

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **HOLY TRINITY VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Darwen

LEA area: Darwen and Blackburn

Unique reference number: 119357

Acting Headteacher: Mr M Leighton

Lead inspector: Ian Naylor

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 267062

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	403
School address:	Bank Top Darwen Lancashire
Postcode:	BB3 2RW
Telephone number:	01254 702119
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Jackson
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Trinity VC Primary is a larger than average sized school. The majority of pupils are from British heritage backgrounds, but 48 are from other ethnic and national origins. Pupils are from family backgrounds representative of a cross-section of the community, but many are from disadvantaged homes. Attainment on entry is well below average. There are three pupils whose first language is not English. There are seven pupils with a statement of special educational need, and 72 pupils have special educational needs requiring school action; this is about the average for similar schools nationally. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The school achieved the Healthy School Award in 2004 and the Activemark Award 2003. It is part of the Assessment for Learning Network and the Behaviour Improvement Project. Parts of the school premises are used in the evenings by the local community.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20906	Ian Naylor	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Art and design History Geography Physical education English as an additional language
9931	Margaret Kerry	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
10668	David Walker	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Religious education Personal social and health education
1224	Graham Todd	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology
7994	Pam Weston	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage English Music

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

This is a **good** school with a happy and friendly outlook. It provides a good standard of education for pupils from a very wide range of social and cultural backgrounds, many of whom have specific learning needs. Because teaching is consistently good or very good, all pupils achieve well and make good progress. The school adds at least good and sometimes very good value to pupils' standards. The strong ethos of the school encourages very good personal development. The satisfactory leadership and management by the temporary leadership team have ensured that pupils continue to learn in a stimulating and caring environment. The school gives good value for money.

#### **The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- Pupils' relationships and behaviour are excellent and they show very good attitudes and responses in lessons.
- The school produces outstanding achievements in sport under the motivational leadership of the acting headteacher; pupils are given extensive opportunities across an exceptionally wide range of sporting activities both in lessons and out of school, and as a result they make excellent progress.
- The school is excellent in the way that it communicates with parents about their child's progress, involves them in a very good range of school activities and provides them with very good counselling and advice.
- Links with the community are excellent.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 are below the national average and need to be raised further.
- There is a very high quality of pupil welfare and pastoral care; relationships throughout the school are excellent.
- The school plan lacks whole-school direction and evaluation.
- In information and communication technology (ICT), standards are lower than national expectations, and the use of ICT is underdeveloped in other subjects. However, the considerable improvement in equipment, resources and staff training is producing a rise in pupils' overall level of achievement.
- Pupils' views are given the highest priority and this encourages their independence and initiative, with the result that they develop exceptional standards in personal and social skills, self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is very good as a result of the high quality of teaching.
- The leadership of the school is committed to meeting the needs of individuals, providing opportunities for all pupils, and setting very good role models to staff and pupils.
- Teaching is good overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and in art and physical education.
- Although attendance is below the national average, the school is working very hard to improve this position.

Since the previous inspection, the school has made good improvement overall. Standards in comparison with those of other similar schools have risen. The school's reputation and record for success in sporting achievements has been further extended to an extremely high level. This has a very positive impact upon pupils' overall achievement and self-esteem, and particularly on the school's ethos. The curriculum has been improved through the introduction of national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies. Teaching is more consistent across the school and has a better impact upon pupil progress. Subject leadership has been improved and is now at least satisfactory in all subjects. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the opportunities for professional development offered to staff. However, more is needed to help teachers to raise pupils' standards, particularly in early literacy. There have been improvements in the levels of

equipment, staff training and resources in ICT, but these have not yet had time to lift pupils' standards to required levels.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Standards in English by the end of Year 6 in the 2004 national tests were below the national average. Standards were average in mathematics and science. When compared to those in similar schools, standards were above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science. **Achievement is good overall** in the present Year 1 to Year 6. It is very good at the Foundation Stage, although children will not meet the Early Learning Goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception year because their attainment on entry is well below average. In Year 2, current standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average, but achievement is good. Current standards in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science, but achievement in these subjects is good. Achievement and standards are very good in art and physical education and good in religious education. Standards and achievement are unsatisfactory in Years 2 and 6 in ICT. Progress is good for the pupils from ethnic minority groups and for those with English as an additional language (EAL). There was no significant difference noted during the inspection in the performance of boys and girls, although national results show that girls tend to perform less well than boys by Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress. Attendance is **below** the national average. Overall personal development is **very good**. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and behaviour is excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **very good**. Cultural development is **good**.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education is good.** Teaching is **good** and often very good. It is best in Years 5 and 6. It is especially good in art and physical education and in the Foundation Stage. Teachers plan well for the wide range of abilities in each class. There is good teamwork between staff and this gives good support to pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN and EAL. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in English, mathematics and science. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities with excellent opportunities for participation in sport. Pupils' views are given extremely high value. Welfare support, guidance and attention to the health and safety of pupils are all of very good quality. Parental involvement and links between home and school are exceptional. There are very good links with other schools, and those with the local community are excellent. Many of these, though not exclusively, are through sport.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** The school is well governed. The temporary senior management team have worked together well to maintain the ethos and standards in the school. They have been well supported in this by governors, who have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. The governing body meets all its legal responsibilities. Financial procedures and controls are satisfactory. The acting headteacher is extremely committed to the needs of all pupils and provides very good day-to-day support to staff.

The school plan lacks a sharp focus. It fails to properly evaluate and define what needs to happen next and over time in areas such as raising standards, the curriculum, and teaching and learning.

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

Parents think very highly of the school and are pleased with the progress of their children. They are especially grateful for the excellent level of information and close support they receive from the school. Pupils are extremely proud of their school, especially of its sporting achievements and friendly atmosphere. Most pupils like all the after-school activities and thoroughly enjoy taking part. They appreciate the way that the staff take their views into account.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve standards in Year 2 in English, mathematics, science, and standards across the school in ICT.
- Consolidate the work begun on raising the rate of attendance.
- Provide a cohesive and fully evaluated school plan.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement of pupils is **good** overall. The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is very good. In Years 1 to 6, achievement is at least good and often very good, especially in Years 5 and 6. This is due to the high quality of teaching. Good and sometimes very good value is added to the standards achieved by pupils as they move through the school, particularly between Year 2 and Year 6.

