

INSPECTION REPORT

FENISCOWLES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Feniscowles

LEA area: Blackburn with Darwen

Unique reference number: 119163

Headteacher: Miss Elizabeth A Hargreaves

Lead inspector: Dr. Alan Jarvis

Dates of inspection: 11th – 15th July 2005

Inspection number: 266819

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 412

School address: Livesey Branch Road
Feniscowles
Blackburn

Postcode: BB2 5EG

Telephone number: 01254 201054
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mr. Stuart Roberts

Date of previous inspection: 17th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is nearly twice the size of most primary schools. It is on a split site with the infant and junior departments on opposite sides of the road. Since the last inspection the infant building has been substantially refurbished. In addition to two classes in each of Years 1 to 6 there are two Reception classes. Most pupils live nearby but the school's popularity means that an increasing number now come from further afield. Most pupils are from a white British background but there are a small number from Caribbean, Chinese, African or Asian backgrounds. No pupil is at an early stage of speaking English but an above average proportion speaks English as an additional language. Overall, the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are below average with very few from highly advantaged backgrounds. There is a low take-up of free school meals. Attainment on entry has fallen over recent years. In the current Reception class it is below average but Year 6 entered with average standards. An above average proportion of pupils enters or leaves the school in any one year. A below average proportion of pupils have a special educational need but the proportion having a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. Pupils' special needs include specific needs such as dyslexia, moderate learning, emotional or behavioural, speech or communication or physical difficulties. The school has very close

links with local primary schools in a Network Learning Community and its two main local secondary schools, Walton-le-Dale High School and St Wilfrid's Church of England High School. It collaborates with Newfield Special School in respect of music. The school was awarded the Activemark and Healthy Schools awards in 2004 and became an Eco-school in 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2711	Alan Jarvis	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology (ICT) Design and technology
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8316	Jozefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Feniscowles Primary is a good school. It is highly regarded by parents and the community it serves. An increasing number of pupils are coming from wider afield. Pupils are included very well in all that is on offer. Children make a very strong start to school life and by Year 6 all groups of pupils achieve well, particularly in English, mathematics and science. This is because of their very good attitudes to learning, high attendance, a good curriculum and a considerable amount of good or better teaching. The headteacher ensures the school runs smoothly and that it continues to improve. It provides very good value for money on modest costs.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children make a flying start in the Foundation Stage, where provision is very good.
- Unusually for a school of this size, there is no suite of computers.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes support the very good climate for learning.
- A rich and varied programme of clubs and extra-curricular activities is provided.
- Parents play an influential role in school's work and support high levels of attendance.
- Provision for special educational needs is very good, particularly for pupils' personal development.
- Problem solving in mathematics is inconsistently developed across the school.
- Standards in writing, whilst improved, remain the weakest area of English.

Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Although no key issues for action were identified then, staff have continued to seek improvement. The overall quality of teaching, pupils' personal development and links with parents have all shown good improvement. Pupils' good achievement in English, mathematics and science has been sustained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The table shows that results have varied in relation to the makeup of each year group. However, over the past three years the results have been above average, and overall have risen in line with the national trend of improvement. Pupils have achieved well in relation to their mostly average starting points on entry. In 2004, pupils did well compared with their peers in similar schools.

Achievement is good overall, regardless of pupils' special needs, gender or ethnicity. Standards on entry are now below average. The children in the Reception classes achieve very well because there are quite a number of younger children and some with low standards on entry. At the end of the Reception class they are reaching average standards in most areas of learning but standards in their personal, social and emotional development are above average. By Year 2 achievement is

satisfactory overall. Standards in Year 2 have improved this year in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and writing they are above average but reading is the strength. Standards in mathematics are average but problem solving is not as strong as it should be. In science, standards are also average; not enough pupils are reaching the higher level. Achievement by Year 6 is good. This group of pupils entered with average standards. Standards in Year 6 remain above average overall in English, mathematics and science, as in the 2004 national tests. The relative weakness in writing, inconsistent emphasis on problem solving in mathematics and a lack of detail in teaching higher level skills in science are limiting even higher achievement. Standards in ICT are average. Whilst the improved provision is helping pupils make up lost ground and ensuring they achieve satisfactorily the lack of a computer suite and proper assessment is limiting achievement. Standards in religious education and music are above average and achievement is good.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral and social development, are very good. Pupils are self-confident and give of their very best. Behaviour is very good. Pupils do not like to stay away for any reason. Attendance is in the top 10% of similar primary schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage. Good or very good teaching was seen in all year groups but it is strongest in Year 6. Although interactive whiteboards are used well when available to enliven teaching, ICT is not used consistently to enhance pupils' learning. Adults provide good support to help pupils with special educational needs. Pupils enjoy their learning and show great enthusiasm in lessons. Assessment is mostly good and used well to inform teaching and learning, except in ICT. The school is committed to inclusion and pupils with special educational needs are very well catered for. This ensures they achieve well academically, but make very good gains in their personal development, especially those pupils who have behavioural difficulties. Staff give pupils' personal well-being a high priority at all times. A good curriculum is enriched very well through clubs, visits and visitors. Staffing and resources are good. However, the accommodation is satisfactory because the school lacks an ICT suite and a fully developed outdoor area for the Reception classes. Pupils' very good personal development is very effectively supported by the very good care they receive, the effective and growing involvement of the school council, the very strong links with parents and the wider opportunities provided by good links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. Leadership is dynamic at all levels but subject leaders need some time to work alongside colleagues in the classroom. The school runs smoothly, enabling managers to sustain the good climate for learning they want. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well led and managed. Developments are thought out well but the comprehensive plans could be sharper still. The governors are well organised, effectively manage the budget and provide good challenge and support. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are highly satisfied with the school. They say they like the family atmosphere, and the school not only provides a good education but also gives pupils the "building blocks for life". Pupils love the school. They say their teachers are fair to them and teach them well. They particularly like music and the many others activities on offer.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Take steps to improve the ICT facilities and further strengthen the use of ICT in all subjects.
- Strengthen problem solving in mathematics, in classes where this is a weakness.
- Continue to raise standards in writing and narrow the gap between this and reading.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and capability into account. Achievement is good overall regardless of pupils' special needs, gender or ethnicity. Standards on entry are now below average. The children in the Reception classes achieve very well and are reaching average standards. Standards have improved this year in Year 2 and are average overall. Standards in Year 6 are above average, which represents good achievement from average standards on entry. Value added indicators show that pupils achieve well compared with their peers in other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6 pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, religious education and music.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well and make a flying start to school.
- Although pupils are currently achieving well in ICT, over time achievement is satisfactory and is limited by the lack of an ICT suite, no assessment and insufficient use of ICT in other subjects.
- Achievement in problem solving in mathematics is weaker than other aspects of this subject.
- Standards in writing are the weakest area of English.

