

INSPECTION REPORT

BELTHORN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Belthorn, Blackburn

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119289

Headteacher: Mr M Rothwell

Lead inspector: Paula Allison

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 24th February 2005

Inspection number: 266406

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:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	153
School address:	Belthorn Road Belthorn Blackburn Lancashire
Postcode:	BB1 2NY
Telephone number:	01254 55620
Fax number:	01254 55620
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Small
Date of previous inspection:	21 st June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small foundation school with 153 boys and girls on roll. It has grown significantly in the last ten years and has undergone several extensions to cope with the increased numbers. It is a popular school and a number of parents travel long distances so that their children can attend. The school is situated in the village of Belthorn and it serves the villages of Belthorn and Guide, as well as various outlying hamlets. However, a large percentage of pupils come from Blackburn and Darwen, many from socially deprived areas. Therefore the socio-economic circumstances of families vary greatly, but are broadly average overall. Free school meal eligibility is four per cent, which is below average. The school regularly has pupils joining the school during the school year, particularly into the older classes. Attainment on entry varies quite considerably from year to year, but is broadly average overall.

The school has 20 children in the Foundation Stage, who are taught in one reception class. Eighty-eight per cent of pupils are of white British ethnic background; others are of various minority ethnic groups, or of mixed race. There are currently no pupils for whom English is not the home language. The school has a number of pupils from Traveller families. Around 20 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above the national average. Two of these have statements of educational need. Most of the special educational needs are moderate or specific learning difficulties.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21420	Paula Allison	Lead inspector	English Religious education Art and design Music English as an additional language
13459	Eva Mills	Lay inspector	
1028	David Page	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs
16761	Melvyn Hemmings	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

ISIS
3 Harrowby Road
West Park
Leeds
LS16 5HN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school**, which provides well for all its pupils. Pupils have a wide range of experiences and they make good progress during their time in school. Achievement is good. The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average and particularly high in mathematics
- The very good quality of provision for art and design results in pupils reaching very high standards; the quality of display is excellent
- Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development; they behave responsibly and work hard
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school
- The headteacher sets high standards and governors are fully involved with all aspects of the school's work
- Parents are confident in the quality of the school's provision and they support it well
- The marking of most of pupils' work does not help them understand how they can improve
- Pupils are not sufficiently involved with evaluating their own learning in lessons

The school was last inspected in 1999 and had no key issues to address. Since then, standards have fluctuated, but all pupils continue to achieve well and the school has maintained high standards in aspects of provision, such as the richness of the curriculum, pupils' personal development, care and partnership with parents. The quality of teaching has improved, but provision for ICT has not kept up with current developments. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	E	C	D
mathematics	C	E	C	D
science	A*	C	D	D

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

Achievement is good. As this is a small school, standards tend to fluctuate from year to year, as cohorts change. Children make good progress in the reception class and currently standards are above average, as most children are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 have improved considerably since the last inspection and are now above average, demonstrating the good achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 have been lower in the last two years, and last year did not compare well with those in similar schools. However, the test results that year did not reflect the actual progress pupils had made. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are currently achieving well and standards in Year 6 are above average, which is good achievement, given the prior attainment of the pupils in that year group. A few pupils do not achieve as well as they could do as a result of their poor attendance. Throughout the school, standards are particularly high in mathematics and art and design. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could do in ICT.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Attendance is satisfactory. Despite efforts made by the school, the overall attendance rate remains below the national average. However, it is the poor attendance of a few pupils that causes this, and the attendance of the vast majority of pupils is very good. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils behave responsibly at all times; they enjoy school and work hard.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good. It is now consistently good throughout the school and is often very good, especially in art and design and mathematics. Pupils learn effectively. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and pupils respond well to this by working hard and making good progress in lessons. Relationships are supportive and pupils are confident and apply themselves well to the tasks they are given to do. Teachers include all pupils in their lessons, often by the use of skilful questioning and by careful planning to meet individual needs. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers plan their lessons well, but do not always make it clear to pupils what they are learning and how well they are doing. The marking of pupils' work does not sufficiently help pupils to know how they can improve.

Pupils have a wide range of experiences in school. The curriculum is very effectively enriched by visits and visitors and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Provision for art and design is of a particularly high standard. Provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop ICT skills or to use them to support their learning in other subjects. Pupils are very well cared for and the partnership with parents is very good. Both of these aspects positively affect the confidence with which pupils approach their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has effectively led the schools' development to the popular and successful school it is today. He tirelessly promotes the ethos of the school, which is based on including and valuing everyone, and sets high standards for its work. The school is very well managed, with particularly high standards in financial planning, control and administration. Governors are involved in all aspects of the school's work. They bring a wide range of expertise and interest to the role and have developed into a very effective body. The school complies with statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the school and feel it provides their children with the experiences and challenges that help them to make progress, both academically and personally. Pupils enjoy school and feel confident in it. They like their teachers and their lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise achievement in information and communication technology
- Ensure that the marking of pupils' work helps pupils to know how they can get better
- Involve pupils more in evaluating their own learning in lessons

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class achieve well and currently standards are above what is expected of children of this age
- Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is better than it was at the time of the last inspection
- Standards in Year 6 have been lower in recent years, but pupils achieve well
- Achievement in mathematics is particularly good throughout the school, but pupils do not achieve as well as they could in information and communication technology (ICT)
- The quality of art work in the school is high

Commentary

1. Children achieve well in the reception class. Although attainment on entry varies quite considerably from year to year, most children have skills that are similar to other children of this age. The good teaching by all adults and a programme of work that meets the needs of all children ensures that children make good progress in all areas of learning. Usually by the time they start Year 1, most children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. In the current reception class most children are on course to exceed these goals.
2. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. At the time of the last inspection, standards were average and achievement was satisfactory. Improvements to the curriculum and the quality of teaching have resulted in better achievement and higher standards. In the school's Year 2 national tests pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average and compared well with similar schools. Currently, standards are above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. This is good achievement for this particular group of pupils.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (17.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.4 (17.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.0 (18.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Standards are usually high and were well above average at the time of the last inspection. Standards were not as high last year. They were average in English and mathematics and below average in science. These standards did not compare well with those in similar schools and seemed to indicate that pupils had not made the progress they should have done from what they achieved in Year 2. However, these test results were disappointing and did not reflect the actual progress made by pupils. The school's own assessments show that the pupils in this group made good progress through the year, but a few of them failed to perform on the day in the tests. This was enough to bring about the lower overall standards.

