

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSFOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Penwortham, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119278

Headteacher: Mrs L Clement

Lead inspector: Mr C D Taylor

Dates of inspection: 7 – 9 October 2003

Inspection number: 256626

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:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	183
School address:	Martinfield Road Penwortham Preston
Postcode:	PR1 9HJ
Telephone number:	01772 743531
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Fann
Date of previous inspection:	14 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kingsfold Primary School is an urban community primary school with a 26-place nursery. Most pupils join the reception class at the age of four and remain at the school until they are eleven. Relatively few pupils join the school at other times. Numbers have decreased since 1999. The school serves the Kingsfold estate and surrounding areas of Penwortham. The local area is composed mainly of rented housing with some privately owned property. Twenty six per cent of pupils - above the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils join the school with levels of attainment that are below average for their age. Fourteen per cent of pupils – broadly in line with the national average - are identified as having special educational needs. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs. Pupils with special needs include those with behavioural problems, moderate learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) and Asperger's syndrome. Only three pupils are from ethnic minorities. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has recently received the Activemark Gold award and received a School Achievement Award in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23004	Christopher Taylor	Lead inspector	The foundation stage Science Music Religious education
9981	Saleem Hussain	Lay inspector	
19120	Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Kingsfold Primary is an improving school. Standards are above average in English and science in Year 2, and are average overall in Years 2 and 6. This is a good improvement on last year's standards in Year 6. Teaching and learning are now good, so pupils are currently achieving well. The school benefits from the good leadership of the new headteacher and a commitment by all staff to improve the school further. Expenditure per pupil is broadly in line with the national average and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Consistently good teaching in the nursery and reception means young children get a good start.
- Good teaching in Years 1 to 6, especially in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) ensures pupils are learning effectively.
- Good teaching in physical education (PE) in Years 3 to 6 and a wide range of sporting activities are strengths of the school.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good. This helps pupils to learn well.
- Provision for pupils' welfare is very good; very good account is taken of pupils' views.
- Links with parents and the community and with other schools are very good.
- The new headteacher provides good leadership and management.
- Standards of attainment are below average in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- There is an inconsistent approach to the teaching of spelling.
- Assessment of pupils' standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not rigorous enough to enable teachers to set work appropriate to the needs of individual pupils.

Since the previous inspection in 1999, the school has made good progress, overall, in improving the areas identified in the last inspection report. ICT now meets statutory requirements and older pupils' standards have risen in science. There has been insufficient progress, however, in developing and using assessment of pupils' progress. Planning has improved in geography, music and PE, and the role of subject co-ordinators has been developed satisfactorily. In addition, there have been significant improvements in teaching and learning, pupils' welfare and leadership and management.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	D	E	D
mathematics	D	E	E*	E*
science	C	E	E*	E

*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 **satisfactory**, overall. It is good in the nursery and reception and in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory, overall, in Years 3 to 6.

While many pupils enter the school with levels of attainment below average for their age, children achieve most of the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. By Year 2, standards are above the national average in English and science, and average in other subjects. In Year 6, standards are broadly in line with the national average in English and science, but are below average in mathematics. This is a good improvement on standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 when attainment in mathematics and science was in the bottom five per cent of schools

nationally. Pupils are currently making good progress in Years 3 to 6, but achievement has generally been no more than satisfactory over the last few years.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching for children of nursery and reception age is consistently good across all six areas of learning. Consequently children learn quickly. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and ICT and pupils learn well. Teaching is good in mathematics, science, ICT and PE in Years 3 to 6, and is satisfactory in all other subjects observed. Teaching has improved recently and pupils are currently learning effectively. Teachers use assessment in English, mathematics and science to plan work that is appropriate for pupils of different abilities. Assessment in other subjects is not as good as it should be.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of visits and visitors, and there is a good variety of extra-curricular sporting activities. Pupils with special educational needs receive plenty of assistance and make sound progress. Procedures for the personal support and guidance of pupils are good and pupils' welfare is very good. The school benefits from very good parental links and receives the valuable support of an active parents' association. Very good links with the community and with other local schools further enrich the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and other key staff are **good**. The work of the governing body is also **good**.

The headteacher has very high aspirations and has moved the school forward rapidly. Other key staff provide good support. Governors carry out their statutory duties well. They play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school. The school supports educational priorities well through good financial planning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

There is strong parental support for the school. Parents are particularly pleased that children enjoy school, teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard. Pupils think highly of their school because they discover lots of new things and teachers help them effectively.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. *
- Introduce a more consistent approach to the teaching of spelling. *
- Improve assessment of pupils' standards, especially in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, and use this to set work appropriate to the needs of individual pupils. *

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that details of facilities for disabled pupils are included in the Annual Report to parents.

* *The school has already identified these issues as areas for development.*

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

In reception, most children achieve the goals they are expected to reach. By the end of Year 2 standards are **above the national average** in English and science, and **average** in mathematics. In the current Year 6 standards are **broadly average** in English and science, and **below average** in mathematics. Pupils' achievement is **good** overall in reception and in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is generally **satisfactory** in Years 3 to 6, but pupils underachieve in mathematics. Boys and girls usually reach similar standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in reception and make good progress towards the early learning goals for young children.
- They achieve well in Years 1 and 2 where standards are above the national average in English and science and broadly average in other subjects.
- Pupils are currently making good progress in Years 3 to 6, but achievement has generally been no more than satisfactory over the last few years. Consequently, standards in Year 6 are in line with the national average in most subjects, but spelling is weak.
- Pupils underachieve in mathematics and standards are below average in Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well in physical education in Years 3 to 6 and standards are above expectations.