Commentary

1. Standards on entry are lower than they were. This is because the school is now taking children from a much wider catchment, including some areas that are more socially disadvantaged than the immediate locality. The children's attainment on entry is below average in most areas of their learning. In personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development their attainment is at the lower end of this band. The children in the two Reception classes benefit greatly from the very good teaching and the constantly challenging curriculum they receive. As a result, standards are above average in relation to the goals expected for children at the end of Reception year in personal, social and emotional development. In the other five areas of learning, standards are average.

The table shown in this section gives average point scores for pupils. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term. So, if a school's points are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (15.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.6 (14.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.9 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The fall in standards on entry has partially been reflected in the results in the Year 2 national tests over recent years. In 2004, results in reading and writing were both average whilst those in mathematics were well below average. Compared with similar schools, pupils did not do as well as they should have done in writing. In mathematics they were far lower and pupils underachieved. Consequently, both writing and mathematics have been a focus for development in the past year.
3. Standards and achievement have improved in the current Year 2. Standards are above average in reading and writing but still stronger in reading. The improvements are a result of better teaching, and pupils using phonics more effectively to help them read and write. More role play is also being used in learning and this is helping pupils to think and write about their experiences much more clearly. In mathematics, standards are average and pupils are now achieving satisfactorily. Good emphasis is given in some Year 1 and 2 classes to practical mathematics. However, achievement is being limited because in other classes too little emphasis is given to this important aspect of work and the overuse of worksheets is dulling learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.3 (29.1)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.7 (29.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.9 (29.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Pupils have consistently achieved well by Year 6. This has placed them in good stead for when they start secondary school. Although varying in line with the makeup of each year group, over recent years, standards have generally been sustained at least at an above average level. They have risen overall in line with those nationally. Results have mostly been good compared with those in similar schools. The table shows, for example, that the very good group in 2003 left school two or more terms ahead for their age in English and mathematics and one term ahead in science. The advantage was not so great in 2004. This year group were not as able, particularly in English, but they were still more than a term ahead in mathematics and science.
5. In the current Year 6 all groups of pupils continue to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well overall and some achieve very well. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Achievement is good in all of these subjects. However, there is scope to further improve achievement in some areas of these subjects. It is on these areas that the school needs to continue to focus in order to make achievement very good. In English a noticeable gap still remains between standards in reading and writing, with reading being better. For example, last year around nine in ten pupils reached or exceeded the national expectation in reading whilst two out of three reached a similar standard in writing. The reason for this is that writing has not yet had the same focus in Years 3 to 6 as it has in Years 1 and 2. In mathematics, problem solving is not given a high enough priority in some classes in Years 3, 4 and 5 although it is done well in Year 6. In science, more attention is needed to fine tune pupils' thinking about fair testing, writing predictions and explanations and more systematic teaching of higher level skills.

6. Despite recent good improvements in provision, achievement in ICT is satisfactory. It is not yet as good as it is in other subjects. As a result of better teaching and resources pupils are currently making good gains in their learning and making up for most of the lost ground when provision was not as good. However, the lack of an ICT suite limits the time they have to develop their skills and use ICT in other subjects. The lack of assessment means that work set is not challenging enough as teachers do not have a clear enough idea of what pupils can and cannot do.
7. Standards are also above average in religious education and music. Pupils also achieve well in these subjects. In the other “foundation” subjects, the indications are that standards are broadly average, although standards across the board could be improved if even stronger links between subjects were developed. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make. The inspectors agree. Overall, achievement is being helped by pupils’ high levels of attendance, very good behaviour and attitudes to work, the very good ethos for learning, much good or very good teaching and an effective and well-managed curriculum.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not like to stay away from school for any reason and this helps them to achieve well.
- Pupils feel very secure and self-confident, and give of their very best.
- Pupils treat others with high levels of respect and are developing very well as mature, thoughtful citizens.

Commentary

8. Attendance levels have been consistently above average since the previous inspection. They are in the top 10% of similar schools. Very little absence is due to parents taking children on holiday during term time, which means pupils’ learning is continuous. This supports their good achievement. The vast majority of parents say their children enjoy school and they ensure their children attend regularly so they can take full advantage of what the school provides. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.3	School data	0.2
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.

9. Relationships in school are very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils’ attitude and effort in lessons and model mutual respect very well. Pupils are encouraged from when they first join the school to work sensibly together, have respect for themselves and others, to behave very well and work hard. Pupils’ response is very good as they enjoy being with their friends and teachers. They are

courteous, polite, listen attentively and work hard in lessons, supporting each other during group work. They are motivated to maintain their high standards through the recent introduction of 'Golden Time' when they choose curriculum-linked activities on Fridays.

10. Pupils' very good personal development is a result of the opportunities to understand Christian values and beliefs, and also those of other faiths and cultures, to learn a musical instrument or to be an eco-warrior. Pupils put what they learn into action. Although most are from a White British background they have a very good appreciation of cultural diversity and value race equality. The school is a happy, caring community where pupils show empathy with others, have a very good understanding of right and wrong, show respect for people, property and the environment and contribute positively to the school and wider community. For example, pupils initiated class activities to raise over £7,000 for the tsunami appeal. In the last year they have also started recycling, improved the school playground, and achieved the Healthy School award.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching, learning and assessment are all good. A good curriculum is enriched very well through clubs, visits and visitors. Staffing and resources are good but the accommodation is satisfactory because the school lacks an ICT suite and a fully developed outdoor area for the Reception classes. Pupils' very good personal development is very effectively supported by the very good care they receive, the effective and growing involvement of the school council, the very strong links with parents and the wider opportunities provided by good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Good or very good teaching was seen in all year groups but it is strongest in Year 6.
- There is no system for assessment in ICT.
- Although interactive whiteboards (computer-linked display boards) are used well when available to enliven teaching, ICT is not used consistently to enhance pupils' learning.
- Adults provide good support to help pupils, including those with special educational needs.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and show great enthusiasm in lessons.

Commentary

11. Parents, carers and pupils think teaching and learning are good. The inspectors agree. The good teaching and learning are a key reason why achievement is good and have been improved since the previous inspection, with much seen that was very good. The table shows that more than 8 out of 10 lessons were judged as good or better. In the Foundation Stage teaching and learning are consistently very good. In Year 1 and 5 most lessons seen were good or very good. Year 2 presents a fairly balanced picture of both satisfactory and good or better teaching, as does Years 3 and 4. Good or very

good teaching is the norm in Year 6 and provides a spur to achievement. The strong teaching in music is also beneficial to the pupils' creativity and learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14 (37%)	17 (45%)	7 (18%)	0	0	0

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

12. Most teaching is good. It is characterised by some well-developed features. For example, the high expectations that many staff have for standards and behaviour generate confidence, self-esteem and a joy of learning in all groups of pupils. Teachers have a clear understanding of what the pupils are to learn and objectives are identified within planning. Pupils enjoy their lessons and approach tasks and activities very enthusiastically. Relationships are very good between staff and pupils. Teachers are very adept at encouraging the pupils to be involved. Methods are thought through carefully, lessons are well organised and resources are usually used effectively.

