for other pupils. Most pupils with special educational needs also do well because of careful identification of their needs and careful support they receive. Most average and lower attaining pupils do well in relation to their capabilities. A small number of pupils do underachieve but there is no pattern to this or an explanation as to why this should be.

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

Attendance is well above average. Pupils have good attitudes to school and learning. They behave well overall and form very good relationships with adults and each other. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved and is now good overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance is high because parents are supportive and pupils like their school.
- Behaviour in lessons is nearly always at least good and this enables pupils to learn with confidence.
- Standards of behaviour in the playground are satisfactory but not as good as those in the classroom.
- Moral development is very good, and social and cultural development are both good.
- Pupils very willingly take responsibility and make good gains in personal development.

**Commentary**

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2002/03**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.4	School data:	0.1
National data:	5.8	National data:	0.4

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

- Parents say their children relish coming to school. Pupils have very positive views about the school and this is reflected in their very good attendance levels and punctuality. Parents are contacted on the first day of any unexplained absence and they appreciate this care. However, attendance declined a little in the latest year, as it did with all schools nationally.
- Pupils are keen to learn, well mannered and show respect for their teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants give pupils positive encouragement, which raises their self-esteem and helps them achieve good standards. The newly introduced "5 Cs" rules of care, courtesy, consideration, co-operation and concentration are effective. This is supported by the fact that the school has had no occasion to exclude any pupils for poor behaviour in the last year. Pupils of all abilities and background co-operate well in classes. The school council views are summarised as:  
*"We like this school because we say our prayers to God, the teachers are nice, we respect one another, we get rewards, the lessons are fun and unkindness is sorted out."*
- There are three main playground areas, some of which have uneven surfaces. The play areas are edged with steep slopes or steps and, during the time of inspection, a lot of mud. These areas do not encourage constructive play activities. Consequently, the behaviour outside at lunch times is not always as good as it should be, from a small minority of pupils. The school is in the process of redesigning the playground and this should be beneficial.
- Assemblies are of good quality and make for a positive and calm day. There are close links with local churches. For example, two visiting ministers led assemblies during the inspection week. Pupils recite their school prayers and this adds to a sense of community. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and make visits to local heritage sites. Religious education lessons provide pupils with good opportunities to learn about Christianity and other religions. However, opportunities for spiritual and multicultural awareness could feature more prominently in other areas of the curriculum by introducing a policy to specifically plan for and resource such opportunities.
- The school encourages pupils to reflect on their feelings and think about the consequences of their actions and this promotes good relationships and behaviour. Pupils have a very good understanding of right from wrong and are very willing to take responsibility. Pupils raise money

for charity and help each other, for example they take very good care of children at the school with disabilities. Older pupils are trained as “buddies” and are each paired with a child in reception class, who they look after responsibly and play with each week. Pupils in Year 6 look forward to their residential outward bound trip, which effectively teaches them to organise themselves and rise to challenges.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are good overall. Pupils are well cared for. There is an effective partnership with parents and good links with other schools and the community.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and good by the end of Year 6. Assessment is satisfactory overall. It is very good in the foundation stage, good in English and mathematics but under-developed in other subjects.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some teaching in Year 6 is outstanding.
- Most teachers consistently teach well and use an effective range of interesting methods to engage and motivate pupils.
- Teaching assistants play an important role in all classrooms and when pupils are withdrawn for more specialist support.
- Assessment is insufficiently developed outside of the foundation stage, English and mathematics.

### Commentary

#### *Teaching and learning*

14. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, where it was satisfactory. Recently some good teaching appointments have been made. There is now more very good and excellent teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, unlike previously. The high proportion of good teaching and learning, particularly in the reception classes, English, mathematics, science and ICT, is the main reason why overall achievement is good and standards are improving. Good teaching in French in Year 6 is also adding additional challenge.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (6%)	3 (8%)	23 (64%)	8 (22%)	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.*

15. Teaching in the reception classes is consistently good, and ensures that children achieve well and develop good levels of independence in their work. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 pick up the challenge presented by well-motivated learners. The outcomes in standards indicate that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory, improving and particularly good in Year 2. Teaching is generally good in Years 3 to 6 and particularly so in Years 3, 4 and 6.
16. The satisfactory teaching ensured that work was interesting, varied and that tasks had sufficient challenge to enable pupils to work independently but it did not have the imagination, good pace and interest in learning seen in the good teaching. The good teaching did not

introduce unexpected challenges, the very good use of time and the sheer determination to raise standards that was seen in the much stronger teaching.

17. A major reason for the good achievement of pupils is that many teachers have high expectations of what pupils should be able to do, and of their behaviour. Teachers encourage pupils to develop the confidence to become autonomous learners. In Year 6 this is taken to the limit and some teaching is of an extremely high quality. This is a key factor in the very strong progress made as pupils approach their National Curriculum tests.

#### **Example of outstanding practice**

**In a Year 6 science lesson these high expectations were combined with very brisk learning with new challenges constantly introduced in a half hour session.**

Pupils initially had to come up with a clear set of reasons why people should not smoke. Through carefully orchestrated discussion the class came up with ideas such as “Your breath and clothes smell” or “It costs a lot of money”. Then a new challenge, which ensured all pupils were engrossed in their work: “Work with your thinking partners, give me a list of reasons why not to smoke – a list of the effects smoking can have on you. Present your information carefully”. The pupils worked independently but the teacher also provided support through questioning and writing frames. Pupils worked extremely briskly and confidently. Then a different kind of challenge focused on another learning style. One pupil came to the front of the class to pretend she was a teenager being pressurised by her friends to smoke. The class had to ask her questions and give advice about this. Some very well thought out questions materialised, based on what they had just learnt. The teacher summed this up by challenging them to think “It is better to have friends that help you make good decisions than those who don’t”. An excellent message to end on!

