

INSPECTION REPORT

HOWICK CHURCH ENDOWED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Penwortham, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119364

Headteacher: Miss Maggie Beck

Lead inspector: Ian Nelson

Dates of inspection: July 4th – 5th 2005

Inspection number: 267081

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

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: 106

School address: Liverpool Road
Penwortham
Preston
Lancashire
Postcode: PR1 0NB

Telephone number: 01772 612487
Fax number: 01772 614891

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr David Thornton

Date of previous inspection: March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small, Church of England, voluntary-controlled primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years. There are 62 boys and 44 girls on roll, most of whom have benefited from some form of pre-school provision. The school attracts pupils from a wide area, including rural and urban districts. Pupils come from a range of privately owned and rented housing and there is a wide social mix in school. Most of the pupils are of white British heritage; a small number come from other ethnic backgrounds, including Bangladeshi, Indian and Chinese. Only one pupil has a home language other than English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Twenty-one pupils have special educational needs, mainly learning and behavioural needs. Although the number with special educational needs is about average, the school has a much higher proportion of pupils with a statement of their special need than most schools. Many pupils start at the school other than at the beginning of a school year, and many of these have special educational needs. The skills and understanding children have on entering the Reception class vary from year to year and cover a wide range but are generally above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2220	Ian Nelson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
11041	Marvyn Moore	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
25623	Ted Cox	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Religious education Music Physical education Special educational needs
19765	Pauleen Shannon	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics The Foundation Stage History Geography

The inspection contractor was:

VT Education Consultants Ltd
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	3
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	6
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	10
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	12
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with some very good features. The headteacher leads the school very well and has established a very good team spirit among all staff and governors. Teaching and learning are good overall and pupils make good progress. Standards are mainly average by Year 6 as the school attracts a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) from other schools. They achieve well but do not always reach the levels expected of their ages. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's very caring Christian ethos ensures that every child matters and that all pupils are fully included in the whole life of the school, whatever their ability, disability, gender or ethnic heritage.
- Teaching is good, so that pupils learn well and make good progress.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very well, so that they thoroughly enjoy their lessons, work very hard and behave very well.
- Children in the Reception class get a good start to their life in school.
- The school works well with neighbouring schools.
- Leadership and management are good and the school has a clear idea of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve.
- Pupils' writing is not good enough.
- There is not enough work in some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT).

Overall improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has addressed the key improvement points from the previous report, although there is still some work to do in raising standards in some aspects of ICT and in providing opportunities for pupils to write in all subjects. These issues are priorities in the school's development plan. Resources have improved where they were lacking. The governing body is now fully involved in school development planning.

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*	D	E*
mathematics	C	A	C	E
science	B	A	B	D

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

The information in this table needs to be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils in each year group.

Achievement is good for most pupils, including those with special educational needs, those whose mother tongue is not English, and those in the Foundation Stage. Standards at Year 6 are broadly average in mathematics and English, except for writing, where they are not good enough. They are above average in science, and in religious education they exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in ICT are broadly average in the aspects taught but are not high enough in control technology. Standards at Year 2 are average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics and science. Children in the Foundation Stage exceed the goals expected of their age. In the national tests at age seven and eleven, standards fluctuate from year to year, which is not uncommon in such a small school. The results do not reflect the pupils' good achievement, because a high proportion of pupils join the school during the year and many

