

INSPECTION REPORT

WITHNELL FOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chorley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119306

Headteacher: Mrs S Teale

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Holmes

Dates of inspection: 7th - 9th July 2004

Inspection number: 258463

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	89
School address:	Withnell Fold Withnell Chorley Lancashire
Postcode:	PR6 8BA
Telephone number:	(01254) 830 437
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Steve Turnock
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Withnell Fold Primary School is smaller than the average primary school, with 89 pupils on roll; 40 boys and 49 girls. The school is in the centre of the village of Withnell Fold, between Chorley and Blackburn. A few pupils live in the village, but most come from the surrounding district and live in private, owner-occupied accommodation. Pupil mobility is below average. There are a small number of pupils whose mother tongue is not English, but no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and overall, the socio-economic status of the pupils is above what would be expected in most schools. Pupils enter the Reception class from local playgroups and nurseries, with attainment on entry which is above average overall compared to what is expected for most children at that age.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with statements of SEN is below the national average. There are six pupils on the SEN register, with three at the school action plus stage. Between them these pupils have a wide range of learning needs: moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural learning difficulties and speech/communication difficulties.

The school has an ethos of care and hard work, in which everyone is valued and included. The vast majority of pupils are from a white, Christian background. There are close links with the community and with other local schools. The school has had 'Beacon' status for the last four years and this has involved a successful link with a number of other small, local primary schools focused on specific aspects of mutual development.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15215	Brian Holmes	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology History Geography Physical education Citizenship
13786	Susan Walsh	Lay inspector	
23319	Vince Leary	Team inspector	Mathematics Special educational needs English as an additional language Religious education Science Art and design Design and technology Music
16413	Doris Bell	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Withnell Fold Primary School is a **good** school with several very good features. It provides a good quality of education, which leads to pupils **achieving well** and attaining standards well above the average expected for most pupils by the age of 11. The school gives **good** value for money. It is very well regarded both by pupils and their parents. There is a strong ethos of care and hard work and very good leadership and management from the headteacher and governing body. All pupils are included in all activities and a good quality of teaching and learning and curriculum provision enhances pupils' experiences.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well and attain standards well above the average in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, in close partnership with the very effective governing body.
- Subject co-ordinators in foundation subjects are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of provision in their subject areas.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning, their personal development, their behaviour and relationships with others are all very good and a strength of the school.
- There is a good quality of education with very good opportunities for enrichment and very good welfare, support and guidance.
- The school's links with its parents and the local community are very good and also a strength of the school.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a **good** improvement in the school's effectiveness. There has been very good improvement in the subject areas identified in the 1998 inspection: science and ICT. Standards of attainment have risen steadily and are now well above average in English, mathematics and science. There have been significant improvements to the school buildings as recommended in the last inspection, apart from facilities for physical education. A very good level of leadership and management has been maintained despite significant staff changes and building alterations. The governing body has improved its role and level of involvement in the school and the links with the community have also improved well. All other aspects of school work have been maintained well, including teaching, which although now good, takes into account the significant changes in staff. There is a very good capacity to build on achievements and improve even further.

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	A*	A	B
mathematics	C	A*	A*	A
science	E	A	C	E

Key: A – very high; 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.*

Pupils' achieve well. Attainment on entry to the school is above the average expected. In the Foundation Stage, most children make good progress and are on target to achieve the goals expected of children at the end of the Reception Year, with a small number of children exceeding them. Inspection findings show that by the age of seven most pupils have achieved well and are attaining standards well above the levels expected in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In the junior classes, pupils continue to achieve well and by the age of 11 their standards of attainment

are well above average in English, mathematics and science. All groups of pupils achieve as well as each other. No evidence was seen of differences in the achievement of boys and girls. From the evidence seen during the inspection, pupils are achieving well in a number of other curriculum areas by the age of 11, notably ICT, music, geography, history. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well against the targets on their education plans.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school's ethos promotes personal development extremely well. Pupils' attitudes to learning, their behaviour and relationships with others are all very good and strengths of the school. Pupils' attendance is very good. They are keen to attend school and their punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is good, with several strengths. The quality of teaching and learning is good in most lessons, with examples of very good teaching in the infant class. There have been a number of staff changes and a long-standing member of staff was ill during the inspection. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour and engage pupils well in their learning. Teachers' knowledge of subject areas is good and homework is used well to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. Occasionally, time is not well used in lessons. Assessment procedures are good, particularly in core subjects and are used effectively to set pupils' targets for improvement. However, the marking of pupils' work does not always make clear to them what they need to do to improve to achieve the next step in their learning.

The school provides its pupils with a **good** curriculum, which is broad, well balanced and meets statutory requirements. It enriches pupils' experiences with a very good range of extra activities that boost their skills in sports, arts and personal development. The internal accommodation, although satisfactory, restricts curriculum opportunities, particularly in physical education. Learning resources are good. Pupils are very well cared for and supported in a caring environment. There is a very good partnership with parents and links with other schools and the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good, with very good leadership from the headteacher and governing body. The headteacher provides a very good role model to other staff and leads the school with a clear ethos and sense of purpose for all pupils to achieve their best. There is a clear philosophy of valuing pupils' achievements. Governors fulfil their role and legal responsibilities extremely well and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Managerial responsibilities have been delegated well with most staff having responsibility for more than one curriculum area. Subject co-ordinators are good in supporting other staff, although in foundation subjects they are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of provision in their subject areas.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are very positive. They are very pleased with almost all aspects of the school's provision and expressed high levels of satisfaction both through the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting. Some concern was expressed in the questionnaire about the level of information provided on their children's progress, but the inspection found no evidence to support this view and concluded that the information parents receive from the school is good. Pupils also have very positive views about the school. They like school, feel they are trusted, get on well with other pupils and know that they are expected to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Further develop the role of subject co-ordinators in foundation subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Standards of attainment are well above the national average at the ages of seven and 11 in English, mathematics and science and above average in several other subject areas. All pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress across the school, including pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented.
- Standards of attainment are above average in ICT at both ages of seven and 11; an improvement since the previous inspection.
- Standards of attainment are above average in music, geography and history by ages seven and 11.
- Pupils achieve well in their use of literacy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

1. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment in national tests have improved well for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 and are now well above average, particularly in English and mathematics. In science, there has been more variation in standards as the school has sought to develop its practice in investigative science. The tables below show the results achieved in the 2003 tests, firstly in Year 2 and then in Year 6. Standards of attainment in Year 2 were well above average in reading, very high in writing and in line with the average in mathematics compared to pupils' performance in all other schools. In comparison to similar schools, performance was very high in writing, above average in reading, but below average in mathematics. In science, based on teacher assessments, pupils' performance was well above average. In the Year 6 tests, pupils' performance against other schools was well above average in English, very high in mathematics and in line with the average in science. Compared to their own prior learning and pupils in similar schools, performance was well above average in mathematics, above average to well above average in English but well below average in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.6 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.7 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.7 (18.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 14 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	29.1 (31.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	30.0 (31.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.7 (30.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Inspection findings are clear that standards of attainment are well above average in English, mathematics and science, both in Year 2 and Year 6. All groups of pupils achieve as well as each other. No evidence was seen of differences in the achievement of boys and girls. The

current Year 6 group are on course to achieve the challenging targets set for them in English and mathematics and inspection findings also show an improvement in investigative science, resulting in improved standards for most pupils. In the Year 2 and Year 6 classes, there is a good match of work to pupils' abilities, including for higher attaining pupils and in both year groups a high proportion of pupils are working at the higher than expected levels at age seven (Level 3) and age 11 (Level 5). The school has worked hard to improve standards in science and overall improvements in provision for ICT have had a positive impact on pupils' standards. Homework also contributes strongly to the high standards most pupils attain, particularly in the junior classes. Standards have been maintained and improved in the face of significant staff changes and the recent alterations to the building.