4. The school analysed the results very carefully and made some changes to help pupils perform better in the tests this year. Challenging targets have been set for the current Year 6 in all subjects, and evidence indicates that the pupils are rising to these and are achieving well. They are on course to reach standards that are better than might be expected, given their prior attainment. Standards are currently average in English, above average in science and well above average in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (25.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.5 (25.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.0 (28.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. As this is a small school, where one cohort can vary quite considerably from one year to the next, trends in standards are difficult to identify. The school also has an above average number of pupils with special educational needs and a number of Traveller pupils, some of whom have poor attendance records. It only needs a few of these pupils to be present in a year group, particularly if they join the school during the school year, for their performance to have a significant impact on the overall results in tests. Currently the overall improvement trend is above the national trend in Year 2 and below the national trend in Year 6, but these statistics only reflect the fluctuations in standards over the last few years. The school's own assessment information shows that pupils make good progress year on year, despite any differences in standards. Targets set by the school are usually met.
6. The school makes every effort to ensure that all pupils achieve well. Almost all pupils with special educational needs, who have individual education plans, have needs related to literacy and numeracy. As a consequence, the standards of attainment of many pupils with special educational needs are lower than their peers. However, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their teachers, support staff and other adults and therefore achieve as well as other children. The achievement of those pupils who have poor attendance records is held back by the work they miss, despite the best efforts of the school. Girls have tended to achieve better than boys in Year 2, but this is now changing with improved teaching strategies and boys are achieving more than they were. In Year 6 there is no clear pattern of difference in achievement between boys and girls and the school.
7. The school places a lot of emphasis on art and design and the subject is very well led. Pupils achieve very well and reach standards that are well above expectations. This quality can be seen in the excellent displays around the school. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in ICT are not as high as they could be; achievement is unsatisfactory. Although improvements have been made in resources, provision overall has not kept up with current developments and pupils do not have the opportunity to gain the skills they need.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning; their behaviour is very good. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and cultural development and good provision for pupils' social and spiritual development. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and work hard in lessons

- The school sets high expectations and pupils behave very well
- The school is very successful at ensuring all pupils are fully included in the life of the school
- Pupils enjoy a safe and secure environment free from bullying or any other harassment
- The breadth of the curriculum contributes very well to pupils' cultural development

Commentary

8. Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very good. The school effectively encourages pupils to become well involved in the school's life and the range of activities it provides. All pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need or level of prior attainment, are helped very effectively to become fully included in the life the school. The school's reputation as a safe and secure environment free from bullying or harassment has led to parents from far afield sending their children to the school. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about their work. In one Year 4/5 mathematics lesson, they concentrated very well on their task of working out co-ordinates, and in a Year 1 mathematics lesson children were clearly excited by work on shapes.
9. Pupils' behaviour is very good. There were no exclusions during the year prior to the inspection. Pupils behave very well in and around the school, both during and outside lesson time. They play together well at breaks and lunchtimes and show courtesy to others when collecting food. They move around the school sensibly and queue in an orderly manner to enter classrooms. The behaviour of pupils in a Year 2 citizenship lesson was very good. A mother with a young baby was the focus for the lesson and pupils were very keen to ask questions, waiting patiently for their turn despite their obvious enthusiasm to be involved. Pupils whose special educational need is behavioural are effectively helped to deal with this, so that their behaviour is generally in line with that of other pupils.
10. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good and this contributes positively to pupils' achievement. Pupils feel safe and secure in the school and as a consequence their confidence and self-esteem are very high. They contribute readily to class discussions and are prepared to come up to the front of the class and try new problems in front of others. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility, for example by serving on the school council, acting as monitors during movement around the school and preparing audio equipment for assemblies.
11. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Parents are very happy with the values the school promotes and the positive impact on their children. It is one of the reasons many parents chose the school in the first instance.
12. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Some whole-school assemblies provide very good opportunities for pupils to gain knowledge regarding the Christian approach to spirituality. In one assembly, pupils demonstrated awe and wonder as they were helped to reflect on the journeys made by Moses. The very good ethos for learning promoted by the school is effectively supported through the successful way the school helps pupils to value themselves and others. Art and design makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development, as pupils are given opportunities to appreciate the work of a range of artists and are given time to reflect on what it means to them.
13. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers and non-teaching assistants provide good role models for pupils and help to set the high moral standards within the school. High expectations in lessons ensure that all pupils behave well and have a respect for others' needs. The sensitive and effective way in which pupils with special educational needs are included in the lessons, often through the work of teaching assistants, helps other pupils to learn tolerance and respect.

14. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The school effectively encourages pupils to work together both during lesson time and outside it. Pupils are helped to understand the way communities work together through the operation of the school council. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility as monitors around the school help them to effectively develop a sense of responsibility within society.
15. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Very good use is made of the local environment in such subjects as history and geography and this helps pupils to appreciate their own local culture. Very good use is made of examples from other cultures as the basis for work in a number of subjects. Art and design makes an excellent contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of artists from different cultures and they talk confidently about the work, making comparisons and using the work as a stimulus for their own art work. The school is very effective at ensuring all pupils, regardless of their cultural heritage, are fully valued members of the school community.
16. Despite the considerable efforts of the school to promote good attendance, overall rates of attendance remain below those achieved nationally. The vast majority of pupils attend very well; they are very happy in school and want to come. However, the poor attendance of some of the Traveller pupils remains a concern to the school and has a detrimental effect, not only on the attendance rates of the school, but also in the progress of those pupils who fail to attend regularly. There have been improvements since the last inspection. The school has put a lot of effort into establishing good relationships with Traveller families and has been successful in encouraging many of them to ensure that their children attend regularly. However, as new families arrive, the work has to start again. The school follows up all absences rigorously. There are no unauthorised absences.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is consistently good through the school and ensures that all pupils learn effectively. The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of experiences and opportunities. The high level of care pupils receive and the strong partnership with parents contribute effectively to the quality of the education offered by the school.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and helps pupils to learn well. The quality of the assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, which encourages them to work hard in lessons
- Relationships are positive; all pupils are included and their contributions valued
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning
- Teachers assess pupils' work effectively, but do not involve pupils enough in evaluating their own work
- Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, but the marking does not always make it clear to pupils how they can improve

