

INSPECTION REPORT

THORN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bacup

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119193

Headteacher: Mrs A Edgar

Lead inspector: Mrs J Clarke
Dates of inspection: 21-23 February 2005

Inspection number: 266349
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	163
School address:	Cowtoot Lane Bacup Lancashire
Postcode:	OL13 8EF
Telephone number:	01706 874027
Fax number:	01706 874027
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Crane
Date of previous inspection:	05/07/1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Thorn Primary School is a small primary school with 163 pupils. This is a significant fall in numbers since the last inspection when there were 300 pupils on roll. There are 78 boys and 85 girls in the school. The school is located in Bacup in Lancashire. The majority of pupils come from the local area. Children begin school in the reception class in the year in which they are five. The pupils come from an area of social deprivation. The children's attainments when they start school are well below average. The numbers of pupils starting or leaving the school other than at the normal admission times is well above average. English is the first language of all pupils. There are currently 26 pupils in the school who have special educational needs. This is broadly in line with the national average. There are five pupils with statements of their special educational need, which is above the national average. The range of needs identified includes, speech and communication difficulties, and autism. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals at 37.0 per cent is above the national average. The school has recently been involved in the Excellence in Cities initiatives, the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools and the Healthy Schools Initiative.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25509	Mrs J Clarke	Lead inspector	English Art and design Geography History English as an additional language Special educational needs
32692	Mr N Mayfield	Lay inspector	
30205	Miss T Kenna	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Personal Social and Health Education and Citizenship Design and technology
32753	Mr R Johnstone	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

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CHESHIRE
CW8 4DU**

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, which gives good value for money. The very good leadership of the head teacher has secured the good improvement since the last inspection. The governing body give good support for the school. Effective management in the school enables the school to run smoothly. Teaching and learning are good and as a result achievement for all the pupils is good. The very effective teamwork of all staff has ensured that the school works well and the pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to their work mean that they are successful.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher is a very good leader who has an outstanding vision for the school, she is ably assisted by the governors, senior management team and all the staff. As a result the school has made good improvement since the last inspection.
- The pupils achieve well because they have very good attitudes to their work and their behaviour is very good. Some pupils are hampered by an inability to express themselves effectively.
- Very good help, encouragement and guidance are available for all pupils and as a result they want to learn and achieve well.
- The children in the reception class have a very good start to their schooling.
- Good teaching and a relevant and interesting curriculum enthruses the pupils and motivates them to learn.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average and could be better. The pupils do not use their ICT skills enough in other subject areas.

Overall there has been good improvement since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed and the school has recognised that there is still more work to do to bring about further improvements in the pupils' writing skills. Standards in the core subjects are improving and achievement has improved. There are now better resources and facilities for the children in the reception class for outdoor play and the staff work hard to promote the children's speaking skills although this remains a school priority. The school libraries are now used regularly by the pupils and there are good opportunities for the pupils' to develop their independent research skills. The school has made good improvements in many aspects of its work. Teaching and learning has improved and the school makes good use of the checks it makes of the pupils' work to target resources to areas identified for improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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	D
Mathematics	E	D	A	B
Science	E	D	B	D

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement throughout the school is good. The children start school in the reception class. Their attainment is well below the average for their age. Achievement is very good. This is the result of very good teaching and learning. By the end of the reception year, the majority of the children are likely to achieve the expectations of the Early Learning goals set for children of their age. However some children although they have achieved very well will not reach this level. In the 2004 national tests and tasks for pupils in Year 2 the pupils' achievements in reading and mathematics matched the national average but were below average in writing. In the same year the results for the Year 6 pupils set against the national picture showed that they achieved standards

that were average in English, above average in science and well above average in mathematics. In comparison with schools in a similar social context the pupils achieved standards which were below average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Overall, standards for the current Year 2 and 6 are likely to be broadly average. In this primary school, each year group is small. Some year groups have more lower attaining pupils than others and more pupils with special educational needs consequently standards do fluctuate year on year. Achievement is however good.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are **very good**. **The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** The pupils take their responsibilities seriously and the school council and play leaders play a significant part in the life and work of the school. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education throughout the school is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good** with much that is very good. The teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and number are very well taught in the school. The staff have very high expectations of the pupils and they encourage them to work hard in all lessons. The support staff and specialist staff give very good help to the pupils and as a result the pupils achieve well. Assessments of the pupils' work are used well to help the teachers plan their work. The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all the pupils well. There are good opportunities to enrich the curriculum through visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. There is good provision for activities after school. The accommodation is good and has recently been refurbished. The school takes good care of the pupils, very good support and guidance is available for the pupils including those pupils with special educational needs. There are good links with the parents and the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the governance, leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The headteacher has managed the good improvement since the last inspection in a very good way. She has an outstanding clarity of vision for the development of the school and excellent aspirations for further improvements. As a result standards and achievement are rising rapidly. Management systems allow the school to function efficiently. The governing body are fully involved in the work of the school and are clear about the challenges the school faces. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. The parents recognise the recent improvements in the school and feel that the school takes good care of the pupils. **Pupils have very positive views of the school.** They say that the teachers help them with their work and their views are listened to.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Encourage and improve the pupils' language development.
- Improve standards and the use the pupils make of their ICT skills in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are broadly **average**. Pupils achieve **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the reception class is very good. The children have a very good start to their schooling.
- Standards in comparison to schools in a similar context are below average.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) could be higher.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Commentary

1. Children start school in the reception class. Each year group tends to be small with a very wide variation of attainment from one year to the next. Most children start school with skills, which are well below the expected level in almost all the six areas of learning, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. A majority of children have poor skills in expressing themselves. By the end of the reception year the children have achieved very well and their attainment is broadly at the levels expected. However, in spite of very good achievement some children do not attain the early learning goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. This is particularly evident in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. The children achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good and accurate checks of the children's understanding give a very good guide to the teachers work. The teacher and the teaching assistant give very good help to the children, they feel happy and secure and as a result their achievement is very good.
2. In the 2004 national tests, the schools' results showed that in comparison with schools in a similar social context the pupils in Year 6 had achieved standards, which were below average in English and science and above average in mathematics. These results show how well the pupils at this school do in comparison with schools in a similar context in mathematics. However, this is a small school where some year groups are quite a lot smaller than others. The numbers of pupils with special educational needs is above average and the numbers of pupils who leave and join the school in the middle of their schooling is high and these circumstances all have an impact upon the standards the pupils achieve. Recent trends in the attainment of the pupils shows a rapidly improving picture.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2 (15.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.3 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.2 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

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

3. The table above shows the results for the National Curriculum tests and tasks in 2004 for pupils in Year 2. Their results in reading and mathematics were broadly at the level expected nationally but below that level in writing and science. Achievement for these pupils was good.