3. In most years, children join the Reception class with attainment that is above expectations. However, the current group demonstrated attainment in line with that expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development when they started. Through good provision in the Reception class, most children progress well and all pupils are expected to achieve the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception Year. A minority of children are likely to exceed the goals set for them.
4. Pupils achieve well in the infant class because of the good provision made for their development. Most pupils make good progress by the end of Year 2, particularly in basic skills. Standards of attainment are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science and above average in ICT. In Years 3 to 6, pupils consolidate their progress because of consistent teaching, which is good in English and mathematics, particularly in Year 5 and in Year 6 and attain standards well above average in English, mathematics and science and above average in ICT. In religious education, standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In some other subject areas observed during the inspection pupils achieve well by ages seven and 11, notably in music, geography and history.
5. The use of literacy in other subjects is good and in numeracy and ICT it is satisfactory. Pupils develop a good knowledge and use of subject terminology in different subjects. They are given good opportunities to write for different purposes, for example, in history, geography and ICT. In mathematics, pupils' everyday work is not often planned to link to other subjects. However, there are some examples of mathematical skills being used in other subjects. For instance, in design and technology pupils have used their measuring skills in making Tudor houses and in geography, pupils in Years 5 and 6 produced line graphs comparing the temperature differences between two different mountain regions. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of curriculum areas. However, in a number of subjects the further development of ICT and improvement in ICT programs, have been identified as areas for development, for example, mathematics and science. Teachers are also making more use of ICT to support their teaching in subjects through the use of interactive whiteboards. During the inspection, evidence was seen of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in English, mathematics, history, geography and design and technology, when Year 6 pupils were transferring data gained from a survey on biscuits onto a spreadsheet.
6. Higher-ability pupils and those who are gifted and talented, achieve well. Planning to meet their needs is appropriate and effective in all classes. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school and achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics. The school's assessment procedures enable teachers to have an accurate view of each individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses and plan appropriate work for these pupils.

How well are pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities developed?

Attendance rates are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour. Their personal qualities are developed very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and this helps them to achieve well.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Very high rates of attendance promote good continuity of learning.
- Relationships are very good; there is very good respect for feelings, values and beliefs.
- Very good provision for moral, social and cultural development results in very good personal development.

Commentary

7. Pupils are keen to attend school and are rarely late. Parents report that their children really enjoy school. Attendance rates are well above the national average for primary schools. Pupils miss very little school and this promotes good continuity of learning. Parents strongly value education and encourage their children to attend school regularly. Attendance, including absence for family holidays, is carefully monitored and contact is made with all parents on the first morning of absence. As a consequence unauthorised absence is rare (see table below).

Authorised absences	
School data	3.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absences	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

8. Very good relationships between pupils and staff and friendly relationships between pupils result in pupils feeling secure and confident in school. They readily ask and answer questions and are articulate and self-assured. This helps pupils to learn well. They are enthusiastic and keen to work hard. There is a busy and productive atmosphere which promotes good achievement. This includes pupils with special educational needs, who have very good attitudes to learning and show great enthusiasm for their learning. All pupils get on well with each other, including those for whom English is not their mother tongue and there is a very good sense of racial awareness and harmony within the school. Pupils are keen to be involved in the life of the school and musical activities, sport and the annual production are all very well supported.
9. Pupils are helpful, considerate and consistently behave well. Many come to school with high standards of behaviour including self-discipline. The school reinforces these standards and has very high expectations regarding behaviour. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities and Year 6 pupils carry out many jobs independently. They are mature and sensible and take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue and there is very little falling out or minor squabbles. They report that any minor incidents are handled well by both teachers and lunchtime supervisors. There were no exclusions from school last year (see table below).

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White - British
Mixed - any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Black or Black British - Caribbean
Information not obtained

Number of pupils on roll
76
0
2
0
0

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

10. The school meets statutory requirements regarding a daily act of collective worship. Despite having no hall and being very short on space the school manages to gather together all its pupils on a daily basis. Assemblies have strong spiritual, moral and social themes and are appropriate for a wide age range. Music is used well to promote enjoyment, understanding and for praise. Pupils are starting to understand wider issues and their place in the world through assemblies, personal, social and health education (PSHE), citizenship and circle time. During the inspection younger pupils were thrilled and fascinated with the way electricity caused a bulb to light. There was tangible awe and wonder.
11. Pupils have a strong moral code and treat each other fairly. They are well aware of their responsibilities to the school and the wider community. The newly established school council is very promising and helps pupils understand democracy although at present the process where representatives seek the views of their classmates is not sufficiently formalised. The school has promoted cultural development and racial awareness very well through a multi-cultural week which included exciting visitors who represented a good range of cultures, interesting lessons where the cultural focus ranged from Jamaica to the local valley and a good range of visitors. Pupils have responded very well and have a healthy respect for the views of others and a good appreciation of the wider world.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **good** with very good features. The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Teaching and learning are enhanced by a good, broad and balanced curriculum, with very good opportunities for pupils to experience an enriched curriculum. Very good levels of support, care, guidance and pupils' personal development strengthen the ethos and climate for learning in which pupils learn and achieve. The school has also developed very good links with its parents, the local community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** in all parts of the school. There are **good** arrangements for assessment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good encouragement and engagement of pupils.
- There are high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they apply well to a number of subject areas through effective planning.
- Good use is made of resources to support pupils' learning.
- Specialist teaching is used well in music and ICT.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and work well, both on their own and with other pupils, producing good amounts of work.
- Occasionally, time is not well used, which can affect pupils' learning.

Commentary

12. Since the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be of a high standard, there have been significant staff changes and during the inspection one long-standing member of staff was absent due to illness. The quality of teaching and learning is now **good**. Both parents and pupils are positive about the teaching staff. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard and that their teachers will help them to make their work better. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen during the inspection in lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	9	8	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

