

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BRITANNIA COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bacup, Lancashire

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119189

Headteacher: Mr P Morley

Lead inspector: Mr A Margerison

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2004

Inspection number: 266490

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: 5 – 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 174

School address: Rochdale Road  
Bacup  
Lancashire  
Postcode: OL13 9TS

Telephone number: 01706 874447  
Fax number: 01706 873935

Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs K Holt  
governors:

Date of previous June 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Britannia on the edge of Bacup. The area is a mix of private and rented housing. Most of the pupils live in the immediate area and attend nursery or play-group prior to admission to the reception class, however, it is a popular school and a significant proportion of pupils are brought to the school by their parents from the surrounding area. The area is one of great contrasts in socio-economic terms. The proportion of families with higher educational and high social class backgrounds is below average, but the school also draws its pupils from more advantaged families. As a result, although pupils' backgrounds vary, overall their socio-economic circumstances are average. There are 174 pupils on roll aged between five and 11 years, the local demographic trends are resulting in gradually falling roles. Overall, the number of pupils who join and leave the school during the school year is above average although this varies significantly from year to year. When children start school, their attainment varies from year to year, but overall it is broadly typical for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs mainly for moderate learning difficulties, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very small and no pupils have English as an additional language. In recent years the school has had to deal with significant staff turbulence due to retirements and leave of absence. The school was awarded the School Achievement Award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2166 6	Mr A Margerison	Lead inspector	English
			Geography
			History
			Special educational needs
			English as an additional language
1944 3	Mrs N Walker	Lay inspector	
2041	Mrs V Reid	Team inspector	Science
			Art and design
			Music
			Religious education
			Foundation Stage
1151 0	Mr K Oglesby	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Design and technology
			Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse Education (UK) Limited  
 14 Enterprise House  
 Kingsway  
 Team Valley  
 Gateshead  
 Tyne & Wear  
 NE11 0SR

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Britannia Community Primary School is a good school** that provides very good value for money. From when they start in reception, due to good teaching pupils achieve well to attain very good standards by Year 6 in English and good standards in mathematics and science.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good overall, but there is a substantial amount of very good and even excellent teaching.
- Pupil's love coming to school and their behaviour is excellent.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, senior staff and governors.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and procedures for ensuring their health and well being are very good.
- The range of opportunities in lessons to fully prepare pupils for living in an integrated, culturally diverse society is limited and not sufficiently threaded through the work of the school.
- There are no systematic procedures to involve parents or pupils in the development of the school.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved well. The provision for children in reception has been completely reorganised. It is now very good and children achieve very well. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has developed well and, as a result, standards in Year 2 and 6 are now in line with those expected. Negotiations are still on-going to provide a separate outdoor area for children in reception. However, the school makes the very best use of existing space to compensate so there is no significant effect on the provision for children's physical development.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	C	D	E
mathematics	A	A	B	B
science	A	B	B	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

**Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well** as they move through the school. In reception, children achieve very well to exceed the goals they are expected to reach in their personal and social development, communication, language, literacy, and mathematical skills. Children achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical development to reach standards that are in line with those expected. In the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, the school's results in reading were above average and well above average in mathematics when compared to all schools nationally and very high in both subjects when compared with similar schools. Results in writing placed the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence shows current pupils in Year 2 are achieving well to attain

good standards in mathematics and very good in reading and writing. In the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, results were above average in mathematics and science, but were below average in English. Despite this, the trend in the school's results is above the national pattern and these results purely reflect variations between groups. Inspection evidence shows the results in this year's national tests in English are much improved. Currently, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are achieving very well in English reflecting the positive effect of the strategies the school has implemented to improve standards. Pupils' achievement in mathematics and science is good and due to the high standards of teaching in Year 6, pupils are well set to attain good standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education, geography and ICT to attain standards that are in line with those expected by Year 6. Insufficient evidence was available to enable overall judgements on standards and achievement to be made in any other subjects or on children's creative development in reception.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and behave excellently. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good. The provision the school makes for developing pupils' social skills is excellent reflected in excellent relationships throughout the school between pupils and with adults. Provision to develop pupils understanding and knowledge of their own culture and traditions is good. However, planned experiences to develop pupils awareness of the daily lives of other cultures are not sufficiently threaded through the work of the school, as a result they are not fully prepared for living in an integrated culturally diversified society.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good,** but a substantial proportion of teaching is very good. Teaching in reception is very good so children achieve very well. A significant strength of the teaching in all classes is the excellent teamwork between staff and throughout the school, support staff make a very important contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers have extremely high expectations of pupils' behaviour and encourage them very effectively to take part in lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons very well so pupils of all abilities are generally well challenged. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well in all subjects; however, there are fewer planned opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons outside of the computer suite. Assessment procedures are good and the information is used well to plan lessons.

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. The school places a very high priority on ensuring that pupils are very well cared for and work in a safe environment. Links with parents are good, particularly in dealing with any concerns they may have, but there are no systematic procedures to involve them in the development of the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The school is very well led and managed.** Excellent teamwork is a key feature of the leadership of the school and as result, due to the very positive contribution of senior staff, the drive for continued improvement has been maintained despite changes in staffing. As a result, the headteacher had only been in post for three weeks, but had already established himself as a very effective leader commanding the respect of pupils and staff with very high aspirations for the school. Governors have a very clear understanding of the challenges the school faces in the future and with very effective financial planning have ensured the school is able to maintain

current staffing levels despite gradually falling rolls. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities well.

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

Due to the very effective procedures to ensure parents are satisfied with school, any problems are dealt with quickly and parents have very positive views of the school. Pupils love coming to school and although there are no formal procedures to involve them in its development they are highly satisfied with the quality of their education.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Extend the range of opportunities to fully prepare pupils for living in an integrated, culturally diverse society.
- Develop systematic procedures to involve parents and pupils in the development of the school.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

From when they start school in reception, pupils of all abilities, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well as they move through the school. As a result, standards in Years 2 and 6 are above those expected.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well in reading and writing to reach well above average standards in Years 2 and 6.
- Children achieve very well in reception.
- Children achieve very well in personal, social and health education, which has a very significant effect on their very positive attitudes to school.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics to reach good standards in Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in ICT have improved well since the last inspection to be in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6.