Inspection evidence suggests that the current Year 2 are likely to achieve standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science which are typical of pupils of their age.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (24.1)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.0 (25.8)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.5 (27.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were thirty-three pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- The table above shows that in 2004 pupils in Year 6 achieved standards which were well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English. These results showed a significant improvement from 2003 when standards in English were low and in mathematics and science they were below average. The leadership of the school has put strategies in place to support the lower attaining pupils and extend the average and higher attaining pupils. These approaches are beginning to bring success. The current Year 6 are not as strong as the previous Year 6 and are on course to achieve average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of the year.
- Standards in ICT are below the levels expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Although achievement is satisfactory there is more to do to improve the pupils' ICT skills and the school has plans in place to do this. The pupils need more opportunities to practise and develop their computer skills in other subject areas. The expected installation of interactive whiteboards in each classroom is eagerly anticipated by the school and all staff are looking forwards to additional training and support so that standards can be moved on. Standards in religious education are at the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. This good provision makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal, social, cultural and emotional development.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. These pupils are identified early and careful plans are put into place to guide the work the teachers set for them. Learning is planned in small steps so that the pupils make good gains in their learning and achievement is good. Extra help in lessons from the class teacher and support assistants is carefully matched to the pupils' needs and this is successful. Specialist support from trained teaching assistants and the special educational needs teacher gives extra help to specific pupils and strengthens their achievements. The additional help given to pupils in Year 6 to boost their achievement is having a positive effect and the school has recognised the impact of this provision and is set to extend its range still further. The school has kept a careful eye on gender issues within the school and has recognised that in some year groups, where there is a clear majority of boys, this occasionally distorts the overall picture. However, the school is not complacent and is looking carefully at learning styles to match delivery of lessons to the needs of the pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are developed **very well**. The pupils' attitudes to school are **very good**. Their behaviour in lessons and at playtimes is **very good**. The promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **good**. Pupils arrive **promptly** and happily, ready for the start of the school day.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of relationships between pupils, adults and parents creates a very good learning ethos.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and encourages them to enjoy learning.
- There are high expectations of conduct. Pupil's opinions are valued and there are many opportunities within the school day for them to take responsibility.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school takes significant action to ensure that pupils attend regularly and arrive on time.

Commentary

7. This school is effective because relationships at all levels are very good; pupils are polite and not afraid to ask pertinent questions. In lessons, in response to the teachers' high expectations and very good management, pupils listen to their teachers carefully and concentrate on the tasks they are given. The very good relationships between all members of the school ensure that all are valued for their contribution to this very close community.
8. The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development. This underpins all of its work. As a result, pupils readily accept responsibility when asked to do so. They respect each other and the adults in the school. The essence of the school is to make learning fun. As a result, pupils show pleasure in their own and others achievements. They know what is expected of them and they respond very well. Children in the reception class are encouraged to become independent in their work. They learn that it is important to take turns and share and though some initially find this hard they all generally cope very well. The children develop very good relationships with all the staff and demonstrate good levels of perseverance with their learning, even when they find their tasks hard. The approach taken to involving children in managing resources and equipment for themselves is very good. Most children are expected to reach the early learning goal in the area of personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year.
9. The teaching staff have a quiet and engaging manner which strongly effects pupils' behaviour in a very positive way. All staff and pupils are involved in considering and establishing the high expectations of conduct throughout the school. This ensures that through ownership, these expectations are fulfilled. Pupils say that their opinions are valued, and through the school council they are committed to improving the school for all involved there. For example, the school council have raised funds, which have helped to improve the playtimes, by providing boxed equipment for outdoor and indoor playtimes. They have fully supported the schools introduction of a 'Buddy System' that all pupils can use to express their worries and concerns. The local council has also supported the school in its involvement with the Lancashire Healthy Schools programme.
10. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Class discussions, together with assembly themes, are used effectively to promote an understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Each class has a time when the pupils have an opportunity to explore their own worries or concerns and to learn to respect other people's values. Because teachers plan many practical activities for pupils, they learn to socialise and work together very well. Pupils work collaboratively, for example, on mathematical and scientific investigations. They enjoy the after-school clubs. The school teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions. It does this through interesting topics in geography and history, and through art and design, and music. Pupils study the major world religions in their religious education lessons and are aware of the many different religious festivals so that they have begun to more fully understand, appreciate and contribute to the wider culture in which they live.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.8
National data:	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.7
National data:	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

No of pupils on roll
163

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0

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

11. Procedures to ensure that pupils attend regularly are very good. An electronic system for recording attendance is now in place, allowing fast and accurate analysis of attendance patterns. The school telephones parents on the first day of any unknown absence and has sound procedures for writing to parents or involving the appropriate authorities in the event of persistent absence. There are some innovative incentives in place. The performance of each class is measured each week and results are greeted with enthusiasm throughout the school. Punctuality is also thoroughly monitored. Parents are written to if there are persistent patterns of late arrival. Attendance is improving and the school is committed to further improvements.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for the pupils which helps them learn **well**. **Effective** teaching and learning results in **good** levels of achievement. The pupils are keen to work hard and their behaviour is **very good** as a result they show a strong commitment to their learning. Consequently, achievement is **good**. The curriculum is **well** organised and there are **good** opportunities for the pupils to learn outside of lessons, which enriches their experiences. The accommodation and resources are **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** and because the pupils are **very well** cared for they achieve **well**. Links with parents and the community are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** throughout the school. **Effective** teaching enables the pupils to achieve **well**. Teachers make **good** use of their checks of the pupils' understanding to plan the next steps of the pupils learning. As a result, teaching is carefully matched to the needs of the pupils and achievement is **good**. The pupils work hard and are keen to improve. They are happy at school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are particularly strong in English, mathematics and the reception class.
- Pupils are very interested in their learning and so they work productively.
- The school has many strategies in place to help the pupils to improve their work.
- Teachers know the pupils' strengths and areas for development well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in thirty lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1(3%)	9 (30%)	18 (60%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Teaching and learning throughout the school are good; often teaching is very good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when teaching and learning were judged to be satisfactory. It is very clear, when looking at pupils' work in their books, that good teaching is the norm. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are particularly strong where the teaching of the basic skills is very thorough. This is because there is considerable teaching expertise within the school in these two subject areas. There are two leading English and two leading mathematics teachers and there has also been a recent input in these subjects from the Local Education Authority. The teachers have recognised that the pupils' vocabulary is not extensive and they are working hard to develop the pupils' speaking skills and their skills of expressing themselves. These are areas the pupils find hard. Teaching in the reception class is very good. The teacher organises the classroom spaces effectively so that the needs of all the children are met. The children are provided with a good balance of direct teaching with the teacher or classroom assistant, small group work and their own choice of task from a wide range of activities. This is very effective and promotes learning through play, developing early independence. Throughout Years 1 to 6 the pupils experience good teaching and so learning is secured. The teachers plan their lessons well and have very high expectations of the pupils. Planning is clear and gives good guidance for the teachers. The teachers who work in the mixed year group classes plan very carefully and pay particular attention to ensure that the pupils are not disadvantaged and all the pupils are very well catered for in lessons. As these pupils work is carefully matched to their needs their achievement is good.
13. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They say that they like school and know that the teachers help them with their work. They recognise that sometimes their work is hard but they feel that they get enough help. Relationships between the staff and pupils are strong and as a consequence, the pupils are happy to work very hard. The teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and so there is no time wasted in lessons. As a result, the pupils make good gains in their learning. The teachers encourage the pupils to do their best and to try hard, they give lots of praise and help and this encourages the pupils with their work. Resources are generally used well by the staff to promote learning, however ICT is underused in lessons and is an area identified by the school for improvement. Staff are effective in helping the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of different subject areas at a good pace and so the pupils' productivity is good. Because the staff spend a lot of time encouraging the pupils they respond positively and show good levels of application. Pupils work together well either in-groups or in pairs paying good attention to each other and listening carefully to each others point of view.
14. The school has many strategies in place to support the pupils with their learning. The special educational needs teacher, support staff and the booster teacher all play important roles. The teaching assistants give very good help and guidance to the pupils and this has a very positive impact on the way they learn. Support staff are well briefed and work sensitively with pupils who have special educational needs and also lower attaining pupils. They make a very good contribution to pupils' learning and self-confidence. Booster sessions designed to encourage and extend the learning of the higher attaining pupils in Year 6, are also having a positive impact. Work in a small group with highly focused targets for learning enables these pupils to learn and achieve well. Specific support for pupils with additional national strategies and speech and language work for individual pupils all has a positive effect on the pupils and builds their confidence and allows good learning. The special educational needs teacher gives specific assistance to a range of pupils and they recognise that this support has helped them to make good progress.
15. Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science and the teachers use this information well to guide their lessons. Assessment for the children in the reception class is very good; the teacher makes careful notes of how the children are achieving and uses these notes very well to