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	8	16	2	0	0	0

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

17. The quality of teaching throughout the school is usually good and is often very good. This is an improvement from the last inspection, when teaching overall was good, but the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 was not as good as it is now. Parents are very confident in the quality of teaching that their children receive. Pupils themselves like and trust their teachers and enjoy their lessons. The quality of teaching ensures that pupils learn effectively and make good progress in lessons. Mathematics and art and design are particularly well taught and this contributes well to the achievement of pupils in these subjects. However, teaching and learning in ICT are unsatisfactory. Teachers do not use ICT sufficiently in their planning and they do not teach ICT skills effectively enough.
18. Teaching in the reception class is good. The quality of the teamwork, with all adults working together effectively, is a major strength. The teacher has a good understanding of the needs of young children and plans an appropriate range of activities and experiences, which promotes children's learning. There is a good balance between teacher/adult-led activities and those initiated by children themselves, so children gain skills and learn to be independent.
19. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations of what pupils can do, and pupils respond by working hard. The headteacher is instrumental in promoting these high expectations; they are evident in all classes and are a major factor in the good achievement of pupils. Teachers challenge pupils continuously, expecting the most of them and not settling for less. For example, when questioning pupils in the Year 5/6 class, the teacher does not always accept the first answer to a question but continues to make pupils think further and really sort out their thinking. Pupils respond very well to this level of challenge and in all classes they concentrate and try hard. They want to do well and take a pride in their work. Teachers also have high expectations of behaviour and attention in lessons. As a result, pupils attend very well and behave responsibly. This makes for an effective working environment and helps pupils get on with their work.
20. Teachers encourage and engage all pupils. Relationships in classes are positive and teachers include all pupils in lessons and value their contributions. This is often done through skilful questioning that supports the less confident and challenges the more able pupils. It is also done by providing pupils with enough time to express their views. For example, in a Year 4/5 literacy lesson the teacher helped pupils to understand and respond to a poem they had read. Pupils were keen to contribute and sufficiently confident to make suggestions, knowing they would be listened to. This kind of discussion is a strong feature of many lessons and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Traveller pupils are effectively included in lessons and teachers often go out of their way to ensure that they are successful, which adds to their self-esteem.
21. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. Teachers effectively deploy available support staff and volunteers, ensuring that their work is well planned and integrated in the lessons. They provide good quality support for the less confident pupils, which enables them to make good progress. For example, in the Year 2 class there are often several adults, but their work is very well organised, so that the pupils who need support get it and the teacher is often then able to work with a small group and provide

them with some well-focused teaching. This is very effective in promoting the learning of all pupils. Most pupils themselves are confident that they get help when they are stuck.

22. Teachers, and other adults working in the classrooms, are well aware of the needs of those pupils who have special educational needs. Individual education plans for these pupils are detailed and of good quality, ensuring that effective guidance is provided for teachers. Very frequent evaluation of the pupils' progress is recorded on the plans and this provides a very good record, ensuring that all adults working with the children are clear on their progress. Occasionally the focus for the individual education plans is not revised in light of these records quickly enough, which sometimes leads to targets for improvement which are no longer the most appropriate for the pupil.
23. The school has a wide range of good quality resources and teachers use them very well. This is particularly evident in history, geography and art and design lessons. For example, in art and design, pupils are introduced to the work of an impressive range of artists and artefacts and this inspires their own work. In a Year 3/4 lesson, the enthusiasm of pupils and the quality of their work showed that they had been stimulated by studying pictures of Anglo Saxon jewellery. Where available, teachers are beginning to use interactive whiteboards to improve the quality of their teaching. There are examples of where this is very effective. However, not enough use is made of ICT to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils do not turn automatically to computers and other technology during their lessons.
24. Teachers know pupils very well and they plan to meet their individual needs. They assess pupils' work meticulously and track their progress. They use this information to help them plan work. So, pupils have tasks that they can complete, but which give them enough challenge to help them progress in their learning. Some effective target-setting takes place and this is negotiated between pupils and teachers. However, on a daily basis pupils do not have enough opportunity to evaluate their own learning. Learning objectives are rarely shared with pupils, and neither are pupils given the opportunity to decide whether they have learnt what they were expected to learn. Although teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and give pupils encouragement, the marking of pupils' work overall does not give pupils what they need to know in order to improve. There is, however, currently the beginning of a more focused approach to marking in writing, which does this well.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, with a very good range of enrichment opportunities that extends beyond the school day. There is a good match of teachers and teaching assistants to the curriculum, which effectively meets the needs of all pupils. Accommodation is satisfactory and learning resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is planned very well to maximise links between subjects
- An extensive programme of visits and visitors significantly enhances pupils' learning
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in other subjects
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling them to make good progress and achieve well

Commentary

25. A lot of thought has gone into the way the curriculum is planned, so that pupils are given a wide range of exciting learning experiences. The headteacher is responsible for the curriculum overview, which emphasises a cross-curricular, creative approach to teaching and learning. Individual subjects are carefully incorporated within well-planned topics and the skills required by the National Curriculum are taught in a progressive and precise manner in all subjects,

apart from in ICT. Care is taken to ensure effective links between subjects so that pupils can use skills acquired in one subject to support their learning in others. In the reception class, the emphasis is on giving children practical activities that make learning fun and help them to make good progress across all areas of learning. In Years 1 to 6, pupils have good quality opportunities to refine their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, which is an important factor in pupils' good achievement in English and mathematics. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the curriculum, particularly enjoying practical activities such as art and design, but also mathematics and their work in the local environment in history and geography.

26. All pupils are able to take part in a variety of rich experiences in art and design, drama and music. They are able to work with visitors, such as artists, musicians and theatre groups, to develop their skills through a broad range of activities. The quality of pupils' artwork is very good. Pupils are provided with a wealth of imaginative activities that very successfully develop their creative talents. Provision for music has been improved considerably since the last inspection and its profile has been raised in the school. Pupils are able to participate in a wide variety of educational visits and extra-curricular activities. These add further significant learning opportunities for pupils to enjoy.
27. The provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. The curriculum does not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their computer skills. Consequently, the standards that pupils achieve are below those expected. There is only limited use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
28. Induction procedures for children new to the school are very good and all pupils are prepared well for the next stages of their education. There is good provision for pupils for their personal development, within a curriculum that is fully inclusive of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy equal access to the curriculum with others. They are taught in the mainstream classes alongside the other children and provided with good support from teaching assistants and other adults.
29. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum means that all pupils' needs are well catered for. There is a wide range of good quality resources in most subjects, which effectively support pupils' learning. Only in ICT are resources insufficient. Pupils do not have enough regular access to computers to help them to develop and consolidate their skills. Neither is there sufficient software to enable ICT to be used across the curriculum.
30. The hall is too small for physical education lessons, which sometimes limits the range of activities. However, the school has been aware of this for a long time and work is soon to start on an extension. The new classrooms are large and light, but the outside area for children in the reception class is inadequate and hinders their learning through an outdoor curriculum. The excellent displays of pupils' work in corridors and classrooms help to provide a very stimulating setting in which to learn. They also reflect the value that teachers place upon pupils' efforts, which makes a valuable contribution to the school's very good ethos.