13. The very good teaching was sharper, more consistently challenging and ensured pupils were engrossed in their work. For example:
 - In the Foundation Stage staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn, interact with them very effectively and expect them to be very active in their learning.
 - In a Year 1 religious education lesson the high level of interest generated by the teacher's enthusiasm, excellent relationships and demanding activities created a buzz for learning.
 - In Year 5, the interactive whiteboard was used very effectively to illustrate the difficult idea of perimeters and the teaching assistants supported learning very effectively.
 - In Year 6, the teacher's expert mathematical knowledge and focus on problem solving ensured that all groups of pupils were working towards the limits of their capabilities.

14. A growing number of classes now have access to interactive whiteboards. These are being used well to strengthen teaching. Teachers used them to make the purpose of the lesson clear, to illustrate the topic being taught and to show video clips or photographs which bring the subject to life. The use of ICT in learning has been improved and it is used well in some classes; in others not enough use is made. This is because opportunities for using ICT are not yet consistently planned into learning and more software is needed.

15. Some teaching and learning was satisfactory rather than good. There was no common reason for this. Where teaching in mathematics is satisfactory, although the pupils achieve appropriately, there is not enough challenge, practical work or problem solving. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson some opportunities were missed to use games and resources to demonstrate ideas and extend pupils' learning. In science in Year 2, not enough attention was given to challenging the higher attaining pupils and the need to address behaviour issues fragmented learning. In other lessons in Years 3 and 4, learning proceeded with a satisfactory rather than good pace.

16. The teachers have a clear understanding of the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and set challenging work for them. Special needs support assistants are also well briefed and offer targeted support tailored to each pupil's needs. Teaching assistants also offer good levels of support to specific groups of these and other pupils and help boost learning in literacy and numeracy. Good teaching for pupils with special educational needs results in their good academic achievement and very good achievement in their personal and social development.
17. Assessment is good and used well to inform future teaching and learning. Although assessment is good overall, there are weaknesses in ICT. Assessment in this subject has been underdeveloped for some time. It features as a key area for development in the current school development plan. In contrast, assessment is very well developed in the Foundation Stage. The effective systems in English, mathematics and science enable the staff to assess accurately what the pupils can do and understand and then to use this information to plan what they are to learn next. This information is used effectively to track progress and to devise individual plans suitable to the pupils' needs. Most pupils are aware of their targets. Marking of pupils' work is generally effective, but there are some inconsistencies in evaluating work and indicating to pupils how they can improve.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good. It is very well enriched through carefully planned activities within and outside the school. Resources are good overall. The accommodation is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very well designed, and only limited by the lack of a fully developed outdoor learning environment.
- The lack of an ICT suite is a barrier to higher standards and achievement.
- The school offers many opportunities for enrichment within and outside the school.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs very well.

Commentary

18. The effective and well-balanced curriculum reported at the last inspection has been sustained. The curriculum for Foundation Stage children is very stimulating and imaginatively planned to meet their varying needs. It provides the children with many very good opportunities to explore and to investigate inside and using the local and outdoor environments. The strong focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, together with religious education and music, meets the needs of pupils well and contributes to their good achievement. Although most attention has been given to the core subjects, the foundation subjects have not been ignored. Provision in these is more consistent than in most similar schools at this time. Good steps have been initiated to develop more links between subjects and use ICT more across the curriculum.
19. There are very good opportunities for enrichment of pupils' learning inside and outside the classroom, from Reception to Year 6. The very good links with the local community help the pupils with expertise in many fields, such as football skills with Blackburn Rovers Football Club. The wide-ranging clubs, which are very well attended, enhance

pupils' learning. The residential stay at Barhaugh Hall provides excellent opportunities for outdoor pursuits, such as archery, abseiling, and raft making. The carefully planned visits and visitors add expertise that enriches pupils' learning and personal development very well.

20. There is a very strong programme for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Sex and relationships education and the dangers of drugs are included and sensitively delivered. Parents are regularly consulted about this provision, offering comments such as *"We are glad to see the subject being tackled so early"*. The co-ordinator for learning outside the school day regularly consults the pupils, in order to build on the specific activities already on offer. She collates their responses and makes every effort to accommodate their requests. A very good example is the setting up of clubs such as cricket, parachute games and knitting. Very good links within the school ensure the children transfer smoothly into Year 1 and from the infant to the junior years.
21. The provision for special educational needs is very good, especially to deal with pupils' difficulties with behaviour. This results in very good progress in personal and social development and good academic achievement. The curriculum is very well adapted and modified to meet their needs and as a result they are included very well in the curriculum and enrichment activities.
22. Currently, there is no ICT suite. This is unusual for a school of this size. While there is an adequate number of laptop computers, their unreliability sometimes slows down pupils' progress in learning. These factors are barriers to standards being higher in the subject. The school is aware that it needs to develop further links between subjects and to enhance the use of ICT to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
23. The limited outdoor area in the Foundation Stage impairs the development of children's physical skills and play. The narrow strip of paved area, with a steeply sloping banking, provides very little space for ambitious play and as an outdoor classroom. While there are plans by the local education authority to rectify the situation in the near future, the current arrangements are unsatisfactory. Staff work very hard to minimise the effects of this shortcoming and make provision where they can, but it is limiting their standards in physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. There are firm plans for this to be remedied as part of the continuing refurbishment of the school.
24. There is a good match of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. An effective and well-deployed group of teaching assistants support pupils in their learning well. Currently there are three job shares, but the arrangement works very well for the benefit of the pupils, because expertise is increased and it provides continuity of learning for them. The office staff provide a highly efficient and welcoming image for the school. There is a good range of resources to support learning in most subjects. The accommodation is very well maintained by the cheerful site manager and his staff, and attractive displays help celebrate pupils' efforts and success.

Care, guidance and support

The systems in place to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good. Pupils' access to well-informed support and guidance is very good and encourages them to achieve well. The school values the views of pupils and has made good progress in seeking and acting upon these views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal well-being is a high priority at all times.
- Staff provide very well for pupils' personal development.
- Pupils make an effective and improving contribution to the school's work.