18. New teaching and learning strategies are commonly adopted which help make the point of learning clear to pupils, motivate them and help provide feedback on how well they have done. For example, teachers regularly say to pupils “this is what we are learning today” so that they are crystal clear about what they have to do and focus pupils’ attention on “what I am looking for” so that they can focus on the things that matter. Other beneficial techniques are also used. These include getting feedback by asking pupils to hold one, two, three, four or five fingers up as an indication of how much they have learnt, and letting them share thoughts by writing on whiteboards and “Brain Gym” exercises which help maintain concentration.
19. Teaching assistants play an effective role in classes, although budgetary constraints have meant that their numbers have had to be reduced this year. They are well informed about the needs of individual pupils and work very closely with the teachers to plan the support they provide. Pupils with statements of special educational needs and those on the register of special needs receive particular support. However, the teaching assistants also work with groups of higher attaining pupils, such as in science in Year 3, and with other individuals as required. Some pupils are regularly withdrawn to receive targeted support to improve their skills in literacy and numeracy.

#### *Assessment*

20. Assessment is satisfactory and has improved, but remains under-developed in some subjects. Procedures are very well developed in the reception classes. Effective systems are in place in English and mathematics which allow teachers to assess what each pupil can and cannot do. This information is used well to track progress and plan work in lessons to challenge all groups of pupils. This improvement is one important factor that has led to improved standards in English and mathematics. This good practice has not yet spread to other subjects of the curriculum although there is emerging practice in science and ICT and further developments are planned for this year. Consequently pupils do not have the clear targets for learning in these subjects as they do in English and mathematics. Assessment is also well used to identify pupils who would benefit from a range of “booster” lessons to help improve standards.

## The curriculum

The curriculum is good, and particularly strong in mathematics. There are good opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities in sports and the arts. The internal accommodation has been significantly improved but the external accommodation is unsatisfactory. Resources are good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The mathematical curriculum is particularly well developed.
- The curriculum for the foundation stage is imaginatively planned and is well balanced.
- Although there are fewer teaching assistants this year, they are effectively deployed and their skills are well used throughout the curriculum.
- Recent innovations to the curriculum are enriching learning opportunities.
- The outside accommodation is limited as a curricular resource.

## Commentary

21. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are good. It enables nearly all pupils to achieve well in most subjects and areas of learning. Curricular provision has improved since the previous inspection. It is well planned and appropriate emphasis is placed on the key areas of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Statutory requirements are met in all areas. French has been introduced to pupils in Year 6 and this is helping to broaden and enrich the curriculum. There is a supportive learning environment where pupils develop their thinking skills through good quality questioning. Opportunities for independent learning feature strongly, particularly for the children in reception classes. Pupils are motivated and effective learners because the curriculum is stimulating, innovative and varied. This approach is helping to raise standards generally, but particularly in mathematics.
22. The mathematical curriculum is very good. The teachers know the mathematical needs of individual pupils very well and consequently plan work which will challenge them. Planning also ensures that the work gets progressively more difficult and if the pupils do not master something the first time it is revisited. A very good emphasis is given to mental mathematics and practical investigations, both of which are key to the high standards.
23. The school strongly promotes educational and social inclusion. It is evident in the way planning gives due recognition to all pupils within the class as, in Years 1 to 6, well-matched activities meet their needs. Booster sessions provide extra support for some pupils who need to achieve the next level. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils is good. The teaching assistants, working in close liaison with the teachers, use their experience and skills well to meet the varying needs of individual pupils.
24. Teachers provide good opportunities overall to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subjects. For example, in science and history they encourage pupils to write conclusions and develop data handling skills after completing investigatory activities. Diary writing is a feature of their work in religious education. Writing through other subjects is strongly promoted and is an important element in the improving literacy standards.
25. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There is a wide and varied range of activities in sport, music and drama and an annual residential activity in Year 6. Visits are made to places linked with curricular topics. An interesting variety of visitors also come to the school. The school is an active participator in local inter-school sporting events where the pupils saw much success last year in netball, cricket, football, cross country and athletics.
26. There is a good match of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The sense of joint purpose that binds all staff together is a strong feature and a key factor in the school's success. There is a good range of resources in all subjects and ensures the curriculum

operates effectively. The internal accommodation has benefited considerably from a large injection of funds which have enabled longstanding deficiencies in classroom accommodation to be resolved. In stark contrast, the external accommodation is unsatisfactory, as it has been for many years. There is no suitable outside area for the reception–age children, which limits their physical development. The playground and fields have several crucial limitations that adversely affect their use as a curricular resource and remain relatively under-developed.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school cares for its pupils well. Pupils receive good quality support and guidance. The school's involvement of pupils by seeking and acting on their views is satisfactory and improving.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good care and welfare help pupils to feel valued and to become confident learners.
- Child protection procedures are good.
- Induction is very good and pupils are given good quality personal guidance.
- Effective systems are in place to guide and support pupils' academic progress in literacy and numeracy, but less so in other subjects.
- The school has made a good start in seeking pupils' views through the school council but this practice needs time to embed and be fully effective.