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

- Children in the Reception classes make rapid progress.
- Standards in Years 1 and 2 are below the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards and achievement are very high in physical education, art and design.
- Progress is good for pupils in the ethnic minority group and for those with English as an additional language (EAL).
- Standards in ICT are weak across the school.

#### **Commentary**

1. Achievement is very good at the Foundation Stage. Pupils make rapid progress, especially in their communication skills and in their personal development, because of the very good teaching. Some children will meet the Early Learning Goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception year. However, the majority will not because their attainment on entry was well below average.
2. Standards in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading, and well below average in writing and mathematics compared with those of other schools nationally. They were little better when compared to those of other similar schools, although standards in reading were shown as average. This is partly because teaching has to cope with the below average attainment on entry to Year 1 of the majority, and with the generally wide range of abilities. This includes several pupils with EAL. There is therefore still a great deal of catching up to be done by many pupils. In Year 2, current standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average, but achievement is good. This is the result of good teaching and the introduction of a range of strategies to bolster pupils' achievements. The indications over the last few years are that trends in standards are rising and the trend has been maintained in the current year.
3. Standards in English by the end of Year 6 in the 2004 national tests were below the national average compared to those of all schools nationally. Standards were average in mathematics and science. When compared to those of similar schools, standards were above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science. Current standards in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science, but achievement in these subjects is generally good and sometimes very good.
4. Achievement and standards are very good in art and design and physical education and good in religious education. The artwork displayed around the school shows a particularly high standard, and pupils' work is highly valued by staff. The school achieves remarkable success across a wide range of physical education activities, such as gymnastics, and in sport. Pupils gain success in local, regional and national competitions in gymnastics, team games and at an individual level.
5. Standards and achievement are unsatisfactory by the end of Years 2 and 6 in ICT. This is because teaching has not been effective over time.

6. Progress is good for the pupils from ethnic minority groups and for those with EAL. Appropriate support is made available through the local authority to help these pupils to learn English, and the school follows the guidance given to help increase pupils' understanding and use of English.

7. There was no significant difference noted during the inspection in the performance of boys and girls, though the results of the national tests results show that girls tend to perform less well than boys by Year 6. The school is aware of this and has made provision in lesson and curriculum plans to support the progress of girls.

8. Pupils with SEN make at least good and often very good progress towards the targets set for them as they move through the year groups. They make significant gains in their national test levels. The special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) monitor pupils' progress carefully and involve them in discussing their own individual learning targets. There is no identification made or specific provision for pupils who have very high levels of attainment or who are gifted and talented in the academic subjects. However, in physical education and in sport, talented pupils are identified and given additional support, and as a result they often make exceptional progress.

9. Pupils of all ages make excellent progress in their personal and social development. They are well prepared for transition to the next stage of education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.8 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.4 (13.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.8 (15.2)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.0 (27.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.4 (27.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.7 (29.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Pupils' behaviour is excellent, and they have very good attitudes to their work and to school. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory, although the school is working hard to improve this. Punctuality is satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Behaviour around the school is excellent. Pupils are very well mannered and considerate to others.
- The school develops in pupils a strong sense of personal responsibility.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and are keen to join in every aspect of school life.
- Relationships are excellent and there is a real sense of community.
- Attendance is below average; recent improvements in procedures have not yet had an impact on attendance figures.

## Commentary

10. By the end of their time in school, pupils have developed very high standards of behaviour and made excellent progress in their personal development. They display high standards of courtesy and consideration to each other and to visitors. Social skills are very well developed. Pupils are confident and spontaneously polite. On many occasions, such as entering and leaving assembly, pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they show a high degree of self-discipline. At playtime, behaviour is good-humoured and sensible. Bullying is rare and is effectively dealt with, and pupils show respect for each other.

11. Attitudes to work are very good. Standards of presentation are high, and pupils take evident pride in what they do. Pupils are eager participants in class, in school productions and in the many extra-curricular activities. They are very keen to learn, and willingly contribute ideas. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They have a highly developed sense of personal responsibility, and show concern for others, their immediate environment, and the wider world. This was exemplified at a school council meeting, where the view was expressed that *'We should not just leave it all to the teachers, but play our part.'* The acting headteacher and staff consistently demonstrate very high expectations of pupils' care and consideration for others.

12. Assemblies, lessons, and all the activities in the school very effectively promote spiritual and moral development. Pupils express a real feeling of joy in the world around them, through confident spoken contributions and tuneful, expressive and enthusiastic singing. The school also makes significant efforts to promote wider cultural understanding through links with a Muslim school, and in non-European themes in art and multicultural activities. Social development is very strongly supported in numerous ways, such as residential trips and a wide range of sporting activities.

13. Relationships are excellent, showing a high degree of respect. The school is very inclusive and works hard with all pupils to improve behaviour where this is needed. To this end, there has been very good involvement with local services and projects, and very good use of the family support worker. The school is a welcoming community.

14. Currently, attendance is below the national average and therefore unsatisfactory. The school believes that the social and economic backgrounds of some pupils have a negative impact upon attendance rates. There are many good procedures in place to improve attendance, but these have yet to raise levels of attendance significantly. However, some of the absence is caused by term-time holidays. Punctuality is satisfactory, and an adult 'greeter' follows up any lateness.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. The curriculum is satisfactory. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, with excellent opportunities for participation in sport. Welfare support, guidance, and attention to the health and safety of pupils are all of high quality. Parental involvement and links between home and school are exceptional. There are very good links with other schools, and those with the local community are excellent.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is satisfactory.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (5%)	11 (25%)	27 (61%)	3 (7%)	1 (2%)	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.*

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers make lessons interesting and relevant so that all pupils learn well.
- Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and know their individual needs very well.
- Good teamwork amongst staff promotes a consistently good approach to teaching and learning across the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is very well managed and this enables them to work and cooperate well.
- Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science, but it is not as well developed across the other subjects.

## **Commentary**

15. The most effective teaching is to be found in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, where it is consistently very good. This is where there is particularly effective emphasis on raising pupils' standards and achievement. Teaching is also especially good in art and design and physical education across the school. There is good teaching across the school in English, mathematics, science and religious education. Teachers plan very well for the wide range of abilities in each class, including those with SEN and EAL. The activities are challenging, interesting and often good fun, so that pupils are well motivated to learn and achieve well.

