

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **S. EDWARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Darwen, Blackburn

LEA area: Blackburn

Unique reference number: 119666

Headteacher: Mrs A Grundy

Lead inspector: Mrs Heather Evans

Dates of inspection: 1 - 3 December 2003

Inspection number: 257643

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	249
School address:	Blackburn Road Darwen Blackburn Lancashire
Postcode:	BB3 0AA
Telephone number:	(01254) 701616
Fax number:	(01254) 761805
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Margaret Leatham
Date of previous inspection:	06.03.2000

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized primary school in Darwen near Blackburn. Whilst some pupils live in privately owned houses many live in housing association properties in and around the parish of the Sacred Heart and Saint Edward's. There are 249 pupils on roll. Almost ten per cent of these pupils claim their entitlement to free school meals, which is about average. Parents of some other pupils who would qualify choose not to claim their entitlement. There are 27 pupils with identified special educational needs, which is also about average. Of these, an above average number, six, have a formal Statement of Special Educational Need. A few of the pupils speak a language other than English at home, which is Italian. All of these pupils speak English confidently and work and learn well alongside their friends. There is no nursery and, before entry to school, children's educational experiences vary widely. Indications from the detailed assessment procedures after starting school are that the overall attainment on entry is below that of children of the same age nationally. This is particularly true in language and communication skills, the understanding of mathematics and in the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21374	Heather Evans	Lead inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education English as an additional language
8992	Julian Vischer	Lay inspector	
30559	Jennifer Taylor	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Foundation stage

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	
Standards achieved in areas of learning, and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>35</b>

# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school with many very good features.** Standards are good and most pupils achieve well and make good progress especially in English, mathematics, and science. Teaching is good overall and very good in mathematics and science. As a result, pupils learn well and in mathematics and science they learn very well. The school is at the heart of the parish community and it is led and managed very well by a team of people committed to seeking ways of finding excellence. Finances are managed very well and the school provides very good value for money.

### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching, and, as a result, learning are predominantly good.
- The curriculum is good and is supported and maintained by very good assessment procedures.
- The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and the senior staff are very good and the school is very well governed.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour is good; together, these ensure good achievement.
- The accommodation is stretched to the limit and inhibits the aspirations of the headteacher and the governing body to improve the library area and for providing better facilities for the children in the Reception classes.

Since the previous inspection in 2001 the school has addressed all of the identified weaknesses very successfully and has made very good improvement. Standards have risen and the quality of teaching has been improved.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**The achievement of children and pupils across the school is good.** Most children are well-placed to attain all of the expected learning goals by the end of the Reception class. Overall they make very good progress in the Reception classes and achieve well. Pupils' standards and levels of achievement are also good in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Standards attained in English in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 in 2003 were close to the national average and in reading they were like those in similar schools. Standards in mathematics were below the national average and, when compared to similar schools, as in writing, they were below average. Most of the pupils in Years 2 and 6 are already on course to exceed national expectations in English mathematics and science by the end of the school year. When the test scores in 2003 are compared with the attainment of that group of pupils when they were in Year 2 there had been improvement that is well above that of pupils in similar schools. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) overall are in line with expectations. In history, geography and art and design attainment is above the expected level across the school as it is in physical education at the end of Year 6.

**Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils like school and respect the established values. They arrive early, some coming to the breakfast club, and are eager to learn. Pupils are rarely late and most have very positive attitudes to school. In lessons and around the playing spaces pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their respect for what the school is offering them are obvious in lessons and in the way they tell of learning experiences, residential visits and

competitions with other schools. Pupils' good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life is enriched by the variety opportunities to celebrate with artists working in school, sporting events and singing and acting in special productions for parents. These performances are highly regarded by the community. These strong elements play an essential part in achieving the harmonious and well-balanced atmosphere that permeates this school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education including teaching, learning, curriculum provision and the care and guidance of children is good.** The quality of teaching is good overall and much is very good because the teachers are secure in their understanding of the National Curriculum and about their pupils' prior knowledge. As a result lessons are well planned and interesting and so most pupils learn readily and achieve well. Most achieve the step-by-step targets set for them and recognise how well they are doing. The curriculum is structured to cover all of the required subjects, often in such a way that new learning is linked to work covered earlier and this reinforces facts and processes very well. The care and guidance provided for all children by the adults working in school are good. Parents value the work of the school and most are actively involved in their children's learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership, management and governance of the school are very good.** The headteacher leads the school very effectively and has a strong vision for the school's future. Her dedication and inspiration have provided excellent and clear direction for the teaching and support staff as well as for the governing body. The deputy headteacher is a strong member of the senior management team that is dedicated to working for the continuing good of the school and its pupils. The decisions made by governors are managed very well and follow the priorities set out in the clear and relevant school improvement plan. Subject leaders are very effective when monitoring the work of their colleagues in planning, teaching and assessment. They use the various talents of the support staff very well. Everyone shares fully in the process of driving up standards across the curriculum.

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

In conversations, at the meeting with parents and in the replies in questionnaires, most of the parents expressed a good level of satisfaction about the school. A few parents would welcome more personalised information in the annual written reports. The inspection team considers that, although they meet requirements, the style of the reports could be improved. The school is ready to review the present style of the annual reports. Most pupils have very positive views of the good things that the school offers them. Some would like longer playtimes but most say that they like their school just the way it is.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

This is a good school with no major weaknesses. A minor area for improvement is that the governors and headteacher should:

- Investigate all possible ways of improving the accommodation so as to enable the provision of a covered playing area for children in the Reception classes and to develop enhanced library facilities.

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

## **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

The standards attained in English in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 in 2003 were close to the national average and in reading they were like those in similar schools. Standards in mathematics were below the national average and, when compared to similar schools, as in writing, they were below average. By the end of Year 6 in 2003 standards were above national averages in English and were well above average in mathematics and science. When compared with the attainment of that group of pupils when they were in Year 2 there had been improvement that was well above that of pupils in similar schools. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with expectations. In history, and geography and art and design are above the expected level as they are in physical education at the end of Year 6. In all other subjects standards are in line with the expected level.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the tests in English, in 2003 were above average by the end of Year 6 and in mathematics and science they were well above average.
- During the inspection, evidence showed that in English, mathematics and science in both Years 2 and 6 pupils are on course to achieve standards above the expected levels.
- Attainment levels in history and geography exceed those usually found by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' achievements in art and design across the school and in physical education by the end of Year 6 are good and exceed national expectations.

## Commentary

1. Children enter the Reception class with attainments that have been assessed as being below those expected for children of the same age nationally. There has been a review of practice in this part of the school since the last inspection and all of the systems in place including the curriculum have been significantly improved. From the below average level of attainment on entry, children in the Reception classes now make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the Reception classes, many achieve all of the expected learning goals although a few have some delay in language and communication skills. Rectifying this is an important part of the work of the teachers of pupils in Year 1. The changes and improvements since the last inspection are proving to be successful. Most of the children in the present Reception classes are well placed to achieve all of the expected learning goals before they move into Year 1. Children join the school from almost a dozen different pre-school providers. The fluctuation of attainment levels on entry and the variation in the numbers of pupils with learning difficulties means that the stringent assessment procedures used are acted upon in a sensitive way that meets the needs of every individual.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.1 (15.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.1 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.9 (16.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (26.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.5 (27.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.3 (29.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are on course to exceed the expected standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are making good progress and many are already achieving the standards expected by the end of Year 4. These pupils are making especially good progress in reading and writing and all of the new initiatives to extend opportunities for extended writing are working well. In lessons the challenge for pupils of all attainment levels is great. Those capable of working at a higher level are supported very well and are encouraged to succeed. In these classes the lower attaining pupils achieve their individual targets because of the carefully modified work and the dedication of the skilled teaching team with the well-organised support staff.
3. By the end of Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve standards that are above the expected levels for average attaining and above average attaining pupils. At this early part of the school year most pupils are already working at the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science. The average attaining pupils and those capable of higher attainment are on course to exceed the national expectations by the end of the year. To achieve these standards pupils learn very well and make good progress because of the industry and commitment of all of the teachers. In the present Year 6 the above average number of pupils with special educational needs, who do well in lessons, may have an adverse effect on the overall test results. In other subjects pupils' skills and achievements in reading and writing and in mathematics help to lift levels to higher than expected levels. A strength of the school is the way in which pupils of all backgrounds and attainment levels are very well supported in lessons. Pupils are helped to learn particularly well by being constantly encouraged to extend their learning by pursuing their own interests through independent research and personal study. Across the school achievement is good.
4. In mathematics pupils learn very well and they use their knowledge and understanding of number without hesitation. They manipulate numbers using multiplication and division, confident that their understanding of the rules of mathematics will help them to find the easiest way of solving a problem. Pupils endeavour to reach an acceptable solution as quickly as they can, always trying to compete with their friends and trying to beat their own previous best effort.
5. Standards in science are also above the national average because the work to help them to be scientists and learn through investigation is so well organised. Pupils' skills and confidence in planning, conducting and recording the findings of investigations were seen to particularly good effect in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6. Pupils show good scientific knowledge by the end of Year 6. Across the school the completed individual and independent work in books, as well as that that displayed in classrooms, shows good levels of presentation and achievement in all of the areas of the curriculum for science.
6. Work in information and communication technology (ICT) is interesting and challenging, as a direct result of the improved facilities. Since the last inspection, the increased skills of the teachers have enabled pupils to make good progress. The standards of pupils in all classes are now in line with the expected level. Some pupils who have computers at home have skills that are better than those regularly found in primary schools. These pupils are reaching Level 3 by the end of Year 2 and some in Year 6 are working within Level 5. All of the pupils are confident when using computers for word-processing, to enhance work in English, history and geography. This newly developed work is helping them to select from a bank of skills to plan, organise and review data in science and mathematics.
7. Standards in art and design, history and geography by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above those normally found in most schools. There is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement for standards at the end of Year 2 in physical education but the small amount seen was good. Inspection evidence indicates that standards achieved are above expectations by the end of Year 6. In all other subjects the available evidence indicates that pupils' achievement is at least in line with the expected levels. In design and