plan the next steps of the childrens' learning. In ICT the assessments used by the staff are not yet fine enough to enable the teachers to move on those whose skills are more developed than others and this is an area for development. Tracking systems are now in place and these will enable the teachers to keep a careful check on how the pupils are progressing. Marking of pupils work is both encouraging and supportive and in the best cases helps the pupils to see where they have gone wrong and how they can improve their work.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good** and is enriched by a **good** variety of experiences that give a greater depth to learning for all pupils. The curriculum is both broad and balanced and provides a wide range of well delivered curricular opportunities for pupils. Accommodation and resources are **good** overall and both are used **well** to support the curriculum and aid learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a stimulating and interesting curriculum, which is relevant and effectively meets the needs of all pupils.
- The school provides good opportunities to enrich the curriculum through a wide range of extra curricular activities.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum as a tool for learning and teaching is insufficiently developed.
- Support staff are very effectively deployed to support the delivery of the curriculum.
- Accommodation and resources are good.

Commentary

16. Since the last inspection the overall curriculum provision has improved and is now good. All statutory requirements are met in all subjects and the curriculum motivates the pupils to have an enthusiasm for learning. Time allocations for all subjects are appropriate and the timetable is used well to maximise learning. The school uses a range of local and nationally provided guidance to plan interesting and challenging activities and experiences for all pupils. The good quality range of extra curricular activities, combined with visits out of school, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in all respects.
17. A wide variety of activities are planned outside of the school day for the pupils. There are many opportunities for pupils of all ages to take part in sport, the arts, dance and cookery. Pupils also benefit over time from opportunities to visit a variety of places within and outside their local community and enjoy welcoming special visitors to the school to support the curriculum. This good range of provision adds value to the pupils' learning and broadens their experiences.
18. Teachers have a good subject knowledge overall and this enables them to link carefully the different subjects. Pupils make good use of measurement in science lessons and apply their learning in literacy lessons to activities in the library and history. This illustrates that pupils are able to use and apply knowledge and skills gained in one subject in order to further their learning in another. Very good strategies for pupils' personal, social, cultural and emotional development are carefully woven into all aspects of the curriculum. However, ICT skills are insufficiently well developed in pupils and as yet there are not enough appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply and develop computer skills and knowledge in other subjects. The school has good plans in place to further review and enhance the creative curriculum to ensure high levels of excellence and enjoyment for all.
19. Support staff make a very good contribution to the curriculum and learning. They are well informed and work closely with the teachers on planning and assessing pupil's learning. This clearly contributes to the pupils' good rates of achievement. The school extends the more able pupils through carefully tailored teaching and by providing challenging work in lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Early identification of need

ensures an appropriate curriculum throughout the school. Very good support from teaching assistants ensures that the detailed individual education plans give pupils a full access to the whole curriculum.

20. Accommodation and resources are good overall. The school has benefited from a good programme of refurbishment and redecoration and governors' have plans to further improve the fabric of the building, including much needed work to some of the toilets. Classrooms and other work areas are bright and attractive and pupils' work is effectively displayed. The accommodation is spacious allowing the creative curriculum to be developed well. There are two well-stocked and used libraries and the school has recently benefited from the development of a computer suite, which is now beginning to support improvement in pupils' skills in ICT. The school is well equipped for all aspects of learning and teaching and makes good use of the space and resources at its disposal.

Care, guidance and support

The overall quality of the care and support provided for pupils is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are good.
- The support and guidance given to individual pupils is very good. The pupils are very happy at school and get on well with each other and their teachers.
- Pupils have trusting relationships with their teachers who trust their pupils, seek their views and delegate real authority to the school council.

Commentary

21. The school has recently renewed its Health and Safety policy and all the appropriate measures to ensure pupils work in a safe and healthy environment are in place. The building dates from the 1930's and is oversized for its current purpose. In recent times the school has adopted a systematic approach to improving the accommodation and the premises were clean and well cared for at the time of the inspection. There are very few accidents but when these do occur incidents are well recorded and parents are notified when appropriate. All staff have received First Aid training and there are a good number of First Aid boxes around the school ensuring there is always one nearby in such a large building. The school carries out the proper risk assessments when outside trips take place and is currently reviewing its stocks and usage of cleaning materials. Fire drill takes place every term and the fire extinguishers are regularly checked.

22. The support and guidance given to pupils is very good. There is a special needs co-ordinator appointed but pupils normally refer any difficulties they have to their class teacher. Pupils interviewed said that this worked very well and in a recent pupil questionnaire over 93 per cent responded positively that there was an adult they could approach if the need arose. The school additionally uses a 'worry box' that pupils can use if they do not want to talk directly to an adult. The head teacher monitors this personally. There is a buddy system in place, which was seen to work very well. Pupils volunteer to become playground friends and receive training. They wear yellow hats in the playground and seek out pupils who have no friend to play with. There is a special place in the playground where pupils stand if they want someone to play with. Although the behaviour of others is sometimes an issue for pupils, there is no significant evidence of bullying. Pupils are well looked after during the school day. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils actively encourage understanding. Pupils respond positively to challenging lessons that make learning enjoyable. Pupils know that when they have difficulties in their work, or something is troubling them, there is always someone to help. The teachers know their pupils very well.