Care, guidance and support

The school has very good procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Very good support, advice and guidance are provided for pupils. The school's measures for taking pupils' views into account are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school places a very strong emphasis on the welfare and care of pupils and has very good systems in place to support this
- The very good relationships which exist throughout the school ensure pupils receive very effective personal support

- Children starting in the reception class and others new to the school are helped to settle in very well
- Pupils know that their views matter to staff and the school council provides an effective way to involve pupils in the work of the school

Commentary

31. The school has maintained the safe, caring environment found at the time of the last inspection and parents are confident that their children are well looked after in school. The school sees pupils' health, welfare and safety as a priority and has very good systems in place to support pupils' well-being, including detailed risk assessments for visits out of school. All health, safety and child protection procedures are very effectively managed by the headteacher, governors and other members of staff. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged and the school makes very good use of health professionals to support pupils' welfare. Catering staff ensure that school meals are well balanced and healthy.
32. Staff know pupils very well, are aware of their individual needs and circumstances and are able to provide very good personal support to pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and this ensures that help is available to pupils when they need it and pupils can share any worries. Traveller pupils are well supported by staff in the school and this enables them to work well with other pupils, taking full part in lessons and integrating well in the playground. All adults in the school community make a very good contribution to the pastoral care of pupils which is a strength of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well looked after through the effective use of individual education plans. Teachers, teaching assistants and other adults provide good support for these pupils.
33. Children joining reception are helped to settle in very well and soon become used to the routines of school. All parents who expressed a view feel that the school has good arrangements for induction into the school and pupils who join the school in other year groups report that they are made to feel welcome. Pupils in Year 6 feel that they have been well prepared for the transition to secondary education.
34. Generally the school is good at ensuring all pupils are effectively involved in the life of the school. This is in part due to the very good ethos which the school creates. A school council has been set up recently involving pupils in Year 6 and this is making a good start in involving pupils in whole-school issues. It has already instigated some fundraising activities and has followed up suggestions from other pupils. Pupils in all year groups are confident to express their views and know that their opinions and suggestions will be taken seriously. This reflects the very positive ethos of the school where all pupils are valued as individuals.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school and hold staff in high regard
- The school has very good relationships with parents and information is shared very well
- The school has productive links with the community which are used very well in lessons

Commentary

35. Parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school and are very positive about all that the school provides. They have a high level of confidence in the staff and appreciate the open, welcoming atmosphere which helps to provide a true partnership between home and school.

This aspect of the school's provision has been maintained at a high level since the last inspection.

36. This partnership begins early, when children who are due to start school are invited into school with their parents each week to use the library. This enables children to become used to school and to get to know the reception class staff. The very good relationships with parents are fostered by staff as pupils move through school. Parents are encouraged to exchange information informally at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as more formally during consultation evenings. The school administration officer has a pivotal role in the day-to-day contact with parents and ensures that any concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. Staff also have good contact with the families of Traveller children and this is instrumental in ensuring that relationships with the Traveller community remain strong. It is this that has brought about improvements in the attendance of a number of these pupils.
37. Information about the school and about pupils' progress is comprehensive. Each term parents are given details of the work their children will be doing. Homework is explained to parents and they are given guidance on how they can help their children. Annual written reports to parents contain useful targets for improvement. The parents of the few pupils with statements of special educational need are involved in the review of their statements. Appropriate use is made of outside agencies to provide specialised support for those pupils who need it.
38. The school is very much part of the local community and staff and governors are very proactive in establishing and maintaining links with local businesses. These links are used very well in topic work. Fieldwork based on the locality is used extensively in history and geography. Pupils visit local farms and businesses and local people come into school to talk to pupils about various topics, including the experiences of evacuees who were placed in the village in wartime.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is good. Management is very good. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and has been instrumental in making it into the popular and successful school it is today
- Leadership is committed to including and valuing everyone
- Governors strive effectively towards the vision they have for the school
- Self-evaluation is thorough and helps to move the school forward
- Financial management is of the highest standard

Commentary

39. The headteacher has worked hard over many years to develop the school from the small village school it once was to the much larger, successful and popular school it is today. Parents have confidence in his leadership and many bring their children long distances in order that they should attend the school of their choice. He sets high standards for the work of the school and leads by example in the curriculum, especially in the areas where he has particular expertise and interest, such as art and design and history.
40. The leadership of the school relentlessly promotes the inclusion of all pupils, the positive work ethic and the very good personal development of pupils that distinguish this school and contribute so effectively to the achievement of all pupils. Members of staff with particular responsibilities and teachers in their roles as subject co-ordinators are focused on ensuring

that all pupils achieve as well as they can. This is demonstrated in the way in which all pupils are valued and respected and the high expectations all adults have of pupils.

41. As a result of some recent changes in staffing, some responsibilities are relatively new. For example, the recently appointed deputy headteacher has taken on several roles, including that of special educational needs co-ordinator. She has a clear view of developments needed and leads and manages the provision well. The newly appointed Year 5/6 teacher has taken on a range of responsibilities and has made a good start in developing the science curriculum. He has not yet had enough opportunity to make the major changes that need to be made to bring ICT up to a satisfactory level of provision. Currently the leadership and management of ICT are unsatisfactory.
42. School development planning is effectively focused on improving achievement and the raising of standards. Leaders monitor the school's work and plan for ways to improve. For example, a weakness was identified in writing through the school. The co-ordinator analysed pupils' work, provided teachers with guidance and an action plan was drafted for making improvements. As a result, teachers are more confident in teaching writing and pupils are achieving more and standards are improving. Another example is the way in which the mathematics co-ordinator has carefully analysed test results and brought about changes in the approach to teaching as a result.
43. Governors are a well-established and committed group. They bring a wide range of expertise and interests to the role and put a lot of time and effort into pursuing their aims. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play a major role in self-evaluation and development planning. They have a clear vision for how they want the school to be and they strive individually and as a group towards this. They are rightly proud of their school and what has been achieved. Committee structures are effective and are the means by which governors both support and challenge the headteacher and staff.
44. Self-evaluation is rigorous and the findings are used effectively to bring about improvements. Teaching is monitored and supported well and secure performance management procedures are in place. Pupils' achievements are carefully assessed and the progress of individuals is effectively tracked. The school knows how well all pupils are doing and where any weaknesses are. However, although the school tracks the performance of individuals very well and can use this information to deal with weaknesses on a year-by-year basis, it does not make enough use of the information to provide an overview over time and enable patterns in performance to be identified efficiently.
45. The school is very well managed on a day-to-day basis and strategically. The school has a history of being a confident, self-managing school. All management procedures are efficient and allow staff to pursue the educational aims of the school. Financial planning, administration and control are excellent. The headteacher, the administrator and the finance committee of the governing body have clear roles and responsibilities and together they keep a very close control of the budget. They plan strategically in pursuit of their educational aims and have successfully seen the school through some financially challenging times. A substantial balance was carried forward into the current year, which is accounted for by the reserves committed to building extensions – the classroom just completed and the hall extension which is about to be started. Given the quality of the provision and the good achievement of pupils, the school gives good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	367,061
Total expenditure	343,687
Expenditure per pupil	2,246