13. In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good in all the areas of learning observed and very good for mathematical development. Consequently children in Reception make good progress to achieve well. Teachers plan thoroughly and provide children with a wide variety of activities. Very good relationships between staff and children ensure that the children are happy and relaxed and that learning is an enjoyable and challenging experience. In mathematical development, the teacher's rapid questioning, very effectively aimed at different ability levels, gave all children the opportunity to apply their very good knowledge of number to increasingly challenging problems. Learning is focused on individual children's needs and abilities.
14. There are some common strengths of teaching that underpin the good quality of pupils' learning in the infant and junior classes. Teachers engage pupils in learning well and there are high expectations both of pupils' learning and their behaviour. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach, which is used well to plan lessons that challenge pupils' and involve them in their learning. For example, in a very good science lesson with Year 1 pupils aimed at making simple electrical circuits, thorough planning, good knowledge of the subject and pupils' learning needs and high expectations resulted in high levels of interest and concentration from all pupils, very good relationships between all involved, very good independent learning and high achievement by the end of the lesson. Resources are used well and teachers make good use of specialist staff, for example in music and ICT to enhance pupils' learning and raise their achievement in those subjects. Pupils demonstrate consistently good attitudes to learning and behave extremely well. They respond extremely well to the opportunities they are given to work on their own and with other pupils in paired activities. When working on their own and with others, they show very good levels of responsibility and interest in their learning. They work hard and produce a good amount of work to show for their efforts. Occasionally, time in lessons is not used effectively and when this occurs it slows the pace of pupils' learning down or gives them less time than needed to practise and develop skills.
15. All pupils are involved well in all classes and teachers and all other staff fully promote the equality of opportunity for all pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and plan effectively to meet the needs of lower-, middle- and higher-ability pupils. For higher-attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented, provision to meet their needs is good and they achieve well as a result. For pupils with special educational needs, the quality of teaching is good. There are specific targets on education plans and pupils know some of their targets. There is good use of learning support assistants to support pupils' learning. As a result these pupils make good progress.
16. Assessment procedures are good. In English and mathematics, pupils have targets to aim for and these are regularly checked by teachers. In science and ICT there are clear procedures for assessing pupils' development of knowledge, understanding and skills. Day-to-day assessment is sound and celebrates pupils' successes. However, marking does not make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work as the 'next step' in their learning in English or mathematics.
17. Homework is used well. It is very effective in promoting the development of English and mathematics and raising pupils' levels of attainment in all classes. It is used well to develop study skills among older junior pupils, through the research work they undertake on their individual projects.

The curriculum

The school provides its pupils with a **good** curriculum. Statutory requirements are met in full. It enriches pupils' experiences with a very good range of extra activities that boost their skills in sports, arts and personal development. The internal accommodation, although satisfactory, restricts curriculum opportunities. Learning resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils benefit equally from the curriculum.
- A wide and interesting range of opportunities enriches pupils' learning.
- The provision for information and communication technology is good.
- The accommodation is adequate and has improved, but is a relative weakness.

Commentary

18. The curriculum is broad, well-structured and gives sufficient time to all subjects. The school provides good learning opportunities for pupils throughout Years 1 to Year 6. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully implemented to good effect and have contributed to the consistently high standards in English and mathematics. Since the previous inspection, standards in science have significantly improved as pupils now have more opportunities to carry out practical investigations. Teaching in science is more challenging and a clear focus has been given to meeting the needs of all pupils. There has also been very good improvement in the provision for information and communication technology.
19. Learning is made enjoyable by the varied opportunities provided that stimulate and motivate the pupils. A particular strength of the curriculum is the way in which it embraces all pupils, regardless of gender or ability. This integration is very successful precisely because it does not highlight or focus on the differences between pupils. Instead, it offers the same curriculum, but takes great care to ensure that those pupils who need support receive it. For example, pupils with special educational needs have equally effective provision based on the targets in their education plans. The school provides well for gifted and talented pupils with challenging work that enables them to achieve well and is developing a systematic approach for these pupils to flourish.
20. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a good curriculum. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that children soon acquire basic skills of literacy and numeracy and have ample time to learn by experience and through trial and error. Reception children in the infant class, for example, work alongside pupils in Year 1 for some formal teaching, but pursue purposeful, independent activities much of the time. Most areas of learning are deliberately combined to make them more relevant and enjoyable.
21. The school enriches the curriculum very well with many, varied opportunities. Whenever possible, pupils visit a place of interest to bring alive each topic in geography, history and other subjects and this puts learning in context. For instance, pupils in Year 3-4 visited Ordsall Hall to support their work on the Tudors. There are visits to local churches and a mosque to show how religious worship varies. Of particular note is the special emphasis given to music provision. Every pupil learns the recorder and the majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 have lessons on stringed and/or woodwind instruments. These music lessons are complemented by pupils working with composers and leading orchestras in the Northwest. To enhance pupils' personal qualities, consolidate their music skills and enjoyment of school life the school organises annually a musical in which all pupils in Years 3 to 6 participate.
22. Standards in ICT have improved as there is now better provision for this subject since the previous inspection. The school is fully implementing the programmes of study for ICT. There is a dedicated ICT suite where pupils learn basic ICT and research skills on a regular basis. Extra funding has been obtained for such resources as the interactive whiteboard.

23. Staff are very adept in overcoming the potential negative impact of the accommodation on the infant and junior classes, particularly in physical education. There have been significant improvements recently in adding to the accommodation. A new library/ICT suite, toilet block and staff room have all been added. Despite these improvements, there are still weaknesses in facilities. Classrooms are cramped and storage space is inadequate. There is a lack of facilities for physical education. It is to the great credit of the staff that lessons are so well organised and harmonious in the space available. In physical education, pupils receive skilled training from local coaches in sports, like football, cricket and tennis. These sporting links enable their curriculum entitlement to be met. The school has addressed fully the issues raised at the previous inspection.

How well are pupils cared for, guided and supported?

The school has very good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides very good support advice and guidance for pupils. There is very good involvement of pupils in the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very supportive caring environment where pupils feel safe and secure.
- Achievement is well monitored and pupils whose progress is slowing are quickly identified and well supported.
- A very well thought out induction procedure helps pupils to settle very quickly.
- Pupils' views and suggestions are respected and quickly responded to.

Commentary

24. Very high standards of care and support continue to be a strength of the school with the result that pupils have good levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. The school provides a very safe, secure and pleasant environment for all pupils. They are carefully supervised. There is a good emphasis on health and safety in many lessons, for example, when learning about electricity in science. Good attention is paid to health education. Pupils understand the dangers of smoking and there is appropriate drugs education. They learn about growing up and looking after themselves. The school has effective child protection procedures in place.
25. Parents and pupils appreciate the very friendly environment. The small size of the school helps the staff promote a happy family atmosphere. Pupils find staff easy to talk to if they have a problem; the headteacher and the lunchtime staff are particularly supportive. Staff know the pupils very well and develop a comprehensive understanding of each pupil's academic achievements and personal development. All pupils' needs are well cared for. For example, during the inspection, a statemented pupil was fully included in the school concert in the singing and dancing routines. Good use of target setting and high staff ratios ensure that any pupil whose achievement is slowing is well supported. Pupils receive consistently good advice and guidance. Induction procedures are very good and are highly valued by parents. All prospective pupils are visited in their own home and whilst attending playgroup and Nursery. Foundation Stage staff build up a very good knowledge of each pupil before they start school. A gradual introduction to the school ensures that pupils settle quickly.
26. Pupils know that their views matter. They are able to make very sensible suggestions both individually or via the school council. Pupils are confident that the headteacher will respond quickly to the little notes that they pin on her door.

How well does the school work in partnership with parents other schools and the community?

The school has very effective links with parents. Links with the local community are very good as are links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of their children's education and this promotes good learning.
- Local community links are used very well to extend and enrich the range of activities available.
- Very good collaboration with other local primary schools promotes high standards.