Commentary

25. Pupils know members of staff look after them very well and help them to make the most of their time in school. The school has maintained the very good procedures for health and safety and child protection matters since the previous inspection. The building on one site has been completely refurbished and plans are in place to upgrade the other site. Risk assessments are now thoroughly in place and the school has improved the road crossing between the sites since the previous inspection. A new governors' committee has been established to monitor health and safety in school. Pupils feel safe, happy and well looked after, confirming parents' views.
26. Activities in lessons such as 'brain gym' help pupils to be alert, listen carefully and concentrate very well and contribute to the very good relationships in school. Interactive assemblies are used very well to guide pupils on how to stay safe, be healthy and make a positive contribution to school life. Topics have included "how we are spoiling our world," working for the Healthy School award and recycling as part of the Eco-school award.
27. The school involves pupils effectively in its work through giving them regular opportunities to contribute their views and take responsibility. Pupils respond to questionnaires and discuss issues at class and school council level or during circle time. Pupils work with staff to resolve issues and improve the school environment. For example, a group of children were responsible for designing and planting the school gardens in the playground. Staff have always valued pupils' opinions but since the school council was formed last year pupils feel more involved and responsible for decision making. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given, whether as a Year 3 reading buddy for Reception children or Year 6 pupils helping to run the "number club" and ICT club at lunchtimes for younger pupils. The school council also runs a successful stationery shop.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think highly of the school and in turn support it very well.

- Recent links with some schools are already proving very beneficial.
- The school is outward looking and draws well on the resources of the community.

Commentary

28. Parents are very happy with the aims and values the school promotes and the way in which the school meets the needs of their children. As one parent said, *“We like the family atmosphere and school not only provides a good education but gives pupils the building blocks for life.”* Staff take very good account of information provided by parents as part of the induction process. Parents are very well informed about what is happening in school through the weekly newsletter, opportunities to attend curriculum information sessions and the partnership pack, which has a range of booklets about how to support their child’s learning at home. Parents give very good support with attendance and very few absences are for holidays in term time. The Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) organises social and fundraising events, which are very well attended and enabled them to spend over £17,000 last year on playground improvements and resources for teaching and learning. These positive links with parents reflect a very good partnership.
29. Through the Network Learning Community initiative the school now has links with nine other local primary schools. For example, pupils attended joint training sessions before setting up the school council. More recently they have met with their peers in this group for school to celebrate their achievements at the “pupil voice conference”. An exchange visit with their buddy school has enabled the school council to evaluate how they would like to improve school meals and encourage healthier eating. Working with pupils from different cultural backgrounds has a positive influence on pupils’ understanding of racial harmony and tolerance.
30. Teachers make effective use of the school’s links with the local and wider community to promote pupils’ learning. As one pupil said, *“I am more confident now and can talk in front of many people”*. Strong links exist with local churches. The vicar is a member of the governing body, attends assemblies in school, is a reading buddy for pupils and regularly involves pupils in church activities. Harvest produce is distributed in the community and pupils sing to local senior citizens. A number of parents are church members and active PTA fundraisers, which means pupils have contact with good role models and understand how they can contribute to community life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are all good. The headteacher and other key staff provide effective leadership.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is dynamic at all levels and developments are thought out well.
- The Foundation Stage and provision for special educational needs are both led and managed very well.
- The school day runs smoothly, enabling managers to sustain the very good ethos they want.
- Governors effectively manage the budget and provide good challenge and support.

Commentary

31. Parents say that leadership and management are good and that the school focuses on continual improvement and keeps up with the times. The inspectors agree. Since the last inspection good leadership and management have been sustained. This has ensured the good achievement of all groups of pupils and contributes to their good performance compared with their peers in similar schools. Although no key issues for action were previously identified there have been good improvements in teaching, enrichment of the curriculum, provision for special educational needs, links with parents and pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. The school's own self-evaluation closely matches the judgements in nearly all areas of the inspection.
32. The school day runs seamlessly. This is because all staff are clear as to their roles and responsibilities and administrative procedures are not unduly bureaucratic. Behaviour policies are consistently implemented. Other management tasks such as the monitoring of teaching, performance management and the tracking of pupils' achievement are well established. The head and deputy headteacher spend much of the school day ensuring the very good climate for learning is sustained and nipping any potential problems in the bud. However, a consequence of this is that the headteacher carries too heavy a workload.
33. The wider senior management team effectively supports the head and deputy head. The newly appointed managers have already made a good contribution. Their impact has been strong in improving provision in Year 1 and 2, developing ICT and strengthening the tracking systems in English and mathematics. Very good leadership in the Foundation Stage has resulted in very good improvement since the last inspection. The management of the special needs co-ordinator is also very good. This is reflected in the very thorough documentation, the precision in which pupils' needs are identified and the way in which support staff are deployed to best effect. The impact has been very good in ensuring that the personal development of pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils mostly achieve well and some very well and their achievement is improving as the measures put in place become more embedded. Subject co-ordinators interviewed showed vision and drive with a clear focus on raising standards. However, few currently work alongside teachers in the classroom in developing their subjects.
34. The comprehensive development plan rightly focuses on further improving provision in ICT, ensuring problem solving in mathematics is consistently taught well and the gap between standards in reading and writing is narrowed. The detailed plan is based on a thorough evaluation of performance in the national tests, strengths and weaknesses in each subject area, performance management discussions and suggestions from the governing body. The quality of the plan is not yet very good because some of the intended success criteria lack precision and there are no specific targets to help governors monitor progress.
35. The governing body benefits from good leadership and a team approach. Several governors use their skills well by leading sub-committees where much of the detailed work takes place. They are in full agreement with the direction in which the school is going but their role in strategic planning could be sharper. Financial management is good. The larger than usual balance carried forward below was the result of capital expenditure carried forward across the academic year, and is therefore appropriate. Very good value for money is provided based on modest costs and good effectiveness.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,028,740
Total expenditure	1,034,677
Expenditure per pupil	2,457

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	105,710
Balance carried forward to the next year	99,773

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. The previous inspection report criticised the lack of a close match of planning and assessment procedures to the areas of learning recognised nationally for children under five. This resulted in children missing opportunities to engage in practical work to deepen their understanding. Since then, the school has made very good improvements in the provision for these young children. The classroom areas have been effectively modernised, with a very attractive 'rainbow room' which is shared by the two classes. In addition, the continuous provision now in place ensures a very good balance between adult and child-initiated activities across all areas of children's learning. This arrangement fosters very good independence for all children. Improvement has been very good since the last inspection.
37. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The co-ordinator is a very good role model for her colleagues and there is a strong sense of teamwork among all staff. The excellent relationships contribute significantly to the very happy atmosphere evident in both classes and to children's very good achievements. Parents are very appreciative of the school's very good induction arrangements. Home visits made by the staff are well established and assist the children to settle happily into school. Parents are very well informed through regular newsletters to show them how they might contribute to their children's learning.
38. The current Reception classes have quite a number of young children and a significant proportion who start from a low base. They start with standards that are below average but well towards the lower end of this broad band. The very good teaching and a vastly improved curriculum result in the children achieving very well as standards in most areas of learning are a little above average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a flying start as a result of the excellent relationships.
- Staff plan many opportunities for children to develop independence and to work co-operatively.
- There is a very good balance between adult and child-initiated activities.