Commentary

1. Standards on entry to the nursery are below national expectations. Many children have only limited basic skills and their language development is often poor. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress towards the early learning goals for young children. By the end of the reception year, most children reach the levels expected for their age in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, creative development and physical development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world are still below average for their age. This is similar to standards at the time of the previous inspection.
2. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 and 2. By Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and science. Pupils' attainment in mathematics, ICT and other subjects is in line with standards expected nationally. This is similar to the previous inspection in English and science, but not as good in mathematics where standards were above average by the end of Year 2. Standards are better than those in the national tests in 2003 when attainment was average in reading and writing, but not as good in mathematics where standards were above average. There are no significant variations in standards between girls and boys.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.1 (18.0)	16.3 (16.5)

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

3. In Year 6, standards are broadly in line with the national average in English and science and in most other subjects. Pupils are currently achieving well in these subjects, although achievement has been no more than satisfactory for most pupils over the past few years. This is a good improvement on the previous year when, the school reports, serious behaviour problems in Year 6 caused underachievement and results in the national tests in 2003 were poor. Pupils achieve well in physical education and standards are above national expectations. This is due to good teaching and a strong programme of extra-curricular sporting activities. In English, standards in reading and writing are generally sound, but spelling is weak. In mathematics, standards are below the national average and pupils underachieve because they do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. Many pupils do not have instant recall of basic number facts and do not appreciate the importance of mental agility. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender. Overall, the school's results improved broadly in line with the national upward trend from 1998 to 2002. Standards then fell, but are now improving rapidly.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.3 (25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	21.8 (25.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	24.6 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Attitudes, behaviour and relationships have improved greatly during the current year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show high levels of interest in school life and activities.
- They have good relationships with each other.
- They take responsibility well.
- The school has very clear and very high expectations for conduct.
- The school deals effectively with all forms of bad behaviour.

Commentary

4. Pupils show much interest in lessons and other school activities such as trips and after school sports. In a Year 3 music lesson, for example, they listened to the teacher very well and were keen to try different musical instruments that might make the sounds of animals. Pupils are good at working in groups. Successful team games in PE illustrate their ability to form good, constructive relationships.
5. Pupils are developing well in their maturity and attitudes towards others. Members of the school council liaise closely with their classmates so that they can act in their best interests at council meetings. This has helped pupils develop a sense of unity. Older pupils are keen to carry out useful tasks such as answering the telephone at lunch times. Pupils often support charities and good causes by fundraising and are also involved in music concerts in the community. They are developing well as young citizens.
6. The school is an orderly place where the great majority of pupils behave well. The new headteacher has worked very closely with the whole school community and successfully

established new standards for conduct and behaviour. The change in approach has been effective, illustrated by the marked reduction in fixed period exclusions since the headteacher has been in post. Teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to ensure that pupils develop positive attitudes. Most pupils with special educational needs are well behaved and respond well to the encouragement they receive.

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

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good moral understanding and can clearly distinguish right from wrong.
 - Social development has improved and is now good.
 - Pupils work well together and fulfil the responsibilities of living in a school community.
 - Multicultural awareness is not well developed.
7. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There is a daily act of collective worship, which meets requirements. There are some opportunities for reflection relating to moral issues and living in the community. Pupils' self knowledge is being promoted through class discussion times, but this is under developed. In religious education lessons and assemblies there are some opportunities for developing spiritual awareness but these are having only a limited impact on pupils' appreciation of a spiritual dimension to their lives.
 8. High priority is given to equipping pupils with a clear set of moral values and the provision is good. Teachers' high expectations are effectively reinforced by routine classroom practice, the consistent application of the behaviour policy, explicit moral teaching and incidental group discussion. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding that helps them to distinguish right from wrong.
 9. Pupil's social development is good. All pupils understand and fulfil the responsibilities of living in the school community. The promotion of values such as friendship and co-operation forms an important aspect of school life and, as a result, pupils interact well with each other. Pupils are encouraged to take a full and active part in all aspects of school life and contribute their ideas for improvement through an elected school council. Pupils are encouraged to work together in small group situations whenever possible.
 10. The provision for pupil's cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn of their own culture through aspects of the curriculum and during educational visits. Some efforts have been made to gain a fuller understanding of multicultural traditions by encouraging pupils from the school community to share their own knowledge of Indian music, food and clothing and by comparative geographical studies of different countries of the world. However, this has had only a limited impact on pupils' appreciation of cultural diversity within our own society.

Attendance

Attendance and punctuality remain **satisfactory**. Attendance levels are currently close to the national average. Most pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

There were 18 exclusions in the last school year, involving seven boys. Nearly all these exclusions occurred before the current headteacher took up her post.

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	212	18	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** overall. Teaching and learning are good, while the school makes very good provision for the welfare of its pupils, and links with parents and the community are very good. Assessment of pupils’ standards is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science, but is unsatisfactory in other subjects.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** in the nursery and reception, and in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are consistently good in the nursery and reception.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work very effectively together.
- Throughout the school, teachers’ insistence on high standards of behaviour has had a very positive impact on improving pupils’ attainment this year.
- In English, mathematics and science, tasks usually match pupils’ individual needs well.
- In other subjects, work is not always matched closely enough to pupils’ needs.
- Teaching of spelling is inconsistent, and basic number facts have not been taught effectively to older pupils.
- ICT skills are taught well and teachers are beginning to use computers effectively across different subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

11. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in nearly all lessons and was good or better in just over three-quarters. This is a big improvement on the previous inspection when only a third of teaching was good.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	3 (8%)	25 (69%)	6 (17%)	2 (6%)	0 (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.

12. Teaching for children of nursery and reception age is consistently good across all six areas of learning. Teachers and learning support assistants have a good understanding of how young

children learn and they work together well as a team. They have high expectations of all children and constantly encourage them to build their confidence. The curriculum is well planned and lessons have clear objectives leading towards the early learning goals for young children. Staff frequently check children's knowledge and understanding, and provide tasks that are well matched to children's individual needs. They give good support and guidance those who are less confident and these children make good progress as a result.

13. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Insufficient teaching was observed to make an overall judgement in other subjects. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good in mathematics, science, ICT and PE. It is satisfactory in English and geography. No judgement could be made in other subjects.
14. Good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a cheerful and productive atmosphere. The introduction of effective class management procedures this year has been reflected in increasingly good standards of behaviour and positive attitudes to work. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and standards of attainment have risen.
15. Literacy and numeracy skills are generally taught well, though there is no consistent approach to teaching spelling and older pupils have not learnt basic number facts rigorously enough. Teachers' planning in English, mathematics and science uses the results of assessments to ensure that work planned for pupils of different abilities and those with special educational needs is usually matched to pupils' individual needs well. Teachers make sure that work for higher-attaining pupils is challenging enough so that they make good progress. In a good literacy lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher helped average pupils to sequence a series of instructions in the correct order, while the learning support assistant worked with lower-attaining pupils to identify letter combinations with different sounds. Higher-attaining pupils worked independently, and the teacher provided more challenging work for two pupils who found the sequencing task too easy.
16. In other subjects, pupils' standards are not assessed as accurately and work is not always matched closely enough to individual pupils' needs. As a result, some pupils occasionally find the work too easy or too difficult. This occurred in a design and technology lesson in Year 6, for example, where the task of choosing a suitable material for covering an umbrella or a sun shelter was too challenging for many of the pupils.
17. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources, and this helps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Most staff have a good knowledge of computer systems and ICT skills are taught well. In a good ICT lesson in Year 6, for example, the teacher's very good expertise was apparent when showing pupils how to set up links between different pages of a document. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory. Pupils use computers for word processing and increasingly use the Internet to research information on different subjects across the curriculum.

Assessment

The assessment of pupils' work is **unsatisfactory** except in English, mathematics and science. Teachers do not use the information gained from assessments consistently to help pupils improve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment in English, mathematics and science is sound, but it is unsatisfactory in other subjects.
- Teachers do not always use assessment effectively or consistently to help plan and implement pupils' next steps in learning.
- Assessment and recording procedures for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory.
- There are no individual targets to help pupils improve their standards.

Commentary

18. Assessment procedures are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science where pupils' progress has recently been carefully tracked and test results analysed. This has helped raise standards in English and science this year, but has yet to make an impact in mathematics. Assessment procedures in other subjects are unsatisfactory. This is because there are no consistent approaches to assessing the development of knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils move through the school. As a result, work is often not matched to pupils' individual needs and work is sometimes too easy for some and too difficult for others. The school has given insufficient attention to improving assessment procedures since the last inspection when assessment was judged to be inaccurate. Under the guidance of the new deputy headteacher, assessment has been prioritised for urgent development in order to raise pupils' attainment.
19. Assessment and recording procedures for pupils with special educational needs are sound, enabling them to make satisfactory progress towards meeting targets in their individual education plans. However, arrangements for reviewing pupils' progress are not always regular enough to enable them to make the best possible gains in learning.
20. Pupils do not have enough understanding of how they can improve. They do not have individual targets, for example, to help them take responsibility for their own learning and improve their attainment. Most pupils do not know the level at which they are working. There are no reference sets of work, levelled to National Curriculum requirements, in most subjects to help teachers to assess pupils' work accurately. However, most marking is good because it not only celebrates pupils' efforts but also advises them how to improve their work.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum for its pupils, which is enhanced by a **good** range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation is **good**, and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes provides a good start to their education.
- English, mathematics, science and physical education are prominent, although some other subjects and aspects are too thinly represented to enable pupils to make the best possible progress.
- A good range of after-school clubs, together with a sound number of visits and visitors, enrich the curriculum.
- The curriculum provides satisfactorily for pupils with special educational needs.
- The good accommodation and satisfactory resources enable all subjects to be taught effectively.

Commentary

21. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils in the nursery and reception lead effectively towards the early learning goals for young children. Children take part in a wide range of carefully structured activities and experiences, which give them a good start to their education.
22. All subjects required by the National Curriculum are represented within the school's curriculum. Schemes of work are well established in all subjects to ensure that pupils gradually build on their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. There are developing links between subjects to help make learning more relevant for pupils. The use of mathematics, ICT and English in other subjects is satisfactory and is developing

rapidly. Teachers ensure that all pupils have equal access to the subjects of the National Curriculum. However, some subjects, such as design and technology, art and geography are only thinly represented, which prevents pupils from learning more in these areas.

23. A satisfactory number of visits and visitors and a good range of after school clubs helps to extend pupils' learning. Visits that enrich pupils' experiences include a residential trip to an activity centre and an excursion to Southport. Visitors, one of whom shared her experiences during the Second World War with pupils in Year 6, help to bring the curriculum alive. Clubs, with a strong emphasis on sport, include football, rugby, gymnastics, dance and keep fit. These are popular and well attended, and help explain the high standards in PE.
24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound, enabling them to make satisfactory gains in learning. This is because work is usually carefully matched to their needs in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects the support they receive helps them to make at least sound progress even though work is not always so carefully matched to their precise needs.
25. A satisfactory range of resources is used well to help pupils learn. The school grounds are spacious and support work in subjects such as science and PE. The good accommodation enables the curriculum to be taught effectively. While resources are sound, overall, they are good in some subjects such as history and English. This enables teachers to make lessons especially interesting, through using old objects and large texts, for example, to increase levels of interest and involvement.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are **very good**. The school has made good improvements in these areas of its work since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good induction arrangements for new pupils.
- A very healthy and safe environment exists, including good arrangements for child protection.
- Pupils have good, trusting relationships with adults in school.
- Pupils have easy access to well-informed advice, support and guidance to help them progress.
- Arrangements to seek and act on pupils' views through the school council are very strong.

Commentary

26. The school introduces new pupils very well by holding special meetings with parents and providing many integration sessions. This ensures that they settle into school quickly and successfully.
27. The school's designated officer for child protection is fully trained and deals with any issues effectively. All staff are issued with sufficient written guidance about their obligations. The school's very good arrangements for emergencies are underpinned by a very high number of staff trained in first aid. The school works very well with external agencies to promote health and safety. The school nurse, for example, is a regular visitor, and is well involved in sex and drugs education.
28. The school provides good advice and guidance for pupils. Pupils are content during the school day and are well supported in their learning. This owes a lot to the caring nature of the school that is evident in the good relationships between pupils and staff. Staff give much day-to-day support to pupils in their personal development. Individual problems are handled with sensitivity and care, for example, if pupils feel bullied. Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for and teachers regularly track the progress they are making towards the targets in their individual education plans.

29. The school council provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their self-esteem and personal and social skills. The school values pupils' ideas and has taken up many of their suggestions including a request for playground equipment and seating. A sports council is to start soon, to discuss pupils' ideas for sporting activities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents and the wider community, including other schools and colleges, are **very good**. The school has made good improvements to these partnerships since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school involves parents very well through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- They receive very good information about the school and good information about their children's progress.
- Parents make a very strong contribution to learning at school and at home.
- The school makes very good efforts to involve parents in the school and in their children's learning.
- The school has many links in the wider community and with other schools and colleges.