Commentary

27. Parents make a very valuable contribution to their children's learning and are an important factor regarding the high standards achieved. Homework is well supported although a small number of parents expressed concern about the quality of some of the tasks. The Parents' Friends' Association successfully raises funds and social events are very well supported. Parents are also willing to help in school or with school visits. There has been a recent survey to seek parents' views. Parents' views were valued and acted upon when appropriate.
28. Parents are provided with good quality information about their children's progress and the work of the school. A minority of parents were concerned about the quality of reports and the timing of parents' evenings. The reports are generally of good quality. Subject reports are generated by computer and although they state clearly what pupils know, understand and can do, some parents find the format impersonal. However, both the class teacher and headteacher add good quality individual comments. Some teachers include targets or ways for pupils to improve their work but this practice is not consistent. Parents' evenings are held in the autumn and summer terms and a small number of parents expressed concern about the lack of a parents' evening in the spring term. For pupils with special educational needs, liaison takes place on a regular basis and parents are involved in discussing their children's progress and future targets. The school prospectus is of good quality and meets statutory requirements and parents receive regular informative newsletters. The governors' report to parents is particularly well presented.
29. The school is an integral part of the local community and makes very good use of the very interesting local environment for teaching science, geography and history. The school has few facilities for PE but imaginative links with the local sports clubs, other schools and very good use of local coaching initiatives extends the range of provision and ensures that the pupils still reach high standards. The school's 'Beacon' status has encouraged high quality links with other local primary schools. The local cluster group has undertaken many joint activities including a multicultural week, joint staff training and a shared technician to support ICT. Pupils continue on to a wide range of local secondary schools and pastoral links are good. Curriculum links are strongest with the main receiving secondary school. Pupils have particularly enjoyed the German lessons which were provided. The school's outward looking attitude has encouraged very productive links with both the local community and other local schools and has had a very positive impact on standards.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

The leadership and management of the school are **very good**. The headteacher and governing body provide very good leadership and are well supported by key staff. These are important factors in the continued good achievement of pupils and the maintenance and improvement of standards of attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a very good role model to other staff.
- There is a clear philosophy of valuing pupils' achievements.
- Governors fulfil their role and legal responsibilities extremely well and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Management is effective, with subject responsibilities delegated well.

- Subject co-ordinators in foundation subjects are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of provision in their subject areas.
- Financial planning and management are very good.

Commentary

30. The headteacher provides a very good role model to other staff and she has maintained a very good level of leadership and management since the previous inspection in the face of significant staff changes and the alterations that have taken place to the building over the last five years. She has a clear vision for the school and has created a shared vision and direction with other members of staff which has resulted in a strong sense of teamwork among all adults who work in the school and the governing body. The impact on pupils' achievement is that there is a clear philosophy for attaining high academic standards and also for pupils' personal development and valuing their all-round achievements. Her leadership and management are very well regarded, both by the parents and the pupils. One of the key developments she has led since the previous inspection is the school's achievement of 'beacon' status and its work with a group of local, small schools, which particularly impacted on the school's ability to apply for funding to improve its ICT facilities. This typifies the headteacher's determination to strive for continual school improvement.
31. The reflection of the school's aims and values in its work is good. The commitment to ensuring that pupils feel valued and develop as individuals underpins its life and contributes well to pupils' standards of attainment and achievements. There are very good relationships at all levels throughout the school. All pupils have equal access to the full range of opportunities provided.
32. The headteacher leads the curriculum well and managerial responsibilities have been delegated well. As a result, with a small staff, she is subject co-ordinator in two curriculum areas and is well aware, as a result, of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject co-ordinator's management role in school. She evaluates teachers' planning, observes lessons in English, mathematics and science and interviews pupils about their learning. Members of the governing body are also involved in observing lessons and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator analyses pupils' performance in tests in order to identify areas for improvement. Pupils' progress is 'tracked' effectively and targets set for improvement. All of these measures result in a good level of school self-evaluation. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator acts in a senior role and forms a very effective management team with the headteacher. The school improvement plan is an effective document and was produced collaboratively by staff and consultation with the governing body. Whilst subject co-ordinators generally fulfil their roles well, particularly in core subjects, those responsible for foundation subjects are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring provision in their subject areas, with the result that they are not as well informed about pupils' standards of attainment in those subjects. Leadership and management of the work with pupils who have special educational needs are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) liaises closely with the headteacher and organises and manages the provision to a good standard. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and children's progress is carefully monitored.
33. Statutory requirements are fully met and the governing body performs its role extremely well. The governing body shares the headteacher's vision for the school and governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are fully involved in the school's development and clearly hold the school to account for its performance. There is good use of performance management to determine training needs in line with school improvement planning. There are good opportunities for teachers and support staff to take part in training linked to school and national priorities, to help build up their own professional development.
34. Financial planning and management are very good and the headteacher works closely with the governing body to achieve this position. The school budget is managed well, with efficient

systems in place to make sure that the finances are carefully controlled and expenditure regularly reviewed. A major priority is to maintain high staffing levels, for the benefit of the pupils. To help finance the recent building improvements a larger than normal carry over was built up, which is being used to maintain staffing levels, now that other sources of funding have been accessed for the building project. There is a secure understanding of the principles of best value and these are applied well when comparing costs for purchases and their effect on the achievement of pupils. Day-to-day administration and systems of financial control are both efficient and effective.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	330,151
Total expenditure	314,830
Expenditure per pupil	3,279

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27,863
Balance carried forward to the next year	70,407

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Reception class is **good** and they achieve well. Since the last inspection, the school has taken on board the national guidance for the Foundation Stage. The accommodation has recently been extensively improved indoors and out. There are secure plans to improve the outdoor provision further with a wider range of resources aimed at making it an effective outdoor learning area. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

The children enter Reception in the year in which they are five and parents are provided with clear information about starting school. The transition from home to school is smooth because Foundation Stage staff visit the children at home and in the nurseries they attend and parents and children are given a number of opportunities to spend time in school in the term before they start. In most years, children join the Reception class with attainment that is above expectations. However, the current group demonstrated attainment in line with that expected for their age in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development when they started. Reception children are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good overall and a well planned curriculum provides a good range of stimulating activities that are well matched to the children's needs and prepare them effectively for their work in Year 1. The provision is well led and managed, and the children's progress is carefully monitored. The good ratio of adults to children enables the children to be taught in smaller groups, organised by age, that ensure their full access to all Foundation Stage learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are very well cared for, valued and supported.
- Teaching is good and helps children to achieve well.
- The daily routines offer security and successfully lead children towards greater independence.

Commentary

35. The quality of teaching and learning is good, built on very good relationships with and management of, children. This enables the children to achieve well and meet the goals expected nationally for the end of the Reception Year. The very good relationships between staff and children ensure that children are happy, relaxed and benefit fully from the well-planned activities prepared for them. They are well cared for, valued and supported. This was evident during registration in the spontaneous happy birthday greetings offered to the teacher and the confident way in which some children were prepared to share what they had been doing at home. They usually behave well, concentrate on their various activities and respond quickly to the firm reminders they sometimes need to listen to others, put their hands up and wait till they are asked to speak. This is usually done in a very supportive way, helping them to respect and value what others have to say within an atmosphere that shows them that their opinions and ideas are valued. These daily routines give them confidence and contribute towards their developing independence. This was especially noted in a session that successfully encouraged the children to share the reasons why different places were special to them. The children take their place very well alongside the older pupils in their class, joining in a whole range of activities with enthusiasm.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and language skills are promoted well in all areas of learning.
- Almost all children achieve well and exceed the early learning goals.
- The strong emphasis placed on the teaching of sounds, letter formation and reading successfully enhances speaking and listening skills and early writing skills.

