

INSPECTION REPORT

Morecambe Road School

Morecambe

LEA area: Morecambe

Unique reference number: 119876

Headteacher: Mr T Pickles

Lead inspector: Mr D Smith

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th November 2003

Inspection number: 258952

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community special
Age range of pupils: 3-16
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 166

School address: Morecambe Road
Morecambe
Postcode: LA3 3AB

Telephone number: 01524 414384
Fax number: 01524 426339

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs L Shaw

Date of previous inspection: 24th November 1997

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Morecambe Road School is a large Community Special School. The school has recently achieved, for the second time, Investors in People and the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark. The capacity of the school is 190 and there are currently 166 pupils on roll, 117 boys and 49 girls. This includes one pupil who is part-time in the nursery. The pupils have a wide range of special educational needs and they all live in Lancashire. Half of the pupils have moderate learning difficulties and a quarter of the pupils are identified as autistic. The remaining pupils have either emotional, social and behavioural difficulties or speech and communication difficulties. No pupil has been permanently excluded from the school during the last year. A small number of pupils are traveller children and four per cent of the pupils are in public care. 42 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils in the school from an ethnic minority background. Achievements are not compared with the national standards for pupils in mainstream due to the special educational needs of the pupils in this school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17323	Mr D Smith	Lead inspector	Physical education
			English as an additional language
19443	Mrs N Walker	Lay inspector	
1769	Mr M Holohan	Team inspector	English
			Information and communication technology
			Citizenship
			Special educational needs
22466	Mrs D Pearson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage
			Mathematics
			Modern foreign language
			Music
15551	Mrs P Mitchell	Team inspector	Science
			Art and design
			Design and technology
10760	Mrs P Clark	Team inspector	Geography
			History
			Religious education

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	8
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	14
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 to 4	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with many very good and some excellent features. The school provides good value for money. The pupils achieve well, making good progress in their learning, as a result of the good and often very good teaching. Standards are highest for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 where pupils' achievements are very good. In Years 3 to 9 standards are good, although the achievements of the pupils in Years 10 and 11 are only satisfactory. The management of the school is very good, both the governance and leadership are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is very well managed.
- The school promotes excellent relationships and very good personal development.
- The special support assistants make a significant contribution to the education of the pupils.
- The school's links with the parents are excellent.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good for the pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- The school's care, guidance and support for the pupils are very good.
- The external accreditation available for the pupils in Years 10 and 11 is under-developed.
- The quality of artwork in the school is exceptional for the pupils in Years 7 to 11 and their achievements in physical education are very good.
- The enrichment opportunities outside of the school day are insufficient.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection. In particular the school has developed the role of the subject co-ordinators and the monitoring and evaluation of quality and standards is now good. The school now provides an effective curriculum, with some very good features. Assessment policies and procedures are now good across the school and this has had a positive impact on the good quality of teaching and pupils' learning. The very good changing and showering facilities now provide the opportunity for the pupils to get changed quickly, with no time lost, and consequently they make good and at times very good progress in their physical education. The new library facilities are very well managed and this provision is used well to boost the pupils' reading skills.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Foundation	Good	Good
Year 2	Very good	Very good
Year 6	Good	Good
Year 9	Good	Good
Year 11	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

Pupils' achievements are good overall. The pupils in the Foundation stage make very good progress towards their physical and creative development targets and good progress in the other goals that children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Pupils' achievements are very good in Years 1 and 2, good in Years 3 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Pupils throughout the school have responded very well to the high priority placed on the development of their communication skills and they achieve very well in their reading. The pupils make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills and achieve well, although their achievements in writing are only satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well in English and mathematics and their achievements are generally good in other subjects. The pupils in Years 7 to 11 make exceptional progress in the development of their skills in art and design and their achievements are

excellent. These pupils also respond very well to the specialist teaching of physical education and their achievements are very good.

The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and good provision for the pupils' cultural development. The school promotes excellent relationships in a warm and genuine manner. The celebration and sharing of achievements is exceptional and adds to the very positive ethos of the school. The pupils' attitudes are very good, they behave very well and as a result no pupil has been permanently excluded from the school during the last year. In general, the attendance of the pupils is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, and for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils in Years 3 to 9 and satisfactory for the pupils in Years 10 and 11. The quality of teaching and learning in physical education, for the pupils in Years 10 and 11 and in music, for the pupils in Years 1 to 6, is very good. Curriculum provision is good and enriched during the school day. The provision of extra-curricular activities is only satisfactory because there are insufficient activities during the short lunch break and after school. The pupils also have too few opportunities to be involved in residential trips. The pupils are very well cared for and receive very good support and guidance. The school has very good systems for consulting the pupils and taking their views into account. Excellent links have been developed with the parents. Good links have been established with the community and other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The management of the school is very good whilst the leadership and governance are good. The policies and procedures for performance management, the induction of new staff and the continuing professional development of staff, are all excellent. This has allowed significant staff turnover and yet the quality of education and standards of the provision are good. The leadership of the curriculum by the headteacher and other key staff is good. The governing body supports and challenges the senior managers very well, which helps to inspire staff and create very effective teams. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and all statutory requirements are met. The senior members of staff are very good role models and there is an exceptional level of care for the needs of the staff and pupils. The school is very good at evaluating its' own performance and this provides a foundation for the very good planning and documentation produced by the school in all aspects of management. The school has previously managed an outreach service but this is not a current priority due to changes in special education provision.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are extremely positive about the provision that the school makes and as a result the school's partnership with the parents is outstanding. The pupils enjoy being at the school, are clear that they are taught well and have excellent relationships with the other pupils and the staff. The older pupils talk enthusiastically about their outdoor pursuits. They enjoy activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, canoeing and orienteering and would like the opportunity to take part in more of these activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- The range of external accreditation available to the pupils.
- Residential opportunities and the provision of extra-curricular activities outside of the school day.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievements are good overall and they achieve very well in Years 1 and 2. Achievements are good in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 3 to 9. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Years 10 and 11

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils make good progress towards the achievement of their own and school targets.
- The pupils of all ages achieve well in their reading.
- The more able pupils in Years 10 and 11 are insufficiently challenged by their external accreditation.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well.
- Pupils' achievements in art and design are excellent for the pupils in Years 7 to 11.