Commentary

30. The school values parents' views. Parents were recently consulted about procedures to improve pupils' behaviour. Their suggestion to celebrate '*citizens of the week*', for example, was adopted whole-heartedly. At the parents' meeting, parents praised the new headteacher's attitude and approach to discipline and were pleased that behaviour has now improved.
31. The school provides very good quality information for parents. The nursery handbook, for example, has much information about how parents can support learning at home. Pupils' annual reports state clearly how well they are doing in each subject and areas for development are shown separately. However, more information about how pupils are doing compared with national expectations would be helpful. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted at an early stage. Links between home and school are regular and constructive, which helps to ensure these pupils make sound progress.
32. The parent teacher association works very hard in organizing many popular social and fundraising events. Funds raised have helped to establish the ICT suite, for example. Many parent helpers give their time generously by helping in lessons or listening to readers. The school works hard to organize parents' courses in conjunction with the adult education service. Many parents have become more involved in their children's learning by taking advantage of courses on *Keeping up with the children*, *Five to Nine* and *Dads and lads*.
33. The value of very strong community links was well illustrated during the recent *Health Week* when rugby, gymnastics, tennis, cricket and Taekwondo coaches, local supermarket staff, health visitors and others led sessions to support pupils' learning. Very good links with other schools include very effective mechanisms for transfer to secondary schools. Pupils in Year 6 can take advantage of a summer school at Priory Technical College, for example, and a *buddy* system will operate shortly at Penwortham Girls High School.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is **good**. The school is managed **well**. The governance of the school is **good**. These are improvements since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher has high aspirations and a very clear vision for the school.
- Senior staff share this vision and inspire and motivate staff and pupils well.
- Strategic planning reflects the school's aims and values well.
- The governing body carries out most of its duties well, but a few items required by law have been omitted from the Annual Report to parents.
- Good financial planning supports educational priorities well.

Commentary

34. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has clear priorities and has succeeded in improving pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the ten months since her arrival. She has realistic plans for the future and is committed to meeting the needs of pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs. She has good relationships with parents and keeps them well informed of school events. She encourages discussion and ownership of decisions by her consultative leadership style and has established a good team spirit among the staff. She is supported well by a senior teacher and the recently appointed deputy headteacher who inspire and motivate other staff well. As a result, the school is improving rapidly.
35. The school has good aims and values that are reflected well in its work. It aims to create a secure, caring environment where children can develop and thrive, and where individuals feel valued and confident. It does this by maintaining a happy school with high quality provision and where expectations of pupils' achievements are high. It aims to develop understanding, tolerance and an appreciation of what it means to be a positive member of a multicultural society. The school is largely successful in achieving these aims.
36. The management of the school is good. The headteacher works closely with other staff and has a clear overview of planning across the school. She monitors children's work informally when she teaches each year group. She has observed teaching in all classes and has made suggestions on how to raise pupils' attainment. Some of these observations have been part of the performance management programme that is operating successfully in the school. The headteacher and other key staff have a good grasp of pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science. They analyse National Curriculum test results and successfully identify weaker areas of the curriculum needing attention.
37. Responsibility for curriculum areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators who develop schemes of work, co-ordinate teachers' planning and monitor teaching and pupils' work. This was an area identified for development at the previous inspection, and most co-ordinators are now having a positive impact on raising standards in their subjects.
38. The special educational needs provision is managed well. The headteacher, acting as co-ordinator, oversees this important area effectively. Pupils' needs are identified appropriately and their individual education plans are updated regularly. The governor responsible for special needs is well informed.
39. The governing body provides good support for the headteacher. Governors fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities well, but there are no details of facilities provided for disabled pupils or arrangements for their admission to the school in the Annual Report to parents. Governors

have a good working knowledge of the school and a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They observe classes, take part in training sessions, debate standards and budget issues and help to determine the priorities facing the school.

40. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate targets and ensures that resources are directed towards raising pupils' attainment. The school makes good use of resources allocated to assist specific groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs. The governors' finance committee monitors the school's budget regularly and satisfactory financial controls are in place. The large balance carried forward into the current financial year is earmarked for building work carried out in the previous year and for maintaining current staffing levels with fewer pupils. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The school seeks competitive tenders for all major spending decisions to ensure it receives good value for money. It assesses its performance in comparison with other schools, sets challenging targets and consults widely to gain the opinions of parents and children. Day-to-day administration is efficient and computers are used effectively for handling invoices and for keeping pupils' records.
41. Staff and governors share a firm commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning and the school has a good capacity to succeed. Appropriate targets have been set for raising standards in English and mathematics in the national tests in 2004.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	576,443
Total expenditure	532,878
Expenditure per pupil	2,651

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	68,602
Balance carried forward to the next	112,167

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The good provision for young children is a strength of the school. The quality of teaching for children in the nursery and reception classes is consistently good and the curriculum is well planned to help them learn effectively. Attractive accommodation, informative displays and good resources also help them to learn quickly. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well. High standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Most children attend the nursery and join the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. When they start school, most pupils' attainment is below expectations for their age. Many have only limited basic skills. Language development is often poor. Children learn quickly and by the time they leave reception, most reach the levels expected in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical understanding, physical development and creative development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is still not as extensive as expected for their age.

The teachers and learning support assistants have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They plan and work together very effectively, providing a good range of interesting activities. Children play happily together, co-operate sensibly and are well motivated. This is because teacher's expectations are high, tasks are explained clearly, staff check and record children's understanding regularly and work is matched well to the needs of individual children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn to select their own activities and use resources independently.
- They form good relationships and work sensibly with other children.

Commentary

42. The teachers and learning support assistants effectively help children to develop good social skills. Nursery children are happy to leave their parents and self-register on arrival. They are quickly involved in choosing from a range of activities. Reception children enter the classroom confidently in the mornings. They sit quietly with other pupils and listen attentively to the teacher. They learn to put their hands up when answering questions and take turns when speaking or sharing resources with other children. They get changed for physical education sensibly and put their own socks and shoes on afterwards. Children make good progress and their level of personal, social and emotional development is typical for their age.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills.
- They enjoy books and learn to read common words and simple sentences.
- Children identify initial sounds and recognise words with similar endings.
- By the end of reception, they make good attempts at writing simple sentences.