#### **Commentary**

1 Children start in reception with levels of skills that are broadly typical for their age and most have pre-school experience. The school has very effective procedures to help the children settle into school so they quickly learn how to behave and the routines of the class. As a result, children make increasingly good progress in developing their basic skills and achieve very well overall in their first year in school. Teachers and support staff work together very effectively to provide a very good range of activities that encourage independence, imaginative language development and social skills. As a result, by the end of the reception year, children achieve very well to exceed the levels expected in their personal and social development and in their language, literacy and mathematical skills. Very effective teaching develops children's early reading, writing and number skills very well. By the end of reception, most children know their letter sounds and names and count confidently with many sufficiently confident to write simple sentences and do basic addition and subtraction sums. In their knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, children achieve well and even at this early point in the school year are well on course to reach the expected levels. There was insufficient evidence gathered to make secure judgements on how well children achieve in their creative development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (13.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.5 (12.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.8 (15.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2 Overall, children have a good foundation from which to build on in Years 1 and 2, which contributes directly to their good results in the national tests in Year 2. Although the school's results vary from year to year depending on the group of pupils, the trend in the school's results is above the national pattern. The results in 2003 contributed significantly to this, showing a

marked improvement on the previous year and resulted in the school being awarded the School Achievement Award. The results in reading were above the national average and in mathematics well above. However, most notably, the results in writing were very high and placed the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. This was also the case when the school results are compared to similar schools. In reading and mathematics the results were well above average for similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the 2004 results will show that this pattern is continuing. Currently, pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2. As a result, pupils in Year 2 are well placed to reach standards well above those expected in reading, writing and listening and above those expected in mathematics and speaking.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (26.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.9 (28.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.8 (29.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3 The trend in the school's results for pupils in Year 6 is also above the national pattern and reflects the fact that they have been consistently better than average in mathematics and science since 2001. In 2003, this continued with the results being above average in both subjects. When compared to similar schools, the results in science were well above average reflecting the high proportion of pupils who reached the higher than expected level. However, results in English have been more variable over time. In 2003, they were below average when compared to all schools and well below average when compared to similar schools. However, this group included a significant group of pupils with special educational needs, so the proportion of pupils who attained the expected level was well below average. Although these pupils had a slight effect on the results in mathematics and science, this was less marked because their difficulties were primarily literacy-based so a number of these pupils reached the expected level in mathematics and science whereas they did not in English. Inspection evidence indicates that the school's results in the 2004 tests will, overall be broadly average, but will be much improved in English with a good proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or above showing that the school continues to cater well for more able pupils.

4 The high numbers of pupils who join the school in Years 3 to 6 do have a negative effect on the overall results and pupils who are at the school throughout this time do achieve better. This pattern is also evident for current pupils in Year 6 in which nearly one third of pupils have joined the class since the end of Year 2. Analysis of school assessment data shows that pupils who are at the school at the start of Year 3 make good progress as they move through the school. Due to very good teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills, the school manages to largely offset the effect of this mobility so that in the current Year 6, standards in English are very good, particularly in reading, speaking and listening and they are better than expected in mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs also benefit well from the good teaching and the high quality support they receive from teaching assistants so they are achieving well relative to their ability and their starting point at the beginning of Year 3, although few are on course to reach the expected levels for their age by the end of Year 6.

5 In other subjects, pupils are achieving satisfactorily to reach standards in line with those expected in geography, religious education and ICT in Year 6. The improvements in standards in ICT are a significant improvement since the last inspection and reflect the

substantial investment the school has made in developing the resources and providing training for teachers. There was insufficient evidence available to make secure judgements on standards or achievement in science in Year 2, or in any other subjects except in personal, social and health education in which pupils of all abilities achieve very well.

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

Pupils’ personal qualities are very good. Pupils’ attendance is well above average. They have very positive attitudes to school and behave excellently. Pupils’ punctuality is very good. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils love coming to school and really want to learn.
- The school has extremely high expectations for pupils’ behaviour and conduct so they develop a very clear understanding of what is right and wrong.
- Relationships between pupils are of the highest quality.
- The school’s procedures to promote attendance are very effective.
- Provision to develop pupils’ understanding and knowledge of the daily lives of other cultures are not sufficiently threaded through the work of the school.

### **Commentary**

6 From discussions with pupils and according to parents, the vast majority of pupils are very keen to attend school and are punctual. The school has established very good procedures to promote and encourage pupils to attend. For example, there are clear reward systems, certificates for good attendance and the school follows up any pupils who do not arrive at school soon after the start of the school day. The school is also well supported by parents, the vast majority of whom ensure their children attend school as much as possible. As a result, attendance is well above the national average.

### **Attendance**

#### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.2%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

7 At the time of the last inspection, the behaviour of a few pupils disrupted the learning of others so one of the key issues for action was to develop consistent approaches to manage such pupils. The school has taken very effective action towards addressing this issue. There are a few pupils in the school who find behaving appropriately difficult, including a small number who have had significant problems in other schools and have identified special educational needs because of their behaviour. It is to the immense credit of all of the staff in the school, including lunchtime supervisors, that these pupils have no negative effect on the atmosphere around school or in lessons. In fact, during the inspection, pupils’ behaviour was an outstanding feature of the school, reflecting the lack of exclusions in the last year and parents’ views. Every parent who expressed an opinion said that they felt behaviour in the school was good. All staff have extremely high expectations of pupils’ behaviour and these are very consistently reinforced at all levels. This begins in reception, where the teacher and the

support staff develop very positive relationships with children, but ensure that they very quickly learn what is expected of them and to respect adults and each other. Pupils are also involved in setting their own standards in each class from Year 1 upwards by identifying the class rules. These are displayed prominently so pupils develop a very clear understanding of right and wrong. The extremely high standards of behaviour seen throughout the school reflect this community approach to establishing a very positive school ethos. Adults provide pupils with a strong framework within which to work, but give them plenty of opportunities to develop their self-esteem and take responsibility for themselves and each other so they flourish both academically and personally.

8 The school’s highly effective approach to developing pupils’ social development is reflected in the excellent relationships between pupils. As a result, very few parents and no pupils have concerns about bullying or ill-will. This is partly due to the frequent opportunities pupils have to work with each other in pairs and small groups and the consistent reinforcement of the importance of caring for one another that is threaded throughout the work of the school.

9 Pupils’ spiritual and cultural development is promoted well. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to create reflective moments in lessons or to clearly emphasise the teaching point in an assembly, but overall teachers encourage pupils to think about the work they are doing and to consider the feelings and beliefs of others. Pupils learn about their own local heritage and culture through visits out of school, visiting artists and theatre groups, and about different faiths and beliefs through religious education lessons. However, there are few other opportunities for them to learn about the daily lifestyles of people from the broad range of different cultures who make up modern British society. Consequently, they are not fully prepared for living in an integrated culturally diverse society.

***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll
White – British	172
White – any other White background	1
Mixed – any other mixed background	1

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education, founded on effective teaching, is good. The curriculum is good. The school places a very high priority on ensuring pupils’ health, care and welfare and pupils are well supported.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning in reception is very good.
- Teaching of English is consistently very good throughout the school so pupils achieve very well and attain very good standards in Years 2 and 6.
- There is a substantial amount of very good teaching through the school particularly in the key subjects of mathematics, science and ICT.
- Teachers place an extremely high priority on involving all pupils in lessons.

- Teachers' planning is very good and they make very effective use of teaching assistants in lessons to work with small groups and individual pupils.