have significant special needs, including statements, and some do not reach the standards expected of their ages. Consequently, the school's results compared with those of similar schools in 2004 were well below average in English (in the bottom five per cent of schools) and mathematics, and below average in science. The results of the 2005 national tests show improved standards in all three subjects at age seven. At age eleven the results show an improvement in English and science but a slight drop in mathematics, where several pupils narrowly missed gaining the higher Level 5, though work in their class books was at this level and more pupils gained a Level 4.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Consequently, behaviour, attitudes to learning and personal relationships are very good. A very small number of pupils have special emotional and behavioural needs, which the school manages well. However, two pupils were excluded in the last school year for severe misbehaviour, following extensive support in school in line with the school's behaviour policy. There have been no exclusions in the current year. Attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Procedures for checking how well pupils are doing are satisfactory. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The activities that the school provides to help pupils to learn are good overall, although there is not enough attention to some aspects of ICT. Children are provided with a good range of appropriate activities and experiences in the Foundation Stage. Care of the pupils by the school is excellent. The school has excellent procedures for seeking and acting upon their views and pupils feel very well looked after. Links with parents, the wider community and other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school very well. She has quickly evaluated the school's strengths and priorities for development and is very well supported by the governors and staff. Her view of how well the school is doing is accurate, and the school is well placed to improve. The work of the governors is good and they ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils think the school is very good. A small number of parents feel that they do not have enough information on their child's progress but the inspection found no evidence to support these views. Staff go out of their way to keep parents informed on how well their children are doing and to deal with any worries parents may have. The school welcomes the views of parents. Pupils are very pleased with the way the school seeks their views. In their questionnaire responses, some pupils expressed some concerns about behaviour but the inspection found no evidence to support these worries.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in writing across the school.
- Ensure that pupils have work in all aspects of ICT.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good overall. Standards by Year 6 are broadly average in mathematics and English, except for writing, where they are not good enough, and they are above average in science. In religious education they exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN), achieve well overall and make good progress in their learning, except in writing and some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT), where achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Standards in Year 2 rose in the 2005 teacher assessments.
- Standards in Year 6 rose slightly in English and science but dipped slightly in mathematics in the 2005 tests.
- Good provision for children in the Reception class ensures that they achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge beyond those expected of their ages. None of the children in Reception had SEN at the time of the inspection. Most children have benefited from attending a nursery or playgroup before starting school. They get a good start to their life in school and quickly settle into school routines. They achieve well in the Reception class because they are given tasks and activities suited to their ages and abilities in line with the requirements for Foundation Stage children. Early users of English are well supported and achieve well. Consequently, by the time they leave Reception most have exceeded the learning goals set for children of this age and they are well prepared for working to the National Curriculum in Year 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.3 (15.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.7 (14.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.5 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 15 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	25.7 (30.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.4 (28.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.6 (30.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well overall. However, this good achievement is not always reflected in the results of the national tests at ages seven and eleven because the school attracts a high proportion of pupils from other schools. At the time of the inspection around a quarter of the pupils had transferred to Howick part way through their school careers, and many of these had SEN. Nearly half of the pupils with SEN, and virtually all those with a statement of their special need, had transferred to Howick from other schools. This influx means that, while all pupils achieve well, and the most able gain the higher levels in the tests at age seven and eleven, some of those with SEN do not reach the expected standards and so overall results are affected. The good work the school does with pupils with special educational needs makes it popular with parents of such pupils. The school manages to provide very well for them while also helping more able pupils to

succeed. Individual education plans (IEPs) are well written, with clear and achievable targets. Pupils with SEN are well supported by teaching assistants. Consequently, these pupils make the same good progress shown by other pupils. Some do particularly well; for example, a pupil with specific learning difficulties, who was reluctant to write when joining the school part of the way through Key Stage 2, achieved the expected level in English in the 2005 national tests. The previous report judged standards to be average in English, mathematics and science at Year 6, so standards have been maintained in English and mathematics. They have improved in science, despite a rise in the numbers of pupils with a statement of special educational need.

3. Standards in the national tests fluctuate over the years, which is not uncommon in such a small school. In the tests for seven-year-olds, standards in reading have ranged from above to below average in recent years, and were below average in 2004. In writing they have been mainly average except for 2004, when they were below average. In mathematics standards were below average in 2004 and 2003 but were average in 2002. Standards compared with those of schools with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals were well below average in 2004, but this measure does not take account of the high proportion of pupils with SEN who join the school. The results of the tests in 2005 show an improvement in standards. Half of the pupils gained the higher Level 3 in reading, with a quarter reaching it in mathematics. However, only one-sixth gained this level in writing. The work seen during the inspection shows standards to be average in reading, above average in mathematics and science, and below average in writing. Where work was seen in other subjects it was broadly average.