technology examples of completed work indicated that links with science and mathematics were used well in designing and refining work.

8. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN), and the few pupils who speak a language other than English, achieve well. Progress is measured against the targets set in pupils' individual education plans and as part of the school's assessment procedures for all pupils. In addition the systematic process for tracking the progress of individual pupils with special educational need is even more detailed than for other pupils. Individual education plans are reviewed each term and parents and pupils are invited to participate. Targets are clearly stated and measurable. Teachers adapt work to match the needs of lower attaining pupils as well as for those capable of higher attainment. There is a clear link between the targets specified in individual educational plans and lesson planning. Teachers liaise closely with learning support staff. Some pupils are withdrawn for tuition in basic skills by specialist teachers and learning support assistants. There is a good support system for the few pupils who are learning English as an additional language. As they are all fluent in English they have only a small amount of special teaching but their individual progress is carefully checked as part of the school's normal tracking process.

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

Attitudes are very good and behaviour is good. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very interested in school life and the range of activities provided and they have very good relationships with others.
- Pupils are very enterprising and take responsibility very well.
- Pupils work hard at the tasks that are set them; these are tailored well to their abilities.
- The school stimulates in pupils a strong desire to learn.
- Pupils learn to respect the feelings and values of others very well; they have a very good understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community.
- Opportunities to learn about other cultures and multicultural Britain are more limited but this work is being developed and the school is starting to involve parents.

### **Commentary**

9. From their earliest time in school all of the children are involved fully in the day-to-day events. The children in the Reception classes are helped to develop fully as responsible individuals. They are all on course to achieve the expected learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the present school year. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm for school life is very pronounced. Their keenness in fulfilling the many duties they have around the school is exemplary. Prefects in Year 6 are proud of their roles in befriending others and supervising behaviour in the playground. They work hard to ensure that others have a safe environment to play in. This in turn takes the pressure off the staff especially in 'wet play' when prefects' duties include helping with small groups in the younger classes. School council representatives are justifiably proud of their active forum, which has succeeded in initiating various useful changes to school life. Pupils feel a secure sense of ownership of the school and this has a very positive impact on their attitudes in classroom and in the efforts that they put into their work.
10. Although behaviour is judged to be good overall, behaviour in the classroom is most frequently very good. Pupils often show a determination to pursue work in silence and concentration when set a demanding task. They have confidence that work that is set for them matches their abilities well. This reflects how the school encourages a desire to learn so very well. It is in the playground and the dining hall that behaviour sometimes slips below the very high standards of that found in the classroom. In the dining hall pupils are sometimes a little careless about others when returning trays or when getting second helpings. Similarly in the playground over-exuberance sometimes leads them to disregard other pupils. These instances reflect the normal behaviour of youngsters growing up and are of small consequence. Pupils state that they feel very free from bullying and any other forms of harassment. They say that the school deals very effectively with any problems that do arise.

11. The school teaches respect for the feelings and values of others very well. In 'circle time' or in assemblies pupils are not shy in expressing feelings or personal experiences in front of others. The school sets high expectations for pupils' conduct through the straightforward and clear behaviour code. Teachers make very good use of the house system to promote both positive attitudes and good behaviour. All staff members are very good role models for pupils. They listen closely and respond well to pupils' concerns. This not only sets the standard for taking on the responsibilities of living in a community but also allows pupils to be responsible for their own actions. Spiritual awareness is cultivated well through the Catholic tradition of the school. There is daily prayer, and regular moments of reflection are built into lessons. Pupils learn well about their own culture and traditions through this and through visits to local amenities and shared work with visitors who have special talents. The school provides many opportunities to learn about art and music from other cultures. Pupils are very familiar with traditions from past times such as Ancient Egypt and know about counting and building systems from other than Western traditions. Studies in geography help them to compare life styles in other countries. Opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding about other faiths and cultures in multicultural Britain are being systematically developed. The school is working to involve parents in this increasingly important work of the school.

**Attendance**

12. Attendance levels are good and are above the national average. The punctuality of pupils is very good. The school operates an annual attendance award scheme and encourages good attendance. As a result attendance figures are consistently good. This reflects the effort and support made by parents and carers to make sure their children attend on time. The introduction of the now thriving breakfast club also helps to encourage pupils to arrive early and their punctuality is very good. At the start of day pupils do not tarry but arrive in lessons on time and ready for work. There have been no exclusions for at least the past five years.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.7 %)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

**Exclusions**

There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

This is a good school with many very good features. The quality of education is good overall and the quality of teaching is predominantly good with much judged to be very good. Curricular provision is good and is enriched by an interesting range of opportunities for reinforcing work learned in class and in the community. The school serves the community well.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is predominantly good across all phases. The quality of teaching in mathematics, science and in work with pupils with special educational needs is very good. As a result, pupils learn well and make clear and measurable gains in their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of work that they study. There has been good overall improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and have very good relationships with the pupils.
- Teachers have realistic expectations that are increasingly high and that challenge pupils' thinking; lessons are organised well and work is well matched to pupils' needs and to their earlier learning; the pace of lessons is good and good use is made of time.
- The planning is thorough, detailed and precise; teachers select from a good range of methods.
- The strategies for assessment are very effective; these are incorporated into longer and short-term planning and information gathered is used very well.
- The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are good and are working well

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (9%)	11 (31%)	19 (54%)	2 (6%)	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.*

13. The quality of teaching is predominantly good in all classes and much is very good. In all lessons teachers' knowledge of the subjects taught is secure and the objectives set are clearly explained to pupils. Whenever possible teachers link their expectations to earlier work or to practical experiences that pupils remember. This is a particular strength of work in mathematics and science, which is always linked to investigations and practical experiences. Lessons are well organised and teachers' planning is thorough. The methods chosen and the available resources are always suitable. Teachers are at pains to engage pupils' interest at the start of lessons; work is interesting and the pace of learning is brisk. Challenging work is evident in all classes and, as a result of the very positive relationships, there is a shared sense of delight and achievement in learning. Very occasionally teachers spend too long in the introduction of lessons and pupils do not have sufficient time to complete the intended tasks. The quality of teaching is maintained at a consistently high level across the school.
14. Subject leaders offer very good support for colleagues and manage their work very well. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress, attainment and achievement are very good. All teachers follow the agreed marking policy well as an important strand of the shared assessment procedures. Teachers and subject leaders together make very good use of all of the information gathered. The systems in place provide a clear focus for the analysis of strengths and weaknesses and for setting relevant, measurable targets for improvement. As a result, work is well matched to the abilities of all of the pupils. Since the last inspection assessment and its use to promote work matched to pupils' ability has improved in leaps and bounds. The success of this work is one of the reasons for the improved and sustained gains in pupils' standards of achievement.