Commentary

43. Communication, language and literacy skills are taught well. Staff take every opportunity to talk with the children in order to widen their vocabulary. They continually ask open-ended questions and encourage children to discuss what they are doing. Nursery children, for example, explained clearly how to make gingerbread men, describing the syrup as *sticky* and *shiny*. Children take part in role-play activities to develop their speaking skills. Several in reception played happily together in the *café*, answering the telephone and preparing 'meals'. Those who are more hesitant are given constant encouragement. As a result, all children achieve well, and language development is broadly in line with expectations by the end of the reception year.
44. Children enjoy listening to stories. Nursery children joined in the actions as they listened carefully to a story about a mouse, and then watched an animated version on video. In reception, children enjoyed sharing their books with the inspector. They turned the pages carefully, followed the illustrations well, and answered questions sensibly. In one lesson, children followed the text in a large print book, read along with the teacher where phrases were repeated, and stuck shells, ribbons and cherries onto *Mrs Honey's Hat* to reinforce their learning. During the reception year, children take reading books home regularly to share with parents and other adults. They learn the sounds and names of letters, and quickly identify the initial sounds of words. By the end of reception, all pupils recognise a variety of simple words. Some use a range of strategies to identify unknown words and read simple stories. Children achieve well, and most read as well as expected for their age.
45. Children are given plenty of opportunities to develop their writing skills. During a lesson in reception, children used their own emergent writing to re-tell a favourite part of a story. They learn to write the letters of the alphabet and are taught the sounds associated with each letter. They identify words with similar endings such as *pan* and *fan*, and insert the missing letter at the end of words such as *hat* and *hen*. By the end of the year, pupils attempt their own simple sentences such as *I wow (went) to te pac (the park)* in a legible script, while higher-attaining children use capital letters and full stops when writing, for example, *I went to the shop on my bik (bike) with my mum*. Most children achieve well and standards in writing are similar to those expected nationally.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children write numbers to ten and identify 'one more than' and 'one less than'.
- They solve simple problems by carrying out additions and subtractions within ten.
- They recognise two-dimensional shapes and weigh 'light' and 'heavy' objects.

Commentary

46. Teaching of mathematical skills is good. Teachers make it fun to use numbers and to explore shape and size. In a good lesson in reception, for example, the children sang *Five fat sausages sizzling in the pan* to learn numbers *one less than* five, four and so on. The teacher then used a hand puppet to encourage the children to identify the numerals one to five. Children dressed as frogs and sang *Five little speckled frogs* to reinforce their learning. Finally, they pointed to *Cuthbert Caterpillar*, a number track, to identify numbers within ten. By the end of reception, most children write numbers to 10 or beyond and add numbers within ten correctly. They recognise common two-dimensional shapes and use weighing scales to identify *light* and *heavy* objects. Higher-attaining pupils use numbers to 20 and add and

subtract within ten correctly. Staff ensure that those who are more hesitant are fully involved and make good progress. Children achieve well, and by the end of the reception year, most children have mathematical skills in line with those expected for their age.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn effectively from practical activities and their own investigations.
- They recognise a variety of minibeasts and understand how living things grow.
- They use computers to assist their learning.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and involves many opportunities for children to learn during practical investigations and outdoor activities. In one lesson, nursery children mixed flour, sugar and ginger to make gingerbread men. Children in reception conduct a survey of minibeasts, discuss healthy foods and sequence pictures showing the life cycle of a butterfly. They study the uses of water and carry out their own investigations to determine the effects of exercise. Children develop their manipulative and colour matching skills by using the computer mouse to assemble a viaduct, and learn to use the keyboard to type and print their own names. Children achieve well, but their levels of knowledge and understanding are still below those expected at the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children handle tools and small equipment safely and with increasing control.
- They move safely over large equipment with increasing confidence.

Commentary

48. Good teaching ensures that children have many opportunities to develop their manipulative skills and co-ordination by using pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. They pour water into containers, build models in the sand tray, assemble jigsaws and construction toys and use scissors correctly. Children take part in more energetic activities both indoors and out of doors. During a physical education lesson in the hall, for instance, nursery children moved carefully across a bench, jumped off a box, wove their way through cones and jumped across a series of hoops. The teacher asked several children to demonstrate good practice to reinforce learning. Children followed instructions well when asked to clap or swing their arms during the warm-up. Children achieve well and their physical development is in line with that expected nationally by the end of the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use an extensive range of materials, colours and textures.
- They sing simple rhymes and songs from memory.

Commentary

49. Good teaching helps children to develop their creative skills well. Children use a wide variety of paints, paper, card, fabrics and construction materials. They use felt and matchsticks, for instance, when creating hedgehogs and produce large sunflowers by combining yellow handprints and brown seeds. They create a variety of patterns on the computer by combining different shapes. In one lesson in reception, children dipped leaves in paint to print an attractive picture. Children sing a variety of nursery rhymes and songs from memory and enjoy playing percussion instruments such as drums and tambourines. Children achieve well and their artistic and musical skills are typical for their age by the end of reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall. This is an improvement on the last inspection when English was unsatisfactory in all aspects in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers give appropriate emphasis to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills as they move through the school.
- Teachers help pupils to improve their reading steadily, although the teaching of early and more advanced reading skills could be improved further.
- Writing is given sound emphasis in most years.
- Most teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, and it is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. However, the teaching of spelling is inconsistent.
- Assessment is used soundly to ensure work for pupils of different abilities builds carefully on their prior learning.
- The use of ICT within English could be developed further.