### **Commentary**

27. Parents are pleased with the individual care and attention given to their children. They feel that all children are treated fairly and equally. There is a happy, friendly and purposeful ethos in the school. In the questionnaire completed by the pupils before the inspection, nearly all pupils said that there was an adult they would go to in the school if they needed help. Pupils know that they are well cared for and valued and this has a positive impact on their learning. In class, teaching assistants give effective support to pupils, helping them learn with confidence. Some classes have a suggestions box. This helps pupils share confidences with the teachers and helps to sort out any potential problems.
28. Comprehensive and effective arrangements for child protection are in place. Children who are in care are suitably supported. The school is well maintained and kept clean by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Children are well supervised, both in school and at breaks and lunch times. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory. The inspectors discussed some health and safety issues about the outside areas with the headteacher. The school is well aware of these issues, has carried out appropriate risk assessments and informed the necessary authorities, but they still need to be resolved.
29. Induction arrangements are very effective and enable pupils to settle quickly into the reception class. They are also very good when pupils join the school part way through the school year. Pupils receive good personal guidance through personal and social education lessons, such as "circle time" and drugs education. The "traffic light" system is simple yet very effective in helping the younger children to recognise if they are working and behaving, as they should. Year 2 have sheets to help them think about how to improve their work. Older pupils have a complementary system which emphasises rewards and consequences.
30. Year 5 and 6 pupils have targets set in literacy and numeracy. However, target setting and the involvement of pupils in evaluating their achievement is inconsistent between the year groups and in subjects. This is working best in literacy and numeracy and as a result standards are rising faster in these areas.
31. Most pupils feel that the school satisfactorily listens to their views and values them. A school council has recently been set up and is beginning to give pupils a stronger voice in the school. The council's suggestions for benches in the playground have been taken up and they are

currently considering ways to raise money for “Children in Need”. The school council is not yet fully embedded in school life, for example, with regular times to share their findings and obtain suggestions from other members of their class.

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

There is an effective home school partnership. Good links with the community and other schools enrich pupils’ learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents take a very keen interest in their children’s learning and the parent teacher association gives strong support.
- The school empowers parents through good training and useful curricular information.
- The home school partnership is good but information on reports could be clearer.

### **Commentary**

32. The active “Crawshawbooth School Association” raises significant funds and leads social activities for staff and parents. They have been instrumental in providing resources for the school and improving the appearance of the environment around the school. Parents are also supportive of the “5 Cs” discipline code and the innovative accelerated learning and “brain gym” techniques, which are helping to improve pupils’ concentration levels. Parents give very good support for their children’s education. For example, nearly all attend the twice-yearly consultation meetings with teachers to discuss their child’s progress and many pupils say their parents have purchased a home computer to help with their learning.
33. A parental co-ordinator on the staff effectively organises and arranges training courses for parents. For example, “Keeping up with the Children” and Numeracy and Literacy workshops have helped parents understand how these subjects are now taught so that they can better support their children at home. These have been a contributory factor to the rising standards and pupils’ confidence. The “Parents as Educators” course, set up with the support of governors, has enabled several parents to provide beneficial support in the classroom and this has also helped to raise attainment.
34. Parents are very satisfied with the school. They say that their children are happy and making good progress. Some parents suggested that they would like more information on their children’s progress. The inspectors consider that the annual reports are satisfactory in quality. They have some good features, such as the care the teachers take to write an individual picture of the child and suggestions for improvement. However, the reports are not clear enough about attainment, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, because the underlying assessment system for these subjects is not sufficiently developed. Parents have been consulted about various matters of school policy such as improvements to school security and sex and health education. Governors’ working parties involve other parents, and parent governors help the school to gauge the views of parents. However, periodic polls of what all parents like and would wish the school to focus on are not yet regularly undertaken.
35. The school has worked constructively with the local community on a traffic-calming scheme. Also, pupils are provided with a fluorescent jacket by a local haulage firm and this helps to promote good road safety. Pupils’ lessons are made more relevant through first hand experiences such as visits to the local buildings and churches. Pupils visit old people’s homes with harvest gifts and enjoy welcoming visitors to their school. The school choir has sung, for example, with the “Rossendale male voice choir” and on the village square at Christmas. Secondary teachers take some lessons at the school at various times during the year; this helps to familiarise pupils with their future teachers and the style of work to expect. Some able

pupils attend science, mathematics, design and technology and ICT “Master classes” at a local secondary school. Pupils leave the school confidently prepared for secondary education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership, management and governance are all good. The headteacher and most other key staff provide effective leadership. However, the interim arrangements in place for staff to lead special educational needs, the foundation stage and science are inhibiting further improvements to already strong areas of the curriculum.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governors have a well developed view of how they wish the school to grow.
- Leadership and management have improved since the last inspection.
- Senior managers and those for literacy, numeracy and ICT provide good leadership.
- The school receives less money than most schools but the budget is managed very well.

### **Commentary**

36. The governors work as a united and effective team. They are focused on developing the school’s principles of inclusion, the achievement of all groups of pupils, and enriching the curriculum and the confidence and self-esteem of the pupils. Many governors are parents, which results in them debating issues facing the school very closely. As they made very clear during the inspection:
- “We have a vested interest in the school and want to ensure the best for our children.”*
- Through their committee work and regular visits to talk to staff and see lessons in action, the governors have a clear idea of the school’s strengths and where further development is needed. For example, the governors who oversee work in literacy and numeracy have a very good understanding of how well things are going. Their involvement in drawing up the school development plan is much improved. This has resulted in the strategic way forward being much clearer. They are keen to improve their own performance and have their own programme of training outlined within the school development plan. A productive learning environment has been established and all groups of pupils are well integrated
37. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior management team had some shortcomings at the last inspection. Weaknesses in the oversight of the curriculum were resulting in the higher attaining pupils underachieving and standards in art and design, and design and technology, not being high enough. These have been addressed well. The school’s own self-evaluation now closely matches most judgments in this inspection.
38. Staff work in united and successful teams. Effective leadership has now ensured that the standards achieved compare well with similar schools. The achievement of the higher attaining pupils is consistently good. Although the deputy headteacher was absent due to illness during the inspection there is plentiful evidence of his effective contribution in many aspects of work. Although most effort has been put into raising standards in English and mathematics, standards are also rising in science and ICT. Provision in other subjects is now at least satisfactory. Good steps are taken to improve teaching through observations by the headteacher, senior management team, local education authority consultants and some co-ordinators. Recent cutbacks in the budget and staffing changes have temporarily necessitated a reduction in the time available for all co-ordinators to monitor, support teaching and develop systems of assessment in all areas of the curriculum.
39. Developments in English and mathematics are both strongly led, especially those in mathematics. A clear vision of the way forward is also evident in ICT, where recent improvements are leading to much better achievement and improving standards. However, recent staff changes have necessitated interim arrangements being put in place for staff to oversee provision in special educational needs, the reception classes and science. Although



day-to-day management and some development is taking place, the lack of a permanent co-ordinator in these areas means they are not as well led as they should be.