Commentary

1 The school has effective assessment procedures for setting challenging whole-school and individual targets. The pupils are effectively encouraged to focus on and work hard towards achieving their own targets and as a result they generally make at least good progress in their learning. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark for a second time and this reflects the effectiveness of their good assessment and target setting procedures.

2 Pupils of all ages make very good progress in their reading and achieve very well. This is reflected in the growing confidence of the older pupils who are becoming increasingly clear and accurate when reading aloud to an audience. This is a very good reflection of the good development of their level of maturity and responsibility as senior pupils. Pupils are also developing a positive attitude to reading and their enjoyment of reading has helped to boost their progress. The school stresses the importance of pupils reading aloud to adults in school and home and as a result, they have very good opportunities to consolidate and develop their reading skills. Some pupils in Years 9 to 11 are able to read versions of literature such as the story of Frankenstein and to enjoy the work of Shakespeare.

3 The school has made good progress by the introduction of external accreditation. Most of the pupils achieve very well and attain the top level in Entry Level Certificates but for some of the pupils, this is insufficiently challenging. The pupils achieve exceptionally well in their General Certificate in Secondary Examinations (GCSEs) in art and design. As a result of this, the pupils' average points score at GCSE is above that of similar schools nationally. There are further opportunities to set higher expectations by the introduction of GCSEs in subjects such as physical education, food technology and history, for some pupils. Equal importance should be placed on the entitlement of the lower ability pupils to an extended range of relevant external accreditation.

4 The achievements of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very good. They achieve very well in English and mathematics. The pupils develop very good confidence in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils with additional special needs and communication difficulties achieve well as a consequence of very good and well-planned support. In mathematics they show a lot of interest and confidence when working out answers. They work independently on the computer and are pleased when they are correct. The most able pupils can recognise number patterns and complete a sheet to 100.

5 The pupils in Years 7 to 11 make excellent progress in the development of their knowledge and skills in art and design and their achievements are exceptional. The artwork makes a valuable contribution to the very high quality displays throughout the school. The pupils are extremely proud

of their work and this is a major boost to the development of their self-confidence and raising their self-esteem.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes, behaviour and attendance are very good. The pupils’ spiritual, moral and social development is very good and their cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The promotion of excellent relationships throughout the school.
- The very high expectations for pupils’ behaviour.
- The pupils are prepared very well for their life after school.
- The school promotes attendance very well and there is excellent support from the parents.
- The very good promotion of the pupils’ spiritual, moral and social development.

Commentary

6 The warmth and sincerity of relationships throughout the school is outstanding. The staff and pupils live and learn in a community where there are exceptional levels of mutual support and respect. Pupils are very polite, helpful, considerate and well behaved, a view shared by the parents. Pupils are happy at the school, they enjoy their lessons and behave very well. The ‘points’ system used in Years 7 to 11 is very effective in helping pupils to learn to control their behaviour and also provides a means of recognising and rewarding the consistently very good behaviour of many of the pupils. No pupils have been permanently excluded during the last school year and only a small percentage of the pupils have been excluded for a fixed period of time.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	166	7	0

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

7 Pupils are encouraged to develop independence and responsibility in lessons and through activities such as attending college and participation in the school’s council. This prepares them very well for their social and vocational life after school. For example, in food technology, pupils in Years 7 to 11 learn to work confidently in the kitchen as they get out their own equipment, follow a recipe, use the cookers safely and wash up. Year 10 and 11 pupils attend college for lessons each week and this is a very good social experience. These opportunities raise the pupils’ self esteem as they interact with their peers. Good links with the local community are well established and provide social opportunities such as theatre visits. These clearly promote the pupils’ very good personal development.. Also the pupils are involved in good opportunities to provide voluntary service in the local community. There are times allocated during the week for pupils to sit together, as a class and to discuss their opinions and feelings. These opportunities help the pupils to feel secure and effectively develop their confidence to speak and listen in the company of their peers.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8%	School data	1.2%

National data	8.4%
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National data	2.4%
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The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

8 Attendance, overall, is well above that in similar schools nationally. The school successfully promotes the pupils' attendance and as a result their attendance is very good. They reward good attendance with certificates and follow up any absences on an individual basis. Most pupils are very keen to come to school and arrive at lessons promptly, happy and eager to learn. A small minority of older pupils are starting to lose interest in school and do not always work hard, especially when tasks are mundane and lack challenge, such as completing worksheets.

9 Respect for the feelings and beliefs of other people is developed very well during assemblies and religious education lessons. The theme of remembrance is introduced to the pupils in a very sensitive way. They are effectively helped to understand the bravery of people in past conflicts and how we remember the sacrifices that they made. Other cultures are celebrated in music and art and design lessons and pupils listen to Indian music, learn Indian dance and use African art and design as a stimulus for their own work. Outstanding displays of pupils' work throughout the school celebrate their achievements and this encourages them to work hard and achieve well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, and for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 9 and satisfactory for the pupils in Years 10 and 11. The school's assessment systems are good and are used effectively to guide target setting and teachers' planning. Curriculum provision is good and enriched during the school day, although the provision of extra-curricular activities is only satisfactory. The accommodation is satisfactory whilst the quality and range of resources are good. The pupils are very well cared for and receive very good support and guidance. The school has very good systems for consulting the pupils and take their views into account. Excellent links have been developed with the parents. Good links have been established with the community, other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in the school is good overall. Assessment systems are good and are used well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good.
- The special support assistants are used very effectively and make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
- The use of assessment to inform planning is good.
- The teaching ensures the inclusion and learning of all pupils.
- Some of the teaching for pupils in Years 10 and 11 lacks challenge, especially for the higher attaining pupils.
- Independent and collaborative work is effectively encouraged.
- The provision of homework by the teachers is inconsistent.

Commentary

10 The enthusiasm of the teacher and careful planning ensures that the pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress in their learning. Imaginative ideas capture the interest of the pupils and motivate their learning. The special support assistants play a significant role in the pupils' learning.

The very good skills of the special support assistants, especially in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, provide very good learning opportunities for the pupils.

