

## INSPECTION REPORT

**ACCRINGTON ST JOHN WITH ST AUGUSTINE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Accrington

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119445

Headteacher: Mr G W Garlick

Lead inspector: Mr G R Alston

Dates of inspection: 18 – 20 October 2004

Inspection number: 266274

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	197
School address:	Maudsley Street Accrington Lancashire
Postcode:	BB5 6AD
Telephone number:	01254 392717
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Brankin
Date of previous inspection:	4 November 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St John with St Augustine is a Church of England primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of four and 11. It is situated in two buildings on the outskirts of Accrington. This is an average-sized primary school in England with 197 pupils on the roll: 91 boys and 106 girls. The roll has decreased in recent years because of a fall in numbers of pupils entering the school. Children arrive at school reflecting the full range of attainment levels but, overall, the attainment on entry is below average. Pupils are organised into seven classes. The pupils come from a large, inner-city catchment area that has some signs of deprivation. Housing ranges from local authority estates to private dwellings that are terraced houses in the main. It is an area of low mobility. The majority of pupils are white and a small minority (five per cent) come from Pakistani backgrounds. Ten pupils (five per cent) do not have English as their first language but none of them is at an early stage of acquiring English. These figures are lower than most schools. There are seven per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, which is below the average. Forty-four pupils (22 per cent) are on the list of special educational needs and there is a wide range of learning difficulties. This percentage is above the national average. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is also above the national average. The school has appointed three new teachers in the last two years including a new deputy headteacher. In 2002 the school received an Achievement award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20794	G Alston	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education
19343	M Howel	Lay inspector	
30724	D Hiscock	Team inspector	Science Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
21020	T Galvin	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

A group of Year 6 pupils said proudly, '*inspectors told us a few years ago our school wasn't very good, everybody's worked hard since then and it's much better now!*' The recent inspection confirms these pupils' views. This is an improving school that provides a warm, caring learning environment. Key areas such as leadership and management, teaching and pupil progress that were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection have all improved and are now satisfactory. This is an effective school that no longer has serious weaknesses and now gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- 2004 National test results at 11 are above average in mathematics and well above in science.
- Higher attaining infant pupils do not achieve as well as they should in reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and most junior classes leading to good achievement in these classes, but this quality is not consistent.
- Pupils' speaking and mathematical mental and problem solving skills are weak.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils display good attitudes, very good relationships and their behaviour is good.
- Development planning fails to take account of coordinators' subject action plans and lacks the necessary detail to judge the success of new initiatives.
- Pupils are sensitively cared for and this is much appreciated by pupils and their parents.
- In the Foundation Stage, the provision for creative development and for their knowledge and understanding of the world is not as strong as the good provision in other areas of learning.
- Opportunities to extend pupils' literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across all subjects are not sufficiently carefully planned for.
- Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

There has been a good improvement since the last inspection. The school has maintained the strengths identified in the last report and improved the areas identified as weaknesses. The standards pupils now achieve in English, mathematics and science are better. Although the overall quality of teaching has improved and pupils make better progress, this is not consistent across the school. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The provision for ICT has improved but there now need to be more opportunities for pupils to use these skills across all subjects.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	E	C	B
Mathematics	E	E	B	A
Science	E	E	A	A*

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.*

Overall, pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. Children enter reception with levels of ability that reflect the full range but are below average overall. The children's achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and by the time they enter Year 1 most will meet the goals they are expected to achieve in most areas of learning. The exceptions are in their creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The results of the 2004 national tests in Year 2 were below average in reading and mathematics and well below in writing. Results reflect the above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs (for the school) in the class who took the test. In the present Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in reading and writing

higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Also pupils' speaking and mental and problem solving skills in mathematics are weak. In Year 6, standards are average in English and above average in mathematics and in science. Overall, pupil achievement is good from Years 3 to 6. The results shown in the table above are average in reading, above in mathematics and well above in science. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English make good progress. Standards in basic reading, writing and mathematical skills are high enough by the end of Year 6 but this is not the case with pupils' speaking, mental mathematics and problem solving skills. There is little difference in the performance of girls and boys. The targets set for the school in national tests are challenging enough. Standards in ICT are average at seven and 11 and pupil achievement is good.

Overall, pupils' personal development is **good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. The particular strengths are the good attitudes and behaviour and very caring relationships that are fostered. Pupils like school and attendance is above average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in junior classes, particularly Years 4 to 6 and sound in infant classes. Where teaching is very good, teachers know their subjects and plan lessons effectively. They judge pupils' levels of attainment accurately and meet the diverse needs in the classes. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, especially with the good support from caring learning support assistants, is effective. They all make good progress towards meeting the targets set for them.

Overall, the curriculum is sound and is further enriched by a very wide range of activities. All pupils benefit equally from what the school has to offer. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to extend their reading, writing, speaking and ICT skills across all subjects. Pupils receive good support and guidance and the steps taken to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are effective. A particular strength is the development of very good and trusting relationships with adults. Links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher provides sound leadership and a vision for the school that embraces improving academic standards and developing strong caring values. He has good support from key staff who are beginning to manage their subjects successfully and show initiative. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. Governors are supportive, inquisitive and are developing in their role as 'critical friends'.

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

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. Parents are particularly happy about their children's progress, growing maturity, fair treatment and the high expectations of staff. Pupils enjoy their school life, like their teachers and are proud of its achievements. They find lessons interesting.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise the quality of teaching so that teaching is consistently good across all classes.
- Improve pupils' ability to respond to mental mathematics and problem solving questions.
- Raise the standards that higher attaining infant pupils achieve in their reading and writing.
- Allow more time for discussion and debate to improve pupils' speaking skills.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing and ICT skills across subjects.
- Make development planning a more precise management tool for school improvement.
- Improve the provision in the Foundation Stage.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Achievement overall is satisfactory.** It is satisfactory in most aspects of English, mathematics and science across infant classes and good across junior classes. Current standards in English, mathematics and science are average at the age of seven and are average in English and above average in mathematics and science at the age of eleven. Achievement is good in ICT and the standards pupils attain are at the expected level at the ages of seven and 11.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in reception and across junior classes is good, particularly in Years 4 to 6.
- Pupils make good progress from Years 3 to 6 and, by the age of eleven, standards are above average in mathematics and well above in science.
- Achievement in infant classes is satisfactory but not as good as in junior classes.
- Higher attaining infant pupils do not achieve as well as they should in reading and writing.
- Overall, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress towards their targets.
- Pupils' speaking and their mental and problem solving skills in mathematics are not high enough at age seven and 11.

#### Commentary

- 1 The table below shows that in 2004 standards in Year 2 were below the national average in reading, well below average in writing and below average in mathematics. When compared to those in similar schools they were below average in writing and average in reading and mathematics. The figures indicate a slight improvement in reading and mathematics results but very little progress in writing. However, in this class there was a larger proportion of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs than is normal for the school. This was confirmed by the work seen in the current Year 3. The school recognised that writing results were not keeping pace with the others and this became a focus for improvement. Proportions of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. When comparing the results of boys and girls, there is no significant difference. The school's trend has been improving since 2003 and is similar to the national picture.

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.9 (13.3)	16.0 (15.8)
Writing	12.2 (13.6)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.0 (15.1)	16.4 (16.5)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- 2 The table below shows that in 2004, standards in Year 6 tests were close to the national average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was below average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Over three years up to 2003, results were below average in English, mathematics and science. In 2004 standards in English, mathematics and science rose significantly. Test results in these subjects are now better than those found in similar schools. Evidence from the inspection is that there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.



### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (24.5)	26.6 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.9 (24.6)	27.8 (26.8)
Science	30.3 (26.7)	29.4 (28.6)

*There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

### **Work seen during the inspection**

- 3 Overall standards have risen in national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 since the last inspection. Standards have risen in Year 2 but not as significantly as in Year 6 where there has been a good improvement. There are a number of reasons why this is so:
- the major focus for improvement since the last inspection has been English, mathematics and science where training, resources and assessment have all been features of an implemented action plan;
  - pupils' very good attitudes to learning;
  - external expertise from the local authority has helped coordinators develop action plans aimed at raising standards in English, mathematics and science;
  - the quality of teaching is good across Years 3 to 6 and in reception and as a result pupil achievement is high in those classes, particularly in Years 4 to 6.
- As a consequence of all these factors over time, pupils' achievement is good across junior classes, including those pupils with special educational needs and those pupils whose first language is not English. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is satisfactory and linked to the satisfactory teaching in those classes where there is not enough good teaching.
- 4 Given their low starting points, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their identified targets for the acquisition of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. This is because their targets are clearly defined, tasks are modified to take into account their prior learning and they receive good support from teachers and extra help from learning support assistants during lessons.
- 5 Overall, the progress of pupils whose first language is not English (mainly Pakistani) is the same as for other pupils being good in junior classes and satisfactory in infant classes. Achievement for these pupils is linked to the quality of teaching. Whenever possible, learning support assistants provide strong support, and other pupils are always happy to help. Gifted and talented pupils' needs are met through the challenging tasks that are provided in lessons and the good opportunities which they and other pupils have to take part in out-of-school clubs, particularly in sport and music. Throughout the school, girls and boys perform similarly at all levels of ability.
- 6 Test data shows that the knowledge, skills and understanding of the current children who started school in the reception class this year are very variable. The overall profile is below the level expected for children of this age in all areas of learning. In the past, the profile was well below average in some years. Children have particular difficulties in the areas of communication, language and literacy and number. They get a good start in the reception class that leads to good achievement in a number of areas of learning for example, writing and phonics. As a result, by the time they reach Year 1 the attainment of the vast majority is likely to reach the national expectation in most areas of their learning. This represents good achievement in all of these aspects. However, it is unlikely that most pupils will achieve the expected level in their creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement in these areas is satisfactory.

- 7 In English, standards at age seven this year are average and are better than the results in the 2004 national tests. This is because of lower proportions of pupils with special educational needs in the current class. However, higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as they should in reading and writing. Limited opportunities to write and lack of breadth of reading material restrict their progress. At age 11, standards are average and similar to 2004 test results. Throughout the school pupils show confidence and competence in listening, reading and writing and there is a clear progression in their work and achievements. However, pupils' literacy skills do not benefit from the work they do in other subjects, this is particularly true of the work done by higher attaining pupils. The focus on developing pupils' speaking skills is inconsistent across the school resulting in standards that are below the expected level at ages seven and 11. Pupils are not confident when speaking and do not find it easy to explain their thinking or answer questions clearly.
- 8 In mathematics, standards at seven are average. Pupils use their number knowledge to solve number and money calculations accurately. They confidently investigate length, time and shape. Pupils' skills in the key area of number are at the expected level. Pupils display good strategies for counting on in 2s, 4s, and 5s. By the age of 11, the standards achieved are above average. Older pupils become confident working with fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils measure accurately. They understand co-ordinates in four quadrants, rotational symmetry and can interpret bar graphs and pie charts. They systematically add and subtract decimals to two places. Higher attaining pupils are confident in their knowledge and understanding of number patterns, multiples and fractions and work effectively in data handling activities. At seven and eleven the common weaknesses are:
- average and lower attaining pupils do not demonstrate a good understanding of place value and are not confident at knowing the value of each digit in a three-digit number;
  - pupils' recall of number bonds and multiplication tables is weak and it is common for average and higher attaining pupils to still use their fingers when counting to solve mental questions;
  - significant numbers find difficulty tackling problems particularly in recording the correct calculation in order to answer the question.
- 9 In science, standards at seven are average and at 11 are above average. Achievement is good by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11. This is mainly because most pupils are becoming skilled at predicting, recording, carrying out investigations independently and drawing accurate conclusions. Most lower attaining pupils will reach average standards by the end of the year. Higher attaining pupils are good at classification and recording. They have a good understanding of forces.
- 10 At the ages of seven and 11 pupils achieve the expected level in information and communication technology and achievement is good as many pupils do not have access to a computer at home. This is a big improvement on the findings from the last inspection. The developing use of computers in other subjects is a significant reason for the better achievement of pupils. However, this needs to be further developed. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards and achievement.

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

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are **good**. Provision for personal development through the opportunities offered for social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is above average. This reflects the views of many parents that pupils enjoy school. These qualities make a major contribution to the personal development of all pupils and consequently impact successfully on their attainment and achievement.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good attitudes of pupils.

- The very good relationships between pupils and staff.
- There are limited opportunities for the involvement of pupils in the life of the school.

## Commentary

- 11 A whole-school policy on behaviour ensures that rules are practicable and fully understood. The system of rewards and sanctions is appropriate. Most teaching and learning support staff have a consistent approach and, as a result, pupils respond positively to these routines. The understanding of right and wrong, honesty and fairness are effectively cultivated through direct teaching in personal, social and health education lessons. These are planned throughout the school. They are further enhanced through the consistently positive personal example of all staff. Pupils are encouraged to consider the consequences of their actions and are aware of the impact of their positive behaviour on their learning. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- 12 Relationships in the school are very good and pupils get on happily together in lessons, at breaks and at lunchtimes. They show much consideration for one another and happily share and work sensibly together. Pupils work in an effective learning environment. The school is very vigilant and makes sure that bullying or harassment does not take place. There have been no recent examples of such behaviour. Pupils happily accept responsibility in lessons as monitors and doing jobs around the school.
- 13 Pupils' personal development is high on the school's list of priorities and as a result provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Teachers make good use of religious discussion to help pupils reflect on how best they can contribute to the community. Issues such as kindness to others or the injustice of bullying and dishonesty feature in class and school discussion. There is a very strong drive by all staff to promote pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are valued as individuals; their achievements are recognised and recorded. They are encouraged by this and strive always to do their best. They recognise and value what others do.
- 14 Social and moral development is promoted effectively. There is a clear code of conduct that is understood by all. Pupils have a very clear understanding of what is right and wrong and are encouraged in the principles of teamwork and fair play. Relationships between pupils are very good. Provision for cultural development is good. It is rooted in the school's ethos and sets out clearly the expectation that all people are to be treated with dignity and respect. The school has a clear policy on race equality that challenges racist perspectives and provides opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate the cultural values of others.
- 15 Other opportunities are provided through regular contact with a school in Basra and involvement in fund-raising projects for local and national charities. Pupils are eager to accept responsibility from tidying their classrooms through to being responsible for care and control of resources. The school is reviewing opportunities for pupils to take more responsibilities through a school council and by becoming more aware of their own learning.

## Attendance

The table below shows the attendance figures for the school.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

- 16 Attendance rates have risen recently and are now above the national rates. The school rigorously monitors attendance and punctuality and attempts in many ways to make parents and pupils fully aware of the importance of full attendance and punctuality. The strong family ethos makes pupils very happy to come to school.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, provision is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is a sound curriculum in place. Links with parents, with the community and other schools are good. This is a warm, caring school.