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	78,490
Balance carried forward to the next	101,863

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The attainment of most children on entry to school is average. By the time they start Year 1 most of them will exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning. This shows good achievement. Teaching is good, with all adults working effectively as a team. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and she has developed a programme of work that effectively meets the needs of all children. There is a good curriculum, with a strong emphasis on children learning through interesting, practical activities. Assessment procedures are good, enabling children's progress to be carefully tracked. There are very good induction procedures that help children to quickly settle into everyday routines in school. Links with parents are very good and they are kept fully informed about the progress their children make. The outside secure area is too small and does not sufficiently promote children's learning through outdoor activity. The quality of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection and so improvement has been satisfactory

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The relationships between adults and children are very good
- Children feel confident and secure in school
- There is good emphasis on children becoming independent learners

Commentary

46. As a result of the good teaching they receive, most children achieve well and are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Lessons are planned thoughtfully to allow a good balance between children choosing for themselves and teacher direction. During the daily child-initiated activities the children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves and this effectively promotes their sense of responsibility. Adults work very well together as a team and provide very good role models. They successfully build up children's confidence and develop their self-esteem. Circle time activities are planned well to encourage children to express opinions and talk about their feelings. For example, after discussing what made them feel special, one child wrote "When I climbed up Darwen Tower for the first time it felt special". Children's attitudes are excellent. They respond very positively to the care they are shown, being very well behaved and showing much enjoyment in their work. They also show good collaboration skills when working together in pairs and small groups.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic skills in reading and writing are taught well
- Children's achievement is good
- There are good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills
- The reading corner lacks visual stimulation

Commentary

47. Because of the good teaching they receive, children achieve well and most will exceed the expected learning goal by the end of reception. Well-planned opportunities to talk about their experiences and what they are doing help them make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. There is good use of questioning by adults to involve children in discussions and encourage them to communicate their ideas and opinions. Children's reading skills are effectively developed in the guided reading sessions. This was seen when children were reading *Eddie's Garden* with the teacher. She modelled the behaviour of a good reader well to help them improve their own reading. Her expertise also led them to develop their understanding of the fiction and non-fiction parts of the book.
48. However, books are not displayed well in the room. This is particularly evident in the reading corner, which does not provide an inviting area to foster an enjoyment of reading. There are good opportunities for children to write for different purposes, including initiating their own independent writing activities. They enjoy using a variety a variety of implements for drawing, marking, scribbling and writing. There are high expectations of children's performance and they respond positively by taking care to present their work neatly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, helping children make good progress
- There is strong emphasis on children learning through practical activities
- There are times when groups working independently require more adult intervention
- Children show very positive attitudes to their work in mathematics

Commentary

49. Most children will exceed the expected goal by the end of reception, having achieved well. Lessons are planned carefully to develop children's basic skills and to encourage the use of mathematical vocabulary. Resources are used well to provide practical activities to help children solve number problems. Of particular note is the way the teacher uses the interactive whiteboard as a visual stimulus in lessons. In one lesson, this led to the children making good progress in recognising and ordering numbers to 20. Rhymes and songs are also used well to help children sequence and remember numbers. Activities are often linked to real-life situations so children can use their own experiences to support their learning. There is good teamwork between adults so that children have a high degree of direct teaching. This enables their individual needs to be met effectively. There are times, however, when children working independently are not given sufficient support to help them complete their tasks. Because relationships are very good, children have the confidence to have a go at answering questions, even when not sure if they are correct or not. They know that adults will value their contributions. Children show much enjoyment in their activities, which makes a positive contribution to the progress they make.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress because teaching and learning are good
- Lessons are planned well to be practical and interesting

Commentary

50. Most children achieve well and will exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave reception. Activities are linked well to children's own experiences, to add interest to and stimulate their learning. They are effectively taught about the wider world, away from home and school. In their scientific investigations, they are encouraged to use their close observational skills and make sensible predictions. When using computers, most children control the mouse well and can follow basic on-screen prompts. There is very good use of the local area to develop children's historical and geographical skills, for example when walking around Belthorn to look at the different kinds of houses. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors that provide further good quality learning opportunities. There are good opportunities for children to learn about the beliefs and traditions of other cultures, for example how Jewish people have a special meal on Friday evening to prepare for Shabbat.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well
- Children respond very well to the interesting activities provided for them
- The outside area does not effectively promote learning through outdoor play

Commentary

51. Most children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of reception. There is good use of physical education lessons to develop children's skills in control and co-ordination. Adults work very well together to help them gain a sense of space and awareness of how to share the hall floor area safely with others. A good example of this was when the teacher and nursery nurse worked effectively with different groups to improve their skills in using a variety of small apparatus in the hall. The curriculum is planned thoughtfully to promote children's skills in manipulating scissors, writing and painting tools, along with handling a range of equipment when making models. Resources are good and allow children to take part in a variety of practical and enjoyable experiences, to which they respond very well. However, the outdoor area is small and hinders the use of outdoor play to develop children's learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress because teaching and learning are good
- Some resources are not readily available for children to use
- Role-play activities are used well to develop children's imaginations

Commentary

52. Most children are on course to exceed the expected goal by the time they leave reception, which shows they have achieved well. Children are given good opportunities to use a variety of resources to develop their skills in handling and using different media. Consequently, they develop a broad range of skills, using creative materials and tools. This was seen in a very good lesson in which they created a representation of real flowers using pencil, charcoal and paint. Some resources are not readily available to enable children to choose for themselves the materials they need. There is good use of the role-play area, set out as a garden centre, to develop children's imaginations. Adults join in these activities to effectively develop children's creative talents and their speaking and listening skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, although standards are not always as high as they are in other subjects
- Pupils have good skills in speaking and listening
- Pupils read fluently
- Developments in writing are leading to improved standards
- Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum

Commentary

53. Standards in reading and writing fluctuate from year to year. At the last inspection, standards in Year 2 were average; they were well above average last year and are currently above average. In Year 6 standards were very high at the last inspection; they were average last year and continue to be average now. These fluctuations are mainly due to the make-up of different cohorts of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who have poor attendance, tend to have weaker language skills than they do skills in other subjects, such as mathematics. Therefore, the presence of a few such pupils in a particular cohort can make a big difference to overall test results. Despite the fluctuations in standards, all pupils make good progress and achieve well, given their prior attainment levels.
54. Skills in speaking and listening are particularly well developed throughout the school. Pupils talk confidently in small groups and in whole-class situations. They are given many opportunities to develop these skills in literacy lessons. Most lessons begin with a class discussion, perhaps based on a piece of text, a book or a poem. Pupils respond well; they are eager to contribute their ideas and answer questions. But they are also ready to listen to others and take their views into account. Year 2 pupils describe events and experiences and respond to others in discussions. Year 6 pupils speak confidently in a range of situations and take turns in discussions.
55. Standards in reading are above average. Reading skills are taught effectively and pupils generally read fluently and with understanding. They respond well to different texts. In Year 2, pupils talk about stories they have heard and discuss why characters behave as they do. In Year 4, pupils can explain how similes are used in a poem and by Year 6 they recognise layers of meaning in poetry. Skills in decoding are taught well and most pupils have a try at words they are unfamiliar with and correct themselves when a sentence sounds wrong. Some pupils are not so confident when asked to talk about what they are reading. The school does not have a library, but most classes have a reading corner and a good range of books. Younger pupils take books home to read with their parents, but the practice is currently inconsistent in the rest of the school. This can have an effect on how widely pupils read outside their own set reading books.
56. The school identified a weakness in writing and has recently made changes in the way it is taught in order to address this issue. As a result, achievement is better and standards are improving. Standards are currently average. Most pupils in Year 2 write independently, although a few need a good deal of support. They use sentences and mostly remember to use full stops and capital letters. They spell simple words correctly and form recognisable letters. By Year 6, pupils write in a range of different formats, such as letters, narratives, instructions and poetry. They use words imaginatively and begin to experiment with more complex

sentence structures. Handwriting is taught well and pupils develop a legible and fluent style. Presentation skills are good.

57. Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils learn effectively. Teachers plan carefully and they use their knowledge of what individuals can do to help them provide appropriate tasks for pupils. Pupils are well supported in lessons and this makes a positive impact on how well they achieve. Skilful questioning in whole-class sessions helps pupils develop their responses. A good range of books is used by teachers, including a deliberate attempt to introduce texts from different cultures, for example Indian folk tales and Caribbean poems. Overall the use of ICT in literacy is limited. Some teachers are effectively using interactive whiteboards in lessons to enhance their teaching, for example in sharing texts. In one lesson in the Year 4/5 class, when everyone was writing a poem, some pupils drafted their poems on computers. They confidently typed their ideas in, made changes and printed out their work. Drafting on screen like this does not happen enough in the rest of the school.
58. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has carried out a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work and has analysed test results. Using information from these activities, she has provided teachers with ideas as to how to improve pupils' achievement. A focused approach to marking of writing has been introduced and, where it is used consistently, it is effective in helping pupils know how to improve. Improvement in provision since the last inspection has been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Language and literacy skills are taught well and pupils are given a good range of opportunities to use these skills in other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are used effectively in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Teachers place a particular emphasis on pupils learning subject-specific vocabulary in order that they can discuss their ideas more accurately, for example in science and in art and design. Despite not having a library, pupils have access to a good range of books that support their current topics. They have satisfactory research skills. Pupils write confidently and use this to record their learning in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards are well above expectation
- The mathematics co-ordinator provides very good management
- All pupils achieve well as a result of very good teaching
- ICT is rarely used to support learning
- Marking does not often indicate how pupils may improve their work
- Teaching assistants and other adults make a good contribution to pupils' learning

Commentary

60. The school's results in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were above the national average. When compared to similar schools results were in line with the average. Over the last five years girls have performed slightly better than boys. The trend in improvement has been broadly in line with the national trend. The school's results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were at the national average for all schools. When compared to similar schools results were below the average. Over the last five years there has been no clear pattern in the relative performance of boys and girls. The trend in improvement has been broadly in line with the national trend.

61. Standards of work seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the school are well above the expected level for most pupils. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils are able to subtract and add numbers to 20 and use bar charts to represent information. Lower attaining pupils are able to subtract and add numbers to 10 and choose appropriate calculation methods. Year 6 higher attaining pupils are able to draw angles to the nearest degree and use and interpret co-ordinates in all quadrants. They work confidently with three- and two-digit numbers. Middle and lower attaining pupils are able to carry about the majority of these tasks with support. Throughout the school all pupils regardless of special educational need, gender, ethnicity or level of prior attainment achieve well and in line with others. Pupils' understanding of the mathematics of shapes is helped by the links made with high quality work in art and design. The work seen, particularly of the higher attainers, in Year 6 would suggest an improvement in results in 2005.
62. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers are very effective in engaging pupils in the work and encouraging them to succeed. As a consequence pupils enjoy mathematics and in the best lessons are clearly excited by the work. While lessons are well planned with a clear structure and very effective introductions, teachers do not make pupils aware of what they are going to learn in the lesson. Pupils are very clear on what to do, but less clear on why they are doing it. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, and, with the effective support of teaching assistants and other adults, ensure that all pupils are well supported in order to achieve well. As a consequence pupils work hard and concentrate well at their tasks. When the interactive whiteboard is used, this motivates pupils effectively. However, ICT is rarely used to support learning in mathematics. Marking of pupils' work is usually encouraging, but does not indicate to pupils how they may improve their work.
63. Leadership of the subject is good and management is very good. The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of the priorities for development. She carries out a very thorough analysis of pupils' performances in national tests. As a consequence, areas of weakness in pupils' learning are identified and an action plan to address these is implemented by teachers.
64. There has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection. Standards have been raised; achievement and teaching are still good, leadership is still good while management has improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Mathematics has been a high priority and as a consequence pupils' numeracy skills are generally well above national expectation. Good links are made with other curriculum areas, such as in art and design, where pupils' understanding of shape is significantly supported by high quality artwork. Pupils use graphical presentation strategies in other subjects such as geography and design and technology. Elements of the National Numeracy Strategy have been very effectively embedded within the school's curriculum planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, which enables pupils to achieve well
- Leadership and management are good
- Pupils' attitudes are very good