## **Commentary**

10 Overall teaching is good and leads to good learning, but with a substantial amount of very good and excellent teaching seen across the school, the quality of teaching has improved well since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and the factors identified in the last inspection that led to the weaker teaching have been completely eradicated. Indeed one of the weaknesses, the management of a few challenging pupils is now a major strength of the teaching in all classes. On a few occasions during the inspection situations arose that might have caused major problems, but they were handled extremely skilfully by the teachers so the 'spark' did not flare up into a major conflagration. The second highly significant factor that contributes to the very positive learning environment in many lessons is the way that all staff, teachers and support staff encourage pupils so they feel that every one of them matters. This reflects the very good quality of teachers' planning which takes into account pupils different abilities, providing challenge for more able and gifted pupils whilst supporting pupils with special educational needs through the effective use of varied activities and careful use of support staff. In addition, throughout the school, teachers use questions very effectively to involve pupils of all abilities in lessons and to check the depth of their learning. In small group work, mainly with pupils with special educational needs, support staff use similar techniques so the work produced is the result of collective ideas, pupils feel valued and achieve well.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	16 (47%)	10 (29%)	7 (21%)	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.*

11 The highly effective teamwork between teachers and support staff is exemplified in reception where the quality of teaching is consistently very good. This is due in no small part to the work of the support staff. The whole team has a very good understanding of the needs of young children and how to use the national guidance to provide a very broad range of activities that develop children's knowledge and understanding across all the areas of learning very effectively. As a result, children rapidly gain in confidence and develop good basic skills so most exceed the learning goal set for them and are very well prepared to begin work at a higher level in Year 1. This together with the very good and occasionally excellent teaching in Year 2 leads to the high standards seen in national tests.

12 One of the main reasons why standards in Years 2 and 6 are rising at a rate above the national trend is the consistently very good teaching in English. A key factor in this is teachers' good use of other subjects to develop writing, reading and research skills. As a result, pupils do not just learn knowledge and understanding of the subject, but also learn to use their skills in different contexts, for example, to write in different styles. However, this is not so consistently effective in the development of numeracy or ICT where there are occasionally missed opportunities in lessons in other subjects to build on pupils' skills. For example, for pupils to use the results from science experiments to present graphs and charts. Similarly, teachers do not consistently incorporate ICT routinely into lessons unless they have access to the computer suite.

13 The school has developed good procedures to assess and track the progress of pupils in English and mathematics as they move through the school, mainly by using end of year tests. The school has recently introduced systems to track the progress of pupils as they move through the school in all subjects and currently various subject leaders, for example ICT, are trialling different methods of doing this. However, these are not fully in place and have not yet had sufficient time to have a significant effect on the quality of teaching or learning.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. The opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school places a very high priority on ensuring that pupils of all aptitudes and abilities are provided with the opportunities and experience they need in order to succeed.
- The resources for ICT are good and have improved well since the last inspection.
- Despite the school's best efforts there is still no separate outside area for children in reception. However, staff make very good use of the shared covered area in school to compensate.

## Commentary

14 The school is very committed to ensuring that pupils are provided with the experiences they need in order to develop their own skills and aptitudes. Teacher's careful planning ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum so that pupils experience a broad, balanced, relevant and varied curriculum based on the recommended programmes of study and the Early Learning Goals for children in reception.

15 The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is a particular strength of the school. The co-ordinator has put a huge amount of work into establishing a whole school scheme of work and a consistent approach so that pupils' skills and understanding develops gradually as they move through the school. This programme makes a very significant contribution to the very good relationships and personal skills seen throughout the school during the inspection. Pupils are able to discuss and learn about issues surrounding sex and drugs education along with other aspects of health education. However, the co-ordinator wants to develop the provision further and is currently working on the application for the Healthy Schools Award.

16 Similarly, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Much of the credit is due to the previous co-ordinators who made significant changes to the provision since the last inspection and this impetus has been maintained by the current co-ordinator. The provision fully meets the guidance in the Code of Practice and is based firmly on ensuring that pupils, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, are provided with the support they need. The school provides a good balance between supporting pupils in class and in small groups. Pupils' individual plans have clear targets that teachers and support staff use to plan the work for pupils that ensures they make good progress. These are reviewed regularly, but only those pupils with a statement of special educational need are systematically involved in setting and reviewing their targets.

17 It is the effective use of external agencies such as the music service and Sports Development Team used to enhance learning and provide expertise that broadens the curriculum beyond that normally seen. In addition, there is a good range of different extra curricular activities that many pupils take part in. These cater very well for those pupils who are not necessarily academic and cover sports, music, computers and the arts and ensure that all pupils have a chance to take part and achieve success for themselves. A few parents were concerned that there are no specific clubs for the younger pupils, but most teachers are involved in providing activities so once pupils are in Year 3, the range is good and open to boys and girls of all ages and abilities.

18 At the time of the last inspection, the resources for ICT were judged to be inadequate to teach all aspects of the National Curriculum so that standards were below those expected. Due to the very prudent financial planning by governors and the judicious use of national funding grants, resources, both in the number of computers and the range of programs available for pupils to use has improved. As a result, standards have improved well.

19 Unfortunately, the school has been unable to significantly improve the outside provision for children in reception, but this is not due to lack of action or the school being dilatory in striving to address this problem. The Local Education Authority have been involved, as have other agencies, in a bid to find funding and the school is continuing to pursue various ways of providing this much needed facility. However, the school is built on a slope and the costs involved in creating this area have so far been prohibitive. Reception staff ensure that there is

little significant effect on provision because they make very good use of the shared central area to provide a broad range of experiences in this aspect of learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Support and guidance for pupils are good. The school has satisfactory procedures to involve pupils in the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Arrangements for children starting in reception are very good.
- Because relationships between pupils and adults are very good, pupils feel comfortable in asking for help when they have a problem or are worried about anything.
- Although pupils have responsibilities in school, there are no systematic procedures to involve them in the further development of the school.
- Very effective day-to-day routines ensure pupils work in a safe environment.

### **Commentary**

20 This aspect of the school's work has improved significantly since the last inspection and among parents, the very high standard of care and concern for pupils' welfare is seen as a major strength of the school. Most parents feel that the school develops the 'whole person' well, based on the very good relationships between staff and pupils, staff knowing pupils well and, in reception, quickly getting to know the children. Inspection evidence supports their view. The school has established very comprehensive procedures to ensure pupils' safety and welfare, including risk assessment and arrangements for ensuring a high proportion of staff are First Aid trained. In addition, all staff know and understand the procedures for child protection.

21 The inspection team agree with parents who feel that procedures in the reception to settle children into school are very good. The school benefits from the help of a school liaison officer funded by a local business so that links with prospective parents are established well before their children start in school and the time children spend in school gradually increases. It was very notable that the inspection days were the first the children had been in school all together as a group their behaviour was superb with no sign of trauma or upset and relationships between staff were very good.