15. The teaching of pupils with SEN is very good. Teachers all use their copies of recent individual education plans very well so that the stated targets can be incorporated into daily lesson plans. Pupils with learning difficulties are fully included in all classroom activities although some pupils are withdrawn for short periods of tuition in the basic skills of reading and mathematics. The role of the support assistant within a lesson is carefully planned and these staff members make a very good contribution to the teaching team. Assessment and tracking procedures for pupils identified as having difficulties in learning are very good and are used well to ascertain the rate and levels of achievements. Teachers are all very supportive of the few pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Suitably challenging work is made available in all lessons for those pupils with special abilities or talents to extend their learning and help them to achieve at higher than expected levels.
16. The use of the trained support staff in lessons is invaluable in the effort to increase the rate of learning. Their skilled intervention when pupils experience any difficulties enables lessons to move at a brisk pace where everyone builds well on the sense of success. Similarly, when they work with the pupils capable of higher attainment, their skills and initiative enable imaginative and innovative experiences to be shared. The support, that enables pupils who have barriers to learning to achieve alongside their friends in lessons, will not be available to them in tests. In these circumstances, for this group of pupils, attaining at the same level as the average and above average attaining pupils will prove difficult. The very well developed partnership between the teachers and the support staff makes a significant contribution to the positive ethos of the school and to the good working atmosphere in all classes. Homework is set at suitable levels each week with time allowed to complete it. During the inspection the review of marked work indicated that homework in its different forms was proving to be a positive aid to learning.

## **The curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is good overall with some very good features and it meets the needs of all pupils. The range and quality of learning and enrichment experiences for all pupils are very effective. The accommodation, inside and outside, supports effective learning but the school recognises that the cramped space presents difficulties. The quantity and quality of resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures for reviewing the curriculum and taking effective action are good.
- Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are used well.
- There is very good provision for pupils with SEN.
- A wide range of clubs, activities, visits and visitors to school enrich the curriculum very well.
- The accommodation supports all the requirements of a full curriculum but the library and facilities for play in the reception class are too restricted.

### **Commentary**

17. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. It is broad, balanced and relevant, providing a wide range of learning experiences from which all pupils benefit. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is particularly good. Opportunities for teaching pupils about sex education and drugs awareness are built into the overall provision in a sensible manner. The provision for SEN throughout the whole school is good and those pupils learning English as an additional language are supported well. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are being used effectively, and the very good planning and schemes of work for all other subjects ensure that every pupil receives his or her full entitlement. The good use made of literacy and numeracy across other subjects is another very positive and pleasing feature. The effectiveness of the curriculum is monitored regularly and is developed according to the changing needs of the pupils, parents and community.
18. All pupils benefit very well from what the school has to offer including involvement in extra-curricular activities. A dedicated staff and a group of volunteers lead a range of activities including football, netball, cricket, Italian, construction and 'junk' clubs. There are opportunities to visit places of interest, for example, Gawthorpe Hall and an annual residential visit is arranged for older pupils to enable them to experience a wide range of more adventurous activities. There are visitors to school, who share their skills and experience, for example, a willow-weaving craftsman who conducted master classes. Pupils participate in sports and musical activities with pupils from local schools. Pupils from a local special school come to school to share in music lessons and to watch performances. Care is taken to ensure

that any pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for specialist teaching do not miss any part of the curriculum.

19. There are strong links with the community. The school presents musical and drama productions to local residential homes and makes contributions to the festivals and celebrations of the local church. These opportunities successfully contribute to the social development of all pupils. Pupils are prepared well for transition between the phases in the school and for transfer to the receiving secondary school.
20. Teachers use very effective procedures for reviewing and developing the curriculum. Subject co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility very well. The entire staff is committed to improving the provision for all subjects. They provide a whole school perspective for each subject and ensure that knowledge, skills and concepts are developed. Very good progression within subjects is secure through long-term planning. Initiatives that link subjects such as history with independent writing in English are working very well.
21. The provision for pupils with SEN is very good overall. It is very well co-ordinated by an experienced and highly committed teacher. Individual educational plans for pupils with SEN are detailed and are reviewed and updated regularly. Teachers use them very well in their everyday planning. In all lessons the curriculum is adapted carefully and sensitively to enable pupils with special needs to work well alongside their friends. This is achieved with the skilled help of teaching assistants. The co-ordinator, together with the SEN specialist teacher, monitors the effectiveness of planning on a regular basis, setting new targets when required to meet the needs of individual pupils. Children in the Reception class who have been identified as having any difficulties with learning are being assessed and additional and supportive work is planned that is just being introduced.
22. Staffing levels are good. There are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced teachers who with the support assistants make a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The staffing structure ensures that the teaching team is a unified force that works effectively to support pupils' learning. The use of an additional teacher to facilitate smaller groups in English and mathematics in some year groups is proving to be very effective. The building is clean, bright and attractive and every part is used well. The external grounds allow a good range of outdoor activities to take place. Storage space is at a premium and it is difficult to maintain resources and make them easily accessible to all, but teachers manage this well. Small spaces adjacent to classrooms are used imaginatively to support practical activities. Both the computer suite and the small special educational needs room are essential features that are in constant use. The absence of a covered area for play outside the Reception classes creates some problems but the school has allocated funds to remedy this in the near future.
23. The well-maintained and well-stocked library is situated in a busy corridor. It offers too little space for pupils to develop their research skills through independent study or for pupils to be taught library skills in class groups. Some reference books that would usually form part of the library are distributed throughout the school. All subjects are well supported and these resources, which are frequently supplemented by loans from local museum and library services, are used imaginatively to support learning. Many of the pupils state that they prefer to undertake their personal research using ICT and the Internet, as the library is not really a comfortable place to work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The support, advice and guidance they receive based on effective structures and rigorous monitoring are very good. Involvement through seeking and acting on pupils' views is very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures for child protection and health and safety are good.
- Pupils have a very good relationship with one another and with adults.
- Induction arrangements are very good in the Reception class.

## **Commentary**

24. Pupils are well supported by good procedures for child protection and good health and safety procedures. First aid provision is covered well by trained staff. An experienced member of staff leads all aspects of

child protection provision and is respected by all of the other teachers. Detailed and carefully maintained notes are kept as required. The support from the local education authority is good and information from the diocese is helpful. Health and safety monitoring procedures are frequent and are well-organised. Detailed risk assessment routines for daily life and for school trips are fully in place. Levels of supervision in the playground are good because of the practical help of the Year 6 prefects and the sensible use of safe areas called 'buddy bases'.

25. Teachers and support staff assist those pupils with SEN very well. Some pupils benefit from working alongside their peer group but a few are withdrawn from class to follow programmes of work to develop basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Teachers assess and monitor the progress of the SEN pupils very well. In addition to the overall routines, the progress of pupils with learning difficulties is tracked very thoroughly.
26. The general level of support and guidance is very good because of the effectiveness of relationships and because of the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). Both boys and girls are very certain that they have an adult to whom they can turn and in whom they can trust. The PSHE provision is integrated very well into the life of the school and allows pupils to share their concerns and experiences well. This enables staff to know what issues there may be. It also extends the various channels for pupils to receive very good advice and support about bullying. In the playground, for example, the 'buddies' system using pupils from Year 6 offers real support and guidance for younger pupils. The systems to monitor pupils' development in non-academic aspects of school life are very strong and effective. They are every bit as good as those in place for tracking their academic progress. Strengths are easily identified and the points that they need to work on are continually being targeted and addressed.
27. The provision for starting school is very good in the Reception classes where all children are visited at home before their entry to school. There are well-organised procedures for any pupils who join the school in the middle of the academic year. These pupils are allocated a 'buddy' in their class and given time to settle in.
28. Pupils are very positive about the school and their views are clearly heard and responded to very well. Again the very good relationships between staff and pupils contribute to this. It is central to the ethos of the school that pupils' views are listened to and their ideas are valued. This characteristic, in conjunction with the broad range of responsibilities offered to pupils, is one of the main forces behind the strong personal development of pupils in the school, enabling them to mature quickly. It is perhaps one of the keys to the happy atmosphere of the school. The school council is very well-established, meets frequently and pupils feel free to discuss any issue they please. Pupils feel it is their forum. Feedback to classmates is organised well and the process is considered to be valuable by pupils and teachers. Pupils point to diverse areas such as toilet refurbishment, their 'confidential problems' box, and planning and running the fund-raising initiative for the 'Blue Peter' sale, as amongst their achievements.