16. There is particularly good teamwork between members of staff, forged through careful communication and planning by subject leaders. Relationships with pupils are of a very high order and this means that pupils place their trust in staff and work hard to please. Pupils are taught to take pride in their achievements through the very good use of praise and encouragement, the house point system and other rewards. There is very close attention to the management of pupils' behaviour, with clear boundaries set for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in classrooms and around the school. Staff maintain very high expectations for behaviour, which are respected and adhered to by pupils. This results in the exceptionally high quality of behaviour present in the school.

17. Teaching is less effective in ICT. Although much of the teaching is at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, not enough attention is given over time to ensuring that pupils' skills and standards reach the expected level by the end of Years 2 and 6.

18. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN and those with EAL is good. This is because of the SENCOs' good planning and assessment of pupils' individual needs. Teaching assistants provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils, and liaise closely with the teachers, for example when they lead pupils in guided reading sessions.

19. The procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. The school has worked hard to implement a system of assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Assessment in these subjects is now good, and it has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils are tested on a regular basis and their progress is carefully monitored. In these subjects, there is now a more rigorous system in place to measure pupils' progress, analyse strengths and weaknesses, and provide data to inform teachers' planning. Assessment in other subjects is not as good, and in some subjects there is no meaningful assessment, for example in ICT, religious education and music. Marking is satisfactory; the best marking contains constructive comment that helps pupils to improve their work. Self-assessment by pupils is developing satisfactorily.

20. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. This was in mathematics in Year 4, where the pace of the lesson was slow; pupils did not make sufficient progress and not enough challenge was provided for higher attaining pupils. A few other lessons also lacked sufficient pace, and this had an adverse effect on learning.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with many good features and relevance to all pupils. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There are many visits and visitors. Resources for learning are good and the very good accommodation supports the curriculum well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Extra-curricular provision extends opportunities for learning, particularly in physical education and sport.
- The use of ICT in the other subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The amount of time allocated to teaching on the school timetable is lower than nationally recommended levels for Years 3 to 6.
- The accommodation is very good and is enhanced by very good outdoor sporting facilities.

### **Commentary**

21. The school satisfactorily meets its legal requirements for the curriculum. The core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT are firmly based upon the National Curriculum and national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies. There are, however, areas of weaknesses. The use of ICT to support and enhance pupils' learning in other subjects is undeveloped. The amount of time for teaching during the school day is significantly lower than that recommended for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This means that pupils are being denied further opportunities for learning and this has an impact on overall standards. The way that the timetable is constructed around a four-period day results in several subjects being taught in blocks of time, but sometimes with a large gap between each block. These subjects are not sufficiently well monitored and it is difficult, therefore, for teachers to ensure that pupils build on previous learning in regular and even steps. There is also some slippage in time between the various aspects of the day, such as assembly and registration. These factors weaken the impact of teaching and learning.

22. By contrast, the curriculum is extended and enhanced extremely well. There is an extensive range and number of before-school, lunchtime and after-school activities, including an excellent variety of opportunities for physical education and sport. The school choir sings well and performs within the community. A successful multicultural week was held recently and made a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of other cultures. Pupils join with others from the local area in cultural and sporting activities. Special events, such as art weeks and history days, are successfully held. There is a substantial programme of invited visitors to the school, including representatives from the church, social services and the performing arts. Learning opportunities are extended very well through a good range of visits to places of interest as well as residential opportunities for pupils.

23. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well developed. Sex education and drug awareness are taught as appropriate to pupils' age and ability. The curriculum is adapted and modified effectively to meet pupils' special educational needs. Their individual education plans (IEPs) are of good quality and help these pupils to achieve well. The school is implementing the Code of Practice for special educational needs very well. All pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education

24. The school is well staffed, with class sizes either average or below. The teaching assistants play a valuable role in helping individuals or groups of pupils, particularly those with lower attainment. The very good quality of the accommodation is further enhanced by many stimulating displays of pupils' work to support learning and to celebrate their achievements. The outdoor

facilities for sport are of an excellent quality. Resources are good overall, except for the inconvenient siting of the library for some pupils. The school provides a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment and ensures that all pupils may be involved in all aspects of school life.

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

Arrangements for the care, welfare, and health and safety of pupils are very good. Support, advice and guidance are very good. The involvement of pupils, through seeking and acting on their views, is excellent.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The acting headteacher sets a very high standard of care and support for pupils.
- Pupils thrive in a safe and supportive atmosphere.
- Very good links with outside agencies ensure that pupils receive the support they need.
- There are very good arrangements for settling pupils into school and for helping them to transfer to secondary school.

### **Commentary**

25. The welfare of each child is at the heart of the school's work. The very high standards set in this area by the acting headteacher ensure that each and every pupil is cared for. Under his leadership, an effective team of support staff work with common aims and a clear sense of purpose to provide care and guidance.

26. Governors, working with the acting headteacher, are active in regular monitoring to ensure that the environment is safe. They undertake regular checks of school premises, which are maintained to a high standard. Procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are very good.

27. There are very effective links with outside agencies. These links support pupils with SEN, and those whose behaviour or attendance may need improvement. There is very good awareness of child protection issues, and close liaison with the educational welfare officer. Well-planned arrangements help pupils settle quickly when they first enter the school, and an extensive transition programme to secondary school helps pupils on to the next stage of their education.

28. Monitoring of academic progress is good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and for pupils who have SEN. Very frequent progress reports for all pupils give clear pointers to the next steps which each child needs to take. There are learning mentors for those who would benefit from additional support.

29. It is an excellent feature of the school's ethos that pupils' views are genuinely sought and acted upon. Pupils have a real role in decisions, for example the way in which play space is organised and the facilities provided in it. There is no doubt in pupils' minds that they have an important and valued part to play. The formal expression of this involvement is through the impressive school council, but all pupils are ready and willing to voice opinions in a mature, considered and constructive way.

30. The academic support, care and advice available for pupils with SEN are excellent. Records of meetings with professionals and parents are very well kept.

### **Partnership with parents and community**

Links with parents and the community are excellent. There are very good links with other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school sends parents very frequent information about their children's progress.
- Parents have great confidence in the school.
- Support is offered to the whole family, not just the child.
- A wide range of high quality community links supports pupils' learning and development.
- A very small number of parents do not do enough to support the attendance of their child.

## **Commentary**

31. Parents are very satisfied with what the school provides. They receive regular detailed information about children's progress, and have the opportunity to attend curriculum evenings as well as parents' consultations. Annual reports are very informative and show very good knowledge of each child. In addition, parents find the school very approachable, and can raise any queries or concerns that they may have. All this means that they are extremely well informed about their child's progress.