22 As pupils move through the school, teachers give increasingly constructive support to pupils to help them improve their academic work. However, the key factor that contributes to the effective support and guidance provided for pupils are the very good relationships that exist between pupils and adults. In lessons and around school, there is a very explicit mutual respect between staff and pupils. At lunchtimes, supervisors provide very effective levels of care for pupils. As a result, pupils have great confidence in the staff and know that if they have a problem they will be listened to and their concern taken seriously. However, although pupils have a range of responsibilities in school such as returning registers and setting up the hall for assemblies, the school has not established a systematic way of involving pupils in the work and development of the school. As a result, there is not a clear channel of communication by which the pupils' voice can be heard in school. In addition, although they learn about the principles of citizenship in lessons, they do not have the opportunity to learn through experience the responsibilities of being a citizen.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**



The school has established good links with parents. Links with the community and with other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Due to the good information and very effective procedures to ensure they are satisfied with the school, links with parents make a positive contribution to the work of the school.
- The school has established close links with other local schools to improve the quality of teaching and share good practise.
- The links between the school and the local secondary schools are limited.

### **Commentary**

23 Parents who attended the meeting for parents and completed the questionnaire were very complimentary about the way that the school ensured they were happy about what was going on in school. Despite a slight inconsistency between the quality of a few of the annual reports to parents, the school has wealth of methods of informing parents on the work of the school and encourages them to take part in school events. As a result, the vast majority feel involved in their school, are very supportive of their children at home and support them whenever possible by attending events and special occasions. For example, the school was able to fill the local theatre for its last production on two occasions. The school values parents' support very much but has not established a systematic procedure to involve them in the development of the school. As a result, a few parents do not feel that they have sufficient opportunities to express their views on aspects of how the school could improve further. However, plans are in place to introduce a programme of consultation in the near future.

24 The improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection also coincides with the enhancement of links with other primary schools in the area. The school is an active partner in the local school group and is the host for the local Literacy Network Group. The school has also worked with other local schools to share expertise and in-service courses for staff. However, similarly strong links are not so well developed with the local secondary school. Although parents and the secondary school say that their children settle well, the preparation is primarily restricted to a visit before transferring and meetings between staff to discuss pupils and their needs. There are no formal curriculum links or shared teaching units to help pupils' bridge the transition. In addition, the school has no links with schools in different places in Britain or abroad to help pupils prepare for life in a culturally diverse world.

25 Since the last inspection, the school's links with the community have also improved and parents feel that it is a very important part of the village. Importantly, the school ensures that these links make a good contribution to the experience the pupils have at school. The school utilises the opportunities that are locally available in terms of visits to the local shops and park. The school makes very good use of the Sports Development Team to provide much of the physical education lessons to pupils of all ages. The high level of skills and enthusiasm for sport that these specialist coaches bring into school are very good role models for pupils and they have a positive effect upon the quality of teaching in the subject. In addition, the local Methodist Church meets in the building and supports school events and the local community association hold regular meetings and social events on school premises.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is very well led and managed. Governance of the school is very good. The headteacher's leadership of the school is very good. He is very well supported by senior managers in the very effective management of the school. Consequently, the school deals very

well with the potential barriers to learning caused by the high proportion of pupils who join the school during the school year, the changes in staffing and the financial pressures caused by gradually falling roles.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In a very short time the headteacher has established his position as a respected leader with authority, sense of purpose and very high aspirations for the school.
- Despite the changes in staffing, the senior management of the school have been excellent role models for other staff and pupils maintaining the very strong team ethos of the school.
- Governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges it faces in the future.
- The school's long term financial planning is very good.
- The leadership of the school has established robust systems for monitoring school performance and taking action so that the school has improved well since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

26 Due to very effective leadership, the school has improved well since the last inspection and standards have continued to rise above the national trend. The basis of this is effective procedures to identify and monitor the work of the school, but most importantly, the very strong teamwork between staff. This includes all adults who work within the school and extends to pastoral, administrative, lunchtime and caretaking staff in addition to the academic teaching and support staff. Together they have created a school with a very positive ethos, highly committed to meeting the needs of its pupils and well set to develop further. Parents also hold the headteacher in very high regard and believe the school is well run.

27 At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had only been in post for three weeks. His style of leadership is based on being a presence at all times of the school day. In assemblies, outside in the yard at break times and around the school during lessons, he provides support and encouragement for individual staff and pupils, but at the same time makes his future expectations and aspirations for the school very clear. As a result, he has very rapidly gained the respect of all staff and pupils. It was very apparent that he had already established himself as the driving force behind the school with a very clear understanding of the challenges facing the school in the near future and a very clear idea on how to improve the quality of education provided for pupils. For example, he has recently implemented a change to the use of development time allocated to subject leaders linking it very tightly to the school's priorities in the school development plan rather than a general allocation for all staff. The purpose is to ensure that the action taken towards the priorities is even more effective than it is at present.

28 The headteacher has inherited a school that benefits from having a governing body and leadership team that has had a very secure long-term strategic overview of the school's future. For example, the school foresaw the effect falling numbers could have on staffing and made savings to build up a significant reserve. Consequently, the school has been able to maintain staffing levels and avoid having mixed-age classes by operating a deficit budget to see the school through the current and next year. The expenditure for pupils is very low compared to the national minimum and it is to the considerable credit of the staff and the senior management of the school that standards and the facilities available for pupils have continued to improve. In the near future, it is hoped that the proactive plans the headteacher

has to promote the school in the area will result in pupil numbers beginning to increase. In addition to having a very clear view of the future of the school, governors also have a very good understanding of the priorities for improvement and the work that subject leaders are doing towards achieving them. Although they do not have a formal system of observing lessons, by inviting presentations from specific subject leaders to the appropriate committees, they keep a close eye on what is happening in school. As a result, they are able to evaluate the progress being made towards the set targets for improvement. They also ensure that the school meets its statutory responsibilities well, including the effective promotion of the school's racial equality policy.

29 The school development plan clearly identifies school priorities and the measures by which success will be evaluated. They are also intrinsically linked to performance management and professional development procedures aimed at improving standards. However, its strength lies in the fact that all staff are involved in determining the priorities reflecting the very strong teamwork and shared commitment among staff. At the time of the inspection, the delegation of subject responsibilities was in a state of flux due to the staff changes and the absence of the deputy headteacher due to maternity leave. Although, she was not present during the inspection, her influence was clear through, for example, the provision to identify gifted and talented pupils. The other members of the senior leadership team make a very good contribution to the management of the school by monitoring and analysing pupils' academic performance in national and school tests and supporting younger staff. Most importantly, the senior leadership team are excellent role models for less experienced staff and pupils through their own teaching. For example, most of the very good and excellent teaching seen during the inspection was by senior teachers, and not only in their area of subject expertise, but across a number of subjects. The headteacher is fully aware of the importance of maintaining their influence when the deputy headteacher returns later this year. Indeed, when the school has a full complement of permanent staff in place, it will be in an extremely strong position to build on its existing strengths.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	475357
Total expenditure	481624
Expenditure per pupil	2800

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	84051
Balance carried forward to the next	77784

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

30 Sixteen children attend full time in the reception class. When they start, their knowledge, skills and understanding are around what can be expected for their age. There are currently no children with special educational needs. Children have a very good start to school. They make very good progress and achieve very well because the teaching in all areas of learning is very enthusiastic and consistently very good.