23. The school council is particularly active. Members wear badges and their photographs are displayed on a notice board. The council is encouraged to bring forward their ideas, which have included moneymaking competitions and a book sale to raise money for school activities. They understand the need to fund activities and the school encourages the council to share funds raised with charities. Teachers guide and facilitate the work of the council rather than controlling it and pupils interviewed were able to talk in a mature way about their responsibilities. The school seeks the views of its pupils very well. Nearly all pupils completed a questionnaire prior to the inspection. 87 per cent of all pupils positively agreed that teachers listened to their ideas. The overwhelming majority praised their teachers and their work. This relationship of mutual trust was borne out in discussion with both pupils and teachers.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents are good and have improved over the past year. More parents are becoming actively involved with the school.
- Links with the local community are good and ways to make the school facility more accessible to the community are actively sought.
- Relationships with other local schools are good and the school participates well in local education joint initiatives.
- Induction and transfer procedures are good.

Commentary

24. Links with parents have improved over the past year. The number of parents willing to take an active role in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has significantly increased and many parents attend the wide variety of social and fund raising activities. The PTA has most recently provided a new printer for the ICT suite. The school prospectus is well written and contains all the information normally required. Parents receive a newsletter each term. There are two parents' evenings each year which are well attended and the annual school reports were seen to be thorough and well written. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors said that they felt partners in their children's education and were comfortable to express any worries or concerns they may have. The headteacher operates an open door policy and staff reported that parents felt confident to use this facility.
25. Links with the local community are good. Trees and bulbs have been planted locally in conjunction with the Groundwork Trust. The school has a special relationship with Rossendale Sports Development who offer sports extra-curricular activities on a daily basis. Rossendale make use of the schools facilities and ways are being sought to extend the range of activities. The school works with parents to provide adult education free of charge. So far this extends to art and design and ICT. Literacy and Numeracy classes for adults have not proved popular however, although the school has a 'Lads and Dads' initiative aimed primarily at improving boys' interest in reading. Members of the local community support the school by attending Christmas plays and the Harvest Festival, and there are plans to further the links with local football and cricket clubs.
26. The school shares its site with a local nursery. The nursery relies on the schools' heating system and shares the resource of the school caretaker. The links with the local secondary school are also good, and effective links have been built via regular contacts and meetings. The school has been invited to be a host for Lancashire Literacy Professional Development and is part of a consultant leadership programme promoting good leadership and teamwork in schools. The school is also part of a cluster group sharing good practice and providing resources for able, gifted and talented pupils.

27. The measures in place for induction of new pupils and the transfer of pupils to secondary education are good. There is a high incidence rate of pupils arriving and leaving mid year and the school does well in making individual arrangements to meet each circumstance. The pre-inspection questionnaire clearly shows the overwhelming majority of parents are happy with the school and the progress now being made by their children.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership for the school. The leadership shown by other key staff is **good**. The governing body provide **good** support for the headteacher and help to shape the direction for the further development of the school. There are **good** systems of management in place. The school is **effective** in working to ensure that barriers to learning are broken down.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has an excellent vision for change in the school and she has worked very effectively to ensure a very positive and purposeful educational direction.
- The governing body are very effective in ensuring that statutory requirements are met and they give good support to the school.
- The subject co-ordinators have ensured good improvements in their subjects.
- The school works hard to eliminate barriers to the pupils learning and to include all pupils in every aspect of the life and work of the school.

Commentary

28. The headteacher has been very focused and clear in her endeavour to bring about improvements in the school. She has had an excellent vision for the educational direction of the school and has managed considerable change in a relatively short amount of time. Through her willingness to work hard and make significant contributions to change she has inspired her staff and together they have proved a very effective team. The recently appointed deputy headteacher is an excellent practitioner and provides a very good role model for staff. She has a clear plan for improvements in the curriculum through considerable innovation, which she hopes will improve both the provision in the school and also raise standards. The headteacher has created a strong team in which all feel valued and all strive to do their best. Professional development is seen as a high priority for all staff and consequently teaching and learning are good and often very good throughout the school. Self-evaluation is strong and the staff have worked hard to recognise the strengths of the school and to improve areas identified for improvement.

29. The governing body has provided good support for the school. The governors are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have an effective committee structure, which allows them to give time to areas of concern but also to deal efficiently with school issues. The chair of the governing body is committed to the school and is keen to see it continue to improve. She sees the role of the governors as key and is keen that they should be both very well informed and trained. The governors have a clear understanding of the impact of falling roles and are efficient in monitoring the effect of decisions they have made. They are rigorous in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met.

30. The key co-ordinator roles of English, mathematics, science and ICT are well developed and the co-ordinators have supported their colleagues, helped bring about improvements in the school and have identified key areas for further improvement. Standards in ICT have been clearly identified by the co-ordinator and headteacher as not being high enough. The newly in place co-ordinator has a clear plan for improvements in resources and training and with a clarity of vision has set about to bring about improvements. All members of staff are keen to see the subject move forwards and are looking forwards to training in the use of the interactive whiteboards, which are eagerly anticipated. The key co-ordinators have also helped with the training for other members of staff so that they will have the expertise to monitor the standards

and provision in their own subject areas. This is an effective way not only to build a team but also to spread expertise. All the subject co-ordinators have a framework for the further development of their subjects and are working energetically to improve the provision in the school. Performance management is now in place and staff have targets to work towards. The management systems in the school are good. The commitment to improvement in the school is clear. The school secretary is both very efficient and effective as she provides valuable support both for the headteacher, staff and the parent body.

31. All the staff are effective as they include all pupils in every aspect of the life and work of the school. Inclusion of all the pupils is a very strong feature. The school is effective in targeting and eliminating barriers to the improvement of standards in the school and as a result the pupils' achievement is good. For example, the high number of pupils in the school with special educational needs are provided for very well and as a result they make good gains in their learning. Relationships within the school are very strong and consequently the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, or are low attainers and those pupils who are new to the school are very well cared for. The school has taken effective steps to provide for the higher attaining pupils by giving them extra help both in class and in small groups. The school ensures that financial management is purposeful and uses its resources effectively.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	602,331	Balance from previous year	78,425
Total expenditure	558,566	Balance carried forward to the next	122,190
Expenditure per pupil	2,825		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in all early learning goals for young children are **very good**. The very good provision made by the school provides children with a stimulating and effective start to school life.