Commentary

36. Children develop good speaking and listening skills through the many opportunities provided in the daily class routines and the good teaching. They achieve well and exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year. They speak clearly onto a tape, recording the beginnings of their stories. In the lesson observed, the teacher built effectively on this work, reinforcing the use of powerful verbs and adjectives to make stories more exciting. However, time spent on discussion was just a bit too long. As a result, children started to become restless and also had a very limited time in which to complete the middle sections of their stories. Nevertheless, most did so successfully, using a good range of vocabulary. The small number of higher attainers write at considerable length in well constructed sentences that follow a sequence of events in a logical way. Almost all other children write in proper sentences using capital letters and full stops correctly. However, lapses in punctuation are not picked up in marking, even in the work of the higher attainers, who are clearly capable of using punctuation consistently well. These children also occasionally use speech marks and question marks accurately. Letter formation was good in almost all of the written work seen and all children write their own names legibly. The teaching of sounds is given good emphasis and successfully promotes good reading and spelling. Most children report that they enjoy reading. They read a good range of books in and out of school and have a well-developed understanding of the text and of the layout of a book. They use picture clues and letter sounds to read unfamiliar words and accurately retell their favourite story or the story so far, with good understanding of what they have read.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good, children achieve well and the majority exceed the early learning goals.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of number and the mathematical vocabulary associated with it.

Commentary

37. Teaching is good and as a result, almost all children count confidently in twos, fives and tens and recognise and write accurately, numbers to ten. They count confidently up to 50. Higher attainers count backwards from this number, while other Reception children do so accurately from 20. The mathematical language of number, shape and capacity is used very well in their written work and they show a good understanding of ordinal as well as cardinal numbers. All children very much enjoy the mental mathematics activities at the start of the session. The teacher's rapid questioning, very effectively aimed at different ability levels, gives all children the opportunity to apply their very good knowledge of number in increasingly challenging problems. These range from simple number calculations through to advanced word problems and complex 'teasers' aimed at Year 1 pupils but answered by higher attaining Reception children. Reception children have a very good understanding of odd and even numbers,

describing an even number as one that could be shared equally and an odd number as one that could not. This and their very well developed understanding of doubling and halving, were well beyond the expectation for their age. Their thinking skills were further very effectively challenged as they solved money problems and the teacher very skilfully manipulated the situation so that all children were fully included in the session. All of this work is confirmed in the very good range of recorded work in this area of learning. They are very well prepared for their Year 1 work.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Children achieve well and exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning.
- A wide range of imaginative and enjoyable activities encourage children to find out about and reflect upon the world around them.

Commentary

38. Good planning and teaching successfully give children valuable experiences in all aspects of this area of learning. Their understanding of how to predict, investigate and record outcomes in science is good and with help they record their developing knowledge of forces, electricity and magnetism, as well as animals and what food they need to survive. Early historical skills are successfully fostered in their studies of old and new and, for example, by creating time lines to show how types of transport have changed over time. They have a good understanding of where they fit into their family tree and the reasons why people like George Stephenson and Christopher Columbus are famous. Children demonstrated good geographical understanding for their age as they followed 'Barnaby Bear' to Australia. Good teaching helped them to 'read' a world map and begin to understand how Barnaby Bear would get to Australia and what he would see from the air on his way there. This work is further enhanced by their use of ICT to record the different ways in which children travel to school. This work shows a developing understanding of the different ways in which information can be presented. Reception children use computers confidently. They have good mouse control and know their way around a good range of programs in all areas of learning. Early design and technology skills are fostered appropriately as children make moving vehicles with wheels and axles. However, this work is very teacher directed, leaving the children little scope to exercise their imagination and creativity.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

39. No judgement can be made about provision in physical development since none was seen. However, observations in other areas of learning and evidence from their work show that children use scissors, pencils and paintbrushes with good levels of dexterity. Planning for the Foundation Stage shows that this area of learning is covered adequately, though access to outdoor provision has been curtailed recently by the building programme. Nevertheless, staff are very clear about how they will improve this provision. Resources have already been ordered for the start of the new school year to make effective use of the increased space now available to the children.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

40. No overall judgement can be made about provision in this area of learning because only music was observed. However, children's artwork and teachers' planning and records show that observational skills are successfully taught and that children have many opportunities to participate in role-play activities. Their musical skills are very good for their age. Children sing

very well in tune and, with good voice control, alter the dynamics and the tempo to reflect the mood of the song. Pitch is secure even when they are singing unaccompanied with the teacher only miming the words to help them. Rhythm work is very well developed. All children clap their own names accurately and make very good attempts at repeating the rhythms clapped by the teacher or by other pupils when they work in smaller groups.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic skills are taught well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school.
- Writing initiatives, for example, early writing and Grammar for Writing have had a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Marking does not make clear to pupils what their next step is to improve their work.
- The subject co-ordinator is focused on raising standards of attainment and achievement.

Commentary

41. Standards in English are well above the average expected in speaking and listening, reading and writing for most pupils, both at age seven and age 11. From their attainment on entry to the school, which is generally above average, most pupils in the infant class make good progress and continue this good progress in the junior classes. This represents good progress since the previous inspection in the infant classes when standards were above average and sound progress in the junior classes to maintain the very good standards seen in 1998. Standards of attainment by age 11 have been maintained at a high level and the inspection confirms that a significant number of pupils are working at levels well above those normally expected. In the infant class, 'team' teaching has had a positive impact on standards as well as specific initiatives, for example, Early Writing. In the junior classes, Grammar for Writing has improved standards and the development of a more flexible range of reading resources has also impacted positively. Good links have been developed with other local, small schools to enable teachers to share the planning of literacy and ideas for teaching and resources.
42. At the ages of both seven and 11, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above average. Teachers effectively plan speaking and listening opportunities into lessons. Year 2 pupils responded well to the stimulus of creating a 'Wanted Poster' from their story, 'Cops and Robbers', making very good suggestions to describe the main character. One pupil suggested use of the word '*villainous*'. In Year 6, pupils engaged well in discussion about presentation of their work and the use of mnemonics as a strategy for helping them to remember their spellings.
43. Standards of attainment in reading are well above average, both at seven and at 11. All pupils read accurately, fluently and with very good understanding. In Year 2 and Year 6, almost all pupils are working at a level higher than that normally expected for seven and 11 year-olds. Year 2 pupils show very good understanding of the main characters and themes in their books and the highest attaining pupils refer to the text when explaining their views. Year 6 pupils read with very good expression and understanding of complex stories. Higher attaining pupils infer the feelings of the main characters in the text they are reading.
44. Standards of attainment in writing are well above average at the ages of both seven and 11. Writing has been an area of constant focus in the school to maintain standards at a high level. Important factors in why writing standards are well above average are:

- A consistent approach to the use and application of basic punctuation, spelling and the organisation of writing.
 - The use of specific initiatives to improve writing: Early Writing in the infant classes and Grammar for Writing in the junior classes.
 - Planned opportunities for extended writing in a range of different genres in both infant and junior classes: stories, letters, poems, recounts, diaries, explanation and argument.
 - Opportunities to discuss ideas and develop vocabulary.
 - ICT is used well to give pupils opportunities to present their work in different forms and using different writing genre.
45. The quality of teaching and learning are consistently good, with the outcome that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and concentrate extremely well. On occasion, time is not well used and the pace of learning slows. Assessment procedures are good overall and pupils have targets for their learning. Marking of pupils' day-to-day work is thorough and celebrates their successes, but it does not indicate to pupils what their 'next step' is to improve their work. The main characteristics of the good teaching are as follows:
- Good teaching of basic skills, which gives pupils a firm foundation for developing writing, reading and speaking and listening ability.
 - A well-balanced provision for different aspects of English within lessons, including opportunities to write in a good range of genres.
 - High expectations, both of pupils' learning and their behaviour.
 - Thorough planning which meets the needs of pupils with different abilities, including lower and higher attaining pupils well in all classes.
 - Good subject knowledge, applied well to challenge pupils to progress.
46. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of standards across the school in different aspects of the subject. She is focused on raising attainment further and her monitoring of pupils' performance and teaching and learning has concentrated on this goal. Her analysis of pupils' performance in national tests and sampling of their work have resulted in an number of developments aimed at improving provision in all aspects of the subject. Resources have been improved and are good, including the library, which is a part of the recent improvements to the accommodation and which is used regularly by pupils for research and information finding.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Provision for language and literacy across the curriculum is **good**. Pupils develop a good knowledge and use of subject terminology in different subjects. They are given good opportunities to write for different purposes, for example, in history, geography and ICT. In geography, for example, pupils in the Year 3/4 class used their literacy skills well to produce an information leaflet about 'Our Village'.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils achieve well above average results in national tests.
- The good teaching of basic skills means that pupils achieve well.
- The excellent relationships within classrooms ensure that pupils are eager to succeed.
- The school uses assessment data skilfully to strengthen pupils' learning.
- Effective leadership and management of the subject have ensured consistently high standards in recent years.