11 Teaching throughout the school is well planned to ensure the involvement of all of the pupils. The assessment of pupils' work is good, for example, targets for literacy are well matched to pupils' abilities. The staff provides a good range of approaches to help the pupils make good progress in their learning. This may be through the use of communication aids, the use of computers for research and for communicating with other schools. The very good involvement of the special support assistants makes a major contribution to the good progress that the pupils make in their learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in (72) lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15 (21%)	37 (51%)	19 (26%)	1 (1%)	0	0

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

12 Lessons are calm and orderly. All staff set high expectations for the pupils and these are fully understood by the pupils. The strength of the relationships between staff and pupils, combined with a well-structured reward system, ensure that the pupils are effectively motivated to make good progress in their learning.

13 In some subjects, however, the teaching of pupils in Years 10 and 11 lacks appropriate challenge and interest for the pupils. Some of the tasks set are not age appropriate. In other subjects higher attaining pupils find the work too easy or the final reward not worth the effort. However, in physical education the subject specialist uses very good assessment systems to inform excellent planning to teach the pupils in Years 7 to 11 and, as a result, they make very good progress in their learning.

14 Pupils' independent working is encouraged through the setting of tasks, which require pupils to find answers for themselves. The effective use of good quality library facilities for the pupils plays an important part in the very good progress that the pupils make in their reading. Homework is used effectively in some subjects, but this is not consistent across the school.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum is good and very good for pupils in the Foundation Stage. Enrichment of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a good range of activities during the school day but extra-curricular activities are under-developed. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and the quality and range of the resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for the pupils in the Foundation Stage provides a very good start for the pupils at the school.
- Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- Provision for careers advice and guidance is very good.
- The range of accreditation for the pupils in Years 10 and 11 is under-developed.
- Some classrooms are too small and storage space is limited.

Commentary

15 The curriculum meets all statutory requirements including good provision for religious education and collective worship. It is broad and balanced being particularly good for the pupils in

the Foundation Stage. This is important in providing pupils with a good foundation on which their future learning is based and has a positive effect on subsequent progress and achievement. The quality, range and relevance of the overall curriculum prepare the pupils well for each transitional stage of education including the move to further education once they have left the school.

16 There have been some very good improvements made since the last inspection. The school has reviewed the effectiveness of the whole curriculum that is now good across all year groups. There are now good library facilities not only for use by pupils but also parents. Provision for pupils with additional special educational needs is very good and has been extended by the introduction of a 'therapy support team' to supplement the very good work of the three other special needs teams and the generic support assistants. As a result every pupil, whatever their difficulty or disability, is enabled to take a full part in all the activities provided by the school.

17 Throughout the school, provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. This has a positive effect on pupils' enthusiasm for school and helps to promote their very good personal development. From Year 9 onwards the provision for careers advice and guidance is also very good. Work experience is well organised and the arrangement for integration into college provides opportunities for some social contact with mainstream students.

18 The programmes that have been developed for pupils in Years 10 and 11 are satisfactory. Some of the pupils take part in National Vocational Qualifications courses in retail and catering in the local college. However the range of external accreditation available to the pupils is under developed. The school is promoting the use of information and communication technology throughout the curriculum but this is inconsistent across the school.

19 There is a good range of sport, music and drama activities that enrich the curriculum but the majority of these are during school time. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory but limited by the constraints of time during the lunch break and transport in the evenings or at weekends. There are strengths in the provision, although the majority of activities are provided for secondary-aged pupils. There is the opportunity for the pupils in Years 10 and 11 to take part in a residential visit each year. Some of the older pupils are also successful in gaining a Duke of Edinburgh Award. The pupils talk enthusiastically about these activities and would like to be involved in an increased number of these opportunities.

20 The accommodation is satisfactory, overall, and the staff work hard to overcome the weaknesses in this provision. Some classrooms are too small with limited storage space but the staff work hard to overcome these difficulties to ensure that the pupils have access to a good curriculum and achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support for the pupils are **very good**. The school has **very good** systems in place to consult and involve pupils in the work and development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection arrangements in the school are excellent.
- Pupils are well known to the staff, helping to develop excellent and trusting relationships.
- The school has very good systems for consulting the pupils and taking their views into account.
- Arrangements for settling pupils into school life and preparation for their next step are very good.
- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good, although a few 'low risk' potential hazards have been overlooked and pointed out to the school.

Commentary

21 Child protection is given an extremely high priority throughout the school. The exceptional management of this aspect of the school ensures that members of staff are given regular and very

high quality training in identifying child abuse. The recording and reporting requirements are strictly adhered to. There is no hesitation in seeking advice from Social Services and the school works tirelessly to ensure pupils, and if appropriate, parents, receive the help and support they need.

22 The relationships that pupils have with adults throughout the school are excellent. Members of staff know all the pupils very well indeed and take a genuine interest in them and their achievements both in and out of school. Care and support programmes for pupils result from the staff's very clear professional knowledge of each and every pupil and is tailor-made to help pupils to make very good progress in their personal development.

23 Through the school's council, pupils' opinions are taken seriously and they have an influence on aspects of school life. For example, the staff agreed to the pupils' request for changes to the organisation of the school lunch to allow a choice of main meal. They also initiate fund raising for charity and decide how to manage the collection of donations. A further example of the impact of the pupils' involvement in the running of the school is the fact that they are in the process of organising a fancy dress disco.

24 Arrangements for settling pupils into school life are very good. Again, and particularly for the younger pupils, this is geared very much to the child's needs and capability. A very good programme of guidance and opportunities for further study and career opportunities is provided for pupils from Year 9 onwards. College visits, course choices, and work experience are on offer through the school's very good work with Connexions and Education Business Partnership.

25 Procedures to ensure that regular site inspections and risk assessments are carried out, are very good. The site supervisor has a good understanding of health and safety and the needs of the pupils and works hard to ensure the building is kept very clean and safe. For example, finger guards and a number of more suitable door handles have been fitted in school. Nevertheless, not all members of staff are vigilant in promoting safe practices in lessons, and because of the lack of rigour on the part of the school and the grounds maintenance contractors, some potential hazards remain in recreation areas. Nevertheless, the high level of care and supervision of pupils at all times does effectively minimise any risk to pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is **excellent** and has improved even further on the positive picture found when the school was last inspected. The school's partnership with other schools, colleges, and the community is **good** and it enables pupils to have access to a wide range of social experiences.