### Teaching and learning

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and in the junior stage, particularly Years 4 to 6.
- There is not enough good teaching in the infant stage.
- Achievement is good for pupils whose first language is not English in junior classes and satisfactory in infant classes.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are taught effectively.
- Teachers do not always extend pupils' literacy or ICT skills across all subjects.
- The teaching of mental and problem solving skills is not effective in helping pupils achieve as well as they should.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	14	11	0	0	0

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

- 17 Across the school the standard of teaching has generally been raised and has gone from unsatisfactory to satisfactory overall. The main reasons for this improvement are:
- good support from the local authority leading to a better understanding of subjects by teachers because of well focused training opportunities;
  - three new teachers to the school who have brought new ideas and good teaching skills, particularly into the junior department;
  - more rigorous checking and support by senior management and the local authority has led to increased confidence and competence;
  - better procedures and practices in judging pupils' levels of attainment. This has led to more informed teaching that caters for all pupils, including higher attaining pupils.
- As a result, standards have been raised and pupils are achieving more.
- 18 Overall in Years 3 to 6, the teaching is good, being strongest in Years 4 to 6, and most teachers are strong in terms of:
- the very good relationships they have with their pupils;
  - the planning for lessons, groups of lessons and for the overall programme;
  - their enthusiasm and keenness to engage pupils in worthwhile, challenging and carefully matched activities;
  - expecting a lot of the pupils.

In return, pupils are highly motivated learners who enjoy their lessons and seek to meet the individual targets that are identified for them. Pupils produce a lot of good work and their books show constant improvement. Both parents and pupils consider that the school stretches the youngsters and they are pleased about this.

- 19 On occasions, the two infant teachers are unable to match the good qualities of their colleagues. However, their practice is never less than satisfactory and there are, on occasions, examples of good teaching. An area that is quite difficult for them is the management and control of pupils, particularly the younger ones in Year 1. This leads to pupils not making the best use of their time and producing less work than expected. Inspectors saw enough of pupils in a variety of situations to recognise that they are challenging. Furthermore, it is highly commendable that the junior teachers have very effective strategies for managing lessons and this further enables learning to flourish. Where teaching is less effective, a common weakness is low expectations. For example, higher attaining Year 2 pupils quickly identified a sequence in even numbers and found the work too easy. Another weakness is where work not well matched to pupils' abilities. For example, in Year 1 the task of naming a selection of three-dimensional shapes proved too difficult for lower attaining pupils and they did not understand how to identify faces or corners in order to name the shape. This reflects weaknesses in using the information effectively in planning lessons. In addition, in one class there are pupils who have emotional/behavioural difficulties, and who at times hinder other pupils' learning. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, repeated interruptions made it difficult for some pupils to concentrate and remain focused on the lesson.
- 20 The teaching fails to make good use of pupils' literacy and information and communication technology skills across all subjects. Similarly, pupils are not given enough tasks that require them to use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in practical problem solving activities. These deficiencies restrict pupils' achievement in solving mathematical problems and further improving their literacy skills.
- 21 Some key skills are not always taught effectively because in mathematics, the mental/oral starter has too often a narrow focus. Teachers fail to allow pupils to explain their strategies and questions are not carefully matched to the pupils' learning needs. At times, little use is made of whiteboards to ensure all pupils are fully involved or for teachers to check on their learning. As a result, pupils are not confident or as competent as they should be in answering mental mathematical questions. In a significant number of lessons there is not enough time given to discussion and debate. Pupils are not asked to extend their responses or further develop their ideas. This limits the development of pupils' speaking skills.
- 22 Pupils with special educational needs learn effectively and their achievement is good, many from a low starting point. Four factors have a positive impact on their learning:
- targets in individual plans for their learning are precise;
  - tasks are planned that cover the same type of work as the rest of the class but which are tailored to their special needs and specific targets;
  - teachers and learning support assistants give good support during lessons. This helps pupils with significant barriers to learning to continue to work at the task, supports their motivation and concentration and ensures that they achieve successfully;
  - teachers assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs effectively, through marking their work and through very carefully targeted questioning during lessons.
- 23 Achievement is good for pupils whose first language is not English in junior classes and satisfactory in infant classes. This comes about because of:
- teachers being aware of the needs of individual pupils through training, accurate and helpful assessments of pupils' levels of attainment and making plans for lessons that are tailored to individual needs;

- good support through good teaching in junior classes and when possible effective help from learning support assistants.

24 Assessment procedures are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection when they were an area for improvement. The new coordinator has refined the systems the school had in place effectively. A number of practices were time consuming and were having limited impact on helping teachers plan lessons. In English and mathematics, teachers assess their pupils appropriately in all activities to highlight any areas of strength or difficulty. This information is then used satisfactorily to plan work to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils are tested frequently in English and mathematics. This information is also used as a means of checking their learning. Tracking systems are in place and show the progress that pupils are making towards the targets they have been set and whether this is good enough. These targets are reviewed to identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. Reasons why these pupils are underachieving and ways forward for them are then discussed. This helps ensure that they all do as well as they should. This sound practice is also in evidence in other subjects and helps staff plan lessons that build well on past learning. All staff give pupils good verbal feedback on their work, and the marking of work is usually helpful, particularly in junior classes. It gives pupils a clear picture of whether they have learnt what was intended.

## THE CURRICULUM

Improvements in the curriculum have led to a **satisfactory and worthwhile** range of activities for all the pupils in the school. These are significantly enriched by the wide scope of additional experiences that broaden their day to day learning. The school's accommodation and the resources for learning are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are rich international links, colourful work in the arts and a very good range of sports on offer.
- There is good provision in reception for some of the early skills for literacy and number work but the provision for children's creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world is not as strong as in other areas of learning.
- The close support of learning support assistants helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve as successfully as most other pupils.
- Pupils' personal, social and health education is thoroughly planned.
- Pupils investigate well in science, but have too few opportunities to investigate in mathematics.
- The development of the skills of literacy and ICT is not planned carefully enough in other subjects.

### Commentary

25 The school's range of activities meets the needs of most of its pupils for much of the time. Substantial improvement in provision means that all pupils make successive steps in their studies. This improvement has started to accelerate pupils' progress in aspects of English, mathematics and science but there remains some way to go to ensure that each aspect of these subjects is planned equally well. There is now a clear curriculum plan in place for all the other subjects.

26 The school has an impressive variety of additional activities, visits and visitors. There is a wealth of sports and opportunities in the arts that help pupils to develop skills and gain an awareness of the richness of different cultures through clubs, theatre, galleries and many other places they visit. Very good international links bring a rich global dimension to the work of the school and to pupils' lives.

- 27 Strong provision in reception gets children off to a rapid start in some of the early literacy skills and understanding of number. On the downside, there are limited links planned between the areas of learning so children do not readily have the chance to pursue ideas that grab them. The school has improved the resources, but there are not enough to enliven many of the topics. For example, the lack of tools for children to investigate scientific ideas limits the scope of their understanding about the world.
- 28 The emphasis on children's personal, social and health needs is at the heart of the work of the school. In this school pupils develop as individuals who respect others and care about them because experiences are planned to meet their needs. Moreover, the pupils learn what options in life are open to them and how their choices might affect others.
- 29 Pupils who have special educational needs benefit from the close attention of learning support assistants who have a good knowledge of their difficulties and help them to meet their personal targets quickly. Provision is good across the board for these pupils and this ensures that they have good access to the full range of activities. The school has a plan to cater for the needs of wheelchair users should the occasion arise.
- 30 Curriculum plans do not highlight clearly how pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills can be further developed across all subjects. A good start has been made. For example, the development of writing skills is at its best in history, where it is good. Although ICT resources have significantly improved, planning does not enable pupils to use computers well enough in other subjects. On the other hand, pupils learn to handle investigations in science successfully because the school has improved the quality and emphasis of provision. Planning enables pupils to organise investigations by building up the skills they need to think for themselves. This is not the case in mathematics where provision is inconsistent.