The reception class provides a stable and caring environment. The children are encouraged to enjoy learning and to take part in a wide range of lively, practical activities, which support their achievements effectively in all areas. Although attainment varies in each year group, most children start school with skills, which are well below the expected level in almost all areas of learning, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. A majority of children have very poor skills in understanding and expressing themselves. Many children's knowledge of life in the world beyond their home is limited. By the end of the reception year, almost all children have achieved very well and have reached the goals expected of them. However, in spite of the very good rates of achievement some children will not attain the early learning goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. This is particularly evident in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is a similar situation to that reported in the last inspection. Very good achievement is due to a very good curriculum and very good quality teaching. Children with special educational needs are effectively supported and have full access to the curriculum. There has been good improvement in the provision for the reception children since the last inspection, particularly in the development of the outside area and provision of resources. Teachers planning and adult intervention have also been addressed thus ensuring that no opportunities for promoting children's physical and speaking skills are overlooked.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular routines are quickly established.
- Very good classroom organisation develops social interaction.
- All staff show a consistent approach when supporting children.

Commentary

32. Very good teaching in this area of learning allows the children to learn and achieve very well. As a result most of the children are likely to reach the levels expected of this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Daily routines are well established and are helping these young children to work in-groups, to take turns and share. As a result children are growing in confidence and developing positive attitudes to their work. They understand classroom rules and routines and their behaviour is very good. For example, lining up for lunch is accomplished in a sensible and careful way.
33. Children enter the reception class with personal, social and emotional developments that are below the levels expected. They are helped to become independent. There are clear routines for children to select and work in the different areas of the room or with particular pieces of equipment. Children understand and respond to these routines well. The approach taken to involve children in managing resources and equipment for themselves is good and promotes personal development well. Many of the children clear things away quickly and tidily when required. Most children have learned to share, while a small number of children still choose to work alone or alongside others.

34. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. All staff give clear ideas of what is expected of the children including the difference between right and wrong. Patient and supportive teaching, where children are encouraged to work together and collaborate in their tasks, results in happy and confident children who make very good gains in their lessons.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's communication skills are being developed well.
- Great emphasis is placed on developing children's listening skills.
- Writing is made relevant and interesting.

Commentary

35. Very good teaching ensures that the children learn and achieve very well. So that by the end of the reception year most of the children are likely to reach the expected level, although a significant number will not. As a result of very good teaching strategies children answer questions posed by their teacher and are eager to express their ideas in words. Some show confidence in speaking to adults and to other children, and many initiate conversations in their play. However, a significant majority do not listen well either to other children or adults. Many are reluctant to talk, and others have great difficulty in expressing themselves in order to be understood. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing a book with an adult. Most children know some letter sounds and can name initial, medial and final sounds in three letter words.
36. Children understand that writing is used to communicate and at times they enjoy working at the writing tables, making books and lists. They have opportunities to write during their imaginative structured play sessions. For example, in role-play observed, the waitress in the café wrote down the customers' orders on her pad. In this way the children have many opportunities to use and develop their writing skills. Staff work with small groups of children giving them very individually focused help and as a result the children make very good gains in their learning.
37. Children are aware that books are a source of information and pleasure. They handle books with confidence, and were eager to retell the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. Some recognise familiar words and show they enjoy their reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to develop children's counting skills.
- Mathematical concepts are made relevant to children's experiences.

Commentary

38. Very good teaching in mathematical development results in the children achieving very well. Most of the children, but not all, are likely to reach the levels expected of children of their age by the end of the reception year. Children enjoy counting. Most children count accurately to 10 and many can count beyond 10. The teacher makes good use of number rhymes to reinforce children's counting. Children count while they sort objects as they play.
39. The teacher organises the classroom effectively to enable them to meet the mathematical needs of all children. Planning ensures that children are provided with a balance of small group

teaching and activities. Mathematical learning opportunities are planned into a range of activities that children choose for themselves.

40. As a result of the many purposeful activities provided the children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. They know about circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. They relate addition to combining two groups of objects, and use the appropriate language and symbols. They use relevant vocabulary when answering questions, such as 'more than' and 'less than'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan a very good range of interesting activities that lay a strong emphasis on practical investigation. This makes learning both interesting and exciting.
- Computers are well used to promote learning.

Commentary

41. Very good teaching ensures that the children achieve very well and so most children are likely to reach the levels expected in this area of learning. Children are provided with a wealth of opportunities to learn about their world. Activities are interesting and are well planned with an emphasis on investigation. For example, during a very snowy three days, children built snowmen outside, and an Arctic scene inside complete with melting ice and polar bears. While as part of their 'Goldilocks and the three bears' focus, children made porridge, discovering how the oats changed when they were mixed with milk and water.

42. Children use the computers with confidence, using the mouse to identify and move items on the computer screen and point to illustrations. They took great delight in dressing the teddy for snowy and sunny weather with most managed to print their resulting picture. A variety of programs are used well to promote the children's understanding in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Insufficient opportunities for observation of physical development mean that judgements cannot be made about standards, teaching and learning in this area of learning. However, observational evidence shows that accommodation and resources for physical development are **good**. As a result most children are likely to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their reception year. Children move around the classroom with growing confidence. They show an increasing awareness of space for themselves and for others. They use small equipment with increasing control, as they draw or write. Most manipulate construction materials effectively. However, a number found difficulty rolling and pulling clay. They handle equipment with care, and most are aware of the need to do things safely. There is a good selection of large play equipment, which all children have access to and this helps the children to develop and extend their skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of experiences and materials are used to stimulate children's imagination.
- Very good links are made with other areas of learning.

Commentary

43. The result of very good teaching and learning in this area of learning means that the children do very well and most are likely to reach the levels expected in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. All children enjoy and make tremendous gains in their learning because there are a very good range of well-planned art, design, craft and role-play experiences to stimulate their imagination. They concentrate well on these tasks, making pictures and models with a variety of materials and paint. They are beginning to relate well to each other and share in imaginative ideas to create stories and events. They enjoyed going to the café and ordering their porridge. All the children thoroughly enjoyed singing 'I can count' and 'Spider' as they prepared to make the legs for their spiders.
44. At times the children work with intense concentration on their tasks paying attention to small details. This was seen, for example, as they mixed different shades of brown to paint the bears from the 'Goldilocks' story.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English by the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly average.
- Achievement for all the pupils, including the pupils with special educational needs is good, because the pupils' attitudes to their work are very good.
- Teaching and learning are effective in raising standards.
- All pupils are given good additional help in lessons and in small groups and so they learn well and as a result achievement is good.
- Improvements in provision have had a positive impact on raising standards, but the school recognises there is still more to do.
- Co-ordination of the subject is good.

Commentary

45. Standards are broadly at the national average in reading and writing by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards in writing were an area for improvement. Pupils speaking skills are not as well developed and are below the levels expected. The schools results in 2004 showed a significant improvement by the end of Year 6. The Year 2 pupils' results in 2004 also showed improvement. These results are commendable when it is recognised that each year group in the school is small, the numbers of pupils who leave and join the school are above average and the school has a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. The school has worked hard to address the issues from the last inspection to improve the pupils' writing skills and they have improved. The school considers that there is more to do to improve the linguistic skills of the pupils so that the pupils will be able to express themselves better not only in speech but also in their written work.