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

The school has good links with parents. Links with the community and with other schools and colleges are good. Parents have positive views about the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures to deal with concerns and complaints are very good.
- The efforts made by the school to find out about parents' views are very good.
- The procedures for the transfer of pupils between phases and to other schools are good.
- There is good provision of information to parents although some annual reports lack personal information.

### **Commentary**

29. The parents expressed very positive views of the school in the parents' questionnaires although there was only a low return rate. Conversations with other parents during the inspection support their positive responses on how well the school deals with their concerns and complaints. The school's approachability and procedures for dealing with identified issues are very good. They stem principally from the headteacher's conscientious determination to give them priority. Very few parents have any concerns. They are consulted regularly and their views are valued and acted on well. Parents' questionnaires from

the school are an established feature and, in addition, the school holds termly 'forums' where parents are invited to come and discuss their concerns and where their opinions are canvassed about proposed developments. Parents of children in the Reception class are given extra help about how they may help their children at home. This promising new scheme called 'SHARE' is creating innovative ways to get parents involved in the learning process with their children. It is planned to extend this provision to parents across the school over time.

30. Parents are kept well-informed about what is happening in school through the regular newsletters and by the recent end-of-year 'celebration of achievement' newsletter. Parents are well-briefed about their children's progress through the spring and summer conferences, where the turnout is very high. They are kept in close touch throughout the year through the target card system where regular targets for improvement are set and teachers and parents monitor progress towards them. Annual reports on pupils' progress meet statutory requirements. They contain useful descriptive detail of achievement but some are very bland and lack the personal comments that parents would appreciate. Information on what their child is learning is good; parents are provided with termly sheets in addition to the conferences, where curriculum information is explained. Homework is set and marked regularly.
31. Targets agreed by the SEN co-ordinator and the class teacher are shared with parents and in the case of older pupils with the pupils themselves. Parents are invited to attend the termly review of individual education plans and the annual review of statements of special educational need. The systems work well for all pupils whatever their background, personal interests or attainment level.
32. The school has good links with the community. The very successful summer fair is well-established as a local event attracting many outsiders into the school and raising a considerable sum of money. The active parent teachers association is very supportive in this and in other regular events. Pupils visit local elderly people within the parish and sing in church. Teachers use local museum and library loans services well; these facilities provide the school with additional resources to support teaching and learning in history and other subjects.
33. Links with other schools and colleges are good. There are good lines of communication between the nine local primary schools in Darwen. This enhances opportunities for staff training and development. All members of staff benefit from the general pooling of any concerns or issues that they may face. Pupils transferring to the secondary sector mostly go to the local Catholic secondary school with which there are well-established transfer links. Teachers from that school work regularly with pupils in Year 6 throughout the school year. Pupils from a local special school visit every fortnight and pupils' personal development benefits from working alongside other children including some who have multiple and complex disabilities. Pupils benefit from visiting their friends' school twice a term where they can also experience such facilities as the multi-sensory garden. The school participates in many sporting fixtures with other schools. There are close ties with Blackburn College for work experience training and strong links for teacher training with St. Martin's College at Lancaster University.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership, management and governance of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and shows vision and determination. Her management skills are very good and with the support of the deputy headteacher have had a positive impact on the leadership of all aspects and subjects across the school. Governance is very good. The governors have worked hard to develop their skills and understanding to a very high level.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has excellent vision and aspirations for all aspects of the school's development.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher, deputy head and key staff are very good.
- The role of the governing body is very strong in all aspects of governance.
- All aspects of strategic planning are very good and have contributed to the very high levels of improvement in standards and all aspects of provision.
- The school's assessment, monitoring, tracking systems and their use are excellent.
- The financial planning and best value principles are very effective.



## **Commentary**

34. There has been a very good level of improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. There is an exceedingly clear commitment by the headteacher, governors and all of the staff to the continuous improvement that drives the school forward. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction. Together with the very conscientious and effective deputy headteacher she motivates teachers and teaching assistants very effectively to work in teams. Initiatives are rigorously kept on course and are not allowed to drift or lose impact. The senior management team and subject leaders ensure that agreed strategies for teaching and learning are followed. The ensuing successes in the quality of teaching and learning and their effect on raising standards are regularly reported to parents and governors.

35. Clear goals are set for and shared with teachers and pupils; the headteacher has extremely high expectations of herself, the staff and the pupils. Performance management is very securely rooted in the governance and management of the school. The governors set measurable goals for the headteacher who, in turn, sets equally relevant and measurable goals for the rest of the staff. While recognising the importance of high academic standards, the headteacher, governors and staff place an equally strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. They ensure that all pupils, regardless of attainment on entry to school, are fully included in everything that the school offers. The atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and very high expectations within the school is very strong.
36. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an extremely strong team. They have involved all subject leaders very successfully in the commitment to raising standards and providing a very good education for all pupils. They make decisions that are based on monitoring and are in the best interests of pupils and colleagues. All of the staff have very high levels of commitment to the school's vision of providing a very strong Catholic ethos. The strategic planning, responses to the key issues from the previous inspection and the school improvement plan are very securely in place. The school improvement plan is very well focused on identified needs and therefore is an easily managed document.
37. All aspects of the leadership and management are very good. Teachers' roles and responsibilities are very clearly understood and carried out. Subject leaders are given a very high level of responsibility for developing the work in their subjects. They have very well established and rigorous curricular development plans and reviews. Subject leaders have been very successful in raising standards and have a very strong influence on the work of the school in all subjects and aspects. Their assessments, monitoring and tracking and the use made of this information are exemplary, especially in English, mathematics and science and have already contributed to very high levels of improvement in standards and achievement. They provide very good role models for other staff and pupils.
38. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have maintained an excellent programme of monitoring all aspects of school development, teaching and learning; they form an excellent team. Subject leaders have very good opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning and standards have risen because of this excellent aspect of leadership and management. They monitor pupils' performance in the national tests and have a very good understanding of strengths and areas for development.
39. The recommendations of the most recent Code of Practice for pupils with SEN have been fully implemented. The provision for these pupils is managed well by the aspect leader who is new in post this term. The change in leadership has been planned and implemented very well so that there has been a smooth transition. A part-time teacher has been appointed recently to augment the specialist team caring for pupils who experience any learning or behavioural difficulties. The school benefits from a dedicated team of support assistants who provide very good assistance. The governor with responsibility for SEN is very well involved in the management and provision of education for those pupils who have a special need.
40. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage in the Reception class by the recently appointed leader are very good. She has successfully planned and implemented curricular initiatives and her very good monitoring and reviewing strategies contribute to strengths across the entire range of the very good provision. She has created a successful system of teamwork with the recently appointed teacher in the other Reception class and the support staff. They have been successful in improving the curriculum and standards in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics. They are making the best possible use of the satisfactory range of resources and accommodation and ensure that all aspects of the recommended curriculum are securely in place. They have identified where the priorities are and have begun to address all of them. The headteacher and governing body have already highlighted the need for improved facilities outdoors to give children continuous access to this area. They have successfully involved parents in their children's reading and the home-school literacy links are effective.
41. The governing body has excellent knowledge and understanding of the strengths and plans for development of the school. They ensure that they are very well informed about all aspects of the school development. There is a governor for each area of the curriculum and for SEN. Many governors have attended training provided by the local education authority and have also attended diocesan training. They have a very complete understanding of how the school works including standards, curriculum, monitoring and the provision for SEN. As a result the governance of the school is now very good.

42. The governors at this school have the necessary detailed financial information in order to plan, prioritise and hold the school accountable for expenditure and results. The very efficient finance officer maintains very detailed and up-to-date accounts. She has developed excellent systems for placing orders, checking purchases and balancing the various accounts. The governors have been very closely involved with the finance officer from the local education authority and, where necessary, have questioned recommendations and considered alternatives. They take appropriate opportunities to discuss and agree priorities for school improvement. Although the main priorities are decided by the headteacher in consultation with the staff, the governing body supports and, when necessary challenges, decisions and the allocation of money. In this way the school has developed very effective and evaluative approaches to financial management. A very strong feature of the school is the approach to ensuring best value in all aspects of provision including resources. Recent financial reports are very favourable. The governing body successfully ensures that the school fulfils all statutory requirements. Their knowledge and understanding of the work of the school and their responsibilities have improved since the last inspection.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	590,557	Balance from previous year	6,478
Total expenditure	557,868	Balance carried forward to the next	39,168
Expenditure per pupil	2,240		

43. The apparently high carry forward amount shows money saved as the result of prudent spending in the past two years. This planned saving has been used during the present academic year to provide an extra teacher. This additional member of staff has been used to enable the setting process with smaller groups in English and mathematics and to support investigational work in science in Years 3 to 6. The effect of this initiative is the improved standards that are being seen in all classes.