40. The school receives a lower income compared with most schools nationally and within Lancashire Local Education Authority. The budget is managed very well but is now on a knife edge. Essential costs incurred have risen faster than income this year. A balanced budget, with an extremely low level of contingency, has been set. However, this has been at the expense of cuts in staff training, the hours non-teaching staff work and the purchase of some additional curricular resources. In addition, some planned improvements to the accommodation and the implementation of the national agreement on the tasks undertaken by teachers and teaching assistants have not being fully implemented. However, through very good planning a balanced budget has been set and the development plan has been carefully costed. Special grants for building work, for improving standards and providing support for pupils with special educational needs are spent well. Good action has been taken on the recommendations of the last audit report in 2002. The amount of money carried forward to the current year's budget reflects money set aside for building improvements. Principles of best value are applied well. Very good value for money is achieved because the school's success is ensured with below average costs.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	605405	Balance from previous year	18252
Total expenditure	581273	Balance carried forward to the next	43724
Expenditure per pupil	1875		

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

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

41. Provision for children in the foundation stage is good. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Children enter the reception classes with attainment that is usually average, but is below average this year. Through the consistently good teaching they receive in both classes, the children start Year 1 with levels that are in line with those expected of children of this age. In personal, social and emotional development, the children exceed the Early Learning Goals. The teachers and support staff emphasise the development of social, language and mathematical skills as the foundation of all learning. They plan innovative activities that engage the children and make their learning fun. There is a very good balance between teacher and child-initiated activities, through which the children become independent and enthusiastic learners. In addition, there are good induction procedures to ensure a smooth transition between home and school, and playgroup, nursery and school. Each child is provided with a "buddy", who takes care of them and who provides positive links between the stages. This is to the benefit of both Year 6 and reception children, resulting in good preparation for Year 1 learning. This is just one example of how the pupils put the "5 Cs" into practice.
42. Assessment procedures are very good in the reception classes. Staff gather information about each child across all areas of children's learning, and use it well in their planning. The curriculum provided for the children is good, with stimulating and imaginatively planned activities, through which the children enjoy learning and achieve well.
43. Temporarily, there is no overall co-ordinator to lead the foundation stage. However, the management of this stage is good, because all staff plan co-operatively and exchange ideas to make learning enjoyable for the children. This system ensures that children have similar experiences in each of the reception classes. The very good relationships that exist between children and staff and the school's commitment to inclusion help to create an effective first stage of learning, and a strong foundation for Year 1.

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

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

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

- Children achieve very well in this area of learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.

#### **Commentary**

44. The children achieve very well, because the teaching and learning are very good. Children are likely to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the reception. Staff ensure that all children feel secure, included and valued; they all matter individually. The staff provide very good role models and have high expectations of children's behaviour and learning. As a result, there is mutual respect. The children behave very well, and take responsibilities when organising their play. They are self-confident and initiate new ideas, such as their imaginative journey to the moon, using simple apparatus. Through the variety of activities provided for them for independent play, the children know how to organise themselves and understand that there are rules for working and playing together. The outdoor play area is unsuitable for foundation stage children, because it slopes and is too small. Outdoor equipment cannot be safely used and seriously restricts children's ambitious play projects.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well, because teachers and staff are particularly skilled in developing children's language skills.
- In both classes, good teaching promotes language skills in all activities.
- Teachers and support staff skilfully develop children's enjoyment of stories and imaginative ideas.

### Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are good. Children are likely to meet the goals expected of them by the end of the reception class. The teachers and staff are particularly skilled in developing children's language skills. They seize opportunities for talk in all activities, such as fitting together word puzzles, or discussing being afraid of the dark, in "circle time". The teachers and support staff listen to the children's comments and sensitively correct any grammatical mistakes. This helps the children to acquire good spoken language and to feel confident to express themselves, in the full knowledge that their opinions are valued. The children thoroughly enjoy stories through the staff's own infectious enthusiasm for books. They listened with rapt attention to the story of "Can't you sleep, Little Bear", because the nursery nurse read the story so expressively. The children are often seen exploring the book-box and making up stories as they look at illustrations. There are many opportunities for the children to form good writing habits, through the well-structured play on offer to them. They readily write letters of invitation for a birthday party or send answers to the Wizard's puzzle. Using shaving foam in a tray, the children learn how to form letters correctly, persevering with this activity with determination. They delight in their successes. Some of the higher attaining children write short sentences, and the lower attainers "tell" a story with the help of the illustrations and read a few common words from the big book.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning of mathematical language and skills are good and result in children's good achievement.
- Children learn through a good range of practical activities.

### Commentary

46. Children are likely to meet the goals expected of them by the end of the reception class. The attention that staff give to developing mathematical language helps the children to make good progress and to achieve well in this aspect. For example, they understand and use words such as more and less, and learn to recognise who had more or less than 5, in practical situations. Through challenging and stimulating tasks, the children learn to recognise triangles, circles and rectangles and soon solve the wizard's "What shape am I" puzzles, by counting sides and corners. Good practical activities generate and sustain interest among children and help them to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics. Both teachers seize many opportunities to point to numbers, for instance setting problems around the register, or singing number songs. The children regularly play with construction kits which enable them to see different shapes, how they fit together, how heavy they are and how to make patterns with them. Through all these activities, the children enjoy mathematics and are eager to learn more.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well through good teaching because the teachers plan topics that capture the children's interest.
- The staff create a lively learning environment to simulate children's curiosity.