4. Standards in the national tests for eleven-year-olds have ranged from well above average in 2003 to below average in 2004 in English, where writing remains a weakness. In mathematics, standards ranged from well above average in 2003 to average in 2004. Standards in science were well above average in 2003 and above average in 2004. Standards compared with those of schools where this year group scored around the same in their Year 2 tests were well below average in English and mathematics, and below average in science. In the 2005 tests, standards rose in English and science but dipped slightly in mathematics. In English only five per cent of pupils did not reach at least the expected Level 4, while 16 per cent gained the higher Level 5. In science 53 per cent of pupils gained the higher Level 5, with the rest gaining the expected Level 4. In mathematics 26 per cent of pupils did not reach the expected level, while 21 per cent gained the higher Level 5, with several pupils narrowly missing this level. Pupils' work seen during the inspection shows standards in English to be broadly average; pupils have good standards in reading and in speaking and listening, but their writing is not good enough, though the work they produce in their class books is better than that in their tests. In mathematics pupils were working at a higher level in class than their test results which suggests that they did not perform up to their ability in the test. In all other subjects where work was seen, standards are broadly average except in science, where they were above average, and in religious education, where they exceeded the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are **very good**. Pupils display a great willingness to be enterprising and take responsibility. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes to their work.
- Attendance is good.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Commentary

5. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' spiritual development is encouraged through the school ethos and regular themed assemblies, some of which are taken by the local vicar and curate together with the church warden, who is also chairman of the governing body. Regular visits to places of worship are arranged, including local churches and a Hindu temple. Visitors to the school have also included Salvation Army officers and a Buddhist monk. Pupils pray twice daily, at lunchtime and at the end of the day, and are encouraged to reflect on their actions. They also have time to reflect on the work of great artists as part of their art lessons and on literature in English lessons. Work in religious education, such as the study of St Francis, also gives opportunities for quiet reflection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development derives from, and contributes to, the school's excellent Christian ethos.

6. The school helps pupils to develop strong moral values. Consequently, behaviour at school is very good. The behaviour policy encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. If they misbehave they are encouraged to complete 'think sheets', listing how they could improve their behaviour. The school has high expectations of pupils' conduct and works very well to achieve them. Pupils are taught moral values through the citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and are encouraged to raise money for various charities. Pupils are very interested in school life and in the range of activities provided. They enjoy being members of the School Council and the ECO¹ Council and helping other children at break or at lunch time. All children enjoy the responsibilities given to them by the school, for example in helping with equipment, returning registers and raising monies for various charities. Pupils have respect for their own property, the school's property and the property of others. For example, pupils leave their cycles and scooters safely at school during the day. Bullying at the school is rare but is immediately dealt with by staff when it occurs. Pupils told inspectors that they felt safe and secure in school and that the behaviour policy was well applied by staff and understood by the pupils.

7. Pupils' social development is encouraged very well. Pupils are encouraged to invite parents and grandparents into school for social occasions and bake cakes for them. The school has arranged residential visits to Kingswood Centre, and trips to pantomimes and other places of interest to enhance pupils' social development. At lunchtime, older pupils develop their social skills by eating with and helping younger pupils. Lunchtime is thus used successfully to give older pupils a sense of responsibility. Pupils informally interview prospective candidates for school posts. A very successful breakfast and after-school club is hosted by the school, and all pupils are invited. Year 6 pupils have started a library club for Reception children and also a chess club for older pupils. The governing body is invited on a regular basis to meet the school council and discuss issues of importance to pupils. Relationships at school are excellent. Pupils relate very well to staff and to each other. They are confident and have a strong sense of self-worth. Their confidence and self-esteem are excellent. Pupils were very keen to meet inspectors and talked of their school work and achievements with pride.

8. The school encourages pupils' cultural development very well. Pictures on display include pictures by pupils in the styles of Picasso, Matisse and Warhol. There are also paintings inspired by African art. Religious education lessons inform pupils of a range of religions and the impact of religious belief on peoples' lives. Work in geography has given pupils an insight into life in an Indian village. In English they are introduced to good literature, including poetry. Visitors to school include a Christian Aid teacher. Greek and Italian dancing are taught by the dance students from a local college. African musicians come into school to give performances, and in Reception a role play area has been developed as a Chinese restaurant.