- Excellent information for parents through letters, reports and very regular dialogue.
- Excellent involvement of parents in supporting the school and their child's progress.
- Excellent views of parents.
- Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Commentary

26 Every opportunity is taken to keep parents informed of school life and their child's progress and as a result of the school's efforts, parents do whatever they can to support the school and their child. Annual review reports and meetings, end of year progress reports, letters, information on visits and homework expectations are all very informative. The use of detailed home-school diaries and very regular, supportive telephone calls are also valued by the parents. This helps to promote the parents' excellent support for the school and as a result the pupils' attendance is very good and they achieve well.

27 Relevant courses are regularly provided for parents, as well as organised trips, including a recent visit to a conference on autism. Consequently, parents are fully versed about activities in school. They are fully aware of the progress that their child is making, how they can be involved and

what they can do to help. All this is very much appreciated by parents. Indeed, comments from parents on end of year reports praise the school very highly and are in a similar vein to one in particular that reads, 'all the family are grateful for the huge part the staff at school play in presenting us with the delightful little girl we have with us today'.

28 The school has established good links with the community, other schools and colleges. For example, a private music company works each week with pupils in Year 10 exploring social issues through music and encouraging pupils to express their own creativity. There are weekly visits, again for pupils in Year 10, to the nearby college, and regular opportunities to visit different venues and events locally. The pupils respond well to regular sessions with Youth and Community personnel to effectively address issues such as interpersonal problem solving. As a result, these pupils gain in self-confidence and develop their ability to cope in different social settings. Valuable opportunities are provided for the pupils to learn alongside their mainstream peers during Education Business Partnership activities. The physical education provision used by the pupils at the college is very good and gives the pupils opportunities to use high quality resources in the community. The pupils' very good involvement with the More Music in Morecambe initiative gives them valuable access to local recreational and creative facilities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The management of the school is very good whilst the leadership and governance are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The policies and procedures for performance management, the induction of new staff and the continuing professional development of staff are all excellent.
- The school is very good at evaluating its' own performance.
- The senior members of staff are very good role models for the rest of the staff and pupils.
- The governing body supports and challenges the senior managers well.

Commentary

29 The recent award of Investors In People, for a second time, acknowledges the very effective management of the school. The senior managers have developed excellent performance management systems and the staff's targets are very clearly linked to pupils' progress. The monitoring of the staff's progress towards their targets is managed in exceptional detail, ensuring that there is a continual drive towards improvement and raising standards. The school has made significant progress in monitoring the quality of teaching since the last inspection. This process helps to direct the school's exceptional continuing professional development programme and informs the very good development plan. The special support assistants are fully involved in a professional review process and this ensures that they are an essential part of the staff team and share the ambition and motivation to do their best for the pupils. The induction of new staff is managed exceptionally well. They settle quickly into the school and, as a result, the pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well. The induction process plays an essential part in maintaining continual improvement, despite the large turnover of staff. The parents are confident that the school is very well managed.

30 The school is forward-looking and the senior managers gather relevant information to help guide their future developments. They are aware that they are providing a high quality service in a changing world and are keen for the school to make a significant contribution, by effectively meeting a wide range of pupils' needs. The senior managers meet regularly and work as a very effective and close team. Their formal meetings provide very good opportunities to share day-to-day information and there is a very caring approach in the support and development of the staff and pupils. The school's regular analysis of their performance is translated very well into their very clear development plan with a focus on continual improvement. The school has managed an excessive

under-spend from the last financial year that has been carried forward to this year, but the majority of this is now either spent or planned expenditure during this financial year.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£1,871,712	Balance from previous year	£194,099
Total expenditure	£1,618,967	Balance carried forward to the next	£252,745
Expenditure per pupil	£8,565		

31 The senior members of staff establish the highest professional standards in their work and are clearly respected by the staff and pupils. They work very hard to create a very positive school ethos where each and every individual is valued and fully included in the life of the school. This is inspirational and forward-looking and provides an essential basis for the development of a range of very effective teams. The pupils feel that they are able to learn and play, supported by excellent relationships with the staff. Parents are truly equal partners in this very special school and, as a result, there are excellent working relationships between home and school.

32 The governing body provide very valuable support to all of the staff and pupils and they clearly influence the work of the school. The chair of governors plays an essential role as an integral member of the management team with a significant and effective personnel role. She also makes a good contribution to the monitoring of quality and standards in the school. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. The governing body works hard to involve all relevant stakeholders in shaping and sharing the vision for the future development of the school. The governing body is effective but is receptive to further improvements and has taken part in a useful self-evaluation process. The governors appreciate the very high quality and informative documentation provided by the school. However, as a result of the self-evaluation of their work, they are planning to improve the management and distribution of the information provided to the governing body.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for Nursery and Reception age children is **good**.

Commentary

33 The teacher works closely with parents and therapists to carry out an initial assessment when the children first start at the school. The very effective work of the team supports children well to ensure that their learning is carefully planned with appropriate expectations. As the four children in the Foundation Stage are taught with seven Year 1 pupils they benefit from group games, stories and play sessions. The teacher is careful to ensure individual targets are planned for and assessed in all areas of the early learning goals. The planning and assessment shows at least good progress in all targets. The targets are discussed with parents every six months and a review is held in the first year of school to ensure that the parents are fully involved in their child's learning. The curriculum covers a two-year cycle to ensure the good progress of children who are in the class for two years.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning that effectively provides a good range of activities.

Commentary

34 This term children are learning how to express the difference between happy and sad. They effectively participate in role-play and share and make good progress in their care for others. They take part in "Circle Time" where they are encouraged to use a vocabulary to express feelings. A story is linked well to the theme of sharing with a friend and as a result, the children make good progress in their social development.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher and special support assistants work very effectively as a team and the children have very good encouragement to work.
- The children make good progress towards their individual targets.

Commentary

35 Symbols are used to reinforce the names of animals in a story where the children accurately match animals and name them in a picture. Children make good progress towards their individual targets for speaking and listening. They are given very good support by the staff team in order to maximise their learning. They are confident and are developing skills of taking turns and answering questions. Speaking and listening is effectively encouraged in all activities and the pupils make good progress. Children make particularly good progress in holding a pencil to copy letters or overwrite.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning and the effective use of opportunities to learn through play ensure that the children make good progress in their understanding of numbers to five and ten.
- Good use is made of group games and individual work.