Commentary

66. Results of the school's national tests for eleven year olds in 2004 were low. This was a result of a high mobility factor, a significant number of pupils with special educational needs and a lack of teacher subject expertise in some areas. The appointment of a specialist teacher and an improved curriculum has been successful in improving provision. Most pupils in Year 6 now show standards that are to be expected for their age, which shows their achievement is good from their prior attainment. Standards are above average. Most pupils in Year 2 show good achievement and reach standards above those expected for their age.
67. The recently appointed specialist teacher provides good leadership and management. He has developed a programme of work that enables pupils to work at higher levels in all aspects of the subject. His analysis of last year's national test results has led to a greater emphasis on developing pupils' investigational skills. As a result, pupils are now provided with better opportunities to devise, carry out and record a wider range of experiments.
68. Throughout the school, pupils are taught well, with the co-ordinator being responsible for teaching in Years 3 to 6. Lessons are planned well so that activities build effectively on previous work. As a result, pupils are able to use their existing scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. Teaching assistants are deployed well to effectively support those pupils with special educational needs so they are fully involved in activities. There is good use of questioning to find out what pupils know and can do and to promote their scientific vocabulary. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 on structuring a fair test to find the best conditions for the growth of microbes on a variety of food. Because of this quality of teaching, most pupils in Year 6 show secure skills in planning and carrying out a fair test with little help from the teacher. They are not as proficient at considering what their findings have told them. Consequently, their conclusions to experiments tend to be a description of what they have done rather than an evaluation of their work. There is insufficient use of ICT to support and enhance learning in the subject.
69. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their activities in science, particularly enjoying their practical activities. In all lessons, pupils very were well behaved and showed much interest in what they were doing. This has a beneficial effect on the quality of their work and the standards they achieve.
70. The curriculum is very good, with the many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively making a positive contribution to their personal and social development. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills, such as when pupils in Year 2 were using force-meters to determine the force needed to move boxes of different weights. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new co-ordinator has a clear view of the immediate needs for the subject's development
- Standards throughout the school are below national expectation
- The National Curriculum for ICT is insufficiently well covered
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum
- Interactive whiteboards are beginning to improve pupils' motivation and understanding, but they do not have enough regular access to computers

Commentary

71. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to carry out basic word-processing and use a simple painting program to produce colourful designs. In Year 5 geography pupils enliven their topic books by including clip art and text in an amalgamated form. In design and technology word processing is frequently used throughout the year. By the end of Year 6 higher attaining pupils are using a spreadsheet to explore the effects of changing variables. This very challenging work meant that middle attainers and lower attaining pupils required considerable support. While most pupils can carry out some tasks which are in line with national expectation, the breadth of their capabilities is very restricted and as a consequence, overall, standards are below expectation. Pupils' standards on entry are in line with expectations and as a consequence pupil achievement throughout the school is unsatisfactory.
72. Teaching and learning overall are unsatisfactory. Teachers do not use ICT sufficiently in their planning and they do not teach ICT skills effectively enough. However, the new co-ordinator is providing a good role model for the teaching of ICT skills. For example, in a lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils, good use was made of the interactive whiteboard to model and clarify the task for pupils. The pace of the lesson was fast however, and this was problematic for many middle and lower attaining pupils, as they were unable to try out the new techniques immediately due to insufficient computers. Very good curriculum links were made with mathematics which helped pupils to set their ICT work in context. Pupils behaved very well and maintained attention and interest despite the difficulties caused through the shortfall of computers. Despite the difficulties, this kind of skill teaching has had a positive impact on how well the oldest pupils achieve.
73. Leadership and management of the subject are currently unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in post for only one term and has appropriately focused attention on his other responsibility of science. He has a clear view of the immediate needs for the subject's development, but has not yet had opportunity to begin to implement these. In addition to the computer shortfall, subject areas such as mathematics have insufficient appropriate software to enable them to use ICT to support learning. Improvement since the previous inspection has been poor. Despite investing in resources, such as interactive whiteboards, standards in ICT throughout the school have fallen and achievement is now unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. ICT is used insufficiently to support learning in other subjects. Good use is made of word processing in the presentation of design and technology work. History provides opportunities for data handling and clip art is used to improve the presentation of geography. Interactive whiteboards have been recently installed and are beginning to be used well to model tasks for pupils. Where they are used they are effective in motivating pupils and clarifying their understanding. However, pupils' ICT skills are not sufficiently developed to enable them to use ICT on a regular basis to support their learning in other subjects. In many subjects, such as mathematics, there is insufficient software of good quality to allow pupils to use ICT as a tool for learning. Internet access has only recently been improved and pupils are not currently communicating with others electronically or using the Internet sufficiently as a resource for learning. The newly appointed co-ordinator has not yet had opportunity to carry out a full audit of the curriculum and resources to inform planning.

HUMANITIES

History and geography were sampled. Religious education is reported in full.

History and Geography

75. There is very good curricular provision in both subjects, so that all pupils are able to enjoy a wide range of relevant and imaginative experiences. An extensive range of visits to places of educational interest, including a residential stay for older pupils, is used very well to provide further significant learning opportunities. Of particular note is the way that studies of the local area are used as first hand evidence to further pupils' learning. For instance, in history pupils have used information from 19th century census returns to find out how the way of life in the village of Belthorn has changed. In geography, pupils have made good use of the local visits to develop their knowledge and understanding of the environment in which they live.
76. Pupils have good opportunities to employ their numeracy skills in geography when using co-ordinates in their map work, and in history when sequencing chronological events on timelines. Artefacts are used well in history to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. This was evident in a good lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, in which they were able to dress up in authentic clothing of the 1940s to gain a greater understanding of that era. Links to other subjects are very good. There is some use of ICT to enhance pupils' work in the subjects, such as by researching information on the Internet, but the school recognises that this is an area for further development. Pupils talk with much enthusiasm about their work in both subjects, especially enjoying their studies of the local environment.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of different faiths
- Teachers use a wide range of resources and teaching methods to interest pupils
- Religious education makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural and social development

Commentary

77. Pupils achieve well in religious education and they reach standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of a range of different faiths. Year 2 pupils know about Buddhism through having thought about special places and stories linked to the religion. Year 6 pupils know about Judaism through associated artefacts and festivals. Pupils have also learnt from religion and considered their own values. Year 2 pupils have considered what their views are on right and wrong and the consequences of being angry. Year 4 pupils have discussed the right thing to do in different circumstances.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils' work shows that a wide range of resources, such as artefacts and books, are used to interest pupils and deepen their understanding. Some imaginative worksheets have been devised to help pupils record their ideas. Teachers obviously make good use of pupils' speaking and listening skills, as they encourage them to express their ideas and consider what others feel. In a Year 4/5 lesson, pupils talked about the differences between inferred and actual information. They listened carefully to each other and shared their ideas.
79. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural and social development, as they are encouraged to understand other people's lives, beliefs and ways of thinking, as

well as to consider their own behaviour and values. The subject also promotes the whole-school ethos of tolerance and respect for others. Effective links are made in the overall planning between religious education and other subjects, such as art and history.

80. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject has not been a priority for development recently, but improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' attitudes in Years 1 and 2 have made a difference to the quality of learning in the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The following subjects were sampled: design and technology, music and physical education. Art and design is reported fully.

81. In **design and technology**, pupils' work and photographic evidence were analysed and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator. By the end of Year 2 pupils can say what they like about their design and what they would change. In making a glove puppet they can produce plans and join materials in a range of ways. Their standards are above expectation and they have achieved well. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to model and clarify their own ideas, and can adapt plans and evaluate their work, showing an understanding of what works well. Overall their standards are above expectation and they are achieving well. In designing a set of stationery using the theme of ancient Egypt, pupils used word processing to help present their work. Good links were made with their work in history.
82. Word processing and clip art are used to present aspects of most projects in design and technology. Occasionally digital photographs are incorporated in this. Those photographs that include the children holding up their design and technology work clearly show that they are pleased with and proud of their products. Throughout the school pupils are given a broad range of opportunities to experience the full design and technology curriculum. Good links are made with other aspects of the curriculum, for example when pupils link their work in history to designing a menu suitable for use in times of austerity, such as the Second World War. The good aspects of the subject found in the previous inspection have been satisfactorily maintained.
83. In **physical education**, the curriculum is broad and balanced with very good opportunities for enrichment. These include an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and the opportunity for pupils to work with professional coaches to develop their skills. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management, having produced an effective programme of work for all year groups. She has a good grasp of the quality of teaching and learning through the school and how it could be improved. An annual residential stay, which emphasises physical educational development, makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal and social development. There are sufficient resources to cover all aspects of the subject. The hall is too small for physical education lessons and this sometimes limits what activities can be provided.
84. In **music**, a discussion was held with the co-ordinator and one lesson and some instrumental tuition groups were observed. The subject has undergone a range of developmental work recently and improvement in provision since the last inspection has been good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and effective. She has worked hard to raise the profile of the subject in school. A new scheme of work is in place and this has boosted teachers' confidence. A music room has been created and a considerable amount of good quality resources has been purchased. Whole-school performances serve to demonstrate what pupils have learnt. The opportunity to learn to play guitar or violin is taken up by a lot of pupils and these sessions are of good quality. Whole-school singing in assemblies is enthusiastic and tuneful.
85. In the one lesson observed, Year 1 pupils were making good progress and reaching standards that were above what might be expected for pupils of this age. They were confident in recognising and copying a rhythm. They used their voices in different ways, for example

chanting and singing. They used instruments to make sounds and managed to keep a steady pulse as an accompaniment to singing. The teaching was good, the activities were challenging and pupils' attitudes were very good.

86. Resources are now good and the music room is well equipped for teaching and learning. The school hall is inadequate in size and shape for whole-school participation in musical performances, but this is soon to be remedied with an extension.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well throughout the school and produce work of a high standard
- Pupils are introduced to a wide range of artists, designers and artefacts
- Pupils' work is highly valued, demonstrated in the outstanding quality of displays around the school
- The subject is very well led and managed

Commentary

87. Art and design is a major strength of the school. The quality of pupils' work is very good and it is obvious that in all classes they are achieving very well and reaching standards that are well above what is expected. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.
88. In the reception class, children are already gaining skills and by the time they are in Year 1 they are confident in using different media and exploring colour, shape and line. Year 2 pupils talk about different artists and designers, making comparisons and discussing materials and processes. They explore ideas and try out their own designs, before choosing the one they think works best and they can use, to make a printing block. This is already far beyond what is expected from pupils of this age. By Year 6 pupils can confidently design their own motifs after looking at a range of work from different cultures and times. They have a highly developed sense of how shapes and lines fit together and can all produce a finished design of a very high standard.
89. What is so exceptional in this school is that all pupils achieve very well. No one fails. Support is given if necessary, but the ethos is such that all pupils are confident in their own capabilities and they are not afraid to have a go at whatever task they have been given to do. Attitudes to the subject are excellent. Pupils themselves highlight art lessons as one of the things they like best about the school and they certainly take part in each lesson with enthusiasm. Even the youngest pupils demonstrate high levels of concentration. There is a real desire to complete pieces to the highest level they are capable of and all pupils show a pride in their work. They work independently, but can also collaborate positively with others.
90. Teaching and learning are very good and they are now more consistently good through the school than they were at the time of the last inspection. Teachers use a wide range of resources to inspire pupils. They encourage discussion and give pupils the opportunity to evaluate their own work and that of others. They plan carefully and make sure that tasks are appropriate to individual needs. The less confident pupils are supported sensitively and the more confident are given tasks that challenge them.
91. The subject is very well planned and there are close links made with other subjects, such as mathematics, history and religious education. A major contribution is made to pupils' cultural development, as they are introduced to a very imaginative range of artists and designers. Resources are very good and are well used. However, ICT is not used as well as it could be.

92. The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher. He leads by example, as he teaches and supports in classes. His enthusiasm inspires staff and pupils and he sets very high standards. He takes responsibility for the display of pupils' work, as he sees it as a way of showing pupils that they are valued. The quality and range of display are outstanding and are commented upon by parents, visitors and pupils themselves.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

93. The school places a lot of emphasis on pupils' personal, social and health education and it is planned carefully into the overall curriculum. Sex and relationships education and drugs awareness are covered adequately. In science pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and how to take care of themselves. In religious education pupils consider their own behaviour and values. Circle time takes place in many classes when pupils have the opportunity to discuss their own ideas and listen to others.
94. Recently a scheme of work for citizenship was introduced and it is now taught through the school. In one lesson Year 2 pupils had a visit from a young mother with her baby and they learnt about how babies are cared for. This was a very worthwhile session and pupils listened carefully, asked questions and made good progress in their learning. The creation of a school council is giving older pupils an insight into the responsibilities of living in a community and making decisions.

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

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