## **CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

The school makes **good** provision for the pupils' care, safety and support.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- This is a caring school where pupils are known as individuals.
- Pupils have very good relationships with their teachers.
- There is good support and advice for the pupils' personal development.
- At present there is no system in place for pupils to express their views.

### **Commentary**

- 31 The school provides pupils with a safe and secure environment, where they are recognised for their individual qualities. There are secure child protection procedures in place, and an effective health and safety policy. The comprehensive rewards system ensures pupils receive praise and encouragement for both their work and personal achievements. Most teachers follow the school's behaviour policy, and when applied the good behaviour of pupils demonstrates its effectiveness. The attendance policy is known to parents who happily follow its advice. The school is aware of the older pupils who come to school on their own, and if they fail to arrive on time their parents will be contacted very soon after registration.
- 32 The very good relationships within the school help pupils to feel valued as individuals. They are comfortable talking to their teachers, both during lessons and at playtimes. The teachers act as good role models, and the good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils show how positively they respond to the teachers' high expectations. Personal development is monitored informally, and teachers share relevant information as pupils move through the school. The teachers know the pupils and their families well, are able to react sensitively to any problems that occur.

- 33 Pupils identified as having special educational needs receive good care and support from their assigned helpers and are well integrated into school life. There are effective systems for assessing, recording and reporting the achievements and progress of pupils with special educational needs and these are used well to plan the next step in the pupils' learning. As a result, the pupils make good progress in relation to their previous learning.
- 34 Pupils have completed questionnaires organised by the local education authority and, after analysis, the findings are shared with the school but not the pupils. The results of these are noted and further discussions follow with pupils. The designs for the new playground markings were influenced by suggestions from the pupils. At present there is no school council or other forum for pupils to voice their opinions and make suggestions. There is some very early planning in place to introduce a council.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY**

The partnership between the school and parents is **good** and results in good support for pupils' learning. There are **good** links with other schools and the community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have positive views of the school and support its work well.
- The close links with other local schools are beneficial to pupils.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to be involved with their community.

### **Commentary**

- 35 There was a good response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and good attendance at the parents' meeting. The views expressed by the parents indicate that there is good support for the school and the education it is providing. They say their children like school and are expected to work hard. They consider the behaviour in the school to be good, and think their children are helped to become mature. Some parents felt that the school does not do enough to seek their views and there are no formal procedures in place for this to happen. The good home/school links help parents to make a significant contribution to their children's learning.
- 36 There are good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers inform parents at an early stage if there are any concerns about a child's learning. Also, parents are informed regularly about their children's progress. This contributes effectively to raising pupils' achievement. There is good liaison and support from outside agencies.
- 37 The school has developed good links with other local schools. It is part of cluster groups involving both primary and high schools. There are good opportunities for pupils to visit their new schools and to meet new teachers. The pupils experience art and drama lessons at a high school, and there are transition projects in literacy and mathematics. Year 7 pupils return to the school to tell Year 6 pupils how they have settled at their new school. These close links help pupils to gain confidence for the move to the next stage of their education.
- 38 The pupils are given many opportunities to be involved in events within the local community. There are close links with the church, and the pupils play an active part in many parish celebrations. The school supports many sporting and musical events, and welcomes a wide range of visitors to meet the pupils. Good use is made of local museums and places of interest, and pupils benefit from visits linked to topics they are studying. Pupils' horizons and experiences are considerably enhanced by the school's involvement with local activities.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

There is **satisfactory** leadership and management. The leadership of the headteacher is **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in leadership and management since the time of the last inspection.
- There is good leadership of some subjects and provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school's systems for analysing standards, and teaching and learning, although developing, are not yet rigorous enough in some areas.
- School development planning is not clearly focused on raising standards.
- Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

### Commentary

- 39 Leadership and management have improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory since the time of the last inspection. Representatives from the local education authority have been pivotal in bringing about these improvements. The school is now in a sound position to raise standards further.
- 40 The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy head teacher, is determined to improve standards and achievement in all areas of school life. He sets the tone for the school's strong Christian ethos in the care and mutual respect that he shows for all members of the school community. As a result, staff include all pupils fully in every aspect of school life.
- 41 The headteacher's commitment to raising standards is satisfactorily reflected in the systems and procedures for leading and managing the school. He and representatives from the local education authority have mainly monitored the quality of teaching and learning. The monitoring by the local education authority is perceptive, forthright and useful to the school and governing body in identifying clearly what needs to improve. These good features are not yet as evident when the headteacher checks and reviews teaching and learning. In the last two years the headteacher has had a considerable amount of advice from a variety of sources on how to improve the quality of provision in many areas of school life. The advice has not always been sifted and considered carefully before implementing the most manageable and effective initiatives. This has resulted in some initiatives becoming too time consuming and the impact minimal for example, in assessment procedures.
- 42 All the teachers have worked hard to create the school development plan for the current year and outline planning for one or two years ahead. The school collects a wide range of data on the progress and achievements of pupils. The resulting information is used well to identify some groups of pupils who need extra help with their learning, such as pupils with special educational needs. Also, the data is used to inform the action plans that are devised by subject coordinators and the school development plan. These plans identify some useful initiatives. However, the data is not always analysed and interpreted accurately so that it can be used to best effect. Also, the coordinators' actions plans are not integrated as well as they could be into the development planning process. As a result, the subject sections of the school development plan, and coordinators' action plans, do not always clearly identify the standards and achievements of different groups of pupils and what needs to be done to improve them. The criteria for checking the success of the initiatives in the school development plan are not precise enough or costed in sufficient detail.
- 43 Good leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs have brought about good improvement since the time of the last inspection. For example,

teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils' needs and they now make consistent use of pupils' individual education plans to provide specific work for them. Therefore, pupils make good progress in relation to their previous learning. There is good leadership of the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and ICT. These coordinators use their teaching expertise purposefully to lead the staff effectively. The procedures are good for the professional development of staff and for supporting newly qualified teachers and other staff new to the school.