¹ This is a pupils' council concerned with environmental matters.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

9. Attendance, at 95.3 per cent, is above the national average and is good. The school has very good procedures to promote attendance and monitors it on a first-day-of-absence basis. Parents generally co-operate well with the school to ensure that their children attend regularly.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Asian
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
101	4	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0

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

10. There have been four exclusions of two boys during the previous year. In both cases, the exclusion came as a last resort after the school had worked through its range of other sanctions. Exclusion is only used as a last resort for the most severe misdemeanours and there have been none in the current school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Procedures for checking how well pupils are doing are satisfactory. The activities the school provides to help pupils to learn are good overall, although not enough attention is paid to some aspects of ICT. Children are provided with a wide range of activities and experiences in the Foundation Stage. The school cares for the pupils very well. It has excellent procedures for seeking and acting upon their views, and pupils feel very well looked after in school. Links with parents, the wider community and other schools are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall in Years 1 to 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved from the satisfactory levels of the previous inspection to a standard where it is currently good. Procedures for checking how well pupils are doing are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers give pupils practical tasks that they enjoy.
- Teaching assistants work very well with pupils to help them to achieve well.
- Staff expect pupils to work hard and behave well.
- Tasks in English and mathematics are well matched to the different ability levels within a class but this is not always the case in other subjects.
- Teachers set clear targets for individual pupils and check their progress towards them.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	8	10	0	0	0	0

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

11. Teaching and learning are good in the Reception class. The strong focus on personal, social and emotional development ensures that children settle quickly into school routines. The good use of procedures to check what children know and can do helps the teacher to plan activities to take learning forward at a good pace so that children make good progress. There is a good balance between activities chosen by the child and those directed by the teacher so that children get used to making decisions as well as to fitting in with class routines. The teaching assistant and class teacher work very well as a team so that all children are well supported throughout the day. Staff encourage children to develop their speaking and listening skills, for example by discussing what they saw on a video. They learn to sort animals into groups of those that can fly and those that swim. They develop their reading and writing through a range of appropriate activities and grow in confidence.

12. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good overall. Teachers and teaching assistants form very good teams to ensure that pupils, including those with SEN, are well supported and make good progress in their learning. The teaching assistants are skilled practitioners and teachers use their skills well. They are well briefed, confident and resourceful, so pupils enjoy working with them. In some lessons, teaching assistants take groups to use the computers so that they develop their skills in ICT through other subjects. At other times, the teaching assistants work closely with pupils with SEN so that they understand the task the teacher sets and are supported throughout it. Particular care is taken by teachers to ensure that the materials provided match the needs of individual pupils. This ensures that pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well. The contribution of support staff enhances good teaching.

13. Teachers set practical tasks for pupils, which they enjoy. Consequently, they are very enthusiastic and work very hard. Hardly any time is lost in maintaining discipline, because pupils are so interested and involved that behaviour is very good. Staff and pupils get on very well with each other and show high levels of mutual respect and trust in line with the overall school aims and ethos. Pupils with disabilities and those with emotional and behavioural difficulties are well supported so that they can be fully included in all the school's activities.

14. The school has good systems for checking how well pupils are doing. Teachers make good use of these systems to plan work in English and mathematics at different levels for different abilities, and to set targets for pupils to aim for. In other subjects, systems for checking how well pupils are doing and recording their progress are good but there is less evidence of this information being used systematically to plan work at different levels.

The curriculum

The quality and range of the curriculum are **good**. A broad range of activities helps to enrich the curriculum. The school ensures that all pupils have very good access to what it offers. Pupils have very good opportunities to take part in sports and the arts.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements.
- Provision for PSHE is good.
- Preparation for later stages of education is very good.

Commentary

15. The school reviews its curriculum and makes improvements regularly. The introduction of more computers and the establishment of a computer suite, for example, have improved the use of ICT, since the previous inspection. Curriculum developments take place after thorough discussions between staff and consultations with subject experts.

16. The school ensures that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Provision for pupils with SEN is good and activities are planned to meet the needs identified in their IEPs. Arrangements are made to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are provided with the necessary equipment and materials to enable them to take part in lessons. A survey of the site has highlighted the need to improve wheelchair access, and a programme for this work has been put in place. A pupil who is gifted at mathematics is given challenging problems to solve.

17. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. Relevant policies for health and drugs education are in place. The school is investigating social and emotional aspects of learning and has information available for parents to help them to work with their children. The school nurse makes regular visits and leads sex education lessons. The school is working towards the Healthy Schools Award. There are good contacts with the fire brigade and the police. Parents and staff run cycle training for Year 6 pupils each year. These arrangements ensure that pupils grow in their awareness of how to stay safe, be healthy and contribute to the school community.

18. Preparation for later stages of education is very good. Staff regularly exchange information, and Year 1 staff work in the Reception class during the summer term to prepare children for working in a mixed-age class. Similar arrangements are made for pupils transferring to other classes in the school. Links with the local secondary school are strong. Teachers from the secondary school visit Howick, and parents and pupils spend time at their new school. The school has arranged additional visits by a pupil with special educational needs to his new secondary school.

19. Pupils are offered many opportunities to extend their learning and develop wider interests in out-of-school activities. They take part in clubs for Tai-Kwondo, football, High Five netball and Kwik-Cricket. Pupils receive coaching from a local sports development team and from Judo Education. In the arts, pupils take part in concerts and musical evenings. Membership of a small schools' music partnership enables the school to offer pupils opportunities to play guitars, violins, flutes, clarinets and saxophones. Pupils learn from watching visiting theatre groups and musicians. They care for the environment through membership of the Green Partnership Award and the establishment of an ECO Council.

20. The school has sufficient teaching and support staff, and resources for learning are satisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and the school is planning enhancements to improve accessibility.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **excellent**. The school is excellent at seeking, valuing and acting on the views of pupils. Arrangements to help new pupils to settle in to school are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for child protection are excellent.
- The school has very good procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils have good access to well informed support, advice and guidance.

Commentary

21. The school provides an excellent standard of care for its pupils. Child protection procedures are firmly in place. The headteacher, who is the child protection officer, is well aware of her role. She has ensured that all staff and the governing body have attended recent child protection training

to reflect the 'every child matters' legislation. The child protection policy is comprehensive, and liaison with the statutory authorities is excellent. Accidents and treatments given are correctly recorded.

22. The school deals with health and safety matters very effectively. The health and safety policy is detailed and comprehensive and regular audits of health and safety procedures take place. The school holds termly fire drills and the fire alarm and other safety equipment are checked on a regular basis.

23. The school has excellent arrangements to involve pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. Pupils are proud to be elected members of the school council and give their opinions and views to their teachers, which are listened to with interest and respect. The school council has been responsible for persuading the school to redecorate the children's toilets in their chosen colours, and to provide playground benches. In addition, the school has successfully promoted an ECO council where pupil members discuss environmental issues.

24. Pupils interviewed during the inspection week confirm that they are very well supported by staff and feel very well cared for. The small size of the school and its family ethos ensure that all pupils are well known to staff, who offer a good standard of advice and care.

25. The school has a comprehensive induction scheme to help new pupils to settle quickly and confidently into school routines. Three sessions are arranged for parents of new Reception children. They start school initially for half days, building up to a full day at school when they have gained confidence. Parents are allowed to stay with their children if they wish during the first few days at school. Pupils at Nursery school are visited prior to their admission, and the school makes strenuous efforts to obtain full records for all new pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents. Links with the community are very good. The school involves parents well through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good information to parents about pupils' standards and progress.
- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and to deal with any complaints or concerns are very good.
- The school has very good mechanisms for the transfer of pupils to secondary school.

Commentary

26. The school has very good links with parents and provides very good information about their children's standards and progress. Two parent evenings are arranged each year to discuss their children's progress. The school brochure is very well presented in a parent-friendly fashion and contains good useful information on the curriculum and organisation, Foundation Stage, and full details of all subjects to be studied. The annual governors' report to parents is clear and focused. Annual reports are of high quality and give a detailed explanation of what pupils have studied, standards achieved and targets for improvement. The school holds regular achievement assemblies to which all parents are invited. Staff contact parents by telephone or letter to congratulate pupils for good work or conduct, or if there is cause for concern. Parents receive regular newsletters containing information about current events, and a termly newsletter informing them of topics to be taught and homework arrangements.