Commentary

36 The nursery children spend time individually with a special support assistant in order to count the spots on a large dice. They can clap with the other children and join in a game. The sensitive approach to work encourages pupils to match numbers to ten. Children make good progress in their ability to sit and concentrate for increasing periods of time. They are beginning to play alongside other children and make progress in their ability to make choices. The children enjoy taking part in music and dance activities with interactive songs and games and as a result they make progress in their understanding and use of numbers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning maximises the children's learning opportunities through their learning in science, history, geography and religious education.
- Every opportunity is used for children to explore their environment during lessons and at play.

Commentary

37 During a walk around the school, children experienced pushing and pulling gates and tramping through the autumn leaves. The teacher gives children the time to give eye contact and to answer questions. The experience is reinforced well in class with pushing and pulling toys and watching a short video. Children enjoy thinking about babies and how to look after them and to realise how much they themselves have grown up. The use of parcels to illustrate the giving of presents as a gift of love, leads well into the Christmas story about Baby Jesus. Children sit very quietly on the mat and enjoy exploring and guessing what might be in the parcels.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The physiotherapist and occupational therapist are fully involved in target setting.
- Communication and body awareness is encouraged at all times.
- The staff's high expectations contribute to the children's good behaviour.

Commentary

38 There is very good support from a range of specialists as they all plan very well to make the best of the children's abilities. Most of the children can roll a ball to a friend and say their name with help. They can point to parts of their body and a few children can accurately name the parts. They are helped well and enjoy watching and imitating movements, which they then demonstrate to each other. The children can run, jump and wave ribbons in different directions. Good use is made of

climbing apparatus and wheeled toys at play times to reinforce physical development and confidence. The staff team make their expectations very clear to the children as they begin to understand the need for safety in a busy and active setting.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good support provided by the music specialist.
- Very well planned lessons ensure that the children join in with other groups.

Commentary

39 The children appreciate many different sounds and know how to respond to them through music and movement. It is a very exciting atmosphere for them to experience. The very clear instructions ensure that they give good eye contact and listen well. Children take a full part in the lesson and are very confident. They respond very well to the rhythm of the piano and take great care of the instruments that they can play both loudly and softly. They can recognise a picture of their instrument as a prompt to play together and are beginning to recognise sounds from a distance, to correctly identify the instrument played.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 1 to 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements in reading are very good.
- The concentration on improving spoken language is improving pupils' social confidence.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good for pupils up to Year 2.
- Special support assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- The teaching of literacy in other subjects is well planned.
- More able Year 11 pupils require more challenging accreditation opportunities.
- The marking of pupils' work can vary between classes.

Commentary

40 Pupils of all ages achieve very well in reading. The school has successfully created a reading culture. This is reflected in the growing confidence of older pupils and in the accuracy of their reading, as they read to an audience. Pupils develop an enjoyment and knowledge of books that mirrors the development of their reading skills. All pupils are encouraged to read to adults both at home and in school. Pupils in Years 9 and 11 are able to read versions of literature such as the story of Frankenstein and to enjoy the work of Shakespeare. The libraries are well stocked and they capture the pupils' interests and this helps them to make very good progress in their reading.

41 The development of pupils' standards in speaking are emphasised especially in Years 9 to 11. This effectively helps the pupils to develop the conversational skills that are essential for life after school. The encouragement of debate and discussion in lessons has led to an overall improvement in pupils' achievements.

42 In the lessons seen, teaching is never less than good and very good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The emphasis on the teaching is the development of skills and the enhancement of the

pupils' self-confidence. The work is relevant and age appropriate. In a lesson for Year 11 pupils for example, a discussion on the motives of the monster in Frankenstein gave opportunities for the pupils to discuss wider issues such as morality and behaviour. The development of pupils' writing skills requires further development. Although the teaching of letter shapes to the younger pupils is well established both in class and through the writing club, there are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to develop more mature handwriting skills.

43 Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school, with pupils up to Year 2 achieving very well. Pupils with additional special needs and communication difficulties achieve well as a consequence of very good and well-planned additional support. The special support assistants make a very good contribution to the development of the pupils' communication skills.

44 The school provides examination opportunities for the pupils in Years 10 and 11. The rate of success is high each year but some of the pupils are insufficiently challenged and capable of following a more demanding course. Overall, assessment of pupils' work is good. However, the marking of some of the pupils' work is insufficiently detailed and as a result the pupils are unclear about ways of improving their work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45 The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. This provision is well planned and effectively taught to ensure that the pupils use and improve their language and literacy skills in all aspects of their learning. Teachers have responded well to the good quality training opportunities provided and this has effectively improved their knowledge and understanding of the use of literacy across the curriculum.

French

The provision in French is **good**.

- The quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils in Years 7 to 9.
- The co-ordinator is a subject specialist and keeps detailed records of progress and achievement.
- External accreditation has been successfully introduced for Entry Level Certificate.

Commentary

46 The teacher speaks French throughout the lessons and this effectively extends the pupils' listening skills and challenges them to answer in French. The lessons are taught well, with enthusiasm and as result all pupils in Years 7 to 9 make good progress in their learning. Information and communication technology is used well to introduce a group to clothes and colours. Pupils are able to repeat the names of various items of clothing and the colours, as they have fun dressing up. They answer questions in French with the most able giving a whole sentence. In a role-play as a café owner, pupils are encouraged to serve drinks and ask each other questions. They can read the labels on the bottles and name all the drinks in French.

47 The co-ordinator recognises the need to change to modules and units of work to accommodate the range of pupil ability. Effective self-evaluation and assessment takes place with the pupils at the end of each module and they respond well to the good opportunities provided to learn from their mistakes. Record keeping is comprehensive, with targets that ensure that all of the pupils are challenged to make good progress. There are good links with citizenship when the pupils study France as a country.

48 Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make good progress in their modules for the Entry Level GCSE. The pupils complete additional work after school, supported by the teacher. Good use is made of a target vocabulary, to reinforce the French words for the main buildings in a town. Pupils are encouraged to design posters to promote the historic city of Lancaster as a tourist centre.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' achievements have improved since the last inspection.
- Assessment procedures are good and are used well.
- The quality of teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very good.
- The leadership and management of the subject is good.
- The planned use of mathematics in other subjects is under-developed.