### **Commentary**

47. Teaching and learning are good. Children are likely to meet the goals expected of them by the end of the reception class. The teachers and staff in both classes create a lively environment, which stimulates children's curiosity. In investigating light, the children soon learn to classify colours that can be seen and those that cannot be seen in the dark. They apply their newly acquired knowledge to design a reflective jacket. The children marvel at seeing many squirrels in the Towneley Park and talk excitedly about their visit. The children explore ICT to draw space ships, and many know how to print their pictures, without assistance. The teachers introduce the children well to cultural richness of various faiths, such as Sikhism. This term, they celebrated Divali by making "diva pots" and sending greeting cards. The outdoor area is limited and does restrict children's exploration of the immediate environment and the opportunities for learning from first-hand observation about changes in growth of plants or minibeasts.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and result in good achievement.
- The lack of suitable outdoor play area restricts children's physical activities.

### **Commentary**

48. Children achieve well in this area of their development, through the good teaching and learning they receive. Children are likely to meet the goals expected of them by the end of the reception class. The teachers and staff plan activities that improve children's gross and precise movements, using pencils, crayons and scissors. The children in both classes reach the expected levels. They grow in confidence, but their running, jumping and playing imaginatively is seriously curtailed because of lack of space and a suitable area where they can play imaginatively. While there are limitations to the outdoor area, the staff make the best of the situation by providing activities in the hall. Here the children learn to climb, to balance and to use equipment such as hockey sticks. However, free movement is restricted because the space is too small to accommodate groups of children. Nevertheless, teachers plan their lessons very carefully, to ensure that the children gain maximum benefit from the physical activities. The teachers explore with the children aspects of health and exercise. The children know, for instance, that their heart beats faster after an active lesson.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Through the good, imaginative teaching, the children achieve well.
- The limited outdoor area restricts children's creativity and standards.

### **Commentary**

49. Teachers plan stimulating activities through which the children make good gains in their learning. The good progress is due to the wide experiences provided, which enable the children to delve deeply into their own imaginations. In their role-play, the children develop their imaginative response and organise themselves in spontaneous play. They organise a picnic before setting off for the moon, for instance. The children make a moon using a variety of materials, such as egg cartons, to represent craters. The teachers use toys to encourage talk and new words are emphasised to deepen children's understanding. To reinforce learning, the teacher uses a puppet and reminds the children not to laugh at the toy when she makes a mistake. The limited outdoor area restricts children's imaginative play during the day, because they are unable to explore a wider variety of imaginary situations. Nevertheless, creative development overall, extends children's curiosity, imagination and ability to investigate, discuss and to explore.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Good provision in literacy helps pupils to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Well thought through assessment arrangements are detailed, accurate and secure and help teachers and pupils to have a clear idea of how to raise standards.
- Teachers share a clear, well-founded understanding of strengths and areas for improvement in the subject and in the attainments of individual pupils.
- Pupils' comprehension skills in Years 3 to 6 are insufficiently developed at the higher levels.
- Literacy is promoted effectively through other subjects of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

50. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, when standards were average at the end of Year 6. Standards in English are now average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and good by the end of Year 6 because these pupils entered with average standards.
51. There are several reasons why standards have improved. Teaching is more challenging and innovative and a clear focus has been given to improving the subject. In previous years some of the higher attaining pupils had not done as well as expected, but now these pupils are carefully targeted and set tasks that engage their interest and challenge them at the right level. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs are carefully supported and attend booster classes which help to improve their standards.
52. Speaking and listening skills are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Teachers carefully build pupils' speaking and writing vocabularies and plan opportunities for them to use new and interesting terminology. This enables pupils to use a varied speaking vocabulary. Teachers create a climate in which pupils are confident to speak because they know that their contributions will be welcomed and appreciated. During a religious education lesson, several pupils acted out well the Buddhist tale of "Kisagotami". It was greeted with unanimous interest and appreciation and the actors' sense of achievement was visibly enhanced.

53. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 are good readers. Most exceed the expected levels and read accurately, fluently, and with good understanding. Almost all pupils speak enthusiastically about books and enjoy reading. The higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 read at a high level, explaining and justifying their preferences for particular styles and authors. One pupil caught the essence of an enjoyable read in his telling phrase:

*"The author, he's chatting to me."*

This reflects good teaching, especially teachers' firing pupils' imagination and interest whilst developing good technical ability. They share with the pupils texts that appeal to their differing interests. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher involved the pupils in a lively and absorbing interrogation of the story "Owl Babies". Her own love and knowledge of literature and technical skills beamed through and created a reading experience of high quality. These pupils' reading strategies and enjoyment of literature were improved and all pupils achieved well. However, the higher order comprehension skills of middle and lower attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 are less well developed. The analytical questioning strategies are inconsistently used by teachers.

54. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are average. Achievement is satisfactory. One reason for this is that teaching is not consistently challenging the higher attaining pupils. There are opportunities to write for a variety of different purposes in Years 1 and 2, where pupils use correct grammar and punctuation well and some pupils produce good quality writing. The better teaching in Years 5 and 6 helps pupils to make greater strides and attain above average standards in writing. They use vocabulary with increasing precision, learn to use punctuation correctly, and draw on a good range of expression. Most pupils present their work very well and have developed a neat, joined script, which they use fluently for all their written work. Pupils' best writing is found in story telling and factual accounts. A significant minority of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 write very productively, combining quantity with sustained quality. For instance, a pupil in Year 6 caught the essence of good quality writing in her re-telling of her read of "The Indian in the Cupboard" when she wrote:

*"I was desperate to get up. I didn't dare. Eventually I rose and touched the key. He was crouched down in the shadowy corner of the cupboard quivering."*

55. Teaching and learning vary from satisfactory to good in Years 3 to 6; good overall. Consequently, overall achievement is also good. The quality of teaching has been improved by a number of initiatives. Teachers are making more effective use of the support staff. They work collaboratively with the teachers to agreed targets so that pupils of all abilities learn securely and progress rapidly, an improvement since the previous inspection. The teachers in Years 5 and 6 are pioneering different teaching styles to raise standards. There is a strong focus on pupils developing their thinking skills through good quality questioning by the teachers. Pupils are motivated and effective learners because the provision is stimulating and varied with, on occasions, examples of outstanding teaching. The accelerated learning approach is having a positive impact on raising standards at the end of Year 6 where there is some outstanding teaching.