31 Leadership, provision and teaching are very good. Children of different ages and abilities have equal access to activities and so an equal chance to make progress. The curriculum is well balanced, across all areas of learning and emphasises independence through offering a good range of activities that are always available and made easy for children to select. The teaching provides a good mixture of well-planned, structured play and direct teaching with a clear focus. Role-play, based on themes, is used well to develop key skills, for example, 'Houses and Homes'. The teaching assistant is very effective. No opportunity is missed to help children acquire language and social skills and she ensures that learning is enhanced and extended without doing it for the children. Assessment is good, but in tune with the rest of the school, it lacks the specific tracking of children's involvement through individual targets.

32 There has been significant improvement in the provision since the last inspection. The issue regarding a separate outdoor learning area has, despite the best efforts of the school, not yet been resolved. The sloping site continues to defeat all external advice. Every possible steps have been taken to ensure that children use all activities outside when possible. They have a good range of large equipment and additional time in the school hall so that physical development progresses well. The hindrance is therefore for staff who have to work unnecessarily hard to ensure very good provision across the curriculum.

33 There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgment about provision in **creative development**. Planned activities are very good and make sure that children always have a range of interesting opportunities to learn skills. Very effective support helps children well by showing them not only how to use tools and techniques effectively, but also to develop their language.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very clear routines are clearly understood by the children who feel safe, secure and confident to try all the activities on offer.
- Relationships are excellent because staff give excellent examples to children.
- Teaching has a very good emphasis on developing early personal skills in all the areas of learning, as a result children begin to learn to become independent.
- Teachers have very high expectations of children.

#### Commentary

34 All children have settled in remarkably well. At the time of the inspection they were attending as a class group for the first time, following two weeks part time in separate groups. They behave extremely well because of the warm, supportive environment and have a strong sense of belonging. For the first morning, the Home School Liaison Officer joins the class to provide the continuity from earlier home visits. Children of all abilities are very well supported so they quickly grow in confidence and begin to become independent learners. For example,

immediately they arrive, they register themselves by finding their name card and together, listen to who has specific jobs that day and then keenly explore the experiences on offer. Staff give a great deal of thought to establishing routines, providing very interesting activities and set an excellent example. The teacher and teaching assistant observe children closely, encourage them to join in and to persevere with activities. They are very patiently encouraged to take care of their own needs, take turns, listen to each other, share and play happily with one another. Consequently, the children feel secure in an environment where they understand the very clear routines and the boundaries of right and wrong, such as how many are allowed in different areas and whether to wear aprons. As a result, most children are at the expected levels for their age, a few are exceeding this and all are well on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults take every opportunity to engage children in discussions.
- Adults place a high priority on developing children's spoken language and listening skills.

### **Commentary**

35 Children achieve and attain well because of the high quality teaching that is very strongly focussed on developing all aspects of children's language and communication skills. A major strength of the teaching is the way that adults use questions very effectively to encourage children to talk about what they are doing in small groups and as a whole class. As a result, they learn to listen well to their teachers and each other. Children make good progress in learning to read. A very good range of experiences is provided for children in an environment rich in print. Labels, sentences, questions, instructions and information abound in each area. There is a good range of fiction and story tapes, non-fiction books, including big books to share with the whole class that link in well with the current topic theme. Children learn to listen closely to stories that are told very well and capture their interest. At this very early stage, most children are 'reading' very well by understanding the main elements of the story - the characters, sequence of events and they try to predict what might happen next. In this way, they learn the difference between pictures and words and that those words have meaning. Most recognise their own first name and some identify the initial sounds by matching that in their name with toys. Such activities are very effective in enabling children to begin to see the links between reading and writing and to enjoy stories and rhymes. Children also make good progress in learning to write. Most children recognise their own first name. There are many opportunities for children to write on their own for different purposes through role-play in the 'Estate Agents', and in the well equipped writing area. They are encouraged to add their name to pieces of work. Work at the end of last year shows some children writing simple sentences accurately, punctuated at the beginning and end with letters very well formed.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers place a very high priority on developing children's basic number and counting skills.
- Teachers and support staff use a very good range of resources to support learning well.

### **Commentary**

36 Children make good progress, and, at this early stage many are at or above the expected levels for their age and are in line to achieve well by the end of the reception year. All thoroughly enjoy number action rhymes and songs and join in with gusto. When counting and naming numbers, most children are confident and accurate to ten and represent the number with fingers or objects with the help of Max the rabbit. They use the number line to find and delightedly say the missing number. Using number rhymes and songs they add on one more very confidently. Most children are able to discuss simple mathematical ideas when playing with large and small construction toys, or when experimenting with sand and water. For example, they use accurately such mathematical language as full, empty, large and small. The teaching of number skills is very good. A very good range of varied opportunities are provided for children to practice counting and teachers plan and match work carefully to children's different learning needs. The teaching assistant is very effective in helping groups of children to concentrate on and make the most of the activities provided.

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

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are many opportunities in lessons for children to work independently.
- Teachers plan a good range of activities carefully linked to the topic theme helping them to be purposeful and meaningful for the children.

### **Commentary**

37 The teaching in this area of learning is very good and provides ample opportunities for children to begin to have a firm foundation on which to build the later subjects of science, design and technology, ICT, geography and history. As a result, children achieve well and make good progress.

38 The range of activities available for children to develop their basic skills of enquiry and knowledge of different materials are good. Teachers achieve a good balance between activities that are supervised by an adult and those that the children do on their own or in small groups. Adults make sure that all children complete the main activity of the session. These may include activities such as tasting different snacks, feeling the textures of natural seasonal objects or planting seeds and checking their growth. Other activities link well to the topic and encourage children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different materials and their local environment. For example, they discuss their family and visit the local shops and look at houses around school. Teachers planning ensures that ICT is a prominent feature of lessons and is always available for children as one of the activities they can choose to do. The activities are linked well to the theme of the lessons. As a result, many children confidently use the mouse to operate computer programs, improving their hand-eye co-ordination and their ICT skills. They learn to click on icons to make machines change direction using 'Bob the Builder', to sort animals and, with support, add their name and print the result.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Despite the limitations of the accommodation, good planning ensures children have access to the full curriculum.
- Activities are very well structured to match differing abilities.