Commentary

49 Since the last inspection the quality of teaching and learning has improved in all year groups. The co-ordinator uses assessment procedures well and the pupils are making good progress towards their targets. Very clear planning and explanation to pupils in Years 1 and 2 ensure that they are developing a sensible attitude to work. They show a lot of interest and confidence when working out answers. They work independently on the computer and are thrilled when they are correct. They copy numbers to 10 and are beginning to recognise simple patterns in the number square. The most able pupil can recognise number patterns and complete a sheet to 100. Pupils are fully involved in their learning and have made very good progress since the beginning of term. By the end of Year 4 the pupils are beginning to work more independently on simple fractions and subtraction, using a number line. Special support assistants help pupils to count and recognise numbers and to tell the time using a game on the computer. Year 6 pupils are beginning to understand mathematical symbols and count on in twos and tens. The most able pupils made good progress during the lesson to recognise smaller and larger numbers.

50 The lively and stimulating introduction ensures pupils in Year 9 are very clear about the expectations of the lesson to take a full and active part. They complete bar charts independently, using the correct terms. Good support is given to pupils by special support assistants to enable them to organise and check their own work. They are beginning to understand how to transfer data to an accurate block graph. Good use is made of correct terms and a few pupils are able to work in pairs to achieve tasks. The groups of pupils in Years 10 and 11 are very large and the rooms are too small which does restrict some activities, for instance, there is insufficient use of the computers. Work is presented in a lively manner with good use of correct terms. A few pupils understand the tasks but most require a lot of support; a few are restless and reluctant to learn. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time to understand that data can be produced from a survey. Too many worksheets are used, although textbooks have recently been introduced and this has effectively raised the level of interest and challenge provided for the pupils.

51 The subject co-ordinator has monitored the quality of teaching and is introducing a new scheme of work for the whole school. Resources are being addressed, with more appropriate information and communication software introduced for older pupils. The co-ordinators and subject leader are working closely together and the mathematics consultants have been very supportive of developments in the school. The quality of the marking of the pupils' work is inconsistent and consequently, at times, the pupils do not have the opportunity to understand what mistakes they have made.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52 The use of numeracy in other subjects is not always planned for but is used for measuring and weighing in food technology, and tables and charts, for measuring in science. Time lines are used in history and mathematical terms are used effectively in the teaching of physical education. The good use of key words is evident in all of the mathematics lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiastic teaching interests and stimulates pupils who behave well and work hard.
- There are good opportunities to explore materials and experiment practically, which helps pupils to make choices and become more independent.
- Lessons are well planned to provide activities that are adapted to pupils of all abilities so that they are all fully included in the lessons.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Good use is made of the environment to make lessons stimulating and memorable.

Commentary

53 The good provision reported in the last inspection has been maintained. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved from satisfactory to good. Teachers have high expectations and set challenging targets for the pupils in Year 2. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good overall and nearly half of the teaching is very good. Most pupils make good progress and are keen to learn and achieve well. The teachers and special support assistants work very well together as a team to help pupils to learn.

54 The teacher for the pupils in Years 7 to 11 has good specialist knowledge, uses a good range of resources in appropriate accommodation and as a result the pupils make good progress in their learning. The pupils are taught to behave responsibly and safely as they conduct experiments. The practical work keeps pupils interested and motivated to make good progress in their learning. For example, pupils in Year 7 investigate acids and alkalis. They learn how to spell the words acid, alkali, and indicator and understand the use of them in the right context. All of the pupils listen intently as the teacher demonstrates how to proceed with the testing and then enjoy testing a variety of liquids, working well in pairs. There is great excitement as they discover that 'the soft drink is an acid!' By the end of the lesson they understand how to test for acidity and alkalinity and have made their own indicator using cabbage.

55 Lessons are carefully planned to provide work that is challenging to pupils of all abilities. For example, more able pupils in Year 11 use a textbook to obtain information while other pupils use a worksheet. Less able pupils use a simplified worksheet. Literacy skills are well supported, key vocabulary is stressed and explained, diagrams are labelled accurately and experiments are recorded. Numeracy skills are applied effectively and pupils measure accurately and record their results in charts and tables.

56 The science provision is well led and managed and as a result the curriculum is good. Effective use is made of the local environment and the pupils enjoy the opportunity to learn by the practical opportunities that this provides. Pupils visit a re-cycling centre, plant bulbs, look after the wildlife area and pond dip, and make good progress in the use of microscopes to investigate pond life. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 study the senses and enjoy testing their senses as well as observing the dissection of an eye. Pupils are effectively motivated by these activities, work hard and achieve well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of information and communication technology for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good and prepares them well for their move into Year 7.

- The use of computers in the curriculum for the pupils in Years 7 to 11 is under developed.

Commentary

57 Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress in their learning and achieve well. In a literacy lesson for Year 2 pupils they exchange E-mails with their pen pals from a local primary school. This successfully combines reading and writing skills with the ability to use the Internet to receive and send messages. Good quality experiences such as these have markedly improved the achievements of the pupils and this is clear in the good skills of the pupils in the current Year 7.

58 Within the secondary department the use of national guidance, as a basis for planning, ensures that all of the pupils experience the relevant range of activities. The quality of teaching benefits from the skills of a subject specialist and is satisfactory overall. Despite an audit of staff skills, some teachers remain insecure about the use of computers and make insufficient use of information and communication technology in their lessons. By Year 11 pupils have the skills necessary to undertake the Entry Level Certificate and some of the pupils are capable of achieving well in a more demanding course. Examples of pupils' work show that, overall, they are making satisfactory progress in the use of information and communication technology for word processing, graphics, the Internet and the organisation of data through making spread sheets. Special support assistants are well deployed and they have responded well to the very good training opportunities provided and as a result their additional support and expertise ensures that all of the pupils are fully included in the activities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59 This is well developed in the primary department and for supporting the development of the pupils' literacy skills. Information and communication skills are developed in writing tasks during English lessons and for research in geography. However, the use of information and communication technology in subjects such as science and mathematics is under-developed.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is good and makes a significant contribution to the moral, social and spiritual development of pupils.
- The pupils respond well to visits and visitors but the use of information and communication technology is under-developed.