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

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

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage, in this case the Reception class, is **very good overall** and has significantly improved since the last inspection. Children are now very well prepared for transfer to Year 1. They enter the Reception year in the September before they are five and are taught in two parallel classes. The children have previously attended a wide range of nurseries. Attainment on entry is below average overall, especially in language, mathematics and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. All children achieve well and sometimes very well because of the teaching and the help and guidance from the classroom support staff, all of whom are very good. The curriculum is well planned to provide an exceedingly wide range of interesting, challenging and relevant activities. All adults are very good role models for children and establish very good relationships with them. There is a good ratio of adults to children ensuring that the needs of all of them are met. All staff work very effectively as a cohesive team, carefully monitoring all aspects of children's learning and personal and social development. The external and internal accommodation is spacious and satisfactory. It is very effectively used to enhance children's learning. Children have continuous access to a dedicated separate outside area. There is insufficient equipment for the required range of outdoor activities. There is no shelter so access to this area in all weathers is not possible. The headteacher and the governing body have however already made provision in the school improvement plan to improve this facility in the near future.

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

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well and develop very positive attitudes because of the very good teaching and very high expectations of all staff.
- All adults in the class ensure that children are sensitively introduced to prayer at the beginning and end of every session and to the special events and people who are an important part of their religious beliefs.
- Very supportive relationships are established and most children are confident learners.

### **Commentary**

44. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because of the very good teaching and the contributions by classroom support and are well placed to reach the expected goals by the end of the year. They know therefore what is fair and acceptable behaviour because of the consistency of the routines and the caring attitudes shown to them. Children listen to and participate in the many interesting activities and stories and most speak clearly and confidently. They are continually encouraged to feel confident about their achievements and are reminded of the very high standards of behaviour expected. They are encouraged to share and take turns and put up their hands before answering a question. Consequently groups of children were frequently observed working very well together with minimal adult intervention. They behave very well, share resources, especially the wide range of books, take turns when using computers and share the construction equipment very well. The teachers and classroom support staff create a very caring atmosphere where children feel special and valued from the time they arrive in class and say prayers to the end of the day.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and all of the staff create many good opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills in all areas of learning.
- Children's achievement in writing is good.
- Children achieve well in reading activities because of very good teaching and the efforts made to involve parents.

### Commentary

45. Discussions with children and the analysis of work already completed show that most of the children are on course to reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Higher attaining children are well placed to exceed them. Children make very good progress in speaking and listening because teachers plan many varied opportunities for group discussions in all areas of learning. Children from all backgrounds were frequently observed sharing books, listening to stories and practising writing skills. All staff plan many opportunities during activities to develop children's vocabulary through probing questions. They insist that children take turns and listen to each other. When children were sharing the book, 'The Birthday Cake', higher attaining children described how to make a cake and named the ingredients. The average attaining children read most words and remember many of the ingredients, whilst the lower attaining children use the illustration for clues and read most simple words. Higher attaining and most average attaining children read fluently and accurately with good understanding, as the books chosen are well-matched to their abilities and interests.
46. Very good relationships give children the confidence to speak and all adults listen intently to their comments. The teachers have developed a very rigorous and tightly structured plan for the teaching of sounds with the emphasis on children's ability to say the sounds, recognise them in words and practise their use in writing. Children are encouraged to hold pencils with the correct grip. The analysis of writing shows that most children form letters accurately and have frequent opportunities for practising letter formation and patterns. ICT is very well planned in order to develop children's understanding of spelling. Standards show a high level of improvement compared to children's attainment on entry to the school.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The teachers plan a wide range of structured activities to ensure that children understand number and apply their skills to other areas of learning.
- Children have very positive attitudes to this area of learning.

### Commentary

47. Standards in mathematics are high and children achieve very well because of very good teaching and rigorous assessment. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and use assessment very effectively to guide planning based on children's prior learning. Their knowledge and understanding are very good in the required areas of number, shape and space and problem solving. Most children add and subtract using numbers to ten. Higher attaining children count to 20 and some to 50 and order numbers accurately. Nearly all children recognise a wide range of two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. Children create interesting mathematical patterns in art, showing a very good awareness of order, shape and colour. They described their patterns in detail; for example, one pupil said, "I printed a purple square next to a green circle and on the next line changed the colour and the order of the shapes". Most children are confident in this area of learning, enjoy the activities and work very well. The teachers plan a very good range of mathematical activities associated with other areas of learning and this further enhances pupils understanding and interest.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for this area of learning is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of interesting activities is planned and this enhances children's knowledge and achievements.
- Very good opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing and mathematics are included in the planning.
- Children have good opportunities for using computers in the classroom and the computer suite.
- The Foundation Stage leader plans a very wide range of visits and visitors to enhance children's learning.

### Commentary

48. Indications are that the quality of teaching is at least good. From the very imaginative planning and discussions with children it is evident that achievement is at least as good as could be expected and as a result children are well placed to reach the expected goals by the end of the year. This represents good achievement from their below average level on entry. In the short time since they have been in the school they have become confident and interested learners who know they need to complete one activity before moving on to the next. During the inspection children discussed their topic on toys. They classified a wide range of toys according to the following categories:-
- Old and modern.
  - Wheeled and without wheels.
  - Toys with batteries and those without.
49. Children describing their favourite toys gave well-considered reasons for their judgements. Most children know the purposes of many parts of the body especially the organs of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. They also explain the importance of exercise and diet as essential aspects of a healthy lifestyle. Children's learning is well developed by the wide range of investigations planned. They know that switches control a range of machines; for example, CD players, listening centres and video recorders. Children have many opportunities for making models from construction equipment.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was very good.
- All staff make very effective use of the outdoor accommodation and the hall.
- Although the equipment for outdoors is sufficient to meet the curricular requirements, children do not have the wide range of equipment that is available in most Foundation Stage classes.

## Commentary

50. Insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. The one lesson observed was very good and the termly planning is also very good. Children are well placed to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the year. They use a wide range of movements when creating sequences of shapes at different levels. They jump very high using their arms for momentum and land lightly, taking care to bend their knees. Children handle construction equipment, paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with very good levels of dexterity and accuracy. The majority of children hold pencils with the correct grip and consequently their standards of handwriting have improved very well during the term. Children identified as needing additional help are given very good support and encouragement and make the same levels of progress as other children in the class.
51. The available outdoor accommodation is large and therefore children have good opportunities in the planned lessons for using wheeled equipment, large games apparatus and balls. The playing space has no covered area and does not permit constant use as a natural extension of the classroom.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good in the musical aspects of creative development.
- Standards in the musical aspect, especially singing, are above the expected standards.
- This area of learning makes a very good contribution to children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Children have very positive attitudes.

## Commentary

52. Insufficient lessons were observed in order to make a judgement on the teaching and learning of all aspects. In those seen it was very good. Displays and discussions with children show that they are well placed to reach the expected levels in this area. Planning shows that over the year children have a very wide range of creative opportunities. They are encouraged to experiment when mixing paint and using modelling materials. A particular strength is their very good awareness of shape and texture in art. They produce attractive designs and symmetrical patterns. The staff are skilful in extending children's language and they encourage their imaginative and collaborative activities very well. They have a very clear understanding of the skills to be learned from each activity. The very good teaching of the musical aspects successfully contributes to very high levels of achievement. Children sing tunefully with a very good understanding of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. Their oral skills developed well as they copied and compared rhythms when they played a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Their multicultural development is enhanced by the wide selection of musical instruments available.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

The provision for English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 are above the national average.
- Achievement for pupils, including those with special educational needs is good.
- Literacy is used effectively in other subjects.
- There is very good leadership and management of the subject including good assessment systems that are used well.
- Learning support assistants are deployed well.
- Pupils' skills in independent writing are improving.
- The school needs to develop library facilities to increase opportunities for independent research by pupils.