Commentary

48. Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is well above average. Standards in mathematics in the infants have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be above average. All pupils achieve well and no evidence was seen, during the inspection, of significant differences between the attainment of boys and that of girls. Pupils have very good number skills because teachers are very clear in their explanations, rigorous in ensuring that pupils have plenty of practice and make learning fun. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, swiftly demonstrated their knowledge of numbers up to 1,000 showing good understanding of what each digit represents. Strong number skills enable pupils to deal efficiently with other areas such as constructing graphs or calculating angles. Most pupils enjoy and are good at, solving problems but do not always have the opportunity to develop their own strategies. This is because on occasions there is an over-reliance on workbooks which restricts the achievements of some pupils in aspects of practical, problem solving. There is little difference between the achievement of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils.
49. The quality of teaching is good. Planning is thorough with clear and precise objectives. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. The clear explanations they provide help pupils to understand mathematics and have a positive effect on their response to learning and on their behaviour. Teaching is more consistently effective in Years 3 to 6 because teachers are more rigorous in their expectations and there is a brisker pace to learning. Interesting methods, such as the use of mathematical investigations linked to real life situations enable imaginative and exciting work to take place. This inspires and stimulates pupils to participate enthusiastically and to achieve well. A good example of this approach was a challenge for higher attaining pupils in a Year 3/4 lesson to evaluate which packs of maltesers give the best value for money. Assessment is made easy and the incentive for pupils to view and to build on their previous best work helps their progress.
50. Classrooms are happy and purposeful places. Pupils are eager to learn and enjoy their mathematics lessons. Teachers focus pupils' attention very well by using resources like computer programs to support and clarify learning. When pupils tackle their written tasks they remain resolutely on task. For example, pupils in a Year 6 lesson persevered in their activity of ordering sets of numbers with three decimal points.
51. Teachers routinely plug gaps in pupils' knowledge. Results from regular tests are thoroughly scrutinised so that areas of weakness can be identified and corrected. The regular tests also enable teachers to monitor pupils' progress and help smooth the passage from class to class. Teachers are very aware of how well pupils are learning on a day-to-day basis and give them good advice on how to improve. However, teachers' marking of pupils' work does not consistently inform pupils why mistakes have been made and how they might extend their learning.
52. The subject has developed considerably over recent years because it is well led and managed. The structure of the curriculum is very solid and enables pupils to build on their skills progressively. Teaching has improved because there has been a strong emphasis on problem solving. The co-ordinators have a regular programme of checking their colleagues' planning and pupils' work, with impressive individual detail on pupils' views of their own strengths and areas for development. This results in teachers having a good understanding of how they can improve teaching and learning and set realistic and challenging targets. However, lesson observations are infrequent and this reduces the opportunity to ensure that all teaching is of a consistently high standard.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. The development of mathematics through other subjects is **satisfactory**. The school has made a conscious decision to teach mathematics primarily as a separate subject. Therefore, pupils' everyday work is not often planned to link to other subjects. However, there are the

occasional examples of mathematical skills being used in other subjects. For instance, in design and technology pupils have used their measuring skills in making Tudor houses. In geography, pupils in Year 5/6 produced line graphs comparing the temperature differences between two different mountain regions. The use of ICT to support mathematics is also rather narrow.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain well above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils achieve well because they have a good scientific knowledge.
- Teaching and learning are good but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to ask their own questions.
- The assessment and monitoring arrangements are detailed and accurate, giving teachers a clear idea of how to raise standards.

Commentary

54. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection, when standards were average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in science are now well above average at ages seven and 11 and pupils achieve well. The leadership and management of the subject are good and the co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure a consistency of approach throughout the school.
55. There are several reasons why standards have improved. Since the previous inspection, standards in scientific enquiry have significantly improved as pupils now have more opportunities to carry out practical investigations. Teaching is more challenging and a clear focus has been given to meeting the needs of all pupils. Learning is enjoyable with varied opportunities, which stimulate and motivate the pupils. Of particular note is the teamwork of both teachers and support staff. Therefore, pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress. A range of additional schemes are well used to support work in investigative and experimental science activities.
56. The quality of teaching is good. Consequently, achievement is also good. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide confident and imaginative lessons which motivate the pupils. They plan well for pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and all requirements are fully met. There is a good balance of work to develop pupils' investigative skills linked to their knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of the subject. By the end of Year 6, pupils undertake science activities with confidence. They enjoy the practical nature of the subject and show enthusiasm for carrying out investigations in their practical work. For example, Year 6 pupils tested the quality of a range of plastic shopping bags. They organised their equipment and planned their own solutions to the investigation including factors to change and those to be kept the same. However, opportunities to raise their own questions and predict outcomes are not always a feature of their investigations.
57. Classrooms are happy and purposeful places. Pupils are eager to learn and enjoy the 'hands on' approach to scientific learning. They regard such activity as a personal challenge. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were thrilled when their knowledge of electrical circuits was successfully applied to making a buzzer for their model door. Higher attaining pupils persevered with a demanding task of making a two-way circuit operating from a single switch. Despite setbacks they remained resolutely on task, discussing and trying different methods to achieve success. Teachers focus pupils' attention very well by asking relevant questions to support and clarify learning.

58. Results from regular tests are thoroughly scrutinised so that areas of weakness can be identified and corrected. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils quickly understood the difference between 'insulators' and 'conductors' by checking a range of materials on an electrical circuit. The regular tests also enable teachers to monitor pupils' progress and help smooth the passage from class to class. Teachers are very aware of how well pupils are learning on a day-to-day basis and give them good advice on how to improve. However, teachers' marking of pupils' work does not consistently inform pupils why mistakes have been made and how they might extend their learning.
59. The subject has developed considerably over recent years because it is well led and managed. The structure of the curriculum is very solid and enables pupils to build on their skills progressively. Teaching has improved because there has been a strong emphasis on investigative science. The co-ordinator has a programme for checking colleagues' planning and pupils' work, which gives her a good overview of the subject. The discussion of targets is an effective procedure for all age groups. Lessons have been observed by the headteacher as a part of her whole school monitoring of provision in core subjects and outcomes shared with the subject co-ordinator. An area identified for further development is ICT software to support pupils' learning in the knowledge and understanding elements of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement in provision since the previous inspection.
- Good use is made of the subject co-ordinator's expertise, to teach across both the infant and junior classes.
- The curriculum is well organised, with good development of pupils' skills through ICT lessons.
- Resources are used well, particularly the recently developed ICT suite.
- Assessment procedures are effective and show pupils' progress through the National Curriculum level descriptions.