- 44 The roles and responsibilities of the senior management team are developing well and they provide satisfactory leadership. Members of the senior management team are very supportive of the headteacher and committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning through staff training. This was evident when they decided to involve all staff in completing the self-evaluation form for this inspection. This was undertaken with support from the local education authority and it was used effectively to develop further the expertise of subject coordinators.
- 45 Governors have established a good partnership with staff and are very supportive of all that the school does. There is a good committee structure and the chair and vice-chair of governors visit the school regularly. The governors are committed to promoting the inclusive ethos of the school and they ensure that all the information that the school has to provide meets requirements. Their role in acting as a critical friend and challenging decision-making is developing.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	519,851
Total expenditure	561,627
Expenditure per pupil	2,564

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	113,137
Balance carried forward to the next	64,715

- 46 There is satisfactory management of the school's finances. The school, with support from the local education authority, has projected staffing costs over the next three years. The balance carried forward last year was 23 per cent of the school's budget and that was high. The balance carried forward to this year was above average at 12 per cent but the reserves are currently £25, 714 and that is average. The school has used the recent surpluses to provide time for subject coordinators to implement the subject action plans in order to raise standards. It has also used the money to maintain staffing levels because the number of pupils attending the school has fallen in the last few years.
- 47 Structures and procedures for the day-to-day administration and control of the school's finances are good. The school administrator effectively supports the smooth running of the school and the management of its finances. The headteacher carries out several tasks, such as generating letters to parents, which are usually undertaken by administrative staff. The school seeks to ensure that the services it receives are provided at the best value. The expenditure per pupil is below average. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** and good provision for developing children's reading, writing and number skills.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children know the routines, they readily look to adults for help and are trustful of their support.
- Children who are quicker to grasp early skills of letter knowledge and formation make a rapid start in some of their skills for writing.
- Robust teaching of number and early understanding of calculation makes children think.
- The variety of experiences provided are not sufficiently balanced, nor are they linked well enough across the areas of learning.
- There are not enough resources in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world to support children's learning.

### Commentary

48 When children start their reception year, their attainment is below that expected for their age. In particular, children's skills for communication vary considerably and in some year groups, are well below those of children their age. By the time they are ready to transfer to Year 1, most are on course to meet the goals set out for them to achieve in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, language and communication and mathematical development. This is a result of good progress in some of the key skills needed for a quick start in the National Curriculum. However, most children do not meet the goals for knowledge and understanding and creative development. This is mainly because a better than ordinary rate of progress is hampered by the limited range of relevant resources available to them to help them to explore and investigate for themselves. No judgement could be made about physical development because the full range of skills was not observed. Nevertheless, teaching is good. The accommodation is sound and there has been an improvement in basic classroom resources. Resources are satisfactory overall. However, although resources for outdoor play have improved they are minimal and arrangements for the outdoor provision are not sufficiently well focused on developing pupils' creative and physical skills. The leadership and management of the stage is sound and is beginning to focus on what needs to be done to bring about improvements in the provision.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children settle in quickly and behaviour is good.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to make choices.

49 The teaching in this area is sound and children's achievement is satisfactory. By the time they leave the reception class most will have reached the goal expected of them in this area of learning. Children quickly settle into reception because adults take special care of them and help them to feel secure and part of one big family. Children settle well to their work. Good leadership helps children to gain from a clear understanding of what is expected of them so they rise to shared challenges and tasks they are given. They manage their own belongings with relative ease. They are confident and trustful and they behave very well as they work and play alongside others. This being so, they have too little chance to learn to make choices independently and constantly look to adults for a lead even though many of

them are perfectly capable of sustained play with props and the seeds of ideas. When this does happen, they play happily and profitably. However, there is too little time for each child to explore for itself because the balance is weighted towards adults taking the lead. While this benefits some skills, it slows the development of other equally important personal skills for learning.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE, AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching of skills is good.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking and listening skills and extend their vocabulary.
- Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories.

50 The teaching in this area is good and children's achievement is good. By the time they leave the reception class most will have reached the goal expected of them in this area of learning and a number beyond this. Children get a rapid start in their knowledge and use of letter sounds and they form them in their writing with good movement. These features are taught very well and swiftly so. All the children achieve very well in this aspect of language and they gain great pleasure from the actions that help them to memorise them. So much so that in a session observed most of the children were starting to blend together three letter words such as 't-a-p'. They know that print carries a message but have limited understanding of the vast array of reasons that people write because there are only a few activities built into other areas of learning. The children develop a love of books and interest in reading and the teacher has the skill of providing children with interesting experiences. They enjoy the stories the teacher reads and they listen attentively taking in the detail. Most of the children can read the earliest books in the reading scheme and enjoy taking these home regularly to share with parents. The phrases that children use in their day to day conversations show that they remain below the goals for this feature of communication but soar above in their letter knowledge and formation. Indeed, more able children write with a maturity of handwriting and style well above that of most at the start of Year 1. When they transfer to Year 1, most can read and write simple sentences and have made good enough progress when sharing books.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and skilfully engages children's curiosity about numbers.
- Children's mathematical vocabulary is carefully developed and children can use it to describe their ideas and ways of working.

### **Commentary**

51 The teaching in this area is good and children's achievement is good. By the time they leave the reception class most will have reached the goal expected of them in this area of learning and a number beyond this. Children's activities show that the majority are on course to count to 10 by the time they start year 1. They use the term "zero" already and understand the term. In teaching sessions, the teacher checks their progress well and prompts them to think with some challenge. Work seen shows that those children who are quicker with numbers can combine 3 numbers, such as  $5+3+2=10$  at the start of Year 1. Many of them can count backwards from 10 to 0. Good teaching features some valuable ways that help children to

learn in the early stages of calculation. For example, they learn how to cross off numbers when they subtract small numbers from 10. The balance between conversation and the amount of children's recording is good and this helps children achieve very well in their understanding of simple calculation. Other adults make a good contribution to mathematics. Well thought out questions are based on close knowledge of the different needs of each child and a good understanding of the tasks in hand. In these sessions, adults consolidate what children know and extend them in fun ways that makes number play good fun. Only the very ordinary range of resources flaws an otherwise positive picture. For example, when children play in sand, they have a limited range of tools and containers that do not help to enrich their exploration of mathematical ideas.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are too few links across areas of learning.
- Children are encouraged to use their curiosity and senses to explore their world and gain knowledge.
- Good use is made of visitors.

### **Commentary**

52 The teaching in this area is satisfactory and children's achievement is sound. However, by the time they leave the reception class most will not have reached the goal expected of them in this area of learning and very few beyond this. Opportunities provided are satisfactory. They are planned to be mainly led by adults but provide few links across all areas of learning. As a result, children are unable to pursue these ideas fully and build on their own existing experiences. Nevertheless, teaching does provide the chance to consider some scientific ideas such as 'senses,' as part of the topic entitled 'Ourselves'. Moreover, inspection evidence shows that the level of children's spoken language on entering Year 1 hampers their understanding and attainment overall in this area of learning in some year groups. Children's awareness of time, place and cultures is planned for adequately but planning is stronger in providing an awareness of beliefs. Some thoughtful use of visitors makes a good contribution to their awareness of important family events such as a Christian Baptism.

## **PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

**No judgement** was made about the provision for physical and creative development.

53 In physical development, children attain the goals for their fine skills of control and they show typical skills of manipulation and strength in their fingers. Improved resources for outdoor physical development are now in place but there are too few of them and access to them is limited. No outdoor sessions were observed so no judgement could be made about children's attainment in the full range of physical development. Pupils' ideas for creative and imaginative play are below that of most children their age because they await adults to direct them rather than initiate or sustain their play in relevant and exciting ways. Some of them use familiar props for play well enough. The small amount of materials for creative making and experimentation makes progress narrow in breadth and rather too ordinary for children who have proved that they can do well. However, there are lots of rhymes and songs that punctuate and add to the calm and orderly rhythm of the day.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
- Teachers do not give enough time to developing pupils' speaking skills.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6.
- Some higher attaining pupils underachieve, particularly in Years 1 to 2.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across all subjects.
- Leadership of the subject is good.