Commentary

39. Teaching and learning are very good. As a result the children achieve very well and reach above average standards by the end of the Reception Year. All the children socialise well, mix appropriately with older pupils and understand the class rules and the behaviour expected of them. They line up to go into the hall sensibly, and in assemblies they sit quietly and pay attention, but contribute comments at appropriate

times. Through the variety of activities on offer, children eagerly involve themselves in role-play, often observed to be absolutely engrossed in imaginative play. They are sensitive of the needs of others and show clear understanding of the rules for playing together. The children respect living creatures, as seen when they were looking for mini-beasts. When one of the children commented that *"We must not hurt them!"* the teacher built on this by telling them that they will release the mini-beasts at the end of their study.

40. The directed and child-initiated activities foster independence of learning and provide the children with good opportunities to acquire positive attitudes to all that the school offers them. As a result, the children get off to a flying start. They are eager to learn, and to make sensible choices. Personal safety is emphasised. The children are reminded to wear hats during the warm weather and to wash their hands before taking a snack. They learn what constitutes a healthy meal.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well through the very good teaching they receive.
- There is very strong focus on language skills in all activities.
- A very effective partnership between home and school contributes to children's very good learning.

Commentary

41. Teaching and learning are very good. As a result the children achieve very well and reach average standards by the end of the Reception Year. In both classes, staff provide stimulating and imaginatively planned activities to ensure that children's language skills are successfully consolidated and extended. They listen very well to each other and to the adults, speaking readily in free activities and in role-play. Children are asked open-ended questions to encourage speaking and listening skills. In one lesson, the teachers discussed the big book with the children, asking, *"What might happen?"* This encouraged one of the children to suggest that *"Mrs. Honey might go to the shops"*. Throughout all activities, teachers and the nursery nurses provide very good running commentary and modelling of sentences, which extend the children's vocabulary.
42. At this time of the year, teachers use a simplified form of the literacy hour well to introduce the children to the letters and sounds needed to build their reading and writing skills. The particular strength is the support given to children of different abilities, to push them as far as they can manage. The children love reading the big books and are often seen choosing stories, which they clearly enjoy. The staff encourage the children to enjoy writing. There are some good examples of children writing simple sentences and occasionally using several words. One child proudly showed writing about what she does when she is off school. She successfully reaches Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
43. The systems for assessing children's progress are thoroughly maintained. These are used very well to plan for the next steps of their learning across all areas of language.

Children's speaking and listening skills are very well promoted through all areas of their learning. The excellent relationships that are evident in both classes give children the confidence to speak to all adults, who respond to their comments.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is very good, resulting in children's very good achievement.
- Children learn very well through practical and play activities, including problem solving.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning are very good. As a result the children achieve very well and reach average standards by the end of the Reception Year. Staff plan a very good range of practical activities and games to give the children "hands-on" experience to enable them to understand all aspects of mathematics. Learning is relevant to the children's ages and experience. For example, children collect data on what some of their teddies are wearing. Children use their number knowledge in practical sessions such as arranging birthdays into sets. Games feature strongly in mathematical sessions and successfully consolidate learning. Children use ICT to click on ten more bottles or one fewer than Snap, one of the characters. Outdoors, in the very small space available, children count how far their aeroplanes travel. All activities are based on first hand experience to make learning relevant. Children recognise a wide range of two-dimensional shapes. In both classes, teachers have high expectations of children's learning. They plan exciting activities through which, the children develop confidence in mathematical development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well through the very good teaching they receive.
- The school grounds and locality are used well to compensate for the lack of an outdoor area.
- Teachers plan an enriching range of special events that contribute to children's good understanding of faiths.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are very good. As a result the children achieve very well and reach average standards by the end of the Reception Year. Children are provided with a wide range of experiences to stimulate their curiosity. Children have frequent opportunities for using ICT to support their learning. They are delighted to use the paint program and produce attractive designs. During the inspection, the theme of seaside captured their interests and children used shells to produce pictures of the seaside.

Carefully planned visits and visitors successfully enhance children's learning, such as a visit from a bread-making firm to help the children understand how bread is made. Visits to places such as Stockley Farm help the children to learn about farm animals at first hand. The immediate area is also used to find out the numerous mini-beasts that live there, as observed during the inspection. The children were encouraged to consider which of the creatures were most likely to be found in shady areas. In this way, staff lay very good foundations for early scientific understanding. They work very hard to overcome the shortcomings of the outdoor accommodation. However, it severely limits children's exploration, thereby preventing standards from being higher.

46. Teachers and staff plan exciting activities, where children share in many celebrations from different cultures. One Muslim parent talks to them about her faith, for example, and children also visit the Immanuel Church to deepen their understanding of Christianity. As a result, these children are very well prepared for life in multi-cultural and multi-faith Britain.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, but the accommodation limits the range of activities outdoors.
- Children achieve well in the strands of learning currently possible.

Commentary

47. Teaching and learning are good. As a result the children achieve well and just reach average standards by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers provide the children with as many opportunities as possible within the limitations imposed by the accommodation. There is no developed outdoor environment for children's physical development. The steeply sloping bank and the narrow strip of paved area are insufficient for vigorous play and for using a variety of equipment to develop children's specific skills. Teachers use the hall and the infant playground for small apparatus for games to encourage skills of throwing and catching. On the narrow strip outside their classrooms, the children use wheeled toys and manage to control their vehicles to avoid other children and various obstacles. Children use scissors skilfully and a variety of scrap materials and boxes to make a space rocket. They learn to hold pencils and crayons correctly, which enables them to form letters successfully. Children begin to understand the importance of keeping healthy and learn about healthy eating, which is a part of the whole school approach to this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because teaching is very good.
- Staff plan a wide range of exciting activities to develop children's creativity.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are very good. As a result the children achieve very well and reach average standards by the end of the Reception Year. Children gain confidence in using an increasingly wide range of resources as a result of the very good teaching they receive. They use a wide variety of materials to create pictures and models. The children use ICT to produce colourful pictures, proudly inserting their names. Role-play features very strongly throughout both classes, through which children's imaginations are very well developed. While exploring the large space rocket or preparing for a wedding, children are seen delving deeply into their own imaginations, using their own ideas creatively. In a very good music lesson taken by the music co-ordinator, they joined in singing about different birds, counting in twos. They successfully managed to accompany their singing with a variety of musical instruments, carefully choosing those that represented their bird. This is one example of how different areas of children's learning are successfully linked, to maximise their learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well overall and reach above average standards by Year 6.
- Although improved by Year 2, standards in writing are the weakest element of English in all years.
- Pupils are very confident readers and there is a well-organised scheme for reading at home.
- A wide range of enrichment activities encourages high levels of interest and enjoyment.
- Good assessment ensures tasks are well matched to pupils' attainment and clear targets are set.
- Good leadership contributes well to pupils' good achievement and the effective provision.