Commentary

60. Pupils' standards in ICT are above average both at age seven and 11. This represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection, when pupils' attainment at age 11 was judged to be below average and there was unsatisfactory teaching in the junior classes. All pupils, including those who are gifted and talented, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, make good progress and achieve well. The areas for improvement in 1998 have been fully addressed: there is a scheme of work which fully meets requirements, teachers are more confident in their use of ICT and pupils have access to the full range of software needed to meet requirements. In addition, there is a dedicated ICT suite and there is specialist teaching from the ICT co-ordinator for all pupils from Reception up to Year 4. As a result, the unsatisfactory teaching observed in the junior classes during the last inspection has been replaced by good teaching and all pupils make good progress and achieve well in classes throughout the school.
61. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate good levels of ability in a number of different aspects of the subject. These include pie charts and bar charts on recycling to show the results of surveys they have undertaken. In a piece of work linked to geography, they imported images from the Internet into their work and produced well presented work combining text with images. In the junior classes, pupils make good progress in a range of different ICT applications to demonstrate good achievement and attain above average standards by the time they are in Year 6. Year 6 pupils undertook their own Internet research to produce a booklet on a subject of their own choice. They manipulate images in a graphics program and use publishing tools for a purpose in presenting their work. They devise their program to make a robot move and in

using spreadsheets to show the results of their research into biscuits, use formulae successfully to show their results.

62. The quality of teaching and learning, observed through lessons and the analysis of pupils' work, is good. All pupils receive a well balanced curriculum, with all aspects of the programme of study planned, with some development through subject areas. The subject co-ordinator, who teaches most of the classes, has good subject knowledge which is applied well and other teachers have sound subject knowledge. In the ICT suite, good use is made of demonstration to show pupils exactly what is expected of them and when ICT is taught in classrooms, effective use is made of the interactive whiteboards for this purpose. Lessons challenge pupils well to think about how they use ICT but sometimes too long is spent on explanation to pupils and, as a result, they do not have enough time on the computers to practise their skills. Pupils show good attitudes to learning with computers. They work well at the computers, either independently or in pairs and show good responsibility for their own learning to complete their tasks.
63. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has led the development of the scheme of work, which plots pupils' skills development, and has developed an effective assessment process which highlights the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' learning. For example, a more structured approach to the teaching of data handling was identified as a result of assessment. She works closely with the technician, who works across a group of local schools and liaises closely with her on support for the Year 5/6 class. This has enabled specialist expertise to be available in all classes of the school, impacting positively on pupils' standards of attainment in the Year 5/6 class.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of curriculum areas. However, in a number of subjects the further development of ICT and improvement in ICT programs for subjects, have been identified as areas for development, for example, in mathematics and science to build on existing provision. Teachers are also making more of use of ICT to support their teaching in subjects through the use of interactive whiteboards. During the inspection evidence was seen of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in English, mathematics, history, geography and design and technology, when Year 6 pupils were transferring data gained from a survey on biscuits onto a spreadsheet.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn about the importance of courtesy, care for others and commitment.
- Pupils recognise that different faiths share similar features.
- Assessment procedures are not fully developed.

Commentary

65. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they did at the time of the previous inspection. Scrutiny of available work and talking to pupils indicate that achievement is satisfactory throughout the school for all pupils. A discussion with pupils shows that they have a basic understanding of Hinduism and their beliefs, such as how Hindus worship and how their beliefs affect their daily life. Their knowledge of other world faiths is developing well, an improvement since the previous inspection. They link religious

teaching with their own lives, such as knowing the Bible stories provide examples of how to be caring and considerate to others. "Loving and caring for people will get you through life happily", explained one pupil, catching the essence of how pupils had learned from religion.

66. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, teaching is more effective when teachers make thoughtful use of discussion and writing. For example, in a good lesson in Year 6 on why some Christians choose a particular lifestyle, pupils were challenged to understand and empathise with people whose beliefs and practices resulted in considerable self-sacrifice. The questioning, where pupils were given thinking time, resulted in some reflective comments. For instance, a pupil mulling over the life of John Bunyan showed a mature understanding of the importance of resoluteness in her telling comment, 'if you believe in something it's important to keep to your ideas'. This lesson made a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Good use is made of the community's clergy who involve pupils in visits to their churches. This increases pupils' learning about rituals, such as Christening and symbols of the Christian faiths.
67. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is committed to developing religious education in the school. She is a good role model and supports and influences staff in the teaching of the subject through advice and has developed resources to a good standard to complement the teaching and learning. She checks teachers' planning. However, there are insufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the subject to enable her to have a clear picture of standards across the school. Assessment procedures do not yet assess pupils' progress sufficiently against the level descriptions within the syllabus.

Geography

68. No lessons were observed during the inspection, so evidence was gained from an analysis of pupils' work, curriculum plans and discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. From this evidence, the provision in geography is **good** and pupils achieve well, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. There is good coverage of the programmes of study and pupils' learning is well balanced between increasing their knowledge and understanding of people and places and developing their geographical skills. Opportunities to develop extended writing are well used, for example, information leaflets on 'Our Environment' by Year 3/4 and those for extending pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed. Year 6 pupils, for example, draw graphs comparing the temperature of The Andes with Scotland over a specified period of time.
69. Most pupils in Year 2 show good understanding in their work of the similarities and differences between Withnell and a place in Mexico. In discussion with a group of Year 2 pupils, they also showed good knowledge and understanding of the main features of Jamaica and were able to identify both similarities and differences between their own lives and the lives of people in Jamaica. By Year 6, most pupils have continued to progress well and show understanding of weather and climate, applying key terms such as '*precipitation*' in their correct context. They make informed comparisons between different mountain environments, The Andes and the Scottish Highlands and draw accurate maps of the local area and land use in the village using a key and symbols to good effect. The curriculum co-ordinator provides effective leadership and has begun to develop samples of pupils' work based on the National Curriculum level descriptions. She has identified appropriate priorities for development, including the increased use of ICT in the subject. However, she does lack formal opportunities to monitor the quality of provision in the subject.

History

70. No lessons were observed during the inspection and limited evidence was gained about the leadership and management of the subject because the subject co-ordinator was absent from school due to illness. From the analysis of pupils' work and curriculum plans, the provision in history is **good** and pupils achieve well, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Analysis of pupils' work shows that in both the infant classes, pupils make good

progress in developing their historical knowledge and understanding through their study of the past. There is good coverage of a broad range of topics and events and pupils develop a good understanding of the features of past life both by age seven and in the junior classes. Visits are used effectively to enrich pupils' learning experiences, for example, a visit to Ordsall Hall by Year 3/4 pupils in their work on the Tudors.