46. Achievement is good throughout the school. One significant reason for this is because the pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. The pupils are keen to learn and try hard to succeed in their lessons. Pupils speaking and listening skills are generally underdeveloped by the end of Years 2 and 6. The pupils are encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas as they answer the teachers' questions and contribute in class, but some pupils find this hard. By the end of Year 6 the pupils are beginning to use technical language and express themselves clearly, they are impressive in the way they listen and pay attention to their teachers. The pupils are developing good reading skills with higher attaining pupils reading with fluency, expression and understanding. This is because of the clear drive within the school to help the pupils become fluent readers and the wide range of both fiction and non-fiction books the pupils have at their disposal. The two libraries are used particularly well with the pupils' research skills; an

area identified for improvement in the last inspection, particularly well developed. Writing is an area for continuing development throughout the school. Strategies have been put into place to help the pupils improve their writing and to give them opportunities to use the skills they have learnt in their literacy lessons. Pupils' spelling and punctuation are generally accurate and presentation of work and handwriting is good.

47. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Planning is detailed and matched clearly to the pupil's needs with the needs of all pupils very well catered for. There is considerable expertise in the teaching of English in the school with two members of staff who are leading literacy teachers. They have given good help to their colleagues. Lessons are challenging. The pace and level of demand placed on the pupils is very good. Teaching of basic English skills is thorough and the pupils are expected to work hard. Teachers recognise that the pupils' speaking skills are an area to develop and consequently involve occasions in lessons for the pupils to speak to each other or to the teacher. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the teacher asked questions and when the pupils answer was one word or incorrect she quickly rephrased their answer to encourage and help the pupil to improve. In lessons where teaching and learning are very good work set for the pupils is very stretching. Activities are very well presented as a consequence teaching is sharp and highly focused and the pupils make very good gains in their learning. Marking is good, providing supportive and encouraging comments for the pupils but is less focused on constructive and developmental comments to enable the pupils to further develop their work. Homework is used well to support learning at school.
48. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils achieve well throughout the school. This is because the school has many strategies in place to support and help them to improve their work. Teaching assistants and specialist teaching staff make a valuable contribution in helping the pupils improve. The pupils work in either small groups or individually and have targeted help during lessons. All have work carefully planned and designed to help them achieve to the best of their ability. Pupils with statements of their special educational need receive very good support from dedicated staff and are fully included in lessons. Higher attaining pupils have work carefully matched to their needs so that they make good gains in their learning, this is especially so in Year 6.
49. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. The school has worked hard to bring about improvements in the pupils' standards throughout the school. The co-ordinator has been sharp at identifying areas for improvement, planning and taking appropriate action. For example, she has monitored teaching and learning and helped to ensure continuity in reading across the school. Areas for further improvement have been identified and the needs of the boys and the improvement of all the pupils' language skills are areas prioritised. The co-ordinator recognises that ICT is not used sufficiently to aid the pupils' work. Resources are very good overall, with the quality and range of books in the school being very good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Pupils use their reading and writing skills well in other subject areas. In Year 6 the pupils have written their own versions of the Ten Commandments in their religious education lessons. Whilst in science the pupils develop their use of technical language as they write up their science experiments.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in their mathematics learning. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
- Lessons are carefully planned and taught so that all pupils' needs are very well met. In Year 6 the use of targeted teaching through 'Booster Groups' is having a positive effect on standards.
- There is a very good emphasis on the use of mathematics and the understanding of mathematical language.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils who need additional help.

Commentary

50. Children enter the school with standards in mathematics that are below the levels expected. In the 2004 national tests and tasks for Year 2 pupils their results were average in comparison with national results. By the end of the current year standards for Year 2 pupils are expected to be broadly similar. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieved well above average standards in the 2004 tests. In 2005, the Year 6 pupils are not expected to reach these high standards, and targets have been set which reflect this. In lessons seen during the inspection this was confirmed. Standards are average and pupils are working towards targets that are likely to see them reach national expectations in 2005. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and their achievement is good when compared to their prior attainment. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below the national average.

51. This good improvement is due to improvement in the quality of teaching, the recently introduced more rigorous assessment and planning, and the use of 'Booster Groups' in Year 6. Effective leadership and management of the subject has secured these improvements and has ensured that throughout the school staff are very aware of pupils' individual needs and levels, which are targeted very well. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have developed a good understanding of basic number activities, such as counting on and back in tens or recognising odd and even numbers and sequences. They divide using continuous subtraction, and the more able pupils understand that multiplication is the inverse of division. They know simple fractions, and learn the names and properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. In Years 3 to 6, pupils of all abilities continue to build well on their mathematical understanding. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils have a very good understanding of place value, which they put to good use in making mental calculations. They use written methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in, for example, dealing with metric distance calculations. Higher attaining pupils in a 'Booster Group' round decimal numbers up and down in order to give an approximate whole, they understand the place value of decimals to two places, and can add and subtract decimal numbers. This very good strategy enables the higher achievers to apply their knowledge to more demanding investigations. While in the lower ability group, pupils expressed the opinion that they felt more secure and able to ask questions within their smaller group.

52. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is very good overall in all classes, teachers provide stimulating, well-prepared lessons and explain the work very well. There are recently introduced good assessment systems, which lead to clearly defined target teaching groups throughout the school. This gives teachers clear information about what their pupils know and can do, and what they need to do next. Lessons are well planned, and teachers are good at keeping their pupils fully involved in their work. Pupils have clear targets. In lessons, teachers explain what their pupils will be learning, and then check later to see if they have been successful in their learning. In the very best lessons, teachers challenge their pupils with a lively pace of work, and inspire them to try harder. In an excellent Year 2 lesson, pupils learnt how to divide numbers using continuous subtraction. The teacher's very lively approach, excellent teaching methods, and very good use of support staff ensured that all pupils discovered this method of division and the more able, how to check their results using known multiplication facts.

53. In the majority of lessons, appropriate mathematical problems are dealt with, which involve applying the learning objective of the lesson, this ensures that all have fully understood. In one very good lesson seen in Year 5 where problem solving was directly addressed, pupils were given very good strategies to help them solve problems, all learnt how to identify the starting point within the problem prior to beginning their calculations. Accurate mathematical vocabulary and language are continually used and pupils are constantly involved in discussions, leading to full understanding of calculations and concepts. Pupils' work is generally well marked, so that pupils know how well they have done, and what they need to do next. Teachers often include helpful comments, which guide their pupils and show them how to improve.
54. Teaching assistants provide very helpful support for those who need it and they make a valuable contribution to learning. This support takes place in class and is effective in building pupils' confidence. This approach means that pupils of all abilities are developing a broad and secure understanding of mathematical concepts.