Commentary

49. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Pupils start Year 1 with average standards and over the past few years have achieved satisfactorily by Year 2. However the strong focus given to improvement, better teaching and a stronger focus on role play have ensured standards are above average this year and overall achievement is good. However, standards in reading remain higher than those in writing. In Year 6 achievement is good. Standards are above average but better in reading than in writing.
50. Reading is a strength of the school, as it was at the last inspection. Standards in reading are at the upper end of above average in both Years 2 and 6. A good focus has been given this year to cementing the home-school partnership on reading, using the diary system. This has increased pupils' love of reading throughout the school and improved parental involvement. Reading Buddies provide the pupils with opportunities to share books with others. Pupils love books and talk enthusiastically about those they have read. For example, Year 6 pupils talk very enthusiastically about their favourite authors.
51. Writing remains a priority for development. By Year 2 standards, although improved, are just above average. By Year 6 standards approach above average levels but almost 20% more pupils reach the national expectation in reading than in writing. The school has rightly identified this as an area to continue to focus on in order to raise achievement even further. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, ranging from practical instructions to imaginative poems. More formal spelling and grammar activities reinforce correct usage. There is some evidence of imaginative narrative writing. However, in general, opportunities for writing at length, particularly in other subjects, are more limited.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. That seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. Lessons were well planned and structured and clear learning objectives were identified. In the best lessons, they were shared with the pupils so that they knew what they were expected to learn. Explanations from teachers and support staff were clear and informative. The pupils were enthused to learn, particularly in the very good lessons in Years 5 and 6. As a consequence, despite the intense temperatures during the inspection, pupils were attentive and made very good learning gains in knowledge and understanding of English. Pupils responded very well and were keen to express their ideas and to demonstrate what they had learned. When available, teachers use interactive whiteboards well to enhance learning. Another contributory factor to improving standards is the focus on enjoyment of learning throughout the school. In a very good lesson in Year 3, for example, the pupils were delighted to write rhyming couplets about discarded litter. They used repetition to good effect to make a point about the ugliness of litter, concentrating on the effects of their words on the reader. They were eager to share their poems with others in the class.
53. Many pupils say they enjoy the approach to English and the way learning is extended and brought to life. For example, the renowned author Gervase Phinn has visited and talked about his work. A successful book fair, book club and world book day celebrations have all helped widen pupils' appreciation of reading. A visit from the Blooming Poetry Company, visits to pantomimes and theatres and booster classes all help add extra interest and challenge in learning.

54. There are effective systems for assessing pupils' individual attainment and tracking is now in place to monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school. In each year group, tasks are well matched to pupils' attainment and needs. The pupils with special educational needs and those who are more able are suitably challenged, resulting in good learning for them. Good use is made of assessment data to set learning targets. As a result, the pupils have a clear awareness of how well they are doing and where they need to improve. Marking is meaningful, often providing the pupils with pointers of how they may improve their work.
55. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator, in a short time since her appointment, has made good progress to improve provision in English. The curriculum is well planned and the National Literacy Strategy has been effectively implemented. She leads by example in her teaching and provides effective support and guidance to colleagues. The school has a clear overview of standards and provision, as a result of her good monitoring and evaluation.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Pupils apply and develop their language and literacy skills well in other subjects, though more so in their reading and speaking and listening than in their writing. In mathematics, pupils are encouraged to discuss their learning and to explain their reasoning using specific vocabulary. In 'The Lemonade Kid' production in Year 6, the pupils displayed good speaking and listening skills by main characters, successfully imitating American accents. In Year 5, the pupils carry out investigations to explore how sounds are made, using specific language such as "vibrations" to record their findings. Whilst there are some good examples of good writing, such as in science and history and geography, there is scope to further refine this aspect of work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well overall and reach above average standards by Year 6.
- Although problem solving is strong in Year 6, it is not consistently developed across the school.
- Good assessment procedures are in place.
- The good curriculum is enriched very well by a wide variety of extra-curricular activities.
- Interactive whiteboards are enlivening learning when available but not enough use is made of ICT.
- Leadership and management are good and are moving the subject forward well.

Commentary

57. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning have been improved, better resources are available and the national numeracy strategy has been successfully introduced. Interactive whiteboards are now used effectively in Years 1, 2 and 5.

58. Over recent years standards in mathematics at Year 2 have been falling. However, better teaching has ensured that standards in the current Year 2 have improved and are now average. This represents satisfactory achievement. From Year 1, pupils are learning to handle data. By Year 2, they have good opportunities to practise simple calculations using different number operations, such as addition and subtraction. They are learning to round numbers to the nearest ten and use this knowledge to handle money in manageable amounts.
59. A more practical approach is being adopted in Years 1 and 2. However, insufficient opportunities are provided in some classes to solve problems, apply previous learning and knowledge and use practical methods to work out strategies to extend learning. This is especially the case for the higher attaining pupils. Also there is not always a sufficient match of tasks to the range of abilities and worksheets are used too often, which limits the pace of learning.
60. Teaching and learning are good overall; satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The best teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6, where it was very good. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the very effective use of the interactive whiteboards aided the pupils' learning very well. ICT is used well in some classes, particularly where the interactive whiteboards are being used. However, the use of ICT in learning in daily mathematics lessons is not as good as it might be.
61. Standards in Year 6 are above average. This shows good achievement from Year 2. They are not quite as high as last year as this group of pupils started from a lower starting point. By Year 4 pupils learn to classify using two and three criteria, use sets to sort these and identify an intersection, when members of a set have two or three criteria. By Year 5 they are learning how to calculate perimeters of two-dimensional shapes, building well on previous work. By Year 6, pupils have good experiences in developing their ideas about shapes and measurement, for example using metres, centimetres and litres. They have good developing skills in interpreting graphs with two elements, for example combining time and distance. Problem solving is a strong feature of learning in Year 6 but is inconsistently developed in some classes.
62. The co-ordinator has a good awareness of areas of improvement, such as continuing the initiatives in developing practical work, problems solving and extending work for the higher attaining pupils. The curriculum for mathematics is strong with a good emphasis on calculations. This year a stationery shop, a Year 2 number club, strong numeracy links with Blackburn Rovers Football Club, zone parc activities in the playground and popular booster classes have all helped to enrich the provision. Planning reflects the national strategy for the teaching of numeracy and the curriculum covers this well. Assessment is good, with effective use of national and optional testing to indicate the progress pupils make and to track their achievements. This information is also used well to identify targets for what pupils are to learn next and to identify areas of weaknesses where staff need to focus their attention. Areas for development include more involvement in working alongside other staff.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Mathematics is used effectively to support learning in other subjects. The pupils use their understanding of numbers to work out timescales in history and to measure in design and technology, geography and science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well overall and reach above average standards by Year 6.
- Although standards are average by Year 2, not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels.
- The curriculum is enriched well but too little use is made of ICT.
- By Year 6 pupils are confident investigators but their enquiry work could be even better.
- A useful and manageable system for assessment operates well.
- Good leadership and management has kept the subject up to date.