## Commentary

53. In reading, speaking and listening and writing achievement levels in Year 2 are already in line with national expectations and are on course to be above the national average by the end of the present academic year. By the end of Year 6 attainment overall is above the national average. Overall this is an improvement since the previous inspection. During the past four years the results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 have fluctuated but have improved steadily and now match the national averages. Results in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests indicate an upward trend, accelerating from 2000, with attainment above the national average in 2003.
54. Overall the quality of teaching across the school is good. The good input of teachers and the time invested very well by support staff have a significant impact on the progress that pupils make. The good and sometimes very good teaching, combined with the pupils' good attitudes and willingness to succeed, ensures that achievement for all pupils, including those with SEN, and the few that are learning English as an additional language is good. Learning is enhanced further by the specialist support offered by the SEN teacher. This includes setting by attainment and booster groups for higher attainers. The good quality teaching ensures that pupils of all attainment levels achieve well.
55. During the inspection, evidence showed that most pupils are attaining standards in speaking and listening and in reading that are above those usually found at this stage in the school year. When sharing discussions about their reading pupils explain eagerly how they love books. The home-school reading diary is a useful link between school and parents. Writing is an area identified by the school as a priority area for development. The standards seen in writing across all age groups show that the actions taken by the teachers, as seen in work in other subjects, especially history, are on course to lift pupils' work in writing for different audiences. This need to raise standards in writing has been identified as a priority and is included in the subject action plan. To meet this need pupils in some classes work in smaller, matched attainment sets so that their particular needs can be met. Pupils respond positively to good teaching and work hard. A range of well-organised strategies is used to good effect to support pupils' learning.
56. The pupils in Year 1 for the past two years have started with skills in communication, language and literacy below expectations for this age group. As a result of the planned programme of work and the hard work of pupils, teachers and support staff, most are on course to become confident communicators by the end of Year 2. They demonstrate good listening skills when responding to the teacher's questions about sequencing instructions. Most pupils are attentive and eager to contribute to discussions, as observed in lessons in Years 5 and 6.
57. Reading is promoted strongly in the school. The effective use of class libraries, especially in classes for the younger year groups, ensures that parents' involvement is beneficial. As a result, the enthusiasm of pupils to read well begins early. For example, they eagerly discover the meaning of words relating to character traits while reading books about traditional stories and accounts of children living in other countries. When working with non-fiction books, pupils in a Year 2 group, looking at a book about camouflage, delighted in finding creatures hiding in sand or in long grass and in reading their difficult names, prompted by the pictures. By Year 6 most pupils read fluently and with good expression that reflects the meaning of the text. Whilst the average and more able pupils use the context of the story to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words, less able pupils find this a more difficult task but persevere very well, sounding out unfamiliar words, sometimes with help, and usually succeed. The standard of writing and the presentation of work in all classes is good and by Year 6 pupils write in a neat, cursive style, of which they are rightly proud.
58. Some pupils require additional support, particularly those with specific learning difficulties, problems associated with speech and communication and those with behavioural and emotional problems. This help is often provided through tasks adapted closely to match pupils' needs and abilities, thus allowing them the opportunity to succeed and make progress. Support assistants provide very good additional teaching and guidance to complement the work of the teacher. The targets stated in individual education plans are the focus for additional support. Individual targets are listed in specific target books. These are shared with parents.
59. The subject is led and managed very well. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The subject leader deploys effectively all of the school's procedures to evaluate the quality of teaching and



learning and to advise colleagues. She is a keen advocate of the subject and is committed to raising standards further. The results of tests are analysed carefully and challenging targets are planned well for the next stage of pupils' learning. The systematic monitoring of planning, teaching and assessment is very well organised and has been very effective in lifting standards to their present level.

60. The comparatively inadequate library provision is the only weakness in provision for English. The accommodation is stretched to its limit and the only space for the library is on a wide corridor between the hall and some of the classrooms. This means that it cannot be used as an area for independent learning and research. It is too small for a class to be taught as a whole group. To compensate for this each classroom has a well-stocked class library and graded reading books are stored in the practical area adjacent to the classrooms. The recognised classification system is simple and practical and is understood well by the pupils. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books that are recent publications and in good condition. Some of the libraries' limitations are supplemented by a loan system from the local authority and all pupils are encouraged to take their reading books home regularly.

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

61. Throughout the school the pupils' literacy and language skills are being applied and improved constantly in other subjects. Examples include listening to and carrying out instructions in physical education, and using specific vocabulary in writing up science experiments, illustrated well in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils researching work in history develop their skimming or scanning skills well. Mathematical problem-solving fully engages reading and thinking processes, as seen to good effect in a lesson in a Year 2 class. English makes a good contribution to the social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. Overall the promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum is good.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The provision for mathematics is **very good** with some **excellent** features.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in the 2003 national tests are well above the national average at Key Stage 2.
- Pupils in Years 6 and 2 are well placed to achieve above average standards by the end of the present academic year.
- Pupils achieve very well and have developed very positive attitudes to the subject because of the very good teaching and very high expectations of all staff.
- The leadership and management of mathematics by the subject leader are very good.
- The assessment, monitoring and tracking of each pupil's work are excellent and contribute to very high levels of achievement.
- The very high quality of investigative work and application of numeracy to other areas of the curriculum develop pupils' understanding very effectively.

### **Commentary**

62. There have been very good improvements in standards, the quality of teaching and learning and in the leadership and management of the subject since the last inspection. Mathematics is a rapidly improving subject across the school. There is a greater emphasis on investigative work in all classes and pupils achieve very well overall. Most pupils in Year 6 are well placed to achieve standards above the national average with higher attaining pupils achieving very high standards. Higher attaining, including gifted and talented pupils achieve very well. This is as a direct result of the extremely high levels of challenge made by teachers in all of the parts of mathematics.
63. The high standards in Year 2 are reflected in pupils' knowledge and understanding of place value to 1000. Higher attaining pupils understand place value to over 1000. They have very good mental recall of multiplication tables and add and subtract two-digit numbers mentally. Pupils apply their number skills very effectively to all aspects of mathematics. They tell the time, to quarter to and quarter past the hour and classify a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes using a range of properties including symmetry. Their data handling skills are also well developed. Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils become very confident mathematicians. They rise to the challenges set by the teachers, try different approaches

when solving problems and show very high levels of mathematical reasoning. Achievement is very good considering pupils' below average standards on entry to the Reception classes.

64. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well in every part of mathematics. The majority of pupils use a wide range of methods for problem solving and planning investigations; for example, their very high quality understanding of place value is reflected in their ability to multiply and divide using decimals to two places. Their understanding of equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages is very secure. When solving number problems mentally they use a wide variety of methods and explain their reasoning. Pupils have a very good understanding of the angle properties of triangles and quadrilaterals. They name and measure all types of angle including reflex angles. They use a wide variety of different strategies for solving mental and written calculations. The subject leader has now successfully addressed a finding of the previous inspection when teachers did not make explicit links between mental and written in mathematics. Pupils are now able to explain their mental calculations, and use this knowledge when solving problems. Pupils organise their work very well; they justify their reasoning and manipulate numbers easily and confidently. During a discussion the majority of pupils in Year 6 showed a good understanding of the magnitude of numbers and some used and understood the term "infinity".
65. Throughout the school pupils of all attainment levels show tremendous enthusiasm for the subject. They are very well motivated and extremely well behaved. Pupils' relationships with each other and their teachers and support staff are very good. The school has very successfully and rigorously introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and there is a very strong thread of mathematical challenge throughout the school.
66. Teaching overall is very good and in some of the lessons observed it was excellent. All teaching is good or better. This is a very high level of improvement since the previous inspection. All aspects of teaching are strengths. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding. This is reflected in very clear explanations and very good teaching of basic and advanced skills that contribute to pupils' very good levels of understanding. Planning for all groups in most classes is excellent and is based on the excellent tracking of pupils' attainment and achievements. Sufficient time is given for revision of earlier learning and, as a result, pupils consolidate their learning very well. Teachers question pupils and use their responses to assess their understanding. They have very high expectations of pace of work and presentation. Consequently they know how well they have achieved and their presentation is very good. The extremely high quality of support given by classroom assistants, including those who support pupils with special educational needs, contributes to the achievement of all.
67. The very good leadership and management by the subject leader have successfully raised standards and the profile of mathematics in the school. The excellent systems for assessment, monitoring and tracking give all teachers secure evidence on which to plan. Target setting is very well founded on a wide range of information about each pupil's ability. Daily planning, year group organisation and curricular changes are soundly based on excellent analysis of standards. The school is constantly seeking ways of improving all aspects of mathematics. The high standards in mathematics are further enhanced by the effective use of ICT across all strands of the subject.

#### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

68. Pupils frequently use mathematics as an integral part of their work in other subjects. This is carefully planned to match the abilities of all pupils and extend their understanding of mathematics in the world. Pupils use graphs and charts, for example, when recording or comparing data in geography and science. They look for shape and pattern in art and design and undertake calculations with large numbers when comparing and contrasting historical periods and important events in religious education.