### Example of outstanding practice

#### **In a Year 6 literacy lesson, teaching significantly developed pupils' skills in using more sophisticated punctuation.**

The teacher demonstrated impressive technical competence in the teaching of grammar. Her high quality instructional teaching was complemented by many imaginative strategies, such as working with "talking partners" and role-play. There was an excellent pace to the activities so pupils were animated and well motivated. A notable feature of her methods was to initially revise earlier learning, for instance punctuating a piece of factual writing. This resulted in confident learners. She then quickly built on this secure learning base to introduce new related knowledge, which in this case was the use of brackets. Her insistence on pupils using the correct technical language and showing them a range of exemplars resulted in the pupils quickly mastering the use of brackets as a device for enclosing relevant information. Her questioning techniques were excellent. This teacher targets her well crafted questions to pupils of differing abilities so that all pupils are engaged. Holding their hands up to answer questions was not an option in this class! All pupils were aware that they were active learners and were expected and did take part. The very positive relationships between the teacher and her pupils resulted in pupils improving their punctuation skills very efficiently and applying the new learning to factual writing in a range of subjects.

56. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A key factor in the effectiveness of provision is the high quality of tracking and target setting. Teachers identify and check on pupils' attainments in speaking and listening, reading and writing very carefully in most classes. They use assessment information to plan work so that pupils of all abilities learn securely and progress rapidly. The sharing and discussing of their targets with pupils is at a developmental stage in Years 1 to 4. Marking is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6, where it consistently informs each pupil of their successes but also how to improve their writing and what is expected of them.

### Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Provision for language and literacy across the curriculum is good. Many examples were seen of literacy being developed through other subjects, both in lessons and through the analysis of work. For example, pupils in Year 3 produced good quality examples of historical writing when they word-processed their research on Anglo-Saxon artefacts. In science, pupils' learning was enhanced by the use and application of subject terminology in writing up their conclusions. There is also ample evidence of teachers using other subjects to enhance the pupils' oral, listening and reading skills.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are reaching standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well; in Years 5 and 6, they achieve very well.
- The higher ability pupils now achieve consistently very well.
- Good questioning helps pupils think very carefully about what they are learning.
- Assessment is used very well to find out what pupils know or do not know and to set work which is well targeted to the needs of individual pupils.
- Very good leadership and management of the subject are driving up standards.

### Commentary

58. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards were average then but in the 2003 National Curriculum tests they were above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. The pupils in Year 6 did very well last year from their

average standards on entry. This improvement results from the greater attention being given to the subject, the faster pace of lessons, the teaching of strategies for making calculations and the very strong focus on investigations.

59. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. The main weakness identified by the co-ordinator in respect of shape, space and measures has been fully addressed and is contributing greatly to pupils' good achievements in Years 1 and 2. This is evidenced in the practical use of this element of mathematics, but also in the pupils' application of their well developed skills of calculations. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 generally achieve well, but a very small proportion of the lower attaining pupils lack confidence in calculations and in using the "four rules" to solve simple mathematical problems. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils show particular competence in applying mathematics across all aspects of the subjects. There are examples of the higher attaining pupils using formulae to solve problems and mentally calculate areas of different shapes of swimming pools and surrounding paths. They understand and estimate the approximate metric equivalents of everyday imperial units. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are highly competent in using complex decimals, percentages and fractions and in applying their knowledge to working out solutions to new problems.
60. Most teachers use questions carefully to ensure that the pupils give logical reasons for the strategies for problem solving that they use. This is particularly noticeable as they progress through Years 5 and 6. In a very good lesson in Year 6 the teacher encouraged the pupils to explain and to justify their solutions. She emphasised that there are many ways of solving problems and through comparisons of different methods she very effectively enabled the pupils to deepen their understanding. The teacher's infectious enthusiasm inspired the pupils to learn and to find out more. Teachers plan work very carefully and make good use of formal and informal opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills.
61. The school has clear and very effective procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and progress. The teaching of mathematics in clearly defined groups, according to pupils' learning needs and the high expectations of what they can all achieve, has had a positive effect upon standards. In addition, the co-ordinator, having analysed strengths and weaknesses in the subject, has ensured that work is well structured to ensure that all elements of the subject are taught progressively. While the pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their capabilities, there is a very small proportion of the lower attaining pupils who presently achieve satisfactorily.
62. Leadership and management are very good. The subject co-ordinator has an overview of approaches to mathematics and what individual pupils are achieving in relation to their capabilities. Analyses of pupils' performance and tracking of their progress are allowing the school to focus on areas of weakness and target pupils in need of further support to reach the next level of attainment. The teaching and learning arrangements and the very strong focus on investigations all contribute to the pupils' very good achievements. The knowledgeable governor for the subject keeps an overview of the proceedings and is also influential in driving standards upward.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

63. The subject is well used across other subjects. There are examples of mathematical skills being used in Year 2, where the pupils collated information about their favourite fruit and arranged it in bar and pie charts, using computers. In Year 5 and 6, the pupils analyse their data about decisions taken in the European Union. There are plans to extend the learning of mathematics through ICT, once the computer suite is fully installed.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.



## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils become confident investigators.
- A good and varied range of scientific writing is encouraged but pupils are not always sure of how best to write their predictions, explanations and descriptions.
- The higher ability pupils are now achieving consistently well.
- The interim arrangements for leading the subject are unsatisfactory.
- The subject lacks a clear system of assessing what pupils can and cannot do.