32. The school makes every effort to involve and support parents. There is very good support for family literacy, and a family support worker is very well deployed to assist with a range of difficulties, including help with behaviour. Parents are keen supporters of school events, and there are high levels of parental attendance at school productions and assemblies. Newsletters are informative, presented well and keep parents abreast of school developments and forthcoming events.

33. There is an excellent range of local community links. These are especially strong in sport but also include local businesses and participation in town occasions, such as the nativity procession or music festival. There are also very strong links with the church and with other local primary schools. These links have a very positive effect on pupils' confidence, self-esteem and ability to appreciate issues to do with the wider world beyond the school.

34. The school makes every effort to ensure that parents are kept in touch with the progress their child is making. They are fully involved in the review of IEPs and annual reviews of statements. Despite all the school's efforts, there remain just a few parents who could do more to assure the full attendance of their children.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management, including the leadership of the acting headteacher, are **satisfactory**. Governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The acting headteacher has led the school successfully through a prolonged transition period.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Development planning lacks a clear focus on raising achievement, and it is not coherently linked to all school improvement systems.
- The monitoring of the curriculum for subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not rigorous enough.
- Self-evaluation is not built effectively enough into many school procedures.
- Staff are very good role models, with a high commitment to including all pupils.

## Commentary

35. Over the past year there has been considerable uncertainty over the appointment of a new headteacher, which has now been resolved. During this difficult time, the acting headteacher has successfully formed and led a temporary senior management team. This team has maintained the school's position and kept the confidence of staff and parents. The acting headteacher has made a particularly strong and highly valued contribution to the school's ethos and to the sporting achievements of many pupils.

36. All staff are fully committed to the school's values. They work as an effective team. There is good support for newly qualified staff from senior managers and from colleagues. There is a close working relationship between teachers and the wide range of support staff. Since the last inspection, curriculum co-ordinators have developed their role considerably, and are giving good leadership within most subject areas.

37. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are very active in their role, and are very well led by their chairman. Governors have a very clear vision of the qualities required to develop the school further. Their work in committees is thorough and influential. They carry out their monitoring role very carefully with regard to health and safety, and are well informed about the school's finances. Financial management is satisfactory, and the finance committee monitors how effectively best value is obtained.

38. The weakness in leadership and management lies in school development planning. Current plans are based on wide consultation, but they lack a sufficiently clear emphasis on raising achievement through whole-school improvement work. The plan is dominated by subject development plans. Other school improvement systems, such as performance management, are not linked coherently and consistently into the overall plan, although some steps have been taken in this direction. The school timetable is not well structured and taught time is low in Years 3 to 6. Opportunities are therefore missed to give additional support to pupils' learning.

39. Self-evaluation is not yet a regular part of the school's practice. Whilst the priorities for improvement were accurately identified in the documentation prepared for the inspection, the continuous self-evaluation and rigorous review required to achieve improvement is not in place. This has a particularly significant effect because of the low standards of attainment on entry. A very strong focus on raising achievement is required to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential by the end of Year 6.

40. Management of the SEN provision is very good. The co-ordinators are extremely hard working and have the full confidence of the governors and staff. The money received by the school for SEN is well spent, most being used to fund teaching assistants.

### **Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	1,138,938
Total expenditure	1,084,017
Expenditure per pupil	2,689

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	110,649
Balance carried forward to the next	59,671



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

41. The attainment of the majority of children on entry is well below average. Standards for most children by the end of Reception are just below average, with a small number achieving the goals expected of them. This is very good achievement. The way in which teachers and teaching assistants work together as a team is highly effective. This helps children to have a very positive attitude to school and to develop confidence. As a result, behaviour is very good. The children's experience in the Reception classes provides them with a stimulating and productive start to school life. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall and leads to very good achievement. Quiet, strong leadership and management result in highly effective organisation in the Reception classes. Detailed planning for lessons ensures that children's needs are met very well. The very good ratio of adults to children benefits all children, because they have continuous opportunities to talk to the adults and are also encouraged to talk to each other. Children with SEN are identified at a very early stage. Consequently, their work is targeted from the outset and they achieve very well in relation to their capabilities. The high standard reported in the last inspection has been maintained. Staff have developed very effective curriculum planning, the setting of targets, and assessment techniques.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

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

- A warm, secure atmosphere is generated in which the children feel valued and enjoy coming to school.
- Daily routines incorporate high expectations of behaviour. Children respond well.
- Excellent relationships create a highly effective learning environment that fosters children's moral, social and emotional development very well.

#### **Commentary**

42. This area of learning has a suitably high profile in the Reception classes. The adults are very effective in nurturing pupils' personal and social skills and in generating a warm, secure atmosphere. They enjoy excellent relationships with the children and make them feel valued. As a result, children gain in confidence and settle happily into school. Classroom routines are quickly and securely established. They provide very good opportunities for children to develop independence and show responsibility in simple matters of routine. From the outset, children learn the rules and responsibilities which promote their understanding of the moral and social issues that affect their life. Interesting activities lead to very good work habits because they are designed to sustain children's concentration. Children are well motivated and cooperate sensibly when sharing equipment. Along with the adults' caring provision, good links with parents support children's development well before they start school and in their early days in school. Most are likely to achieve just below the expected areas of learning by the end of the Reception year, and they achieve very well.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are on course to achieve just below the goals expected of them in this area of learning by the end of Reception year, with a small number achieving the goals, particularly in reading. This is very good achievement.
- Writing skills are developed systematically and well.

### Commentary

43. Achievement is very good overall as a result of teachers' skilful questioning, sensitive listening and the many varied opportunities that children have to talk, listen and read. Speaking and listening skills are taught well and reinforced through a wide range of other activities. Reading and writing skills develop well. Informal opportunities to promote and develop writing skills are incorporated skilfully into all aspects of the curriculum. Staff records, together with examples of children's early writing, show that many children can write their names independently. Good emphasis is placed on the recognition of letter sounds and the skills of blending and segmenting these sounds within words. Many children are successfully beginning to read very simple texts. They recognise and say the sounds of each letter when they read. Well thought out practical activities provide very good opportunities for the development of writing. Consequently, children develop very good control of the pencil and clear letter formation. Parents support this area of learning well. Children regularly have homework to consolidate their reading, writing and understanding of the most commonly occurring words in their reading books. Indications are that most children will achieve just below the expected goals for this area of learning, with a number achieving the expected goals.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers grasp opportunities in all activities to promote children's mathematical understanding.
- Mathematical learning is based on practical, linked activities.