### **Commentary**

39 Although there is no separate outdoor area for children, adults have very effectively developed ways to ensure that children have full access to the range of activities they need in order to develop their physical skills. Children are taken outside regularly to use play equipment under the supervision of an adult and the large central area in the school is used extensively for practical activities. Teaching is very good and children achieve well in this area of learning. As result, most of them are well on course to attain the goals expected by the end of the reception class. A key strength of the teaching is careful planning that allows children of different abilities to practise and develop their skills at their own pace. Children experience a good range of equipment outdoors everyday, and use the hall for movement. They show good control as they run, jump, skip and avoid obstacles. Adults join in enthusiastically, which moves children's learning forward very well. Children have valuable opportunities to use classroom equipment that helps them to improve their control of the finer movements needed to use scissors, pencils and paintbrushes. They very confidently use a mouse to control computer programs.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers make effective use of the national guidance for teaching literacy.
- The pace of lessons is very brisk and teachers have very high expectations of pupils.
- The subject leader is an excellent role model for other staff.

### **Commentary**

40 The provision in English has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching and learning is very good leading to pupils of all abilities achieving very well. This is primarily due to teachers' very effective planning of lessons so the learning needs of all pupils are catered for, irrespective of their ability. Activities in lessons extend the most able pupils and those with special educational needs are very well supported in class and in small group activities by support staff. As a result, standards have risen consistently better than the national pattern and the school was awarded the Achievement award in 2003. Teachers' very good understanding of how to develop pupils basic skills results in very brisk and interesting lessons. Consequently, pupils develop very good attitudes to the subject and a very good understanding of the basic skills of reading and writing. This is reflected in the high proportion of pupils who reach the higher than expected levels in both reading and writing in Years 2 and 6.

41 Teachers also have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Instructions are very clear and explicit so that all pupils know what is expected of them. As a result, behaviour in lessons is excellent and even those pupils who, due to their special educational needs, could create problems for teachers and their peers due to their behavioural problems, do not. Teachers' very high expectations extend to pupils' performance and presentation. For example, many pupils in Year 2 write neatly in a joined up style and use rulers to underline headings. These basic skills are developed well by teachers in Years 3 to 6 so that by Year 6 pupils writing is imaginative and well constructed. Critically, they understand that interesting and powerful writing does not necessarily require complex use of adjectives or intricate descriptions, but on occasions very simple phrases can be equally effective. For example, one pupil described a character at the start of a story as a 'short and stubby dwarf with cold eyes'. The oldest pupils' reading, speaking and listening skills are similarly well developed. They are articulate, confident speakers and they listen very carefully to each other.

42 The very good improvement since the last inspection reflects the very good leadership by the subject leader. In her own teaching she is an excellent role model for other staff, and there is a determination to maintain standards and to develop the subject further. For example, the school has good procedures to assess and track pupils' progress as they move through the school and these systems are currently being developed further to monitor how well pupils are doing during each year. The subject leader is trialling a manageable system for writing in her class with the intention of extending it to the rest of the school when she has sufficiently refined the process. The school's marking policy is followed closely by teachers. As a result, teachers' marking is constructive and helps pupils improve their work.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

43 Pupils very good reading and writing skills are partly due to very good teaching in English lessons, but also to the effective way that teachers use other subjects such as science and geography to give pupils opportunities to write about their work. In all classes pupils are expected to record their own ideas and to find out information for themselves, although there are occasionally opportunities missed where this could be extended further.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Mental and oral work is taught well.
- Relationships in all classrooms are very good. Teachers work hard to raise self-esteem, and this helps pupils to become confident mathematicians.
- More opportunities could be planned to use numeracy skills in other subjects.
- There is a good emphasis on accuracy and careful presentation. However teachers do not make enough use of pupils' own jottings or informal recording.

#### **Commentary**

44 The school is doing well for all its pupils in mathematics. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar judgement to the previous inspection, but far more pupils are now achieving the higher levels in the national tests. The school has managed to maintain high standards due to effective leadership, good teaching carefully planned from the National Numeracy Strategy, and pupils who listen well, work hard and want to learn. There is currently no permanent co-ordinator due to staff changes, but the



new headteacher has appropriate plans to deal with this and to introduce systematic monitoring of teaching and learning across the school.

45 Pupils enter the school with a broadly average level of mathematical understanding. They make a very good start in the reception class and continue to achieve well as they move through the school. Some very good teaching in Years 2 and 6 increases the rate of progress further. As a result, all groups are succeeding. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants. They take a full part in lessons and are achieving well. The more able pupils are not allowed to sit back; teachers make sure they are challenged. Girls and boys are currently making similar progress. Pupils enjoy their lessons and show very good levels of concentration and productivity.

46 A strength in all classes is the strong emphasis given to oral and mental work. Teachers plan and lead this part of the lesson well. They provide a good range of activities and choose useful equipment to help understanding. Oral sessions are fun but purposeful. Teachers set a lively pace with demanding questions but make sure no-one is left floundering. As a result, pupils become quicker and more accurate at remembering number facts. Teachers insist on pupils using the correct vocabulary and this enables them to explain how they arrived at an answer. Good teaching in oral work is helping pupils to improve their mental calculation skills and develop a good understanding of mathematical ideas.

47 Another strength in the teaching is the value that teachers put on raising pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Teachers are quick to spot small steps forward and use lots of praise and encouragement. Mistakes become steps on the way to a correct answer, *I can see why you said that, but...* One result is that other pupils take a lead from this, there is no laughter when a classmate makes an error. This encourages everyone to get involved and have a go. In a lesson in Year 6, for example, some challenging work on fractions began with just a few doubtful hands in the air, but within minutes almost everyone was competing to offer an answer. All of this is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes towards mathematics. Many said it was one of their favourite lessons. However the quality of feedback is stronger in oral work than it is in teachers' marking.

48 A weakness in the small sample of work seen is that pupils are not often encouraged to use their own informal jottings and explanations. This does not capitalise on their good literacy skills, or help them to make links between their oral and written work. Teachers rightly show some of the standard formal ways to set down calculations. However, in exploring mathematical ideas, or solving problems, pupils' own notes and diagrams can help to clarify thinking and improve understanding.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

49 There is some use of mathematics in subjects such as science and geography. This gives pupils good opportunities to use their skills. Pupils often collect interesting data in their science experiments, but chances are missed to make more of this, for example by working out averages or looking for patterns and generalisations. There is insufficient use of ICT to present or examine mathematical work, although some teachers are beginning to make good use of the electronic screen.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have many opportunities to work practically and to investigate scientific ideas. This contributes effectively to improving standards and to pupils' good achievement.
- The best teaching is very knowledgeable. It challenges and supports pupils' learning well by skilful questioning and very good strategies to manage behaviour.
- The subject leader has provided teachers with good guidance and ensured resources are well matched to the needs of the subject.

## Commentary

50 Since the last inspection, the quality of the provision has developed well and with gradually more pupils attaining the higher than expected levels in national tests in Year 6, standards have been above average and improved faster than the national pattern. In comparison with schools in similar social circumstances, pupils' performance has also steadily improved to be well above average in 2003. This reflects the effective leadership of the subject. At the time of the inspection, the subject leader for science was absent on maternity leave and another member of staff was covering the post temporarily. However, the very clear and helpful scheme of work that has been introduced and careful analysis of pupils' performance by the subject leader has resulted in good resources that are well organised and well matched to pupils' needs. This has ensured that teachers have been able to continue to plan work successfully and maintain high standards despite her absence.