Mathematics across the curriculum

The development of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects is good. Teachers constantly identify occasions when pupils can use their mathematical knowledge across the curriculum. For example, in Year 2 pupils used a block graph to record the distance their cars travelled. The use of ICT within the subject is developing satisfactorily, with appropriate use being made of computer generated graphs to record data handling.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are good.
- There needs to be more opportunities for some pupils to engage in more scientific investigations.
- Teaching is good enabling all pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy science and have a very good attitude towards their work.
- Leadership is effective.

Commentary

55. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in broadly in line with those expected nationally. This represents a similar picture to that seen at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school the pupils' achievements are good and this can be seen in pupils' books and their very positive attitudes to scientific activities. These good achievements are as a result of consistently good or better science teaching, which engages and interests all pupils and motivates them to learn. The pupils experience a broad range of scientific activities, which cover all aspects of the science curriculum. In some classes however, insufficient opportunities are given to pupils to enable them to apply their scientific skills and knowledge through involvement in experimental tasks.
56. The quality of learning and teaching is good throughout the school. The teachers plan their lessons well and clearly share the learning intentions with the pupils. Through carefully planned exposition and questioning teachers ensure pupils with special educational needs are very well catered for and more able pupils are given activities which are appropriately challenging. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to help the pupils and this adds great value to their learning. A very good feature in all lessons is the pupils' very positive attitudes towards their learning in science. In Year 6 the pupils used ICT and recorded the results of an investigation into the effects of mixing materials very enthusiastically. Pupils were very keen to share their findings and explained and justified their results using a good range of appropriate scientific

vocabulary. Generally the use of ICT to support the pupils' learning in science is underdeveloped. The use of appropriate technical scientific language by teachers and pupils is effective in helping pupils to better describe their experiences in science. In a Year 1 lesson pupils were very keen to find out about the parts of a plant and went on to successfully draw diagrams and label them appropriately. Pupils behaved very well and worked collaboratively to gain success. These very good attitudes and good achievements are as a result of high expectations by all members of staff. Teachers have a very clear understanding of the scientific skills and understanding they are teaching.

57. Pupils work hard in science and are keen and enthusiastic as they engage in the activities provided for them. They are very attentive in lessons and respond well to questions and tasks. Pupils in Year 6 listened carefully to instructions and thus are able to set about recording investigations with informed vigour. In Year 1 pupils again listened to the teachers explanations and tried very hard to explain their labelled diagrams of the parts of a plant. Pupils were pleased and proud of the results of their work.
58. The leadership and management of science are good. The science co-ordinator has been successful in supporting and motivating her colleagues. She has given advice, monitored teachers planning and analysed pupils' work in order to effectively judge standards. The co-ordinator is now keen to monitor the delivery of the curriculum through a series of classroom observations and sees this as an area for further development which will enhance the pupils' experiences of planning, organising and completing their own scientific investigations. Resources for science are good and these are well used in lessons to support teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below those expected.
- The quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply and develop their skills in ICT across other subjects within the curriculum.
- Enthusiastic and effective leadership has recently developed provision in ICT.

Commentary

59. Provision for ICT is satisfactory overall and is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. There has been an improvement in resources and the recent addition of the ICT suite is beginning to help improve pupil achievement and standards. However, the school recognises that standards are not yet high enough. The effective development plan shows clearly that there is still much to do in terms of additional resources to enable the school to raise standards further. By the end of Years 2 and 6, although achievement is satisfactory, standards are below those expected of similar aged pupils. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.
60. By the end of Year 2 pupils have achieved a range of keyboard skills. They enter and store a variety of information and know that text such as a story or poem can be typed into the computer and then printed out. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to improve and develop their skills and these are applied well in lessons. In a lesson in a mixed Year 2 and 3 class in the computer suite pupils were effectively using a paint and draw program to represent the work of the artist Mondrian. Pupils were very enthusiastic about the activity and improved their skills through careful explanation by the teacher and good opportunities to work collaboratively. By the end of Year 6 pupils use ICT to effectively organise and analyse information. There are some good opportunities for the pupils to use ICT to support their learning in other subjects but

as yet this is not consistently developed. Pupils use the Internet with increasing confidence to access and research information. They show a developing competence in the use of spreadsheets and make attempts to amend their work using texts and graphics. Pupils enjoy ICT lessons and respond very well to new experiences. However, due to the below average level of skills, pupils often require support in order to fully utilise the potential of ICT and although they produce satisfactory amounts of work, the standards seen in their work falls below that expected of pupils of their age.

61. Teaching of ICT is good. Teachers have an increased subject knowledge and confidence in their own skills. Support staff are deployed very well to support the learning needs of pupils in lessons. In a Year 6 lesson pupils worked hard to enter data related to a party onto a spreadsheet. The task was challenging for many pupils but all gained success through the sensitive intervention and support of both the teacher and the teaching assistant. ICT is planned into the timetable as a subject but is not yet sufficiently used to support other subject areas. This is currently inhibiting better achievement and standards for all pupils.
62. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The recently appointed and enthusiastic co-ordinator has only had responsibility for six months, but has already made a significant impact on provision, being instrumental in the development of the ICT suite. She has a good grasp of what needs to be done in order to raise standards in ICT and has developed a very clear action plan to address these issues. She has audited resources and plans are in place for her to monitor lessons and further support staff in the delivery of ICT.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

The use of ICT as an aid to teaching and learning in other subject areas is not sufficiently well developed. Teachers are becoming more confident in its use but there are still insufficient opportunities in lessons for both teachers and pupils to use ICT as a tool for teaching and learning. Pupils are able to use word processing skills in many subjects including literacy and science and use the Internet for curriculum research purposes. Basic numeracy skills are enhanced by the use of ICT and it is used effectively to support teaching and learning in art and design. However, although good practice exists, use of ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent and not sufficiently well developed in order to impact on standards. The planned introduction of interactive whiteboards and data projectors into every classroom are expected to enhance opportunities for this to happen and make a significant contribution to the raising of standards in ICT.

HUMANITIES

Insufficient lessons were observed in **geography** and **history** to make judgements on provision and to give firm judgements about teaching and standards. Observations on these subjects have been aided by talking to pupils and staff about their work and looking at a range of the pupils' work.

63. In **geography** the pupils have access to a good curriculum with a range of interesting and relevant subjects studied. Younger pupils follow recent topical events in the news. They have studied the impact the recent Tsunami has had on the lives of the people who lived in the area it devastated. They also recognised it also had an impact on the lives of people from the immediate locality who were on holiday in the region. Older pupils were busy researching to find out facts about the Rainforest using their research skills well as they used both the Internet and the school library for information. In this way the pupils made good use of their literacy skills as they made notes on the information they found and extended their knowledge and understanding of what it is like in the Amazon Rainforest and what animals they would find there.
64. In **history** the pupils enjoy a busy and challenging curriculum which encourages them to develop a clear sense of chronology and to reflect on what life was like in the past. The pupils in Year 1 experienced a Victorian school day. They dressed up as Victorian children and enjoyed a typical Victorian day at school. Their teacher showed them how to play top and whip, hoops

and typical ring games from this period. In this way the pupils learnt that school in Victorian times was very different from school today, but that some of the games for example, marbles are very much the same. Older pupils have enjoyed the myths and legends from Ancient Greece and have used the story to make collages as part of their art and design module 'Talking Pictures' to depict scenes from this ancient myth. The pupils gain a sense of Bacup in the past and study the many Victorian buildings in the town. They learn about the Blitz and the impact that the war had upon the people who lived during this time in history. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their learning in history with pupils in Years 2 and 3 eager to find out as much information as they could about famous people from the past. Displays throughout the school celebrate the pupils' learning and promote the subject well.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and their standards are in line with those expected.
- Teaching is effective in helping pupils to be encouraged to reflect on their feelings and the needs and beliefs of others.
- Religious education contributes well to the personal, social, cultural and emotional development of all pupils.