## Commentary

64. Good progress has been made since the last inspection where standards were average. Standards are now average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and good by the end of Year 6. Boys and girls do equally well, as do the pupils with special educational needs, who are well supported in class. The higher attaining pupils are now doing consistently well in this subject.
65. Standards have not been rising as quickly as elsewhere because past subject co-ordination has not been as successful as it might have been. The subject has not been given the priority that English and mathematics have had and so standards have not been driven up as quickly. In addition, the assessment system has remained under-developed and insufficient emphasis has been given to scientific enquiry.
66. However, the situation is improving this year. Several factors are helping standards to rise. More challenging work now being given to the higher ability pupils and staff feel more confident about teaching the subject. More regular opportunities are now provided for pupils to undertake investigations and varied and interesting lessons are planned.
67. As they get older, pupils develop a good knowledge of living things, materials, forces and electricity. Although they are becoming much more confident at devising, carrying out and making sense of their own investigations, they are a little less successful in understanding the significance, reliability and validity of the data they obtain in their tests.
68. "Concept maps", structured writing, key vocabulary and skilful questioning are helping pupils to use their literacy skills effectively in the subject. For example, vocabulary was carefully emphasised in a Year 2 lesson where pupils came up with the words "disconductors" or "unconductors" as alternatives for the word insulator to describe materials which do not let electricity pass through. Most pupils, but not all, are skilful at writing descriptions, explanations, predictions and scientific relationships, especially in Years 3 to 6.
69. Teaching and learning are good overall. The outcomes of learning show that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall by the end of Year 2. However, good teaching was seen in Year 2 where pupils independently explored what would happen if different materials were placed in a simple electrical circuit. Teaching and learning are good overall by the end of Year 6, but teaching in Year 6 is sometimes outstanding (see paragraph 17). Teachers paid careful attention to making the purpose of the lessons clear and provided a good range of interesting activities. This ensured that the pupils' learning was productive with pupils being given plenty of opportunity to develop their own thinking in both practical work and other tasks. Teaching assistants worked very closely and effectively with pupils with special educational needs. On other occasions, such as seen in Years 3 and 4, they also helped to challenge higher attaining pupils to stretch their understanding of how to carry out a fair test.
70. The current co-ordinator is acting on a temporary basis following a period in which developments have lain fallow. Day-to-day management is satisfactory and sustaining the already good provision. Lessons have been learnt through analysing the results of the latest National Curriculum tests. However the range of methods used to assess pupils' progress are

ineffective in pinpointing what it is that pupils need to do to improve because a robust assessment scheme is not in place in all years.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers make good use of available resources and regularly ensure pupils' work is reinforced at home.
- The curriculum is well planned and nearly all aspects of learning are covered effectively.
- ICT features well in most subjects of the curriculum.
- The subject is well led and managed and consequently standards are improving.

### **Commentary**

71. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. At the last inspection, standards were below average and pupils did not reach the standards they ought to have done. Pupils are now reaching average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 and are achieving well in all years. Standards are not higher because some classes have not had the better resources and teaching they are getting now.
72. The subject has made good strides forward in the past year. Achievement has improved because the subject is better co-ordinated. The key to progress has been the introduction of a new scheme of work which has provided a robust framework for teaching and learning. Training has ensured that teachers have the confidence to teach the subject. ICT skills are taught weekly and ICT is regularly used in other subjects.
73. Over time, all groups of pupils undertake tasks which cover all strands of the curriculum. For example, they use wordprocessors, spreadsheets and databases in their learning. They control floor turtles and use sensors to monitor the physical environment, although standards could be higher in this aspect of work. Computer software is used well to provide support for lower attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and to challenge the higher attaining pupils. Although pupils await imminent individual access to e-mail facilities, this facet of work is simulated for the younger pupils. Most of the older pupils are already proficient with this through the very good access that parents provide at home. Some pupils are helping to develop class and school websites, and these are very promising areas of growth.
74. Teaching and learning are good by the end of Years 2 and 6. Staff make regular use of the computers in their classrooms and any others available nearby. Pupils have a zest for the subject and approach it enthusiastically. Pupils in Year 2, for example, are keen to talk about the computers they have at home and how their keyboard skills are developing well. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learnt about a range of "simulation software". Many understood that this kind of program helps people see things on a computer that happen elsewhere in real life or imaginary worlds. Next day, after doing their homework, they came up with "Flight Simulators", "Robot Dogs" and "Crash Tests" as good examples of these. Pupils in Year 6 confidently discuss their ICT experiences in plotting graphs, looking for errors in databases and writing poems using a word processor. Opportunities are available for pupils to use digital and video cameras in their learning. A weakness is that some teaching assistants lack confidence in supporting pupils in their ICT work.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A lot has been done in the last six months and the way forward is clear. However, the current budgetary position is limiting the time available for the co-ordinator to see how effective other teachers are and manage developments. There has not yet been time to introduce the assessment system associated

with the new scheme of work. Building alterations have enabled space to be available to house a dedicated ICT suite, and this is due to be operational very soon.

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

76. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Word-processing is prominent in extended writing, poster production and displays, for example, in English. Specialist software helps pupils to improve their skills in reading and grammar. Data-handling and the development of number skills is supported in mathematics. In a Year 6 science experiment to evaluate the rate at which substances dissolved, good use was made of a spreadsheet to plot results. Pupils undertake effective research using CD-ROM and the Internet for subjects such as history and geography. For example, they have explored the "Sutton Hoo" website. Software is available to help pupils create artwork and enhance music lessons.