51 Evidence from lessons and the small amount of current work from pupils in Years 5 and 6 indicates that currently most pupils are at the level expected for their age and abilities, but due to the very good teaching seen in Year 6 during the inspection, they are well set to reach good standards by the end of the year. This is because teaching and learning is firmly based on investigation, enquiry and first-hand practical learning with greater attention given to pupils' knowledge and accurate use of scientific vocabulary than was the case at the time of the last inspection. As a result, all pupils achieve well, but higher attaining pupils in Years 2 and 6 consistently do very well. Support assistants contribute effectively in support of lower ability pupils' and those with special educational needs. Consequently, they also achieve well relative to their ability and a few reach the expected levels in the national tests in Year 6. No lessons in Years 1 and 2 were timetabled during the inspection so it was not possible to make secure judgments on current standards in Year 2 and at this early point of the year there was very little recorded work to look at. However, work seen in books from previous years indicates that through practical investigations pupils attain satisfactory standards and higher attaining pupils attain well.

52 Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure which enables them to use skilful questioning to effectively probe and check the depth of pupils' understanding and learning. For example, during a lesson for Year 6 pupils, very effective teaching motivated pupils to contribute enthusiastically to a lively discussion in which food chains were investigated. They demonstrated a good grasp of the importance of plant life and different animals and their place as consumers and producers in the chain. They went on to consolidate their understanding by competently using ICT, although this is not a frequent event in lessons. Teachers know their pupils well and they have a very clear commitment to ensuring the inclusion of all pupils in lessons by planning practically based lessons with tasks that provide good levels of challenge for individuals and different ability groups within the classes. Throughout the school teachers and support staff have extremely high and consistent expectations of behaviour and performance so pupils develop very positive attitudes. They

work hard, respond enthusiastically to challenge and all achieve well. The school is in the early stages of introducing whole school assessment procedures to track the progress pupils

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective leadership has ensured that all the weaknesses seen at the previous inspection have been put right.
- Teachers are making good use of the improved suite to develop computer skills.
- The assessment system is not yet effective in tracking pupils' progress.
- ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

53 Standards in ICT are now at the level expected for seven and 11 year-olds. By the end of Year 6, they have a sound level of skill and knowledge in all the required areas, including those that were weak last time such as database and spreadsheet work, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are keen to learn and are achieving well. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were below average and some parts of the National Curriculum were not covered.

54 The subject leader leads the subject effectively and has steered the improvements in equipment and curriculum very well. He has also been effective in providing support and training for teachers. As a result, teachers' own knowledge and confidence has been improved and they make commendable efforts to prepare themselves when new work is to be taught. Lessons are carefully planned, purposeful, and explanations are kept to a minimum. Consequently, pupils enjoy the work, try hard and are proud of what they do. Where teaching is very good, in Year 6, the pupils respond very well to high expectations and challenging new work. In work on designing a website, for example, the teacher shared his own knowledge and enthusiasm at a formidable pace, but the class were determined to keep up. By the end of the lesson they were thrilled by what they had achieved.

55 The school has invested well in training and equipment and is well placed to raise standards further because the improvements in provision are fairly recent. Now that all classes are using the enlarged computer suite regularly, pupils are gaining in confidence and understanding year by year. The suite is equipped with a large electronic screen. Teachers are making good use of this to demonstrate new ideas, and this is helping to save time and raise standards. The school hopes to install more of these in classrooms to enhance work in other subjects.

56 A manageable assessment system has been prepared but this is not yet in use. The school has wisely chosen to first improve teachers' expertise in judging what pupils have achieved, so that assessment is reliable and useful.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

57 Teachers are beginning to identify the gains that technology can bring to other subjects. For example, pupils use computers to practise phonics in Year 2 and punctuation in Year 3. There are other links with art and design and geography. Pupils learn to use search engines confidently and sensibly to find information, for example, in Year 6 they study time-

lapse photography to improve their understanding of how plants grow. However, opportunities are not regularly identified in teachers' planning and chances are sometimes missed. For example, pupils often collect interesting data in science lessons, which might be more informative if presented or investigated using technology.

## **HUMANITIES**

58 There was insufficient evidence seen during the inspection to make secure judgements on the provision the school makes for **history**. Teacher's planning and other documentation shows that the school follows the national guidance and provides pupils with sufficient activities in lessons to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage lessons very well.
- Activities give pupils good opportunities to use their literacy skills.
- Teachers use questions very effectively to involve pupils in lessons.
- The information from the assessment procedures is not used rigorously enough to ensure that written activities are always sufficiently varied to allow pupils of all abilities get involved fully.
- ICT is not used enough in lessons to develop pupils' skills or as a teaching aid.

### **Commentary**

59 There was insufficient evidence to make judgements on standards in Year 2, but in Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach the expected standards by Year 6. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, but several have particularly good local knowledge and use it well to help pupils develop a good understanding of their local heritage and culture. Visits to places out of school helps reinforce this knowledge well. In lessons teachers use questions very effectively to challenge pupils and to check what they have learnt so that whole class discussions tend to be brisk and lively and pupils develop a keen interest and enthusiasm for the subject. The school has recently introduced procedures to track the progress of pupils as they move through the school, but these are in the early stages of development and are not fully in place across the school. As a result, group activities are not consistently varied to cater for the full range of abilities in the class and in a few lessons less able pupils struggle and need a lot of help from adults or their peers to be involved fully in the task. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills to write about what they have found out, take notes and to research for themselves using text books, but apart from using the computer to research using encyclopaedia programs, there are few systematically planned activities in lessons for pupils to use their ICT skills to present their work.

60 At the time of the inspection, the subject leader was new to the school and had only had the responsibility for two weeks. However, the school has developed the subject satisfactorily since the last inspection in terms of developing the curriculum to match the latest national guidance.

### **Religious Education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well balanced over time.
- Teachers use different teaching methods well in lessons to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Assessment is not thorough enough to enable teachers to have a clear knowledge of what pupils know and understand over time.