Commentary

65. Pupils achieve well in religious education lessons and as a result of these reach standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is a similar situation to that at the time of the last inspection. Two lessons were observed during the inspection. An examination of pupils' work, school documentation and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and the pupils, all illustrate that the subject is covered in depth and allows pupils to progress well with their understanding. In lessons the pupils are effectively encouraged to think about and discuss their learning, feelings and experiences and consider how these affect and influence their own life and beliefs and also those of others.
66. Good teaching enables pupils to learn well and results in good achievement for all. In a lesson in Year 1 pupils considered carefully ideas about new life and thoughtfully considered the special way in which this made them feel. The introduction of high quality resources very successfully engaged all pupils and a sense of awe and wonder was felt when the teacher introduced pictures of newborn chicks. Through very careful exposition and questioning the teacher very effectively engaged all pupils and left them with a sense of excitement by the end of the lesson. Pupils were captivated and their behaviour and response was very good thus leading to good achievement. In Year 5 pupils listened to the story of 'The Good Samaritan' and were asked to consider and discuss how they react to different people in different situations. The teacher skilfully enabled pupils to be very honest about their thoughts and feelings. Reasons for such feelings were then explored well through the teachers effective searching questioning, resulting in a lively and informed debate. Pupils achieve well in religious education because the topics are carefully chosen to meet the needs and interests of the pupils and teaching engages all pupils in opportunities for thought and reflection.
67. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and think carefully about others in their lives. In classrooms and corridors in the school there are displays which carefully reflect the thoughts and feelings of pupils and celebrate other cultures and their religious beliefs. The pupils think about their own personal qualities and those of others and reflect well on the consequences of friendship and kindness; this makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, social, cultural and emotional development. They engage well in prayer during assembly time, often writing prayers and the pupils enjoy celebrating special times and festivals.

68. The subject leader provides good direction and support for the subject. She has a good knowledge of the subject and has a clear understanding of how religious education could be further enhanced within the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

In **art and design**, **design technology**, **music** and **physical education** no lessons were observed as they were not the focus of the inspection. Consequently no judgements have been made about the provision in the school, teaching and learning and standards. Work was sampled and discussions held with pupils.

69. In **art and design** the teachers are effective throughout the school in developing the pupils' artistic skills and ideas. As a result the pupils produce some very effective pieces of work. The pupils study a wide range of acknowledged artists' work and this has a very positive impact on the breadth of the work studied. Pupils have examined amongst others the work of William Morris, Picasso and Paul Klee. The older pupils have studied Picasso's paintings from his 'Blue period' and created their own blue, chalk, pastel portraits with this very famous and impressive visual effect. Younger pupils use a wide range of media to convey their artistic thoughts and ideas. They create pop art portraits and paint pictures of the vehicles they have made from recycled materials as part of their design technology lessons. Textiles, paint, pastel and line drawings are all used to good effect by the pupils as they seek to convey their ideas. Some of the older pupils have created some successful observational paintings of the views from the school playground, whilst others have drawn some effective charcoal pictures of the Victorian buildings in the locality. Most of this work is of a high quality and recognises the pupils' cultural heritage. A wide variety of pupil's work is displayed to good effect by the staff throughout the school.

70. In **design technology** work displayed around the school shows good use of colour, different materials and design techniques. A particularly attractive display of vehicle models made by younger pupils demonstrated clear understanding of design techniques, and the use of a wide range of materials to execute the designs. While older pupils had designed and made skeletons using white paper and matchsticks. These were very effectively displayed on a black background. All indications are that standards of work seen are similar to those at the time of the last inspection.

71. In **music** observations of assembly and the choir show that there is a good quality of musical development in the school. The pupils enjoy singing and use their voices well with appropriate pitch, tone and emphasis. They are accurate in their notes and respond well to change of volume and pace when following recorded music. They clearly enjoy music and gain great pleasure and reward from participation in musical activities. They perform in musical concerts for parents at Christmas and at the Harvest festival. The choir performs in assembly and at the locally held Lord Mayors Festival of Song. The school also makes good provision for peripatetic instrumental tuition. This is taken up well by pupils and makes a valuable contribution to their musical development.

72. In **physical education** from discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of documentation and planning it is clear that the school provides pupils with many good opportunities to acquire and develop skills in dance, gymnastics, swimming and games. The importance of health and fitness education is recognised and this is effectively included in the planning of lessons for all pupils. The school follows a syllabus for physical education which ensures a good progression of skills and strategies in which pupils are given opportunities to apply in a range of competitive sports. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra curricular sporting activities including football, netball and tag rugby and good use is made of the large school gymnasium and school field during lessons. Pupils enjoy physical education and take pride in their sporting achievements.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **very good**. The school's provision for citizenship is **good** and especially in the provision of a school council.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' social awareness is developed very well through their involvement in school and community activities.
- There are good opportunities available to enable pupils to take responsibility across the school.
- The school's approach to supporting children's personal and social development is good.

Commentary

73. Pupils of all ages are given good opportunities to develop their roles as informed citizens through a wide range of activities. Citizenship is taught well as part of the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are encouraged to actively participate in the life of the school and community, which helps them to contribute towards the development of their community and neighbourhood spirit in the area.

74. All pupils are involved in a number of activities to help others. Pupils act as buddies supporting others as they play. They have good opportunities for involvement in the work of their school through the school council. This helps the pupils to have a better appreciation of the ways in which the school can develop and what needs to be done to overcome any barriers to improvement. The school council is developing very well, and gives pupils insights into the workings of democracy, and how their views can influence decisions. The involvement of the pupils in actively participating in the process of electing candidates for the school council enables them to experience citizenship in action.

75. The school has clear strategies for working in partnership with parents to help pupils to develop good social and personal skills. The very good role models provided by adults in the school, the high quality of concern and care shown to the pupils and the effective encouragement for pupils to see their school as one big family create a positive ethos for the personal and social development of all pupils. Pupils' attitudes mature as they progress through the school. They learn to be active and responsible members of their school family, to watch out for the needs of others and to seek ways to help those who need it.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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