### Commentary

44. The very good quality teaching of practical activities makes a significant contribution to children's achievement. Such activities include counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, recognising relationships and working with number, shape, space and measures. Adults support children very well and make learning fun. Most children understand the concept of 'more than' and 'less than' and demonstrate this when working with numbers to 20. They read and write times on a clock face, for example '12 o'clock'. Some children are able to relate these times to activities within the school day, such as the time for dinner. Higher achieving children count in 2s, 5s, and 10s. Children use simple mathematical language correctly, such as *first*, *second* and *last* when ordering flowers. Most children are on course to achieve just below the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception year, with a small number achieving them.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff plan a very good range of interesting activities to stimulate children's curiosity and broaden their experiences.
- Activities are very well organised to enable all children to take part in the stimulating curriculum.
- Opportunities to learn about other cultures feature highly in the planning.

### **Commentary**

45. Children are given a wealth of opportunities to learn about the world. Good questioning and sensitive listening enable them to focus on key elements of the lessons, to talk about their observations and to make sense of what they see. Visits and visitors, along with the good quality resources, support this area of learning well. Most children enter Reception with very limited knowledge and understanding of the world. Nevertheless, they make very good progress, so that by the time that they leave the Reception class most are well on the way to achieving their goals, with a number achieving them. Children learn about other cultures and religions by celebrating many of the important festivals. Computers are used to reinforce the children's basic skills; for example, children make a postcard, selecting their own words and pictures for it. Higher achieving children show good skills and are able to use the mouse to open graphics and use the right tool to select the pictures.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching, learning and achievement are very good.
- The children have very good attitudes. They behave very well and have a good regard for safety.
- There are very good facilities for outdoor play.

### **Commentary**

46. Children use apparatus and equipment confidently and safely because they have very good attitudes and behaviour and have been taught to be sensible and careful. The apparatus in the outdoor area for the children provides for a good range of challenging and imaginative opportunities. Good use is made of the school hall for physical education lessons. In the one lesson observed, the children moved confidently with good control, balance and co-ordination. Children respond quickly to the teacher's directions and manage the large space in the hall very well. Manipulative skills are very good. Children model with clay, handle pencils and brushes well, and use small toys, tools and scissors safely. Teaching and learning in the one lesson seen was very good because planning matched the children's ability well and extended their confidence and enjoyment. Most children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time that they leave the Reception classes.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

47. It is not possible to make an overall judgement of provision and standards in creative development as too few lessons were observed. The well displayed children's artwork, which brightens the room, shows that children have the chance to experience a range of media and methods of creating pictures and patterns. They use paint, collage and modelling materials and express their creative ideas boldly. Children experience very good opportunities to take part in singing, movement and playing percussion instruments. In the one lesson that was observed, children were able to name a very good selection of instruments and enjoyed exploring and learning how sounds were made and how they could be changed. They listened carefully and concentrated and, as a result, learned the words of a chant and were able to perform the actions to it.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision is **good**.

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

- Standards are below average by the end of Year 2.
- Standards in English are improving at a good rate.
- Reading and writing skills are very well promoted.
- Speaking and listening skills are encouraged effectively in all areas of the school.
- The subject is well led and managed.

#### **Commentary**

48. Attainment is just below the national average at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and about average for pupils at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach levels of attainment that are high in comparison with those of similar schools. All pupils achieve well, and this judgement is similar to that of the last inspection. Considering their very low starting point, this represents good achievement over time. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Standards are rising. A significant reason for this success is the appropriate use of strategies to raise the achievement of targeted pupils. These strategies include additional literacy support, booster classes in Year 6 and the use of learning mentors. Teachers relate well to pupils and are sensitive to their needs, while having high expectations of their behaviour and attitudes to work. Pupils respond well and are interested in their work. They are particularly motivated to write when asked, for example for a piece of persuasive writing to promote their school.

49. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from good to very good and is good overall. Where teaching is very good, the pupils are stimulated to develop confidence and skill in using a broad range of vocabulary. Teaching is enthusiastic. Tasks are usually set at the right level of challenge for all pupils. There is very good teamwork with teaching assistants. Talking partners are used very effectively to promote speaking and listening skills. Where teaching is less effective, this is because lower achieving pupils are not sufficiently challenged. There is a consistent approach to teaching across the school as a result of the high expectations set for behaviour. The planning follows the National Literacy Strategy and there is a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject and how to teach the basic skills. Work is marked regularly, with lots of praise, although there is little evidence of teachers giving clear instructions about the next steps for improvement.

50. The development and encouragement of reading is a key area of emphasis at all levels within the school. Pupils achieve very well from their low starting point on entry to the Reception classes.

There is time set aside daily to ensure that all pupils take part in reading, and this is very successful. Pupils are encouraged to become independent readers. There is a good range of fiction books for older pupils in the school library, with comics, magazines and on occasion newspapers available within the library or classroom to promote and stimulate this strand of reading for enjoyment. Unfortunately, the location of the library inhibits independent access by pupils and reduces opportunities for them to extend their enjoyment of books.

51. Opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills are very good. Pupils achieve well from their levels of entry into school. The school has emphasised the development of writing skills at all ages. This is particularly evident in Years 1 and 2, where the introduction of the new scheme of writing is playing an important part in the successful development of handwriting skills. In a lesson at Year 2, the pupils showed good recall of previous work about seaside holidays in Victorian times, although few were able to offer suggestions as to what cockles and mussels might be. When forming their own word bank, they show good skills in using dictionaries to check definitions of various forms of transport present in Victorian times. Pupils' work on display shows knowledge of how to set out a story with an opening, a developed plot and an appropriate finish. By Year 6, pupils write with confidence in a variety of forms, including narrative, reports, persuasive writing, letters and poetry. They use a wide range of vocabulary and punctuation. In a Year 5 lesson, higher achieving pupils wrote in detailed, complex sentences, which included adverbs and adjectives. Lower achieving pupils made good attempts to link their ideas with connectives and used adjectives to give more detail. One lower achieving pupil was able to explain quite clearly what 'time' connectives were and to identify for example 'at last' as a time connective in a piece of work.

52. There is good use by teacher of the interactive whiteboard. During the inspection there was very little use of computers within the classroom to assist pupils' work, although there is some evidence of word-processing in work on display in the classroom.

53. Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well. Most pupils become confident speakers and listen well to others. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were keen to give full praise to the school that they knew they would shortly be leaving. They are articulate, confident and use a broad range of language in their praise, presenting a very convincing, persuasive argument in favour of the merits of their school. During the rehearsal for the Year 6 end-of-school play, there was further evidence of confident and articulate public speaking. Words for the play had been learnt very thoroughly and were spoken expressively by the principal characters.

54. The subject leader has responded well to the challenge of raising standards. She has received good support and training to support her role and, as a result, understands what is needed in order for pupils to make better progress. However, checking on how well staff mark pupils' work in a way that promotes pupils' understanding of the quality of their work is not as strong as it might be. Further work is also required to lift standards in English by the end of Year 2, especially for higher attaining pupils.

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

55. The development of language and literacy skills within other subject areas and topic themes is very good. For example, a geography project presented many opportunities for the pupils to improve their literacy skills. They investigated the development of Clearwater Village on a nearby local beauty spot. They interviewed residents of the village and those who were opposed to the building. They made good use of ICT to aid clarity in the display of their work, presenting the two sides of the argument for and against the building of this village.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at Year 6 have improved overall, but those in Years 1 and 2 remain below average.
- Data analysis is carried out effectively but is not fully used to set individual targets.
- Pupils achieve well in a positive learning atmosphere.
- Not enough use is made of ICT to support pupils' mathematical learning.
- The subject is well led.

### **Commentary**

56. The standards in national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were lower than those of the previous year and well below the national average. However, at Year 6, pupils showed an improved standard from 2003 and results were close to the national average. From observations in this inspection, standards are judged to be below expected levels at the end of Year 2 and slightly above expected levels by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are very limited when they enter the school. By Year 2 pupils make good progress, and during Years 3 to 6 they achieve well, reaching standards that are well above those of similar schools. Pupils with SEN are achieving well as a result of targeted support from both the class teacher and learning support assistants.

57. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge that gives rise to good questioning of pupils, well organised lessons, good explanations and the use of resources to develop pupils' understanding. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils contribute to good or very good learning in most lessons, together with excellent behaviour and very good attitudes engendered by the underlying ethos of the school. As a rule, the objectives for the lesson are shared with the pupils before they begin, which engages their attention and prepares them for the main part of the lesson. Pupils find the work stimulating and interesting, so they are motivated well and respond by working hard and showing high levels of enjoyment. Pupils work very well together. Occasionally the pace of a lesson is too slow and not enough attention is given to the work rate of the pupils, who lose concentration and make insufficient progress in their learning.

58. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and committed, and monitors standards effectively through the data analysis. Some areas for improvement in provision have been identified through classroom monitoring and lesson planning. As a result, the school has been successful in improving upon the standards reached in the last inspection. However, pupils are not set individual targets to guide their progress. Pupils receive a well balanced range of mathematical experiences. The quality of the presentation of pupils' work is usually good, and marking is consistent, though some staff give helpful comments for improvement and others do not. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used as a teaching resource to engage and motivate the pupils. Nevertheless, not enough use is made of it to support pupils in their independent learning, for example when using graphs and tables or for recording and storing their work.

### **Numeracy across the curriculum**

59. Pupils use their mathematical skills suitably in most other subjects. They measure length accurately when designing and are aware of the need to record accurately in their science experiments. For example, pupils measure the differing length of shadows at various times of day and produce graphs of their pulse rate before, during and after strenuous exercise. In art and design, they use symmetry when forming patterns. Timelines are a feature of pupils' work in history and are displayed in several classrooms.

## SCIENCE

The provision is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 1 and 2 are below average.
- Pupils achieve well because the teaching is consistently good.
- Improvements to the curriculum and assessment are helping to raise standards.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used enough to support pupils' work in science.

### Commentary

60. Inspection evidence found that, although standards in Years 1 and 2 are below average, the pupils achieve well. They make good progress as they move through the school, and by the time they reach Year 6 the majority are attaining average standards. The current trend is encouraging and shows an increasing number of more able pupils attaining the higher standard (Level 5). There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

61. The main reason for the improving standards is the consistently good quality of teaching and the focus on developing investigative science. This is enabling pupils to plan and conduct experiments in a much more structured and controlled way. Key elements of the curriculum, such as prediction and fair testing, are taught well. In a very good lesson in Year 5, pupils made predictions and carried out a fair test to find the size and direction of shadows at different times of the day. Most pupils find science fun; they enjoy the work and are enthusiastic about the practical investigations. The good teaching and reinforcement of scientific vocabulary is another improvement that was very evident during the inspection. The teaching assistants support the pupils well; they work effectively with the teachers and provide a high level of care.

62. Assessment has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. There is much more rigour attached to the tracking of individual pupils' performance. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall, and the best examples help pupils to improve their work. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that ICT is an area for development. Currently, ICT is not used enough to support pupils' learning, for example through research, data logging and the recording of investigations by using tables and graphs.

63. Subject management is good. In the drive to improve standards, the co-ordinator has monitored teaching, planning and pupils' work. The monitoring of teaching has helped her to focus on the key aspects of teaching and learning which need improvement. This clear direction is already starting to have a positive impact on raising standards of attainment. The challenge now is to raise levels of attainment in Years 1 and 2, by focusing on the needs of higher attaining pupils in particular.

64. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below average; pupils are not reaching the expected levels in Year 6.
- Recent staff training in the new technologies is bringing about an improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Assessment procedures need to be put in place so standards can be confirmed.

### **Commentary**

65. Standards throughout the school in ICT are below average. In Year 6, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of different programs are underdeveloped. Resources have improved since the last inspection, so the school is now in a much better position to move forward. There is a networked computer suite, a new server has just been installed, and the school will shortly be connected to broadband.

66. During the inspection, the teaching seen was of a good standard and pupils achieved well. However, teaching has not been effective in raising standards to an acceptable level by Year 6. Currently, pupils are not working at the expected levels; they are learning skills that should have been taught in previous years.

67. Recent training in the new technologies is starting to bring about improvements, for example the use of digital whiteboards for teaching and digital photography to record achievement. Most teachers are also using ICT well for their curriculum and lesson planning; it is also being used effectively to label displays of pupils' work. However, analysis of pupils' work showed limited progress and understanding. Much of pupils' work was not available on the computers because the school does not have a way of saving this work in a structured and ordered way. Pupils often share computers when using the computer suite. Examples were seen of putting higher attaining pupils to work with those of lower ability, and this resulted in the more able pupils making less progress than they should. Not enough thought has been given to using this ICT provision in a more flexible way, to allow the pupils to have better access and therefore more 'hands-on' time on the computers. At present, this expensive resource is used for less than three-quarters of the periods available.