#### Commentary

- 54 Inspection findings indicate that standards are now average in English by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, except in speaking and listening, where they are below average. This judgment does reflect the school's national test results in English for Year 6 pupils in 2004 which were average. In these tests fewer pupils than the national average reached the higher level in English in Year 6, and in writing in Year 2. In comparison with similar schools the Year 6 results were above average. Inspection findings indicate that standards are currently average in reading and writing in Year 2. The judgment is higher than the school's 2004 national tests results for the Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. Reasons for the higher standards this year is that through considerable extra help and support, the quality of teaching has improved in Year 1. It is now satisfactory. Three new staff in Years 4, 5 and 6 have raised standards considerably. There are also fewer pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 class than last year.
- 55 Most pupils' achievement is satisfactory in reading and writing in Years 1 to 2. Pupils mainly make satisfactory progress in Year 1. Through good quality teaching in Year 2 the progress of most pupils picks up considerably, except for the higher attaining pupils, so it is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6, so pupils' achievement is good, including the few pupils who learn English as an additional language. All teachers identify early the needs of pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and support staff give them good extra help so these pupils achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. There is no marked difference between the achievement of girls and boys. Even though standards are average at age seven and still average at age 11, achievement is good. This is because of high numbers of pupils with special educational needs, low attaining pupils and pupils who have limited vocabulary, experiences and creative ideas.
- 56 From a below average starting point in Year 1, pupils' progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory across the school because teaching is satisfactory. Most pupils listen well and have a satisfactory vocabulary for describing their ideas and experiences. There are a few reasons for the below average standards. A significant minority of pupils entered the school with a narrow vocabulary and this continues to be the position. They have insufficient vocabulary to understand the difficult words they meet in books or to add interest to their writing. There are regular opportunities to act out a role in front of others but this good practice has not been in place long enough to have enough impact in Year 6. As a result, some Year 6 pupils have difficulty adapting their speech to the audience and they lack confidence when they speak in front of others. Across the school in literacy lessons most teachers do not encourage pupils to extend their answers when they ask pupils questions or give pupils activities in which they talk at length, which builds up skills.

- 57 Year 6 pupils have competent research skills for finding information from books and the internet. Many higher attaining pupils read accurately and with expression. Average attaining pupils read accurately but find it difficult to understand some of the unfamiliar words they meet. One reason for this is that teachers sometimes miss opportunities in literacy lessons to promote pupils' better understanding of the texts they read. In Years 1 to 2, the rate of progress is not as rapid as it could be for higher attaining pupils. This is because teachers do not give the pupils a wide enough range of books that challenge and extend their learning. All teachers assess regularly the achievements and progress of pupils. The assessments are not consistently accurate in order to ensure that teachers plan work at the right level for individual pupils. On these occasions pupils' progress slows down.
- 58 In Years 2 and 6, most pupils write confidently and structure their writing clearly. Most Year 2 pupils punctuate the writing correctly and the standard of spelling is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils join their handwriting but some use a narrow range of words. Across the school teachers miss opportunities to set work for higher attaining pupils that challenges their capabilities so on these occasions they underachieve and their progress slows down.
- 59 Most teachers have high expectations of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work, so the standards of handwriting and presentation are good. However, the spelling of some higher attaining and average attaining pupils, and the punctuation of some average attaining pupils are below the level expected for pupils in Year 6. One of the reasons for this is that Year 6 pupils have only had the benefit of good quality teaching in the last two years and this has not been long enough for teachers to remedy the gaps in pupils' learning. Also, across the school the marking of pupils' work is not consistent in its quality of highlighting how pupils can improve. Another contributory factor is that pupils do not take enough responsibility for improving their writing. The setting of individual targets for pupils to reach is too recent an initiative to yet have an impact. The school provides lessons in basic skills for reading and writing in addition to the literacy hour. These have been successful for handwriting but not for punctuation because teachers do not always match the work to pupils varying learning needs.
- 60 Teaching was good in half the lessons seen; it was very good in one lesson and satisfactory in the remaining lessons. In the very good lesson the teacher set the work at a high level and promoted pupils' very good learning through very interesting and enjoyable activities. Features of the good teaching are careful planning and organisation and effective use of the computer-controlled projectors to explain clearly what pupils are to do in the lesson. Therefore, no time is wasted and pupils work purposefully. Pupils' behaviour is good because teachers manage them in a firm yet friendly manner. These good features are not as evident in Year 1. Also, the work is not always matched well to pupils' differing capabilities or pitched at the right level for the year group so pupils' progress slows down. All teachers do not make frequent use of computers to support pupils' learning.
- 61 The good leadership qualities of the subject coordinator have brought about good improvements in the subject since the time of the last inspection. She has been supported very effectively in developing her leadership by the local education authority. The coordinator's good quality teaching skills are a good role model for staff and pupils. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The coordinator uses the information from the monitoring of pupils' work and analysis of assessment and test data to devise an action plan that contains some useful initiatives. However, the information is not always analysed and interpreted to best effect in order to set out clearly what needs to be done to improve standards further. The coordinator has the ability, support and commitment to improve the subject further.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

- 62 Not all teachers provide a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to develop their language and literacy skills in English lessons and in other subjects. However, this is a developing area and there are good examples of teachers promoting different types of

writing in design and technology and history, but not in science. Pupils' reading skills are reinforced well in design and technology and history, for example when they research information on the internet.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 4 to 6, promoting standards that are better than average for pupils' ages.
- All pupils have equal access to the opportunities provided.
- Leadership and management are good.
- There is not a strong enough focus on developing pupils' mental skills at the start of lessons so that they can answer mental questions with greater speed, accuracy and confidence.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge in practical, problem solving situations to improve their abilities to solve written problems.

### **Commentary**

- 63 There has been a good improvement since the last inspection and standards are rising, particularly from Years 3 to 6. Standards are average when pupils are seven and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in the work seen are better than those indicated in the 2004 national tests. Pupils use their number knowledge to solve number and money calculations accurately. They confidently investigate length, time and shape. They find difficulty tackling problems particularly recording the correct calculation in order to answer the question. Pupils' skills in the key area of number are at the expected level. Pupils display good strategies for counting on in 2s, 4s, and 5s. Average and lower attaining pupils do not demonstrate a good understanding of place value and are not confident at knowing the value of each digit in a three-digit number. Pupils' achievement is sound in number calculations, but is less so in mental mathematics. Pupils' recall of number bonds and multiplication tables is weak. Average and higher attaining pupils still use their fingers when counting to solve mental questions.
- 64 Standards are above average at age 11 and pupils achieve well. Standards in the work seen are similar to those in the 2004 national tests. Older pupils become confident working with fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils measure accurately. They understand co-ordinates in four quadrants, rotational symmetry and can interpret bar graphs and pie charts. They systematically add and subtract decimals to two places. However, pupils do not have good quick recall of basic facts although they compute efficiently. Higher attaining pupils round up decimals to three places and carry out long division confidently. Average attaining pupils do not confidently explain their thinking because they are not frequently challenged to do so when solving mental problems. The majority find the thinking process equally difficult when faced with a written problem. Higher attaining pupils have good computational skills with written calculations but are less adept at applying their thinking.
- 65 In junior classes learning and achievement are good and successfully promoted, particularly in Years 4 to 6 by:
- the pupils' keen interest and good behaviour;
  - the way the pupils work successfully together, discussing their work as it progresses;
  - the quick pace that the pupils settle to written work and get through a good volume of work.
- 66 Many of the strong features of learning stem from the good qualities found in the good teaching in junior classes. Teachers know the subject well and use their own knowledge of mathematical processes to good effect in lessons. Teachers' planning is clear and crisp. As



a result, lessons go briskly and confidently, giving pupils the confidence to 'have a go'. Teachers make good use of their knowledge of how pupils learn and their knowledge of pupils' individual needs to plan tasks that match their prior achievement. Good use is made of a wide range of resources, including interactive white boards, digital data projectors and overhead projectors to keep pupils focused and engaged in the lesson. Owing to teachers' awareness of the different learning needs of different pupils, work is carefully matched to pupils' prior attainment. For example, extension tasks are prepared for those who learn and work more rapidly and need a further challenge.