Commentary

60 Pupils make good progress and achieve well in religious education. This is because the curriculum is relevant and they are encouraged by the use of good teaching techniques, to effectively relate their learning to everyday life experiences. As they move through the school pupils gain an awareness of the beliefs and practices of most major world religions and the significance of some of the religious festivals. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in the Christian celebrations of Christmas, Easter and Harvest. Discussions with pupils in Years 9 and 11 show they feel that religious education provides opportunities for them to talk about a wide variety of topics relevant to their own lives. In addition this knowledge helps them to develop an awareness of the diversity of opinions they may find in the world around them. The pupils make good progress in their understanding of the need for tolerance as well as the importance of caring for the environment, other people and animals.

61 Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Resources are used well and the very good teamwork ensures that every pupil is able to take a full and active part in the various activities. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities provided for role-play, for example, when learning about a Christian baptism. Learning is enhanced by the involvement of a variety of visitors to the school and by out of school trips. There are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to use information and communication technology independently to research for information.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to their learning in history are good and they make good progress.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to improve their literacy skills.
- No external accreditation is available for the pupils in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

62 The quality of teaching is consistently good and as a result the pupils achieve well. Lessons are taught with enthusiasm, and involve a variety of practical tasks that capture pupils' interest so that they enjoy history, work hard and make good progress. As pupils move through the school they develop an understanding of chronology and the changes that take place over time. For example, the different ways people dressed and the different machinery used on farms at the beginning of the 20th century. Well-chosen topics give pupils an understanding of major periods and events in history, from Roman Britain through Medieval and Victorian Britain, to World War II and the present day. The good use of resources gives them opportunities to work out for themselves how and why things changed. For example, by creating a sample 17th century road from graded pebbles, the most able make the link between transport and trade. Good use is made of visits to museums, monuments and places of historical interest.

63 There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum has been revised, schemes of work have been written and there has been an increase in resources. Opportunities are missed, however, to help pupils improve their writing skills. There is an over-reliance on worksheets that make it difficult for pupils to record their own learning and achievements. Opportunities are lost to challenge the potential of the more able pupils by using the enthusiasm and specialist knowledge of the teacher to provide the opportunity for external accreditation for pupils in Years 10 and 11.

Geography

Provision for geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality teaching and very effective teamwork.
- A well-balanced and relevant curriculum.
- Good use of field trips to support classroom learning.

Commentary

64 At the last inspection the variable quality of teaching affected the progress that the pupils made in their learning. There has been significant improvement and the quality of teaching is at least good and at times is very good. The lessons are well planned and appropriate activities capture the interest of the pupils as they work hard and make good progress. The staff work very effectively as a team and every opportunity is taken to praise the pupils and as a result the pupils make good progress in their confidence to ask and answer questions.

65 The curriculum is well planned and as the pupils progress through the school they develop an awareness and understanding of the world around them. They begin to recognise important landmarks and geographical features in their immediate area, weather changes, how to get from one place to another reading a map and then move on to identifying key areas of the world in the atlas. They think about looking after the environment, for example, the need to look after plants and animals and the bad effect of litter. Pupils in Year 11 understand how and why some geographical features can influence and affect peoples' lives. For example, how rivers are used for industry or recreation and what is the effect of population growth on the environment. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to relate their learning to the real world, by taking part in local field trips.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Not enough evidence was obtained to make an overall judgement of provision for design and technology.

Food technology

Provision in food technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in food technology lessons is good and as a result they achieve well.
- There is a good specialist area for teaching food technology and resources are good.
- The pupils in Years 10 and 11 have good provision but opportunities to gain external accreditation are limited.

Commentary

66 Pupils really enjoy food technology lessons and for some pupils it is their favourite lesson. All pupils are able to take an active part in the lessons due to the good teaching and skilled support of the special support assistants. All of the staff work very well as a team and work sensitively with pupils, encouraging them to become as independent as possible. The essential skills are taught and assessed regularly and key vocabulary is taught and explained. Hygiene and safety procedures are stressed appropriately in good quality provision. Relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils are excellent and pupils behave very well and are able to work together harmoniously and as a result they achieve well.

67 By Year 11, pupils are confident in the kitchen and are able to follow recipes correctly. They use kitchen equipment safely and weigh and measure accurately. However, although pupils follow a course at Year 11 this is not sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils. Part of the technology curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is taught at college. This gives pupils access to a wide range of high quality equipment that is not available in school. Their time in college is a very good social experience, inspiring pupils to learn and raising their self-esteem as they interact with their peers. However this course does not lead to any external accreditation and as a result the opportunity is lost to extend the pupils' opportunities to achieve nationally recognised qualifications.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievements in art and design of pupils in Years 7 to 11 are outstanding.
- Pupils are able to talk with confidence about the work of other artists.
- There is a very good, varied curriculum taught by a specialist art teacher in a well-resourced art room.

Commentary

68 All of the pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow a GCSE course with significant levels of success. Last year all of the pupils were successful and many gained average grades. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 keep a sketch book which is used very well to explore and extend the pupils' ideas and techniques. Pupils are justifiably proud of their achievements in art and design and are proud of their work on display. They can confidently discuss their work and are able to talk about the artists who have influenced it. In lessons they work with concentration and enthusiasm and are able to work independently with care and imagination.

69 Pupils in Year 11 use watercolour to paint a leaf. They examine it carefully using a magnifying glass and paint it with small brushes, applying the paint carefully. They use different techniques that they have developed previously to represent the autumn colours of the leaves and produce fine detailed work. The curriculum is varied, includes a wide range of media, including fabrics, clay and sculpture, and uses the art of other cultures successfully to raise standards.

Music

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator is a subject specialist and teaches the pupils up to Year 6 very well.
- The quality and range of opportunities for the development of the pupils' musical skills are very good.
- The pupils in Years 10 and 11 have the opportunity to write lyrics and experience recording with outside musicians.
- The very good opportunities provided by the school for the pupils to play and perform together contribute well to their personal development.
- The school has a good range of high quality resources.

Commentary

70 The co-ordinator has a good overview of the pupils' abilities and keeps meticulous records of their progress and achievements. Display work illustrates the fun pupils have in performing in the local schools festivals and appearing with other musicians. Very good teamwork ensures that the pupils up to Year 2 are very involved and feel secure when singing and playing. They join in well with the African greeting song and enjoy action songs. They are beginning to recognise and name instruments and like to use the microphone. With the use of shapes they are beginning to respond to loud and soft tones, they listen well to each other and are very careful with the instruments. Movement and music with the groups provides a very lively opportunity for dance, actions and singing together. Good use is made of space to encourage movement and to develop spatial awareness. Pupils respond well to loud and soft sounds and quick and slow movements. They can work with partners, in small groups and on their own. The singing and dancing games encourage them to listen carefully and sing along. Pupils make very good progress in performing for each other and show by their actions how confident they are.