### **HUMANITIES**

*Religious education was inspected in detail and is reported in full below. **Geography** was not a focus for this inspection. Two lessons were seen in history. No judgements can be made on standards or provision in these subjects. A commentary is included on history as further evidence was collected through discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils and looking at planning.*

77. In **history** the new co-ordinator has significantly improved provision and teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. There is a good quality policy and scheme of work. Resources have improved. The co-ordinator works closely with the teachers, resulting in pupils not only demonstrating sound factual knowledge of historical events but also developing an understanding of the importance of collecting evidence to answer questions. This strong emphasis on developing pupils' enquiry skills was exemplified in a "hands on" approach to teaching and learning in a Year 3 lesson where pupils went into role as archaeologists. They investigated their "dig" enthusiastically, talking knowledgeably about the evidence they discovered. The local environment is well used for developing their historical skills, complemented by in-depth research using ICT. Assessment is underdeveloped but there is an action plan in place to address this issue.

### **Religious Education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils learn through their religious education about the importance of courtesy, care and consideration for others.
- The school makes good use of its well-developed links with a variety of local clergy.
- Assessment procedures are underdeveloped.

#### **Commentary**

78. Pupils in Year 2 and 6 reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as at the time of the previous inspection. Scrutiny of available work and talking to pupils indicate that achievement is sound throughout the school. A discussion with pupils in Year 2 showed that they are beginning to link religious teaching with their own lives, knowing, for instance, that some of the Bible stories provide us with examples of how to be caring and considerate to others.
79. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where the teaching is particularly effective, very good use is made of links with literacy such as discussion, writing and drama. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 6 on Buddhism, pupils were challenged to understand and empathise with the

notion of death from a Buddhist perspective. The high quality questioning, where pupils are given thinking time and many opportunities to talk through ideas and the role-play of a Buddhist tale, resulted in some reflective and poignant comments. Pupils wrote about and discussed sickness and death with an impressive degree of maturity. This lesson made a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. There are other examples of cross-curricular links to art and design where pupils in Years 3 and 4 made three-dimensional models of Jewish artefacts. Good use is made of the clergy from the local community, who conduct assemblies on a regular basis and involve pupils in visits to their churches. This results in increasing pupils' learning about the liturgies and symbols of the Christian faiths.

80. Leadership is good. The co-ordinator is strongly committed to developing religious education in the school. She is a good role model and supports and influences staff in the teaching of the subject through advice, resources and setting up good quality displays. Her management is satisfactory and she is doing as much as she can under current financial constraints. She checks teachers' planning. However, there are only limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the subject to enable her to have a clear picture of standards across the school. Assessment procedures are currently underdeveloped.

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

*Art and design, design and technology and physical education were not a key focus of the inspection. Therefore no judgements were made on provision and standards. One lesson was seen in design and technology. Further evidence was gathered in art and design and design and technology through discussions with co-ordinators and pupils, looking at teachers' planning and work which had been retained. No information was gathered on music or physical education.*

81. In **art and design** the available evidence shows that provision has been strengthened since the last inspection. There are strengths in painting, where pupils use water colours to depict their feelings about landscape. Good examples of observational drawings in Year 3 and 4 were seen, linked to food technology. Further links, such as with a topic on Islam in religious education, enabled Year 5 and 6 pupils to appreciate art from other cultures. ICT is underused as yet to support art teaching and learning. The assessment scheme is under-developed.
82. In **design and technology** work has also improved. Through Years 1 to 6 pupils experience working with a range of materials and the skills needed to work with them are systematically developed. The work seen shows good progress through the school. For example, younger pupils have made "Joseph's coat" out of many colourful fabrics and materials. They reflected on what they liked about the coats they had made and how they could be improved. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 understand the need to plan a design carefully and evaluate how good their finished products are. They have made a variety of products such as money containers, ways of lighting up their designs and a "moving monster" and understood how their initial designs could be improved. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made biscuits and a variety of musical instruments. Again, care is taken to think about the merits of their finished products with one girl saying:  
*"My instrument is a good one because it is well made, attractive, and sounds like the stars twinkling. It could be better if it were made out of more colourful materials".*
83. Improvements have been brought about because the co-ordinator has worked with staff to improve their confidence in teaching the subject. A clear programme of work has been established to include work on a wide range of materials, and weaknesses have been systematically addressed. However, the assessment scheme is insufficiently developed, as is the amount of time given to designs which are controlled in some way.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

### Personal, social and health education

*It was only possible during the inspection to observe some sessions in which pupils discussed personal and emotional issues gathered around together ("circle time"), to discuss provision with the co-ordinator, and to examine the available work and assemblies.*

### Commentary

84. Circle time is the key way in which pupils' personal, social and emotional development is fostered. Good, sensitive, teaching was seen in which pupils discussed how their day had gone, how they were feeling and what they had to celebrate. In these sessions great care was taken to ensure that pupils listened carefully to others so they could reflect on what they had heard. The teachers carefully organised the sessions so that all pupils were valued and consequently, the pupils were confident to express themselves.
85. In addition, some time is allocated each week so that a variety of topics can be covered appropriate to the ages of the pupils. For example, younger children learn about keeping safe and how to relate to other people whilst the older pupils learn about growing up and how their bodies and feelings might change. In each year the dangers of harmful drugs and smoking are discussed. Sex education is sensitively handled later on in the school.
86. Opportunities are taken to make pupils more aware of their role in the community. For example, in an English lesson Year 6 pupils wrote to the local authority about the traffic congestion on the main road outside school pointing out potential hazards for pupils and the community. Visitors from local churches help to foster a sense of local identity.
87. Throughout all years much emphasis is given to classroom codes of behaviour and the "5 Cs":

<b>CARE</b>	<b>COURTESY</b>	<b>CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>CO-OPERATION</b>	<b>CONCENTRATION</b>
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These ideas are continually stressed in circle time, lessons and assemblies. They help to underpin the very good relationships between the staff and the pupils and between the pupils themselves. Many examples were seen during the inspection of pupils helping each other and ensuring that everyone had a chance to contribute in discussions and shine.

## 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	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<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	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).*