Commentary

50. Standards in **speaking and listening** are above average in Year 2 and are in line with the national average in Year 6.
51. Partner work, group discussions and teacher-led activities involving plenty of questioning of pupils, help to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Year 2, for example, developed confidence when talking to others and when answering questions posed by their teacher. They are beginning to express opinions on matters that concern them. Few pupils, however, have an extensive vocabulary. This was demonstrated, for example, when pupils in Year 4 had limited success in explaining words used in Tudor times. By Year 6, however, pupils talk and listen confidently in a wide variety of situations and sometimes engage in useful discussions on a range of issues.
52. Standards in **reading** are in line with the national average in Years 2 and 6.
53. The school places a sound emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills. Teachers keep accurate records of pupils' progress over time. As a result, by Year 2 most pupils read simple texts accurately and with understanding. However, younger pupils are involved in too much drawing and colouring when learning letters and sounds, and some tasks given to more able pupils to support their reading are too easy for them. By Year 6, most pupils read confidently, and happily share their views about their favourite books, characters and authors. Teacher-led guided reading sessions enable pupils to practise their skills well, as in Year 3 when pupils read a play script together. Most parents support their children well by hearing them read regularly at home. As a result, many pupils read fluently and with understanding and

expression by Year 6. They know how to use the library, but have too few opportunities to research information from books to support their learning. Few older pupils are able to infer and deduce from passages they have read, however, and most have little knowledge of how to scan text to locate information quickly.

54. Pupils' standards in **writing** are above average by the end of Year 2, and are in line with the national average in Year 6.
55. Pupils write for an increasingly wide range of purposes and different audiences as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils write instructions, such as *How to make a book*, in a logical sequence. They re-tell well-known stories in their own words. By Year 6, pupils write in a variety of styles including letters, instructions, poems, diaries and newspaper reports. They draft stories using more complex grammatical sentences with appropriate paragraphs and punctuation, written in a fluent, joined and legible script. They are beginning to write more widely in other subjects such as history to develop their literacy skills. Pupils' writing is not yet lively enough, however, their vocabulary is limited, and there are too few examples of extended stories.
56. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils to achieve well. In the two lessons observed, teachers' subject knowledge was secure, the lessons were appropriately challenging for all pupils, and teachers' probing questions helped develop pupils' understanding. Teachers gave pupils much encouragement, while pupils, in return, showed positive attitudes to their work. In Years 3 to 6, while teaching is satisfactory overall, some weaker features prevent pupils from making the best possible progress. Some introductions, for example, are too long, restricting the time for pupils to consolidate their learning and some worksheets do not help pupils to develop their understanding. Some teachers devote much more time to teaching spelling than others do, and approaches are inconsistent. As a result, pupils do not develop consistent strategies for spelling accurately.
57. Arrangements for checking pupils' attainment are satisfactory. Teachers record progress over time and are starting to assess the National Curriculum levels reached in pupils' work. However, there is no portfolio of moderated work to help them carry this out accurately and consistently. Pupils do not yet have individual targets to help them to understand how they can improve their work and to give them an incentive to succeed.
58. Although ICT is sometimes used well, for instance when pupils in Year 2 *click and drag* sentences to identify the characters in *Little Red Riding Hood*, older pupils do not use computers enough to draft and re-draft their stories and to support their learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Pupils are beginning to write more widely in order to develop their literacy skills in other subjects such as history and science. Year 6 pupils, for instance, prepared suitable questions to ask a visiting speaker, while those in Year 5 analysed the results of their science investigations well and wrote sensible conclusions. The approach to developing literacy skills across the curriculum is not systematic enough, however, and some opportunities to widen pupils' vocabulary and for them to write extended passages are being missed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**. This is similar to provision at the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not achieve high enough standards by Year 6.
- The learning of basic number skills has not been given a high enough priority.

- The quality of teaching has improved recently and this is beginning to affect pupil's attainment.
- Assessment procedures are not always used enough to plan tasks that meet the needs of all pupils effectively on a day to day basis.
- High expectations of behaviour, very good relationships, and positive intervention strategies are having a good impact on pupils' attitudes to learning.

Commentary

60. Standards are in line with the national average by the end of Year 2 and pupil's achievement is satisfactory. Standards are below the national average by Year 6 and need to improve. A significant number of older pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is mainly because pupils do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. Many pupils in Years 4 to 6 do not have sufficient quick recall and mental agility with basic number facts and do not realise the importance of these skills. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to other pupils due to the good support they receive.
61. Although standards have fallen since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has improved recently. Currently, teaching is good and this is having an impact on standards, which are improving. Appropriate opportunities are now given to improve pupils' recall of number facts, and pupils' mental mathematics skills are beginning to improve. Teachers are confident in using the National Numeracy Strategy. In most lessons, learning is effective because pupils are given a high level of encouragement by staff. Tasks, which support the direct teaching of concepts well, are interesting and engage pupils. Frequently, pupils are provided with different activities related to their ability. Occasionally, however, assessment is not used effectively enough to ensure that all pupils are challenged or supported appropriately.
62. Teachers have very good relationships with children and this has a positive impact on pupils' enthusiasm and desire to learn. There is a high expectation of good behaviour and pupils respond well. A good emphasis is placed on pupils working together and this helps them to share ideas and to learn effectively. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are improving as a result.
63. The co-ordinator is new to the post. He has initiated and has begun to implement an effective action plan. As a result, teachers' planning is more clearly focused on the specific objectives within lessons and pupils know what they are expected to learn. The action plan correctly identifies the need for rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and greater emphasis on assessment. The intention is to track pupils' progress more carefully and to target intervention programmes so that all pupils achieve well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum. Appropriate use is made of number lines in history, for example, and of measuring skills in science and in design and technology. Data handling skills are developed successfully using ICT resources.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because they conduct many practical investigations.
- The new scheme of work ensures that pupils learn in a logical order.
- Some teachers are beginning to make good use of ICT resources; but others do not use computer programs sufficiently to assist teaching and learning.