71 Older pupils are incorporating written symbols to represent volume and silence. They use keyboards for composition and learn the correct musical terms. They enjoy performing to each other and producing a written score. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 respond well to their involvement with More Music in Morecambe, a local community based organisation with a longstanding commitment to the school. The pupils are proud of the lyrics that they have written which have been

performed to an audience. They contribute well to a theme of 'what makes me happy' and incorporate this into 'blues' rhythm. The performance is recorded and very good guidance is provided by the musicians to help improve the pupils' work. All pupils show sheer delight on hearing the recording, this contributes very well to their personal development. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of how the different sounds are achieved.

72 Maximum opportunities are provided for performance both in and out of school. A recent school performance involved older pupils writing the lyrics for the sound track and parents supported the production by making the costumes. Pupils play and sing for festivals and Christmas performances. The school's good range of high quality resources provide the pupils with stimulating opportunities to make at least good progress in their learning.

Physical Education

The provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good enthusiastic and specialist teaching for pupils in Years 7 to 11.
- The very good use of assessment to inform excellent planning.
- The provision of very good changing and showering facilities.
- There are insufficient residential opportunities for the pupils and the provision of extra-curricular activities is only satisfactory.

Commentary

73 The subject specialist uses his knowledge and expertise very well to teach the pupils in Years 7 to 11 and as a result they make very good progress in their learning and achieve well. The special support assistants work very well with the teacher to ensure that the pupils are warmed up thoroughly at the start of the lessons. Some of the Year 8 pupils understand that you can damage a muscle if you do not warm up properly. The teacher uses expert demonstration very well and as a result the Year 9 pupils make very good progress in the development of their gymnastics skills. The teacher links theory and practice very well and encourages them to create smart and sharp shapes in their floor work. Every opportunity is taken to use and reinforce the use of correct specialist terms such as bridge shape and symmetry. The pupils show significant progress in their ability to remember, reproduce and explore a sequence of movements on a bench. The very busy lessons maintain their pace as the pupils work very well in teams to get the apparatus out and put it away. Equally impressive is the fact that the Year 9 pupils make very good progress in the accuracy of their throwing skills and also their confidence when catching a basketball. The Year 10 and 11 pupils talk enthusiastically about their very good opportunity to use the physical education facilities at the local college. Some of the pupils have the potential to follow a GCSE course in physical education and the co-ordinator is considering this option for the future. Teaching and learning for the pupils in Years 1 to 6 are good overall and there is some limited development of the physical education curriculum across the school. However the knowledge and expertise of the subject specialist is not used sufficiently to help boost the standards in physical education for the younger pupils. This is an area of development that has not been addressed following the last inspection.

74 The subject co-ordinator has focussed his professional development on improving the policies and procedures for assessment in the subject and as a result assessment is now very good. Accurate assessment is used very well to gain a clear understanding of each pupil's strengths and areas for development. This data is carefully analysed and provides the basis for establishing challenging targets with the pupils. The pupils are fully involved in the assessment of their progress at the end of each unit of work. The teacher takes every opportunity to involve the pupils fully in the evaluation of their own and others performance. Digital cameras and video cameras are used very well as an aspect of ongoing assessment and provide immediate feedback. A real strength of this approach is that the pupils' achievements are celebrated and shared by the other pupils. The clear and accurate assessment is used as the basis of excellent planning and a

particular strength is the way that the activities are planned to meet the needs of all of the pupils and as a result they make very good progress.

75 The provision of very good changing and showering facilities is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils line up eagerly and change quickly to start their lessons promptly and no time is lost. The pupils wear appropriate clothing for sports, behave very well and are very active. They have the opportunity to have a shower at the end of the lesson and this is used to help them develop their self care and personal awareness.

76 A good range of activities is offered in the school's physical education provision. Pupils make good progress in their swimming skills using the facilities at a local high school. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 set exemplary standards with very positive attitudes and behaviour at the swimming pool and as a result make particularly good progress. The pupils' progress and achievements are linked to an award scheme and they are very proud of their swimming certificates. Pupils' achievements in sport are evident throughout the school as they enjoy a good range of games. Their involvement in sport makes a very good contribution to the ethos of the school. The recent introduction of tag rugby was thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils.

77 The outdoor activities that take place are a positive aspect of the extended curriculum, for the older pupils the weakness is that, insufficient of these activities are provided. The pupils talk enthusiastically about their outdoor activities. They thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to use a local indoor climbing wall and canoeing is particularly popular with them. The school has shown a good commitment to the funding of a good range of outdoor equipment. The pupils are very aware of their progress in the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze Level and are looking forward to the opportunity to complete their expedition. The subject co-ordinator is clear that these activities boost the commitment of the older pupils and helps to improve their attendance. He is keen to provide an increased number of valuable outdoor activities for the pupils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planning for personal, social, health education and citizenship is good.
- There is good use of support material to enhance the teaching.
- There are good links with the local community.
- Opportunities for citizenship are identified in subjects.
- The positive development of the school council for the pupils in Years 7 to 11.

Commentary

78 The personal, social, health education and citizenship activities are well planned. A good range of activities provides effective challenges to further pupils' understanding of a range of health and wider environmental issues. Good quality materials have been developed to support the teaching in areas such as health, drugs and sex education. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils develop an understanding of the dangers of smoking through the use of models and diagrams produced by the school.

79 The school makes good use of the local community to effectively develop the pupils' progress in citizenship. An example of this is the visit from the local Member of Parliament to support the pupils in their election process for their school council. The identification of issues from other subjects, such as investigating feelings and responses in English, also play an important part in their very good social development.

80 The School Council helps to promote the very good ethos of the school. It gives the pupils the opportunity to explore and experience standing for office, as well as making choices and voting.

There is a need to extend this provision to the pupils in Years 1 to 6. "Circle Time" for the pupils in Years 1 to 6 is well managed and gives them well structured opportunities to explore sensitive issues such as relationships and bullying.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	6
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	4
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	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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