Commentary

64. Good improvement since the last inspection has ensured that the above average standards in Year 6 have been sustained. All groups of pupils achieve well. This is because of consistently good teaching, an effective and interesting curriculum, good resources and particularly strong provision in Year 6. In Years 3 to 6 a strong emphasis is given to scientific enquiry, although more investigations could be initiated by the pupils rather than led by the teacher. Plenty of opportunities are given for independent, group and collaborative work. A useful science code guides pupils in writing up their investigations and these are generally written and presented well. However, insufficient attention is given to identifying the factors that need to be kept the same, changed and measured in investigations. To further build on standards an even stronger focus needs to be given to reflecting on the reliability, significance and validity of the data gathered in investigations and giving a scientific reason for any predictions and explanations that are written up.
65. Achievement remains satisfactory by Year 2 and standards are average. Although some good teaching was seen, over time teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards in scientific enquiry and living things are higher than in materials and physical processes. Most groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily but too few of the higher attaining pupils reach the higher level. This is because insufficient attention is given to setting more demanding activities or asking these pupils suitably pitched questions. Much of the work is orally done well but pupils' understanding is less well consolidated through structured written work.
66. The weak assessment reported at the last inspection has been considerably strengthened. Tests are judiciously used, together with teachers' own assessments. The information is used to target pupils who are not doing as well as they should be and to enhance lesson planning. This is working particularly effectively in many classes in Years 3 to 6. Marking is conscientious and often gives praise but there are insufficient pointers on how to improve. Pupils are also involved well in their own assessment. At the start of each topic they produce a "mind map" which sets out what they already know, and at the end they add what they have learnt, writing this in a different colour. This is a powerful way for both the pupils and teachers to assess the progress made.

67. The curriculum has been strengthened and, whilst stronger in Years 3 to 6, is good overall. Planning is better than it was. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are taken into account very well. Care is taken to make the curriculum relevant to pupils' everyday lives and the world around them. Visits to the Manchester Science Museum and a number more locally, visiting theatre groups, a gardening and wildlife club and the opportunity for Year 6 pupils to undertake the Creativity, in Science and Technology (CREST) bronze award scheme at St Wilfrid's High School all help to effectively enrich and stimulate enjoyment in the curriculum. Literacy and numeracy are used well in learning. There are some good examples of interactive whiteboards being used well. Digital cameras help record work and the Internet and video clips are used productively for research and to reinforce what has been taught. However, the use of ICT is inconsistent.
68. The joint co-ordinators provide good support for other teachers and have a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. A well thought through development plan for next year is in place as a result of monitoring teachers' planning, the results in national tests and a study of pupils work. As with other co-ordinators, more time is needed to work alongside other staff, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are adequate but the lack of an ICT suite is limiting achievement.
- Although good in some years, ICT is insufficiently used across the curriculum.
- The introduction of interactive whiteboards is helping to enliven teaching.
- Teachers are much more confident in teaching the subject.
- The lack of assessment limits teachers' understanding of what pupils can and cannot do.
- The subject is well led and managed, leading to some key improvements this year.

Commentary

69. At the time of the last inspection there was no evidence of direct teaching of computer skills. Resources were also very limited and some staff lacked confidence in teaching the subject. There has been good improvement since then in these areas. As a result pupils' achievement is better and more consistent than it was. Pupils are now reaching average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. Over time, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils are now making good gains in learning and this is helping them to make up ground lost when provision was weaker.
70. Many more computers have been purchased since the last inspection. Provision is supported well by many parents having a computer at home, often with Internet access. In school, whilst numbers of computers are adequate, some shortcomings remain which are limiting higher achievement. Unusually, for a school of this size, there is no ICT suite, which limits the time available for pupils to develop their ICT skills. Weekly ICT lessons are facilitated for each class by a set of portable, laptop computers in Years 3 to 6. However, they are unreliable, and this sometimes slows down learning. There is also no school web site, to support communication with parents and pupils' learning at home. Internet and e-mail access is appropriately filtered.
71. Over time, all groups of pupils follow a sound curriculum in which they use wordprocessors, spreadsheets and databases in their learning. Although satisfactory attention is given to using computers to monitor and control other devices or the environment there is scope to strengthen this aspect of work. For example, the younger pupils control floor turtles and Year 6 pupils have used equipment at Witton City Learning Centre to control traffic lights and robots.
72. Over time teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the discrete lessons observed some teaching was good and some was satisfactory. The good lessons were well organised and a variety of tasks were used to sustain a good pace to learning. For example, in Year 5 good resources had been prepared to help pupils research information about rainforests and in a Year 4 class pupils linked text and graphics well to produce a scientific food chain. Learning is helped by teachers grouping pupils according to their ability and providing support when needed. However, often the same work is set for all groups of pupils. For some the work is too easy whilst for others it is too hard. A key reason for this is the lack of assessment, which results in teachers not having a clear understanding what pupils can and cannot do. As a result they do not have the information they need to sharpen lesson planning and so provide challenging work to all groups of pupils.
73. Leadership and management by the new subject co-ordinator are good. A lot has been done in the last six months, building on the good work of the previous co-ordinator. The way forward is clear. She has trialled a useful system of assessment and there are firm plans for this to be adopted by all teachers in September. Resources have been audited and improved. More discrete teaching of ICT has been introduced. She has contributed to staff training but now needs more time to work alongside other teachers to improve provision.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Overall not enough use is made of the computers in the classroom. Usage is inconsistent across the school and its resolution is a key area for development from

September. Some good practice already exists on which to build. ICT is generally used well in literacy and numeracy. The teachers who have interactive whiteboards in their classrooms are taking full advantage of this facility. For example, one was used very well in a Year 1 religious education lesson where the teacher used it to enliven the lesson by showing the pupils a series of photographs about a Christening and displayed a timer to set a very challenging pace to learning. Some suitable software is available in art and design and science. The Internet is used for research in history and geography.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history were sampled. Religious education is reported on in full.

75. **Geography** is securely planned over the course of a year so that pupils cover the curriculum expected for their age. Since the last inspection planning, resources and the quality of displays have all been improved. Recently the younger pupils have looked at the Seaside and their "Island home" whilst the older pupils have undertaken a river study as well as looking at the geography in a variety of contrasting locations. ICT is used much more now but there is scope to use it more. A good range of enrichment activities such as the use of the school grounds and local area, pupils' involvement in the eco-schools initiative and fieldwork visits help add interest and vitality to the curriculum. The co-ordinator has good plans to raise standards further.
76. In **history**, the curriculum is also securely planned for and schemes of work are much improved. Each term the pupils either study history or geography, which enables each subject to be studied in more depth. This year, Year 3 pupils have learnt about what the school was like in the past whilst the older pupils have done much work on the Tudors. There is interesting work on display about the life and times of Henry VIII. Good opportunities are provided to visit places of historical interest. The subject is being led forward well. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. There are firm plans to strengthen the use of ICT, develop more links with other subjects and sharpen problem solving.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Years 2 and 6 because teaching is good overall.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and help their good achievement.
- A good selection of artefacts are available to support learning.