68. The leadership of ICT is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has recently been appointed and is very keen to develop the subject. She is aware that there is much to do. There are, however, weaker areas of management, most notable of which are the need to implement an assessment system to track pupils' progress, and the need to identify areas for improvement and record their achievements. Currently, assessment is in its infancy. A portfolio of work is being developed, but there are no examples of levelled work, and the school is unable to confirm standards.

69. There has not been sufficient improvement since the last inspection, when ICT was also judged to be unsatisfactory.

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

70. The use of ICT in different subjects of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are some good examples of its use in English, mathematics and history, but such uses need much more emphasis.



## HUMANITIES

71. Only one lesson was observed in history and one in geography. It is therefore not possible to make judgements about provision. In **history** the lesson was good. It was an end-of-topic activity and featured two Year 4 classes combining for a 'Roman banquet' as part of lessons to experience elements of Roman lifestyles. It was very well organised and generated high levels of interest and excitement amongst pupils. This exciting practical lesson served to consolidate learning that had gone before. Pupils dressed in togas or tunics according to the status of the Roman they were portraying. They sampled Roman menus, played music in the Romans' style and acted out the parts of gladiators or gymnasts. Responses to questions at the end of the session revealed that pupils have a wide range of knowledge about the Romans, some with very specific detail. For example, pupils can recall facts from a visit earlier in the year by a visitor dressed as a Roman soldier.

72. Pupils make visits to local places of historical interest and to museums. A particular feature recently has centred on research into a former pupil of the school who fought during the Second World War and took part in the Normandy landings. In Year 6, pupils write excellent diaries of their own memories as a child. They investigate the town of Darwen in Victorian times. They compare the present day town with photographs and written reports from the past, make visits, and draw and take photographs of what they find. During a school History Day they investigate what it must have been like to be a pupil in a Victorian school, writing very descriptively about their experiences. They wear Victorian style costumes, use Victorian names for one another and take part in Victorian-type lessons. The subject is well planned across the school and good links are made to other subjects, especially to literacy and art and design.

73. In **geography** the lesson seen in Year 4 was good. It involved pupils in a practical activity to reinforce previous learning about changes in land use. Pupils engaged very well in a role-play. They acted out the parts of participants in an imaginary local dispute between property developers, the local authorities and members of the local community affected by the proposed development. Pupils understood the many complex issues involved and played their parts well. By Year 6, pupils make at least good progress in their understanding of a wide range of topics. For example, they study the geography of Japan and learn about features of the landscape, flora and fauna and find the location of Japan on a world map. The subject is planned well across the school and there are good links with other subjects, especially literacy and art and design.

### Religious education

Provision is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is good.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Pupils show respect and appreciation for the beliefs and values of others.

### Commentary

74. The curriculum is firmly based on the recently revised locally Agreed Syllabus. This ensures that, over their time in school, all pupils are able to experience and think about a wide range of issues, primarily from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.

75. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Achievement is good throughout the school. Lesson planning clearly indicates what pupils are expected to learn and do. Much of the work of the lessons in Years 1 and 2 revolves around discussion and activities that support pupils' speaking, listening and thinking skills. While discussion also plays an important part in lessons for Years 3 to 6, the pupils record

more of what they have been taught, so that by Year 6 they are able to make a full written record. A very good example of this was seen in a classroom display of pupils' descriptions of the exodus from Egypt at the time of Moses and what it felt like to be on that journey. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils so that they are fully aware of what they will be doing. They prepare lessons well, and relationships with pupils are excellent. In one lesson, younger pupils discussed the various rules that are connected with the Jewish Shabbat and then took part in a role-play, which showed they had understood what they had learnt. In a class of older pupils, the Lord's Prayer was discussed. An internet website was used to give pupils a time of reflection on each line, and finally they were asked to rewrite the prayer in their own words. Pupils' work shows they are interested in the subject; they present their work well and develop a respect for their own and other peoples' beliefs.

76. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject, which has developed satisfactorily since the last inspection. Statutory requirements are met and world faiths are covered, so that pupils have an awareness of multicultural life in Britain. Resources are good. However, assessment and the monitoring of pupils' progress are underdeveloped.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **Art and design**

Provision is **very good**.

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

- Standards are good across the school.
- Teaching is very good and supports very good achievement by pupils.
- Pupils' work is displayed well and valued by staff.
- Art is used across many subjects to illustrate and enliven them.

### **Commentary**

77. Only two lessons were observed. However, evidence was gathered from scrutiny of pupils' work in their sketch and workbooks and on display in classrooms and around the school, and also from discussion with the subject co-ordinator. From this it is evident that standards are at least good across the school, because teaching is very good and the subject is given high prominence in the school. Teaching is successful because it encourages pupils to experiment and to be bold in their approach to the subject. Pupils are enabled to work successfully with a wide range of materials, colours and applications, to draw, paint, and make collages from fabrics, and to use clay to make three-dimensional sculptures. They grow in confidence in the use of a range of media, and in their understanding of form, shape and colour. In a good lesson in Year 3, pupils designed and made a stencil by folding and cutting patterns in paper. The teacher establishes a good link with other subjects, such as mathematics for the use of symmetry, and literacy for key vocabulary. Pupils experiment with different types of folding to produce different stencil effects. In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils used pastels to draw landscapes and experimented with using perspective in their sketches. In each lesson, pupils' work shows an enthusiastic and imaginative approach with evident enjoyment and willingness to work hard. This contributes to their very good progress and achievement.

78. Staff display pupils' work very attractively to a good standard and accord it great value. A great amount of pupils' work is displayed and this makes an attractive feature of the school for visitors, parents and pupils. The work is of a high standard. Pupils gain in esteem and self-confidence from having their work given this high status. Much of the work is as the result of recent school projects. For example, there are very colourful African masks created by pupils of all ages, using beadwork, designs and patterns and a variety of media, such as crayon, tissue paper and colour washes. During an after-school club run by a school governor, pupils make pictures of owls,

using different materials to create the 'feathers'. Pupils in Year 1 make good observational drawings in pencil and copy the style of Aboriginal art, using rubbings, leaf prints, and block prints. Pupils in Year 5 produce excellent three-dimensional sculptures in clay of mythical monsters, some of which have been put on display to the public in the local museum. Pupils in Year 6 produce very good landscape watercolour paintings in the style of L S Lowry.