27. A small number of parents come in to school to help, and their assistance with the school's reading and spelling schemes is much appreciated. The Friends Association, of which all parents are members, is very active and raises considerable sums of money for school use by a series of social events throughout the year. The school much appreciates their input.

28. Because of the location of the school on the edge of town and on a very busy main road, it is not always easy to forge links with the wider community. However, the school has strong links with St Mary's Church, and pupils go to church every term for Sunday family worship. Regular visitors to school include the vicar, curate and church warden. Pupils have raised money for a number of local and national charities.

29. Links with other schools are very good. The school is an active member of a local training consortium of 17 schools, and regular meetings are held with the headteachers in the consortium to discuss matters of professional interest. The school has jointly appointed a technician for ICT with other local schools, and is a member of two learning networks. One is exploring mathematics and the other behaviour management. The school takes students from nearby initial teacher training institutions and provides work experience places for pupils from a local further education college.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school very well. She has quickly evaluated the school's strengths and priorities for development and is very well supported by the governors and staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are fully committed to school improvement and have good procedures in place to ensure that they work efficiently and effectively.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has created a very good team spirit among all staff and governors.
- School development planning is very good.
- All staff and governors are fully committed to including all pupils, whatever their ability, disability, gender or ethnic heritage in all aspects of school life, in line with the school's stated aims.

Commentary

30. The work of the governors is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Governors are highly committed to and very proud of their school. They have established clear committee structures to ensure that their work is efficient and effective, and they make sure the school fulfils its statutory requirements. They have a clear idea of the school's strengths and areas for development and work closely with the head and staff on school development planning. They have a sound understanding of the complex statistical information on national test results and realise that such information needs to be treated with caution in small schools. Governors have good systems to ensure that they get the best they can from the funds at their disposal and ensure that the school provides very good value for money. They had accrued a surplus to spend on improvements to make the entrance to the school grounds safer, but road improvements planned by the highways authority have overtaken their plans. The funds have now been allocated to other building works to improve accessibility.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	329,455.00	Balance from previous year	33,603.00
Total expenditure	319,739.00	Balance carried forward to the next	43,319.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,880.53		

31. Leadership is good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. In the relatively short time that she has been in post she has evaluated the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. She has established a very strong team spirit among all staff and governors, so that the whole school community works well together for the good of the pupils. This has led to the very good ethos of the school, where every child matters and all are fully included in the whole life of the school. The leadership of other key staff is good overall. The acting deputy works well to support the headteacher and other staff, and subject leaders have a clear view of how to improve their subjects. The headteacher has innovative ideas for developing the subject leadership roles to make them even more effective.

32. Management is good overall. The head, staff and governors work well together to produce a very good school development plan based on an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing. The plan highlights the key priorities for improvement and how these will be tackled. Subject leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects to help them to plan improvements. This has led to the school identifying the quality of pupils' writing and the lack of control technology as its main priorities for improvement. The management of provision for pupils with SEN is good and ensures that all such pupils receive good support and make good progress. The school has put in place good systems to identify pupils whose learning is giving cause for concern. Individual education plans (IEPs) are reviewed regularly and parents and pupils are involved in drawing up the plans. Good arrangements are in place to provide extra help from teaching assistants for pupils with SEN. The school makes good use of support services to gain advice in areas such as visual impairment. The school's success with pupils with SEN has increased its popularity with families of such children, increasing the numbers with SEN transferring to the school, including a high proportion with a statement of special educational need. Procedures for helping new staff to settle into school, including newly qualified teachers, are very good. New staff feel very well supported by their mentor and by the head and quickly become an integral part of the staff team. The performance management of teachers ensures that they are aware of their strengths and areas for improvement. Clerical, cleaning and lunchtime staff all make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school and to its overall ethos, where every child is regarded as precious and taught to recognise his or her worth as an individual.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

33. Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Staff cherish all children. Teaching is good and, as a result, children achieve well. They settle in quickly and work from an interesting curriculum.