Commentary

65. Standards in science are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve well. Standards in Year 6 are broadly in line with the national average and pupils are currently achieving well. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection when standards in Year 6 were well below the national average. Teaching has improved and the scheme of work, introduced since the last inspection, ensures continuity and progression in pupils' learning. As a result, pupils have better investigative skills. Pupils now compare evidence well and draw sound conclusions from their investigations. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants and make good progress as a result.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make good progress because there is a strong emphasis on conducting their own practical investigations. In a good lesson in Year 2, for example, pupils examined a number of faulty electrical circuits enthusiastically. They analysed why the circuit would not work, predicted what would happen if they moved a wire or changed the bulb, and then tested their predictions. Pupils observe the growth of a sunflower over several weeks and examine the properties of different materials that can be bent or stretched. Teachers do not use computer programs sufficiently, however, to assist teaching and learning.
67. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6. There is a good emphasis on pupils carrying out their own practical and investigative work and, as a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are currently making good progress. This is a good improvement on last year's Year 6, where poor behaviour limited the effectiveness of investigative work, resulting in low standards. In a good lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils planned their own investigations to test the rate of evaporation of a variety of liquids. They discussed what evidence to collect and recorded their predictions of what might happen. They were careful to conduct a fair test and used pipettes to measure the same amount of each liquid. Pupils worked enthusiastically, were well behaved and achieved well.
68. In Year 6, good use of modern technology was made to investigate how micro-organisms cause decay. The teacher set up a digital camera and projector to show images of decaying berries on the screen. He then showed a time-lapse video clip of a decaying strawberry. The recording of pupils' observations was well matched to their individual needs. Very good use was made of worksheets already prepared on the computers so pupils with special educational needs could record their observations easily.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and supportive and this is having a positive impact on the provision.
- Pupils and adults are using computers with growing confidence.
- The good scheme of work ensures pupils learn skills in a logical order.
- Assessment is too informal to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' individual needs.

Commentary

69. Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and in Year 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below those expected and the provision was unsatisfactory. The recent improvement is due to a growing confidence on the part of both adults and pupils to use

appropriate technology resources in a variety of ways. The school has purchased a flexible range of resources, including a digital camera and projector and portable laptop computers, and is continuing to expand its facilities to improve provision further.

70. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching methods are effective. Clear explanations enable pupils to learn new skills. Good use of the digital projector and white board enables teachers to show pupils clearly the techniques they need to adopt to be successful. There is a good balance of time between direct teaching and *hands-on* activities, so pupils have sufficient opportunities to work on projects and achieve for themselves. Resources are generally sufficient for individual pupils or small groups to work independently when using the class-based computers and portable machines. However, there is only a limited number of computers in the designated computer area, and if these are the only available resources for a lesson, not enough pupils can participate and learning is not maximised.
71. Lesson planning is now good. It is based on local and national guidance and ensures coverage of all aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and is supporting staff effectively. His involvement in local projects helps him to upgrade his knowledge and understanding, and the school benefits from being involved in local initiatives.
72. Assessment of pupils' ICT skills is too informal. The co-ordinator is aware that this needs to be addressed. Currently, there is insufficient information about individual pupils' knowledge and understanding to enable teachers to plan work that closely matches pupils' individual needs. As the provision continues to improve, this will become increasingly important to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. The use of ICT skills across the curriculum is satisfactory, overall, and is developing rapidly. Younger pupils, for example, enjoy using a microscope that connects to a computer screen to look carefully at objects they are studying in science. There are very good connections between art and design and ICT when pupils experiment with similar techniques using different media to achieve their results. The Internet is used effectively to undertake research in a number of subjects. Older pupils were fascinated by the time-lapse photography of a strawberry decaying. They enjoy using a camcorder to make video recordings of the work they have undertaken. The opportunity to act as presenter and the need to organise the material in a logical order support the development of both language and thinking skills. Pupils learn about lifestyles in other countries by communicating with e-mail pals around the world. There is room for further development, however. In English, for example, older pupils do not use computers enough to draft and re-draft their stories. In science, some teachers make good use of ICT resources, but others do not use computer programs enough to support teaching and learning. In music, little use is made of computers to assist with musical composition or to carry out research on composers and instruments.

HUMANITIES

Three lessons were seen in geography. Only one lesson was seen in each of history and religious education, but inspectors looked at samples of pupil's work and teachers' planning, and spoke to pupils about their work.

Geography and History

Provision in geography has improved since the last inspection, and, along with history, is now **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning indicates that both subjects are covered within the curriculum, but that some areas receive too little emphasis.
- A range of visits and visitors helps to bring both subjects alive for pupils.
- The quality of teaching in geography is satisfactory overall, but there was also some unsatisfactory teaching.
- Co-ordination of both subjects could be developed further.
- There are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school.

Commentary

74. Standards in geography and history are in line with national expectations throughout the school, and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in geography are higher than at the time of the last inspection because the subject is now given more emphasis. The school's planning enables pupils to develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding in both subjects as they move through the school. However, the development of mapping skills in geography and the use of enquiry skills in history are given too little emphasis. In addition, not enough use is being made of ICT resources to assist teaching and learning.
75. Visits to contrasting locations such as Southport and Blackpool, and interesting visitors, such as the lady who shared her wartime experiences with pupils, help to bring these subjects alive.
76. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching and learning, except in geography in Years 3 to 6, where teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, teaching in geography within the school ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching was very good, ICT was used very well, the pace was brisk, the teacher's subject knowledge was secure and behaviour control strategies were effective. These features ensured that pupils were interested and involved and achieved very well. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, tasks were not explained clearly, behaviour control strategies were not always effective and pupils carried out unnecessary colouring, which did not extend their understanding. As a result, pupils made little progress.
77. The subject co-ordinators for geography and history do not have regular opportunities to monitor teaching or pupils' work and this impairs their effectiveness to evaluate what works well and what requires further development. Teachers do not assess and record the development of skills, knowledge and understanding systematically as pupils move through the school. As a result, work is not matched closely enough to pupils' different abilities and pupils rarely attain high standards because the work does not challenge them sufficiently.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils study themes illustrated from Christianity and five other major world religions in line with the recommendations in the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus.
- Teachers do not check pupils' standards sufficiently and little use is made of assessments to set appropriate work.

Commentary

78. Only one religious education lesson was observed during the inspection. While teaching in this lesson was good, it was not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. An examination of teachers' planning and pupils' books, however, confirmed that work throughout the school covers the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
79. Standards are in line with expectations in the local syllabus in all year groups, as at the time of the last inspection. Teachers do not, however, check the standards of pupils' work rigorously enough, and do not use assessment data to set work that is appropriate to pupils' individual needs. Younger pupils study the concepts of deity and worship in relation to Christianity and two other religions (usually Judaism and Hinduism). Concepts such as belonging to a loving family are well promoted in pupils' early years, together with comparisons between major festivals such as Christmas and Divali. Older pupils cover topics such as leaders and sacred books with reference to Christianity and five other major world faiths. In a lesson in Year 5, for instance, good use was made of role-play to illustrate prayer rituals when studying the Five Pillars of Islam. Pupils understand some of the main festivals and beliefs of the major world faiths at a level appropriate for their age, and explore similarities and differences between them. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One lesson was seen in art and design, and one in design and technology. Evidence was also taken from discussions with teachers and pupils, and displays of pupils' work. Two lessons were seen in each of music and physical education.