- 67 Overall, the teaching is satisfactory in infant classes. Where teaching is good, there are high expectations; for example, Year 2 pupils were asked to work out for themselves how to use 'bridging' ten and how this relates to addition. This not only benefited their understanding but also developed their speaking skills. Where teaching is less effective:
- the start of the lesson lacks pace;
  - the tasks given do not challenge higher attaining pupils sufficiently;
  - insecure teacher knowledge means missed opportunities for incidental teaching.
- 68 Across the school, there are weaknesses in the teaching of pupils' mental skills and in providing pupils with effective strategies to solve problems. This is because the quality of the oral/mental starter at the beginning of the lesson and the discussion at the end varies throughout the school. At times, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to describe and compare strategies and mental recall is restricted to too narrow a range of examples. Similarly, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use the knowledge they have gained in everyday, practical, problem solving activities.
- 69 There is good support for those who find learning more difficult. These pupils have carefully planned tasks that support their learning needs. They get good attention from the teacher or from learning support assistants. This is a good and effective method of making sure that they continue to make progress, Teachers have good marking strategies that make sure pupils understand what they are learning and what they need to improve to achieve better standards. Also, they use very good questioning strategies, that check up on what pupils know and that are well structured to ensure that all pupils are kept motivated and challenged, including higher achieving pupils and those finding the work difficult. Additionally, there are good strategies for involving pupils learning English as an additional language.
- 70 The management of the subject is good and is beginning to influence and support teaching. Due to concerns over standards, the coordinator has worked hard with the local authority's mathematics team. They have monitored teachers' planning, results of tests and pupils' work. As a result, the coordinator has gained a clear picture of strengths and areas in need of improvement. For example, place value and setting out calculations are now a focus for improvement. New initiatives are being introduced to address these areas. However, because the coordinator has not monitored the teaching he does not have a clear picture as to whether new ideas are being implemented effectively by all staff. Formal assessment records of each pupil are kept and these are used purposefully to set group targets but not individual targets that are shared with pupils.

### **Numeracy across the curriculum**

- 71 There is a satisfactory curriculum for mathematics. Across the school, work was seen that related to number, shape and space, measurement and the handling of data. Mathematical skills are used and developed appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. However, pupils do not use their skills in ICT enough to aid their learning in mathematics, for example to record and display data collected in surveys. The development of mathematical vocabulary in all classes is not consistent and does not make a significant contribution to the pupils' literacy development.

## SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils investigate scientific ideas consistently in each class and are expected to explain scientific ideas and findings systematically.
- Robust leadership and challenging lessons in Years 4, 5 and 6 quicken the progress that pupils make and raise the standards to above that of most 11 year olds by Year 6.
- The higher attaining infant pupils could be more consistently challenged.
- Those pupils with special educational needs do well because they have the effective support of classroom assistants.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use computers to deepen their understanding.

### Commentary

- 72 There has been a good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are average at seven and above average at age 11; these standards are not fully reflected in 2004 national test results which were well above average. Practical experiences help pupils to design investigations well, think clearly about their observations and describe them. Clear learning objectives and good questioning by teachers help pupils to know exactly what they are learning and how this fits into their previous lessons. Year 6 pupils have to explain their findings using correct scientific terms and they do so with increasing clarity. This powerful teaching method in itself helps them to see and understand the connections between new ideas and what they know already. Even though pupils could transfer their thoughts into writing more than they do, the focus on recording their results in Years 4, 5 and 6 is well led by the subject coordinator. This has lifted standards to above those of most 11 year olds and built features into teaching plans that sustain these strengths. Pupils in the juniors achieve well and pupils make good progress because overall, learning is interesting and exciting.
- 73 In Year 2, pupils have a good diet of hands-on activities that help them to understand and use their mathematical skills in topics such as melting ice. The amount of scientific work shows a breadth of study and lots of interesting activities. Although pupils write about their findings with a clear focus on the scientific ideas studied, too much of the pupils' writing is formulated by teachers, so pupils, and more able ones in particular, do not get enough chances to record their findings for themselves. Pupils in the infants achieve appropriately and pupils make sound progress Good subject knowledge and well planned lessons are marred somewhat by a slow pace and in a lesson in Year 1 progress was restricted by flaws in classroom management.
- 74 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and nearly always at the same rate as others in lessons. This is because teachers plan work that they understand and can do, given the close support of teaching assistants throughout practical and challenging activities. These two important props help pupils to make sense of new ideas whatever their individual needs are.
- 75 Management of the subject is good and the coordinator shows great enthusiasm and drive which are beginning to drive standards up. Pupils' skills in using computers are not developed well enough in science. This is partly because improvement in the school's resources have not reached the level needed to enable pupils to handle data when they monitor light, heat or movement in their studies. This means that pupils are reliant on teachers to provide information rather than find out for themselves, a vital skill for independence in scientific learning.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

No judgement can be made on provision in information and communication technology (ICT) because only one lesson was seen.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the subject is good.
- Pupils achieve well in Year 2 and Year 6; many have limited access to computers at home.
- Computers are not used as often as they could be in some subjects.

### Commentary

- 76 The organisation of the school's timetable meant that only one ICT lesson was seen in Year 2 during the inspection. More evidence was gathered from pupils' work on display, teachers' lesson planning and discussions with pupils and teachers.
- 77 There has been good improvement in standards by the end of Year 2 since the time of the last inspection. Standards now meet national expectations for the subject by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Considering many have no access to a computer at home pupils make good progress including pupils with special educational needs and the few pupils whose first language is not English. Most Year 2 pupils use the mouse competently, for example when they edit a text on how to make a vehicle. The teacher uses the correct terms for the subject so pupils develop well the subject vocabulary. Year 6 pupils confidently use the mouse to work a variety of computer programs. They used the search engine Google to find information about *The Wizard of Oz*. They copied images and text from the web page, labelled the images and saved the work in their files on the computer.
- 78 In the lesson seen, the teacher's very good expertise underpinned the teaching. This meant that the teacher gave clear instructions and was able to effectively help pupils when they encountered difficulties with the computer program. Therefore, pupils knew exactly what they had to do in the lesson and they made good progress in their learning. There was good, firm, yet friendly management of pupils' behaviour that resulted in good behaviour and no interruption in the pupils' learning. Pupils were motivated by the work. They worked together in small groups and helped one another. This meant that pupils' personal qualities and collaborative skills were developed well. Staff give pupils with special educational need good extra support and provide programs that are matched to the pupils' specific needs so they make good progress. This was evident when Year 6 pupils with special educational needs used a computer program about alphabetical order.
- 79 There are a number of reasons for the good improvements in the subject. There has been a considerable investment in time and money, including staff training, and very effective support and advice from the local education authority. There are now an adequate number of good quality computers. The school's plans for a computer suite have been delayed so it has recently purchased six laptop computers which are currently used in Year 2 and Year 5. The consistent use of national guidance for planning lessons ensures that requirements are now met for teaching all aspects of the subject. Lesson planning ensures that pupils' work becomes harder as they move through the school and that the skills they learn develop in an appropriate order.
- 80 The coordinator uses her considerable expertise to lead the subject effectively. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The coordinator gathers information on the use of ICT, and pupils' work, from each class and uses the information to devise an action plan. This contains some useful initiatives for improving the subject. However, the information is not analysed rigorously, and trends and precise conclusions are not securely drawn from it. Therefore, the action plan is not as effective as it could be. The coordinator has the ability, support and commitment to improve the subject further.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 81 There is limited use of ICT to help pupils' learning in other subjects and although unsatisfactory at present this aspect is developing. There are separate ICT lessons each week and the work in these lessons is linked well to other subjects at times. Teachers use effectively computer-controlled projectors to motivate and involve pupils in all subjects, for example when they introduce the work at the beginning of a lesson. There are good examples of word processing and use of the internet to research information, for example in design and technology, English and history. Teachers miss opportunities for pupils to use computers as an integral part of lessons, for example in mathematics and science or to reinforce basic skills in English.