## Commentary

61 Lessons seen and the limited amount of work available, indicate that by the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily to reach the levels outlined for schools in the Lancashire area. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but during the inspection, good and very good teaching was seen. Teachers plan carefully to the Locally Agreed Syllabus so that the curriculum followed is well balanced over time. As result, pupils learn about, and from, religion and they gain a satisfactory grounding in different world religions and faiths, such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Collective Worship is clearly planned and the subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

62 The subject leader is giving sound leadership to the subject, but has only taken responsibility very recently and has not had time to have any major effect on the quality of the provision. However, she is very enthusiastic, well qualified for the role and is already very clear about the work needed to improve the subject. One of the areas she has identified is the need to increase the range of artefacts and resources available for teachers. This is because the curriculum plan means that several classes are often studying the same topic. This stretches the resources to the limit. However, a strength of the teaching is the way that teachers manage to overcome this by providing activities in lessons that develop pupils' speaking, listening and ICT skills. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding steadily develops as they move through the school. For example, in Year 1, pupils enjoyed the story and the teacher helped them to create a short 'freeze frame' drama production to retell the different aspects. As a result, they learnt that Buddhism is a way of living and a way of thinking. In another lesson in Year 3, could recall well the basic aspects of the life of Buddha - his birth, enlightenment and death, and learnt about the Buddhist festival of Vaisakha. They used their ICT word processing skills well to retell and edit the story. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to religious education lessons, particularly in relation to learning about other religions. One Year 6 pupil said "religious education is sometimes boring, but we always find it interesting to learn what it's like to be someone who believes in something different".

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

63 Due to the school timetable and the limited range of pupils' work available to look at, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of provision or standards in art and design, music and design and technology. This was a similar pattern to the last inspection in which no clear judgement was made on any of these subjects. Discussions with pupils, their work from previous years and a few lessons gave a positive insight into the range of work pupils have covered and their attitudes to each subject.

64 In **art and design**, teachers' planning is clearly based on national guidance which allows all the aspects of art and design to be taught and learned over time and, consequently, pupils develop very positive attitudes for the subject. For example, pupils in a lesson in Year 2 were totally absorbed practising the skills needed to develop good observational work through paint and textiles. They encourage pupils to use sketchbooks well to learn a variety of techniques prior to further work

in lessons. Teachers also incorporate ICT in lessons when they can. For example, pupils described enthusiastically how they had used a computer programme to enhance work in pattern linked with the much loved story of 'Elmer the Elephant' and clearly described how they used the mouse to click and drag colours. Work on display in classrooms and around the school shows that when studying different artists, for example, Gustav Klimt, pupils produce very thoughtful work showing good progress over time so that the work in the oldest year groups is of high quality. However, there is little evidence to indicate that work in art and design enhances pupils' knowledge of different cultures or enriches their understanding of art and design or artists other than British and European.

65 In **design and technology**, teachers' planning, talking to pupils and saved work shows that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills. Discussions with pupils reveal that they enjoy the lessons and that they understand the process of designing, making and improving. Designs are done with care and attention to detail, for example, when pupils plan a battery-powered car in Year 6, or musical instruments in Year 5. Their making skills develop steadily as they move through the school as pupils learn different ways to stitch, fasten and assemble their models.

66 In **music**, pupils take part in a regular programme of musical opportunities led by class teachers. Consequently, as they move through the school, develop very positive attitudes to music and a growing knowledge of different types, styles and moods of music from both their own and some other world heritages. Teachers' planning is clear, based on national guidance and supported by a published scheme. Discussion with pupils in Year 2 showed they know the names of some instruments, such as mouth organ, trumpet, violin, guitar, drum and tambourine and the different ways of making sounds with them, such as tapping, shaking and blowing. In Year 6, pupils quickly recalled a range of string, percussion and wind instruments and named composers such as Mozart, Chopin, Bach and Jean-Michel Jarre. They described their recent learning of 'Na-Numa', using two-part harmony with guitar and glockenspiel accompaniment, very enthusiastically and had great pride in their improvement. One pupil said, "It's great how we progressed through the week" and they are looking forward to performing for the whole school in assembly. Pupils sing a good number of simple songs and favourite hymns tunefully with enjoyment, good voice control and a good sense of shape and melody. In addition to normal lessons, if they choose to, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are able to extend their learning and attainment through a very good range of instrumental tuition by visiting specialist teachers for string, wind and keyboard. Recorder and choir sessions are organised and pupils know they are all given a chance to be involved.

67 In **physical education**, teachers' planning shows that all aspects of the National Curriculum, including swimming, are taught. Pupils say they enjoy all the lessons, many included physical education as one of their favourites. There is a good range of clubs and events that include both girls and boys. These are popular and well attended and many pupils go to more than one. Some lessons in all year groups are led by specialist coaches. This not only brings in valuable expertise but enables the class teacher to observe and assess each pupil's progress. There is a well-established residential visit each year, when pupils in Year 6 can try a range of outdoor activities. Resources for indoor and outdoor games are good and the school has built up a good store through links with various sporting organisations. Apparatus for gymnastics is appropriate and well kept.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)**

Provision in personal, health and social education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The totality of what the school provides is very effective in developing pupils' very positive attitudes about themselves, towards each other and to their learning.
- The co-ordinator for PSHE has a very clear understanding of the direction in which she wants to develop the subject.
- The subject makes a major contribution to pupils' excellent social and very good moral development and prepares pupils very effectively to play an active part as future citizens.
- Lessons complement and reinforce the very good relationships across the school.

## Commentary

68 Parents, governors, staff and visitors frequently comment on the high standards of self-control, respect and care for one another shown by pupils. The very strong focus on developing positive attitudes and behaviour is considered by staff and governors to have brought about the significant improvement in relationships within the school since the last inspection. An important contributory factor to this is that over the last two years, the school has very successfully introduced a whole-school approach to teaching PSHE. The success of the programme is directly due to the co-ordinator's very good leadership and management which is based on a clear appreciation and understanding of how to manage change. She has very effectively linked the introduction of a formal PSHE curriculum to in-service training, promoting the Healthy Schools initiative and the schools own behaviour policy. As a result, staff have all embraced it enthusiastically, not as an 'add-on', but as an integral part of the curriculum with its own dedicated time. PSHE is now firmly embedded as an integral part of the teaching and learning experience for pupils and staff and a formal PSHE scheme of work is shortly to be presented to staff and governors using a citizenship programme as a basis.

69 Standards in all areas of PSHE are very good because teaching in PSHE lessons is very good. Lessons are frequently linked to the weekly assembly theme, but also address issues such as drugs and sex education and, mainly with the older pupils, topics of current interest in the news. Lessons in PSHE make a very important contribution to pupils' social development and teach them important aspects of their responsibilities to each other within the school and the wider community. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to learn about the daily lives of British people from cultures other than their own. As a result, they are not fully prepared for life in a culturally, integrated and diverse society. All teachers make very effective use of Circle Time in lessons to involve pupils in discussions. As they move through the school, pupils learn to discuss issues, sensitive to the feelings of others, but develop very clear views and develop the confidence to explain them well. This begins in Year 1 so that pupils quickly learn the rules in lessons and understand why they are needed. For example, at the time of the inspection, in Year 1, pupils followed the theme of helping one another, linked to the assembly theme. They showed very good listening skills and their level of respect for each other was very mature for their age. The importance that teachers place on encouraging pupils to listen to each other and respect what they say means that all are included and are able to participate without feeling awkward. Pupils develop excellent levels of self-esteem because others listen carefully, value what is said and offer their own thoughts confidently.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).*