Art and design and design and technology

Provision in art and design and in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A satisfactory scheme of work, following national guidance, has been adopted in both subjects.
- There is insufficient guidance for teachers on how to develop skills systematically over time.
- Good links between art and design and ICT enable pupils to compare different techniques.
- Assessment is too informal and does not enable teachers to plan for pupils' individual needs.

Commentary

80. Standards in design and technology are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and in Year 6, and achievement is sound. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in art and design. The quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. New schemes of work have recently been adopted that indicate units of work to be undertaken during the coming year. The guidance, however, does not yet include information for teachers about the expected progression and development of pupils' skills as they move through the school. In addition, there are no formal assessment procedures. These two areas need further development if pupils' are to achieve satisfactorily.
81. Links between art and design and ICT are well developed. Pupils in Year 2, for example, look at the work of Jackson Pollock and develop their own ideas using both computer tools, and paint and crayon, to create their own interpretations of *Yellow Islands*. Pupils in Year 4 study the work of Seurat and use ICT resources and paint to produce pictures in a similar style made up from numerous dots. Pupils in Year 5 re-create *The Snail* by Matisse and then undertake their own imaginative creations such as a sea serpent and a raging rhino.

82. In design and technology, pupils in Year 6 investigate the properties of different materials to consider how appropriate they are for making shelters. They test the strength of the shelters with weights and their sensitivity to light by using a computer control device. Throughout the school, pupils design items to a specific brief before they assemble them and then evaluate their final products. Younger pupils enjoyed making Joseph's multicoloured coat and designing a fruit salad. Older pupils investigate different packaging and design money carriers. Higher-attaining pupils evaluate their products with an appropriate emphasis on the improvements that they would make if they repeated the task.
83. Both subjects have co-ordinators, but as neither subject is currently a priority in the school's improvement plan, the co-ordinators have been given little opportunity to make an impact on the provision.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject co-ordinator's expertise is used well by teaching music to all the pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- A new scheme of work enhances the quality of teaching and learning.
- Good use is made of a variety of music during lessons across the curriculum.
- The quality of singing is good, and there are good efforts to improve the pupils' understanding of dynamics during hymn practices.
- There are currently no opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument.

Commentary

84. Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and pupils achieve well. Only two music lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Insufficient teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on teaching, learning and attainment in Years 3 to 6. The good expertise of the subject co-ordinator is used effectively by teaching all the children in Years 1 and 2. In a well-taught lesson with a mixed-age group from Years 1 and 2, pupils achieved well when clapping out a steady beat and when copying different rhythms. They composed their own rhythmic patterns and performed these using a range of percussion instruments. Good use was made of the recorded music in the new scheme of work. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when there was no scheme of work to ensure progression in teaching throughout the school. In a good lesson in Year 3, pupils correctly named a variety of instruments, investigated the sounds they made, and recorded these different sounds using their own symbols.
85. Pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to a wide range of music. Good use is made of music during lessons to create atmosphere and to indicate times for different activities. A range of music is played as pupils enter and leave school assemblies and opportunities are sometimes taken to talk about the composer and the style of music. Pupils sing a variety of modern hymns and songs during school assemblies. They sing tunefully, and are taught to make a good contrast in the dynamics where the words indicate loud and quiet sections. They sing *Ten Green Bottles* and *Green Glass* together effectively as a two-part song and successfully stick to their separate parts. Pupils with special educational needs join in confidently and enjoy their music making.
86. Pupils in the school choir enjoy practising for fundraising and charity performances, and all pupils join in the carol service at the local parish church at Christmas. Visiting musicians introduce different instruments to pupils, but there are currently no opportunities for pupils to

receive instrumental tuition. The school has a good range of recorded music and percussion instruments. Little use, however, is made of computers to assist with musical composition or to carry out research about composers and instruments.

Physical education

Provision for physical education (PE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is very good, with rigorous plans for the subject's further development.
- Teaching is good leading to high standards in Year 6.
- Extra-curricular events and a variety of community links make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

87. The subject is led very effectively. The new co-ordinator has very good expertise and provides a very good role model to others because he teaches the subject well. There are clear targets for the subject's continued development, including a *Health Week* that will effectively link PE with other subjects. The school has recently received the Activemark Gold Award which gives teachers an incentive and suitable guidance to raise standards further. The quality of leadership ensures that PE has a high profile in the work of the school and that all areas are taught well. A recently formed Sports Council, established by the co-ordinator but yet to meet, will give pupils a greater say in future developments in the subject.
88. Teaching and learning were good in both the lessons observed. Pupils in Year 1 learned to throw with increasing accuracy because the teacher placed good emphasis on correct techniques to help them gain confidence and gave them much encouragement to succeed. Pupils in Year 5 developed their skills and their understanding of the tactics of netball to improve their performance. In both lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge was secure, the pace was brisk, good work demonstrated by pupils was shared with others, and the teachers' expectations were high. These good qualities ensure that pupils achieve well and standards are above national expectations by Year 6.
89. A large variety of sports clubs, some of which are attended by younger pupils in Years 1 and 2, extend pupils' learning outside lesson times. Popular and well-attended activities include football, rugby, gymnastics, dance, keep fit and cricket. Good community links, such as those with Bolton Wanderers Football Club and the Bobby Charlton Summer School, help to ensure that pupils' skills are reinforced and that PE is given a high profile.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Class discussion times are used satisfactorily to promote health, drugs and sex education.

Commentary

90. Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work, but discussions with pupils and staff provided sufficient evidence of an appropriate personal, social and health education programme. Teachers use class discussion times to encourage pupils to talk about working and living together. Pupils learn about the use and misuse of drugs and the importance of a

balanced diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. Sex education is taught according to agreed approaches.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).