Commentary

77. Improvement since the previous inspection is good as standards have risen. Achievement is good and the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons, because teaching and learning are secure.
78. Teachers make sure they are well prepared and conversant with the details of the topics they are covering in different religions. They explain clearly and offer good

examples to illustrate ideas and develop understanding. When teaching is very good there are very well planned opportunities for the pupils to share their ideas and impressions with others, for example talking in pairs about what they have observed and what they already know.

79. The pupils participate very well in lessons, especially in Year 6 where attitudes are excellent with mature responses to questions. Pupils' work in Year 6 indicates they consider difficult concepts very carefully. For example, on the topic about thinking about God, one pupil said, "*This is a spirit, an emotion, a feeling within us*". Their work is generally thought provoking and they are usually able to come to their own judgements and conclusions. In a Year 6 lesson the pupils made very good progress and achieved very well in considering issues of forgiveness against the background of different religions. In Year 2 teaching was supported well by a good range of artefacts from the Hindu faith. These were presented in an interesting way, reminding pupils about what they had learned.
80. The pupils' responses in lessons are mature, responsible and indicate the very good levels of tolerance and respect they are developing. In Year 4, the lesson on considering the environment resulted in some thoughtful ideas. The pupils' learning, although good, would have benefited from more debate and sharing issues with others in pairs or small groups.
81. Leadership and management are good overall. There is good use of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education in conjunction with national guidelines. ICT is generally used appropriately to support learning, although this has been identified as an area for development. Other areas for development include more involvement in working alongside other staff.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, and physical education were sampled. Music was inspected in detail and is reported in full.

82. In **art and design** good monitoring by the co-ordinator has ensured that all pupils cover the full range of national curriculum work. Pupils work with a wide range of materials and study the work of other artists. There is a positive link with Walton-Le-Dale High school, where gifted and talented pupils from Year 5 have visited to produce good quality sculptures and paintings. ICT is being used more than it was but there is scope for its further development. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of future developments and has good plans to enhance the resources, and to work more closely with other staff in the classroom.
83. In **design and technology**, provision has been considerably strengthened since the last inspection. Improved planning has ensured that a designing and making approach is firmly fostered and pupils cover the work expected for their age. Teachers have a clearer idea of how to competently teach the subject. Every half term pupils either study a topic in this subject in depth or one in art and design. This helps work to be covered with more rigour. Younger pupils have made moving pictures and puppets and the older pupils have designed and made musical instruments and slippers. Good attention is paid to health and safety within the updated scheme of work. There are good plans to use more ICT and to focus training on the small number of staff who might benefit from this.

84. **Physical education** is one of the stronger foundation subjects and receives a high priority. The curriculum covers all the prescribed areas including gymnastics, games and swimming. Extra-curricular activities are very good. The school has achieved the Activemark award, which recognises the interesting and well-attended school clubs and tournaments which enable the pupils to keep healthy and improve their competitive games skills. For example, football, netball, athletics, cross-country, tag rugby, a fitness club and a Judo club operate. Year 6 pupils go to the Robin Wood Activity Centre for a weekend each May and participate in a wide variety of outdoor and adventure activities. One drawback is that the equipment is stored in the junior school hall, which reduces the space for physical activity. More use of ICT also needs to be made.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards, especially in singing, by Years 2 and 6 are above average.
- The subject is taught by a specialist, whose considerable expertise enhances learning very well.
- Productions and instrumental work significantly enhance the pupils' musical experiences.
- Accommodation presents a problem as lessons have to be taught in the school halls.
- Leadership and management of music are good.

Commentary

85. There has been good progress since the previous inspection as standards have risen. Achievement is good and standards in Year 6 and Year 2 are above what is normally expected. All groups of pupils, including those who are identified as having special educational needs, make good progress in lessons because of the consistently good teaching they receive.
86. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good aspects. The subject is taught by a specialist who has very good expertise, and can share this very well with pupils to support and extend their learning. Lessons are well planned, with good organisation and management. Resources are used effectively. However, sometimes there could be more variety in the range of materials provided, for example for the pupils to make their own instruments. Nevertheless, steel pans have been borrowed recently and are already being used very well. This is having a very significant impact on pupils' music-making skills. Also there are sometimes missed opportunities for "warm-up" sessions prior to singing.
87. In Year 2, the pupils are learning to respond rhythmically to music, to move in time and to sing in tune. In a Year 3 lesson the pupils were able to explore sound using recycled materials to create their own musical instruments. Their finished performance was of a good standard, indicating the good progress they had made and their good achievement. In Year 5 the pupils are learning very well to use musical instruments and produce high quality performances, using steel pans, chime bars and xylophones. Year 6 pupils can sing and accompany their music making with a range of musical instruments. They are confident performers, and approach each performance in a

mature and self-assured way. Their skills in music are developing well alongside their understanding of musical terms and simple notation.

88. The co-ordinator, who works part-time, has moved the subject forward well. She has significantly raised the profile of music within the school. Areas for development have been clearly identified to increase opportunities for ensemble work, improve the storage of resources and the use of ICT to support learning. Assessment is well co-ordinated to judge progress and enable the pupils to evaluate and improve their own performance. Records are very systematically kept to ensure there is clear information about the pupils' progress and there is continuity in their learning, building on the previous year's work. There is an extremely well co-ordinated approach to offering a very wide range and variety of additional musical activities, performance and productions. These enhance learning and enrich the musical experiences the pupils have very well. Storage of resources is, however, difficult and does not allow for easy access and retrieval of musical instruments.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

89. Pupils are provided with very good opportunities to develop in personal, social, health education and citizenship. The curriculum is well structured and the timetable includes well-planned discussions, which provide the pupils with very good opportunities to discuss difficult and sensitive issues such as personal safety. In addition, the school seizes opportunities to extend this aspect of pupils' education through involvement with a variety of agencies. The Life Education trailer truck classroom, which involves all pupils from Reception to Year 6, promotes pride, self-esteem, needs and responsibilities. Parents are invited to participate and many do, which enables them to help and support their children. The school has been awarded a Drugs Accreditation certificate from the Healthy School Award, which promotes pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. The school council provides a very good forum for pupils to take an active part in running their school. Pupils develop skills and understanding of theirs and others' actions on the life of the school as a community. The interaction and the high profile of all these aspects develop pupils' understanding of their responsibilities of living in a community and of the impact of their actions on others. It is a very good preparation for citizenship in the wider community. The co-ordinator has significantly improved provision in the last year.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2

Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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