## **SCIENCE**

The provision in science is **very good**.

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

- Teaching, and, as a result, learning are very good.
- Procedures for assessment and the use of information collected are very good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The curriculum and its support by good quality resources are very good.

- Standards achieved by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above the expected levels.

## Commentary

69. Very good teaching enables pupils to achieve standards that are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The standards achieved by the end of Year 6 are as high as they are because the school concentrates on pupils being scientists and conducting interesting experiments and investigations. This allows pupils in Years 3 to 6 to build on the good practices established in Years 1 and 2. Pupils of all prior attainment get a fair deal as work is matched very closely to their earlier experiences. Those with special educational needs succeed because, besides having specially tailored work, they are very well supported by skilled teaching and well-informed support staff. In Year 6 a group of pupils with complex and multiple learning difficulties achieve at the same level as their friends because of this very skilled supportive work. These pupils are unlikely to attain at this high level in the statutory tests when they will have to think and write without additional support. For this reason it is likely that although many of the class are on course to attain at a level well above that expected nationally, overall the standard is more likely to be above average rather than well above as in 2003. Those pupils capable of working independently are provided with many opportunities to go beyond the level of the majority of the class and to discover for themselves the next steps in the process being studied. This means that time is used well and all pupils are encouraged to work to their capacity.
70. Teaching and learning are very good across the school. This is in part because of the skilled support provided for teachers by the subject leader. During this year she is working in partnership with each teacher in turn to establish the practice of independent investigative work by all pupils. The good relationships that allow teachers and pupils to work well in a calm and purposeful way allow for times for reflection and fun. Lessons are very well planned, often including options for individual development that extend the intended pattern of learning into interesting by-ways that then lead back into the main purpose of the lesson. In Year 3, when testing the qualities of the absorbency of different materials, pupils suggested additional tests that they might add to those planned initially. In Year 4, work on insulating properties about how to keep ice cold caused pupils to reflect on previous work they had undertaken in attempting to maintain the heat of freshly baked jacket potatoes.
71. Whilst in all lessons the investigations themselves were taxing and interesting, especially in ensuring that the concept of the fair test were ensured, it is the attention to reasoning and reflection that lifts the work to a higher level. The varied activities provide strong links between ideas and topics that make knowledge secure through a variety of experiences. Resources and pupils are managed very well and in lessons the different approaches regularly make the speed of learning brisk and time flies. Teachers question pupils very skilfully, causing them to think of answers to solve problems and to demonstrate their understanding of complex issues. Assessment procedures are built into lessons in the planning stage and possible alternative strategies are listed to engage pupils' imagination and to extend their thinking in the unlikely event that the first approach fails to capture their interest. Teachers use these processes to adapt their work within lessons and into the next steps in planning as they find out where pupils have mastered work or where they need additional reinforcement. Marking is thorough, in books and often beside pupils, where a comment or a word is enough to refocus pupils' thinking. The completed work in books in Year 6 is very good and demonstrates how pupils attain the high expectations set for them by their teachers.
72. The subject co-ordinator leads by example and has established very good systems for supporting colleagues and monitoring their planning, teaching and the evaluation of lessons and completed work. The time that has been made available for her to develop her management role, in working alongside colleagues in the classroom offering support, has been invaluable in developing the subject across the school. The review of the curriculum and ways of making it accessible to pupils, as well as the establishment of superb evaluation and assessment strategies, are helping all staff to increase their knowledge and confidence. The increasingly firm grasp that teachers now have on the science curriculum is helping them to promote the subject very well.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The knowledge and understanding of the teachers supported by the technical staff is good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good so that pupils' interest, confidence and skills are good and improving.
- The quality and range of the hardware and software is good.
- The use of the subject to extend research and learning in other subjects is still in the early stages of development.

### **Commentary**

73. Standards by the end of Year 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. Many of those pupils who have computers at home and who get additional help from older family members are confident at a higher level. The skills of this group of pupils help some lessons to move at a fast pace when they readily help their friends. Some of the pupils in Year 6 are working within Level 5, above the expected level, but this is not the case for all of the class. There is a well-equipped computer suite that is in the process of being upgraded and all of the staff have undertaken recent high quality training. The well-structured scheme of work ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught.
74. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand the various forms of communication such as tape recorders, text and photographs. They use the computer for word processing, using the mouse confidently, and easily find their way around the keyboard and icons. They readily demonstrate how to log on, edit text, save their work and log off. Pupils in Year 2 used a paint program with tremendous pleasure and were pleased with their own work that they shared with their friends. By Year 6 many pupils are confident and competent users of computers. They know the usefulness of ICT in their work and in the outside world. Pupils readily collect information and present it on spreadsheets, bar charts and pie charts. They enter the results of investigations into their personal database and then select from a range of options the display that best suits their purpose. They use secure search engines to access websites on the Internet. Their skills in control technology are well established. The school has good access to a good range of relevant software and the action plan, for which funding has been allocated, sets out the next phase of development which was delayed by the inspection and has already begun to be implemented since the inspection week. Pupils enjoy using remote controlled machines to follow a path, around a prepared maze, or to knock down objects, such as skittles, using their understanding of different programs and their knowledge of angles from mathematics.
75. Teaching is good overall across the school. A skilled support assistant, who has a particular interest in ICT, supports the teachers very well. This shared work has a positive effect on raising the standards for pupils of all levels of attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and present their requirements to pupils with confidence. Lessons are planned well and the learning objectives are made clear. Emphasis is placed on the development of relevant technical vocabulary. Teachers achieve a good balance between formal instruction and the time allowed for pupils to develop their skills. This results in good learning when pupils achieve their targets. In all lessons, the pace is brisk and learning is broken down into manageable steps. Skilful questioning extends pupils' learning. Additional support is targeted at those who need it most. Positive attitudes and good behaviour are important factors in pupils' achievement in lessons.
76. The subject leader has been in post for just a few weeks and recognises that her role needs to be developed further. What she has accomplished so far is good. The strategies already in place to raise standards are managed well. There has been a whole-school audit to evaluate skills and to identify training needs for teachers and support staff. As a result, there is a clear overview of provision and standards across the school. Links with the local education authority are good and additional funding has meant that all of the new equipment will shortly be in place. It is planned that by the next term all of the school's computers in classrooms, as well as those in the computer suite, will be linked through a network that will improve the accessibility of computers to all pupils in lessons in other subjects. Practical assessment systems are used well to monitor skills acquired, chart progress and to enable teachers to provide relevant follow up work.

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

77. The use of ICT across the curriculum has not been a realistic possibility until recently but it is now being developed effectively. Teachers' planning for other subjects frequently identifies opportunities for its use. In ICT lessons teachers and pupils support work in other subjects using their computer skills. Literacy skills are improving through the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing and by the use of software

programs to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Older pupils readily use the Internet for personal research in other subjects such as history, geography and science. Data handling in science, using computer skills, is now being developed with pleasing results.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography and history**

Provision in both geography and history is **good**.

Each of these subjects is taught during alternate half terms. During the course of the inspection no geography lessons were seen. Judgements in geography are therefore based on the collected evidence of work seen in pupils' books and displays, scrutiny of teachers' files and assessment records and from conversations with pupils and teachers. The previous report provided little information about standards or teaching in any of the foundation subjects and all of them are at least as good as when the school was last inspected. Religious education was not part of this inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good leadership and management provide the drive and direction to raise standards and achievement in both subjects.
- Good teaching results in standards that are above the expected level and in pupils showing very good attitudes towards learning.
- There are strong links between subjects that make a good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education.