71. In Year 2, most pupils show a good understanding of the main events of the Great Fire of London and produce a well written information leaflet about the Aztecs showing the main features of life in their society. By Year 6, most pupils make good comparisons between the lives of rich and poor people in Victorian England and show a good understanding of changes that took place in the Victorian period. They make good use of their literacy skills to research the topics, presenting their findings with an index and a glossary. They also to write at length about the main features of the topics studied, for example, a letter from an evacuee about life in the countryside during World War Two.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

72. It is not possible to judge the quality of provision, including teaching. However, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions held with teachers and pupils showed that standards are broadly average throughout the school and this is similar to the findings of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue make satisfactory progress. Pupils who are gifted and talented also make satisfactory progress in relation to their ability. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop satisfactory skills in painting, as well as appreciating how different colours and textures can be used for effect. They make drawings from observations. For example, they successfully sketched portraits of other pupils showing skills in observing visual clues and created good facial images. In Years 3 to 6, pupils develop their skills, for in collage, sketching and three-dimensional model-making. For example, pupils in Years 3-4, using chalk, pastels and wax crayons, made good quality detailed sketches of flowers. Pupils expressed their enthusiasm for art and design and enjoyed the opportunity to create an impressive school mural. The subject is effectively led and managed with all requirements met but the subject co-ordinator has had limited opportunities to monitor the quality of provision across the school.

Design and technology

73. From observation of one lesson, analysis of pupils' work and a discussion with the subject co-ordinator, standards of attainment are satisfactory throughout the school and are, therefore, similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue make satisfactory progress. Pupils who are gifted and talented also make satisfactory progress in relation to their ability. Pupils fully appreciate that thoughtful designs, together with constant evaluation, are crucial to making things efficiently. Teachers expect pupils to modify their designs as they progress. This was demonstrated by pupils in Year 1-2 who were constructing moving vehicles and using their tools well to alter the size of the dowelling to make suitable axles. They build on their understanding of how to plan a design as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 3-4 designed Tudor houses using initial drawings to inform the shape and appearance of their models. They listed materials and wrote simple instructions. By Year 6, pupils add detailed measurements to their design plans. Pupils extend their use of different tools and techniques and evaluate their work to see what works well and what could be improved. They are very aware of handling tools and components safely. The subject is effectively led and managed with all requirements met and a greater variety of work planned. However, the subject co-ordinator, who is currently the headteacher, has had limited opportunities to monitor the quality of provision in the subject.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching provides valuable opportunities for pupils to develop basic skills of performing.
- Instrumental lessons are very influential in raising standards.
- Pupils listen to and perform music, including that of other cultures to a high standard.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

74. Judgements are based on scrutiny of planning, interviews with pupils, the observation of a music lesson in the infant class and a school musical performed by pupils in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 2, standards in performing and listening are above the levels expected nationally and pupils demonstrate good achievement. Standards in Year 6 are well above expectations. Most pupils achieve very well, regardless of gender or ability. Achievements in the performing elements were identified as a strength in the previous inspection. This judgement shows that the very good standards have been maintained since then.
75. Teaching is very good. All pupils benefit from the significant input of an experienced, specialist music teacher who teaches music throughout the school supported by the class teachers. This results in pupils by the end of Year 2, being able to represent rhythm using musical notation, sing tunefully and rhythmically and enjoy their musical experience. In the lesson and assemblies observed the children demonstrated good listening skills and good ability in performance with un-pitched percussion instruments. As they move through the school, pupils' skills in performing and composing improve significantly. Both boys and girls sing and perform on a range of instruments extremely well compared with pupils in many other primary schools. This is because of the high expectations of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic teacher.
76. Notable features of the music provision are the opportunities for all pupils to participate in concerts and musicals and to work alongside composers and professional musicians. For instance, during the inspection all pupils from Years 3-6 participated in a musical which they performed at a local independent grammar school. They achieved highly. Their singing, in both choral and solo performances, was of a high standard. This challenging experience also included drama and dance activities, thereby extending the skills of pupils in many directions.
77. The teachers' high expectations have a strong influence on the pupils' very positive attitude to music and their advanced skills in performing, appraising and composing. Older pupils are very familiar with musical notation and use it correctly to sing in tune. For instance, in an interview with a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils they related experiences of 'making' African style music using drums. They also created a composition, 'The Cobbled Road', supported by Michael Amatt, a visiting musician. They were able to identify and classify instruments being played in an orchestra and are familiar with the works of several composers.
78. All pupils learn to play the recorder. Also a majority of pupils in Years 3-6 receive instrumental tuition on string and woodwind instruments. These skills have a major impact on the high standards of music making in lessons and assemblies. Teachers are skilled at using music to develop pupils' cultural awareness. For example, pupils are familiar with Samba and Reggae styles of music. Modern technology is used well to support the development of the pupils' skills of composition.
79. The subject is extremely well led by an experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator. He has a clear understanding of what needs to be developed because he monitors and evaluates the

quality of teaching and learning. Resources are good and used effectively to promote learning. This subject has a valued place in the school's curriculum and makes a very good contribution to the pupils' wider learning experiences and personal development.

Physical education

80. From the limited evidence gained during the inspection, the provision for physical education is **satisfactory**. Two lessons were observed, one with Years 1 and 2 pupils led by a teacher and one for Years 5 and 6 pupils led by a coach from Lancashire Cricket Youth Development. The subject co-ordinator was absent from school due to illness, so limited evidence was gained about the leadership and management of the subject. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory because of the great lengths the school has gone to, to ensure that pupils receive their full entitlement in physical education.
81. In the lessons observed, Year 2 pupils achieved standards in line with those expected for seven-year-olds. They ran over hurdles and around cones and dribbled a ball around skittles demonstrating appropriate levels of co-ordination. In the games played they develop their team skills satisfactorily. Through these activities they improved their running, jumping, hopping and developed their spatial awareness. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated very good hand eye co-ordination in their cricket lesson with good catching and movement. By the end of Year 6, all pupils swim at least 25 metres.
82. The quality of teaching in the Year 1/2 lesson was satisfactory, with very good coaching in the Year 5/6 lesson by the visiting specialists. The Year 1/2 athletics lesson was well structured with a warm-up session and resources were used effectively to build on pupils' prior learning. However, opportunities to assess pupils' progress were missed during the lesson. In the Year 5/6 lesson, pupils received very good tuition from a professional cricket coach and cricket player.
83. Limitations are placed on what the school can provide for pupils in gym and dance by a lack of facilities within the school's accommodation. The school 'hall', for example, is also used by the Year 3/4 class as a classroom. The school does its best to compensate for the lack of facilities through a creative approach, which enables it to meet statutory requirements. Another school has agreed to let pupils from the school use their PE facilities and a number of sporting links have been developed to enable pupils to receive specialist coaching in a number of games and sports, for example cricket and football.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

84. During the inspection provision for pupils' personal, social, health education (PSHE) and citizenship was seen through a classroom observation in the Year 3/4 class and a discussion with the subject co-ordinator. From the evidence seen the overall provision is **satisfactory**.
85. The school ethos strongly promotes pupils' sense of 'self-worth' and visits/visitors, for example, a nurse, are used to promote PSHE and citizenship. There is an annual school citizenship trophy, which is awarded according to nominations from Year 6 pupils. These strategies are all effective in developing pupils' PSHE and citizenship. There is a recently developed school council with pupils representing each year group between Year 2 and Year 6. They have been involved in fund raising for play equipment and are organising their own way of managing their meetings.
86. Each class has a timetabled lesson of PSHE and citizenship, with much work done through 'circle time'. These sessions give pupils opportunities to discuss issues such as healthy lifestyles and to listen to the views of visitors, for example, a nurse who spoke to the Year 3/4 class about the effects of smoking on a person's health. The pupils showed positive attitudes and were given good opportunities to express their ideas and views. A formal whole school scheme of work is in the process of being developed and has been approved by the governing

body. Work has been done with staff on how to develop circle time, based on training attended by the subject co-ordinator.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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