79. Very good use is made of art by teachers across many subjects to illustrate pupils' work and to make the subject 'come alive'. In history, pupils create excellent portraits of Tudor kings and queens, using a collage technique with textiles and fabrics. Very good friezes and models illustrate work on the Ancient Egyptians. In geography, pupils make good representational paintings in the Japanese style when studying the country.

80. The subject is very well led. The co-ordinator has attended many courses and gives good encouragement to other teachers. Resources are good. There is some monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, and a system for assessment, which includes self-assessment by pupils, has recently been introduced. Very good use is made of arts weeks and special events to promote art. The school recognises that more could be done to use ICT in art, for instance the use of digital art forms. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection.

## **Physical education**

Provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good and often excellent in gymnastics and sport.
- Pupils' achievement is very good and often exceptional.
- A wide range of sporting activities is provided during lesson time and this is further extended by an exceptional number of out-of-school clubs and activities.
- Outdoor facilities for sport are very good.

## **Commentary**

81. Teaching is very well organised and planned. There is a very high level of expertise, particularly in the teaching of dance, gymnastics and sport. Teaching is at least good in other areas of the subject. The school has a long tradition of success in sporting achievements and there is now excellence in this area. Teachers are extremely enthusiastic in their approach. They make the most of the many exciting opportunities for pupils to be involved in competitive sport as well as increasing all pupils' skills across each of the required areas of the curriculum. Equal opportunities are provided for girls and boys to take part in all the sports and activities on offer. As a result, pupils of all levels of ability make very good progress and achievement. Many have exceptional achievement in certain sports, such as gymnastics and Kwik Cricket. An example of this was noted during the inspection when the school team (made up of pupils from Years 3 and 4) won the Lancashire Youth Games mixed team title in gymnastics for the second consecutive year. The school's Kwik Cricket team won a local hardball competition against other schools. The school's trophy cabinet has a wonderful display of medals and silverware won by the school and is a testament to its sporting excellence. The school won the national Activemark Gold Award for its involvement in physical education and sport in 2003. More recent achievements have included boys' football in 2004/5, where teams for 6-a-side and 5-a-side have been very successful in a local league, and the school is Lancashire Champion at 7-a-side. In netball, girls have won the local schools' league and cup competitions. Former pupils of the school have gone on to achieve well at local, national and even international levels.

82. Swimming is another area in which pupils have good success. All pupils have opportunities to swim during their time in school, with additional time available through an after-school swimming club. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 took part in the annual swimming gala, which was organised in exemplary fashion by staff. Pupils showed very good standards in the traditional

swimming races and in fun events. School records show that all pupils make very good progress in their swimming, and the majority of pupils can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave school.

83. Pupils are very proud of the school's prowess in physical education and sport. They are extremely enthusiastic participants during lessons and in the many before-school and after-school sports clubs. For example, in an indoor athletics lesson in Year 3, the excellent teaching set very high expectations of behaviour and participation. Pupils were encouraged and challenged to do their best, and this meant that they were very responsive, worked hard and cooperated with the teacher and with one another very well. As a result, progress and achievement by pupils was very good. Similarly, teaching in a Year 6 lesson was very good because of the high level of organisation and preparation by the teacher, and the high expectations of behaviour and response. Pupils carried out very effectively a simple introductory exercise in orienteering, and they made good progress in linking the physical education skills and the geographical skills needed to find their way around a course in the school playground. Pupils were very well motivated, enjoyed the activities, and at the end of both these lessons were able to make critical comments about their performance and that of other pupils.

84. The subject is very well led. Resources are good, although some of the indoor equipment in the school hall is dated and in need of refurbishment. There has been excellent improvement in the outdoor facilities for sport since the previous inspection, with the provision of an all-weather astro-turf court for ball games and a hard surface area for netball and basketball courts. The school has built up excellent sporting links with other schools and within the local community. There is a selection of after-school clubs, some of which are run by commercial organisations who charge pupils for participating, but many are run by school staff and provided free of charge. Pupils also have the opportunity for residential visits, which enable them to take part in the more adventurous activities and outdoor pursuits. The school has a valuable reciprocal agreement with the nearby leisure centre for the use of the astro-turf by their members in the evenings, and for the use of the centre's swimming and other facilities by pupils, both in lessons and in after-school clubs.

85. No lessons were seen in **design and technology** and it was not a focus for the inspection. There was evidence of pupils' work of good quality on display, for example the slippers made in Year 6. In making the slippers, the pupils had followed their design briefs and evaluated their work well. Subsequent discussions with the co-ordinator confirmed that the design aspect of the work has been a focus for development this year. The school is aware that other areas for improvement are the use of ICT and assessment.

86. **Music** was not a focus for the inspection. It is not possible to make judgements about standards, provision and teaching in music because only a few lessons were seen. However, other evidence from the inspection indicates that this subject forms an important and integral part of the school, providing pupils with a wide range of experiences both in and outside school. During a hymn practice for all pupils in Years 3 to 6, the standard of singing was high. Pupils with SEN participated fully and got enjoyment and satisfaction from the practical activities. Singing was also a very good feature of the end-of-year show put on by pupils in Years 5 and 6 for other classes and for parents. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who ensures that all pupils receive their full entitlement in music.

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

87. Only one lesson was seen in PSHE. It is therefore not possible to make judgements about standards, provision and teaching. However, the lesson seen was good. Discussions with the subject co-ordinator and analysis of pupils' work show that there is an underlying emphasis on personal and social development through the normal day-to-day interactions, stories, assemblies and class discussions, but it does not feature as a subject for all classes each week. Topics such as sex education and drug awareness are taught as appropriate, and a range of visits and visitors develops pupils' understanding of citizenship. The School Council is a particularly active body and demonstrates clearly the strength of this aspect of school. Two further examples of where the

school quietly develops pupils' self-confidence and esteem are play leaders, that is pupils from Year 5 who support the younger pupils at playtime, and 'Greeters', pupils who guide visitors around the school. Involvement in the Healthy Schools scheme is also reflected well in the life of the school. However, an assessment system which enables pupils' development in these areas to be recorded and progress to be monitored has yet to be developed. All adults are very good role models for the children and manage them well. There are good opportunities for pupils to meet the teachers and to visit the secondary school to which they will transfer. Overall, pupils are well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education.

## 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	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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