### **Commentary**

78. The leadership and management of both subjects are very good. There is close liaison between the subject leaders to ensure both subjects receive adequate time within the timetable. Teachers and members of the support staff are well supported and guided. There is a rigorous checking system that enables plans to be closely monitored and evaluated so that subject leaders can identify the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and take remedial action when required. It is not possible to make a judgement about teaching in geography but in history the good planning and preparation results in good teaching and in a positive attitude to learning by pupils. This good teaching enables standards to be above those expected. Pupils behave well and are interested in their lessons, as a direct result of imaginative and stimulating teaching. Pupils record their work well and take pride in the presentation of their work.
79. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics including comparison of life in Darwin with life on the fictional Island of Struay. They compare travel and transport in 1930 with the present time with a decided preference for the present day. Older pupils have a wide knowledge of many aspects of life during World War II, including the privations of rationing of food.
80. The enthusiasm of the subject leaders ensures that the pupils benefit from first-hand experiences designed to enrich the curriculum. These include many visits to places of local interest, for example, to Gawthorpe Hall and local museums. The subject benefits from a rich bank of additional resources that are borrowed from the local museums' and libraries' loan service. This means that pupils have access to objects of historical interest and books that would not normally be available in school. There are strong, planned links between history and geography and with other subjects in the curriculum, principally literacy, numeracy and science. Pupils are encouraged to record their findings through independent writing activities. Their writing illustrates the strength of the contribution these subjects make to the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development; for example, pupils in Year 6 write sensitively about the effects of evacuation had on families during World War II.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### ART AND DESIGN

81. The provision for art and design is **good** and has improved since the previous inspection. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including multicultural development.
82. The limited observations and the collection of completed work indicate that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are well placed to exceed national expectations in this subject by the end of the present academic year. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However, discussions with pupils and the analysis of displays and work in pupils' portfolios of completed work demonstrate that the quality of teaching and learning is at least good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a wide range of techniques and media including pencils, crayons, paint and fabric. Their observation skills and design develop well over the years. The collage 'A Wonderful World' featuring plants and animals shows very imaginative use of media and texture. Pupils benefit from the good teaching of texture, colour and line.
83. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop their skills well. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 sketched a willow structure with a good feel for style, movement and texture. Other pupils have designed and made very high quality sculptures in the style of Alberto Giacometti. Many pupils discussed the different styles of a range of artists including Quentin Blake, Vincent Van Gogh and L S Lowry.
84. Pupils are surrounded by high quality art and are influenced by art from many styles and cultures. The art on display ranged from African sculptures and batik to Egyptian and Greek pottery. Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm of their experiences when working in school with a willow weaver. The headteacher, who is also the subject leader, guides by very good example and has identified a wide range of priorities to further improve the curriculum and standards. The school is preparing to enter for the 'Arts Mark' and is working towards the Gold Award.

### Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Total commitment to usefulness and high quality of products made.
- Shared planning about the nature and purpose of work undertaken.
- Enthusiasm and interest of pupils of all ages.
- The interest captured at an early age through the construction club.
- Pupils delight in showing and using products that they have made.

### Commentary

85. The small number of lessons observed and the collection of completed work indicate that standards attained are close to the national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is because teachers work together well with the skilled guidance of the subject co-ordinator. Work is clearly linked to a purpose and ideas are carried through to fruition. The items are designed to meet a need and are then used in other lessons or productions. They have to be functional and durable. During the process of design and making all ideas are tested and then those that prove to be unsuitable are modified, enhanced or re-worked until they are of an acceptable standard. In this way pupils learn that only high quality work is acceptable. The work seen showed very positive links with science, history and art and design. Pupils know very well which subject they are working in but slip easily into a pattern of using and selecting information learned in other subjects in order to complete their present task.
86. Work making robotic monsters has been enjoyed by pupils in Year 4, who have made figures in card that will move. More confident pupils have attempted to fix motors to their models using their understanding of circuits in electricity. These same skills were used to light Victorian houses, that were completed to a high standard. Other groups of pupils used pneumatic principles to activate their models and although the task proved difficult most groups succeeded in the venture. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are always eager to know if the construction club is open at lunchtime. They would like this to be every day as they use a wide range of construction kits and recyclable materials to create and make a range of models either to

support work in other subjects or just for fun. In Year 5 pupils making automata using a system of cams found the work interesting but difficult. They continued to work together, discuss their problems and persevere until they got things right and were justly proud of their completed machines.

87. During the inspection there was only limited opportunity to see the subject being taught but the quality of the teaching seen was good. The way in which books are marked and the quality of completed work on display indicates that across the school all of the teachers work to the same high standards in this subject as they do in others. This is because the subject is led and managed very well and the resources provided for pupils are good both in the testing stage and for the final products. In food technology, when pupils designed healthy meals, the teacher offered advice and suggestions but pupils' own research and ideas led the work very successfully. Pupils were eager to share their work with others and were keen to explain how they had developed their earliest ideas through to completion.

## MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils sing with confidence and joy.
- Provision for instrumental music is good.

### Commentary

88. Pupils achieve well in all aspects of the subject. Most achieve standards that match national expectations and exceed them in singing. During assemblies, pupils sing tunefully and with good awareness of breathing, accurate pitch and dynamic range. They enjoy singing. Pupils have a good range of opportunities for performing, in school, in the community and especially in the local schools' massed choirs. They spoke with great enthusiasm about the school's spring concert known as the 'Musical Extravaganza'.
89. A significant number of pupils benefit from instrumental tuition in keyboard, violin and guitar and play with good awareness of pitch, rhythm and style of music. Provision for music has improved since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 sang "Sing, Candle, Sing" very tunefully and enthusiastically with a good feel for the gentleness of the hymn. Pupils have good opportunities for listening to and appreciating a wide range of music especially instrumental music. A new venture of classes for brass instruments was delayed by the inspection and will start during the next term.
90. Too few lessons were observed to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning but in the one lesson observed the quality of teaching and learning was good. Music contributes well to pupils' social, moral, social and cultural developments. The subject leader and senior management team have implemented a good range of initiatives, especially curricular planning and paired teaching where necessary, in response to their rigorous monitoring of the needs of the subject. It is very well represented in the school improvement plan and in the time since the headteacher's appointment good progress has been made in the subject provision. The subject leadership is thorough and the co-ordinator is well-informed. She manages the subject well and regularly supports less confident colleagues and helps them to plan their lessons using the newly acquired commercial scheme of work that is proving to be useful.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching overall with examples of very good teaching.
- Standards attained by the end of Year 6 in games, gymnastics and swimming exceed expectations.
- Pupils participate and succeed in most local and district sports competitions.
- Boys and girls are enthusiastic about their sporting achievements.
- There is good provision for extra-curricular sports clubs, that are supported well by teachers and parents.

## Commentary

91. There is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about attainment or teaching by the end of Year 2. In the one lesson observed however, the standards achieved and the quality of teaching and learning were good. Pupils' attainment level by the end of Year 6 exceeds national expectations. In the lessons and clubs observed most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved well and they made good progress. Based on prior individual skills and team contribution pupils achieve well, due to their own enthusiasm, keenness to improve and good coaching. School records indicate that standards in swimming exceed the required distances with many pupils swimming distances of 800 and 1,000 metres by the end of Year 6. Evidence indicates good improvement from the time of the last inspection when all foundation subjects were said to be at least satisfactory.
92. Pupils in all year groups know the importance of warming up and cooling down exercises in relation to muscle tone, heartbeat and breathing. Pupils demonstrate increasing control and use of speed and tension to express feelings and moods from Year 3 to Year 6. For example, pupils in a Year 6 lesson combined balance, poise and elevation in linking travelling movements at a complex level during a gymnastics lesson where the teacher's good skills were supported by a link teacher from the secondary school.
93. The school places strong emphasis on developing physical ability, a healthy life-style and positive attitudes. School teams take part in local and district football, netball and cross-country competitions where they frequently win trophies and represent the local schools at higher levels. Good community links are formed with other the local schools from which valuable in-service training for teachers is derived.
94. The quality of teaching is good overall and during the inspection instances of very good teaching were observed. The subject is managed and organised well by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader supported by other teachers and some parents. Many teachers willingly devote time to weekend events and after-school practices. The good scheme of work promotes clear, effective planning and ensures that the full range of physical education activities is covered.



## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The overall provision for pupils' personal social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

- Provision is very well targeted to pupils' needs and ages.
  - Achievement in terms of self-confidence is very good.
  - Teaching skills are used well and pupils are well supported.
  - The provision for this aspect of the school's life is very well integrated across the curriculum.
95. Provision has improved well since the last inspection, more time has been given to the subject and a much clearer focus has been established. The ethos of the school with its emphasis on pupils' opinions and responsibilities plays strongly into this area of provision and the dynamic co-ordinator has had very good support from the headteacher. This joint work has been instrumental in enabling all the staff to fulfil the aims of the school.
96. The approach that the school has taken is very good because teaching skills amongst the staff were audited and useful training was targeted at what pupils need to learn. As a result the scheme of work is very appropriate and all of the staff know how to teach it. Opportunities to link the work across a range of subjects have been used very well with great skill and consequent speed. The use of 'circle time' forms an effective way of teaching the subject across all age groups. There are additional targeted sessions on sex education and drugs awareness for older pupils that are provided by the school nurse.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
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	3
Attitudes	2
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	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
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>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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