## HUMANITIES

- 82 No lessons were seen in **geography**, and one lesson was seen in **history**. Therefore, no definite judgement can be made on the provision in either subject. Pupils' work in books and on display, and teachers' planning, indicate that a satisfactory curriculum is in place for both subjects. Teachers cover the work through a series of lessons on a topic each term that is based securely on national guidance for the subjects. They now ensure that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are built upon steadily as they move through the school. This is a good improvement since the time of the last inspection.
- 83 Across the school most pupils now have average skills in literacy and they use these skills competently in geography and history. This shows good improvement since the time of the last inspection. In geography, Year 2 pupils write postcards when they follow the journeys of Barnaby Bear. The work develops soundly their understanding of climates in different countries.
- 84 Pupils achieve well in history. Year 2 pupils develop their understanding of life in the past when they write about the life of Florence Nightingale. Year 3 pupils have a secure understanding of life in Ancient Egypt. In Years 4 and 6 teachers cover the work in depth by linking the work imaginatively to other subjects, such as design and technology. Year 4 pupils write letters from the viewpoint of a Roman soldier in Britain and Year 6 pupils write imaginative accounts about life as an evacuee in World War 1. Teachers promote pupils' reading skills well in history when they ask pupils to use books and the internet to research information.
- 85 There are attractive displays in most classrooms to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of resources and very good use of visits and visitors to the school to make the work interesting and relevant. Pupils visited Bolton museum and Townley Hall linked to their work in history. They took part in workshops about Victorian life when a theatre group visited the school. In geography, teachers set up links with schools in Gisburn, Germany and Iraq, including communication by e-mail. As a result, pupils develop well their understanding of the differences between these places and life in Accrington.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 86 In **art and design**, there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards and provision. Subject planning follows the national guidelines and is adapted effectively to suit the needs of the school. The school provides additional enrichment through visits by artists to work with the pupils and through visits to galleries and museums. The coordinator has a clear overview of provision in art through regular opportunities to evaluate planning and the quality of pupils' work. Pupils' work is attractively displayed in classrooms and around the school. The work of famous artists is also studied. A particularly good example was seen in a Year 4 lesson where pupils painted very expressive versions of 'My Journey' in the style of Paul Klee. Art is also used effectively in other subjects, such as in history where pupils have created designs as part of their work on the Romans.

- 87 In **design and technology**, there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards and provision. Subject planning is detailed and comprehensive. It follows the national guidelines and is adapted appropriately to meet the school's needs. Additional enrichment opportunities are provided through the school's curriculum focus each alternate half term where design and technology is given a high profile. In the two lessons observed in Years 2 and 6 the teaching was effective in helping pupils to develop their design, planning and making skills. Very good opportunities were provided in both lessons for pupils to make decisions about the tools and materials they wanted to use and to work out solutions to any problems they encountered. As a result of the teachers' expertise and the pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject, all achieved well and were proud of the progress they had made. The subject is successfully led and managed. Appropriate opportunities are provided for the coordinator to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision in design and technology across the school.
- 88 Just one Year 2 lesson was observed in **music** and some singing was sampled during hymn practice. Therefore, no judgements can be made about provision, the standards in Year 6 or teaching and learning. The one lesson observed in the infant class indicates that pupils enjoy their lessons and make at least satisfactory progress from their starting points. Regular practices of familiar and new hymns show that pupils sing sweetly and have good control of pitch. They can keep together, they know they are reliant on each other and they work together well. They have a good sense of expression when phrases are lively in the lyrics and take pleasure in performing and rehearsing. In the one sound lesson observed in Year 2, pupils showed a typical range of skills and awareness of simple musical terms. The resources for the subjects are sound.
- 89 In **physical education**, although two lessons were observed, only a very small proportion of the overall programme was inspected. Consequently, there is no overall judgement on standards, achievement, teaching and provision. Nevertheless, in addition to the lessons, discussions were held with the pupils. In Year 5, standards in dance are good. Pupils make good use of space, they move confidently and do well to incorporate jumps and balances into their movements. They control these movements successfully. Pupils have very positive attitudes and their behaviour is good. In Year 3, games skills are at the expected level. When practising netball skills, pupils pass, catch and run adequately and accurately. Performance improved as they watched the highest attaining pupils going through the drills. Arrangements for swimming are good and most pupils achieve the nationally recommended standard.
- 90 In the lessons seen, there was a good gymnastic/dance lesson and one satisfactory games lesson. In the best lesson, the strengths were:
- the high levels of energy and enthusiasm shown by the teacher led to very good attitudes and behaviour;
  - very good knowledge and understanding of the subject meant that that instructions were understood and followed;
  - good performance by some pupils led to effective exemplars for the rest that raised expectations;
  - good planning led to a brisk lesson that retained the pupils' interest.
- 91 In the satisfactory lessons, the strengths included good relationships, effective management and strong use of pupils as exemplars of good practice. However, there was not enough teaching of skills and pupils had little opportunity to evaluate good performance.
- 92 Leadership and management are good. The coordinator encourages pupils to take part in a wide range of activities inside and outside of school time. There are good links with local professional and amateur sports clubs that provide specific coaching. The curriculum is wide, with opportunities for outdoor and adventurous pursuits made available on residential visits.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision is carefully planned into the curriculum.
- The staff have a strong commitment to the ethos of the school.
- There is no monitoring of teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

- 93 The arrangements for personal, social and health education are good. The school has reviewed and incorporated these into the curriculum planning. The programme of work is taught through subjects. For example, the importance of a healthy diet is carried through direct and related subjects such as science and physical education.
- 94 The adoption of a clear policy and whole-school scheme of work ensure that knowledge and understanding are developed progressively as pupils move through the school. The introduction of a curriculum framework directs when aspects are to be taught and allocates teaching and learning time appropriately. This makes a major contribution to the quality of teaching and learning and represents improvement since the previous inspection.
- 95 The commitment of the staff to supporting this area, informally, ensures that pupils' learning is consistently reinforced in day to day interaction. This makes a significant contribution to the achievement of all pupils. Plans are in place to monitor the scheme of work but these do not include the monitoring of teaching and learning. This has a limiting effect on the quality of information needed to identify areas for improvement.
- 96 The provision is effective in the many ways in which pupils' attitudes, achievements and self-esteem are valued and promoted. It contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how many elements of the community, society and a democracy work. Aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including awareness of drugs and substances, health, safety and sex education are well promoted. Lesson time gives pupils opportunities for voicing their opinions and raising their concerns.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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