34. Children enter Reception with a range of abilities, with many having skills above those expected of their age. Teaching is at least good and at times very good. As a result, most children achieve well and exceed their Early Learning Goals². Assessment information is used well to plan activities that are closely matched to children's learning. There is good support for the children who are early users of English. There were no children in Reception with SEN at the time of the inspection. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator is highly knowledgeable and has led the school well in developing an imaginative curriculum that successfully links each area of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good because teaching and learning are focused on promoting children's confidence, independence and social skills.
- Support staff make a very good contribution to children's learning.
- Staff forge excellent relationships with the children.

Commentary

35. Children enter Reception with a range of skills in this area, most having skills above those expected for their age. Teaching is very good. Consequently children make very good progress and achieve very well in developing their social skills. By the end of their time in Reception, most have skills that are well above those expected of this age. Admission arrangements are excellent, as are relationships between staff, children and parents. The staff are very caring and use every opportunity to praise children's independence and encourage those who are less confident. The class teacher is very well supported by enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching assistants. Secure routines are established so that all children feel safe. This helps them settle very easily. The classroom is organised in a way that helps to develop children's independence. For example, children register themselves each morning under the supervision of the teacher. They are encouraged to use labels to decide which areas to work or play in and are expected to take responsibility for the equipment they use. Arrangements for children to move from Reception into Year 1 are very good. The staff have high expectations of behaviour. Children respond very well to this and, as a result, their behaviour and attitudes are very good. Children enjoy school and show real interest in what they are doing. They are eager to start the day and learn.

² The Early Learning Goals are the standards children are expected to reach before they enter Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are taught well and achieve well because staff provide many language experiences.
- Reading is very well taught.
- Children whose first language is not English are well catered for and are fully included in all activities.

Commentary

36. Children enter Reception with a range of abilities, most with ability above what is expected for their age. Teaching is good, with reading very well taught. By the end of Reception most children communicate fluently and confidently. Reception staff provide many opportunities for them to express themselves in very small groups and in imaginative play areas. Children whose first language is not English are helped to develop their confidence in speaking and are encouraged to share their ideas.

37. The teacher lays the foundations for establishing very positive attitudes to reading, through sharing attractive big books, familiar rhymes and traditional stories. Children enjoy reading and often go to the very attractive reading area during choice times. Children's reading and writing skills are extended through regular letter and word games. The planned use of interesting stories such as 'Dear Zoo', 'Handa's Surprise' and 'The Hungry Caterpillar' ensures that skills are taught in a lively and enjoyable way. Parents make a good contribution at home by hearing children read and helping children learn new words and sounds. Good opportunities are provided to write for a range of purposes that children find interesting. Most children exceed the standard expected of their age.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing skills through a practical, interesting curriculum.

Commentary

38. Children enter Reception with a variety of mathematical skills, with most being above those expected of this age. Teaching is good and at times very good. Children achieve well because there is a focus on first-hand practical activities using attractive resources. For example, in a very well taught lesson the teacher prepared a range of interesting games that fully engaged the children's interest. The contribution by the teaching assistant and a regular volunteer really motivated the children to learn. A range of mathematical equipment is in constant use so that children practise their skills and talk about their learning. By the time they leave Reception most children can record their work, use mathematical language confidently, and exceed the expected standards.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, with the result that children achieve well.
- Staff provide practical activities that capture children's imagination and develop their skills.

Commentary

39. There is a good range of activities for children to develop their senses and widen their understanding and curiosity about the world. Good use is made of social and snack times to help children learn about being healthy. Children develop their knowledge well through a range of interesting topics such as 'journeys', 'toys', 'food' and 'animals'. They have many opportunities to learn about living things, for example going on a 'mini-beast' hunt or watching snails move. Staff successfully build up children's pleasure and confidence in using computers by providing daily opportunities to develop their skills. The children's understanding of different cultures is widened through books, topics and resources. Children also learn about special times of the year such as Harvest, the Chinese New Year and Christmas. Children achieve well and many exceed the expected standards.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

40. No judgements about teaching and learning, standards and achievement are made in this area of learning, owing to lack of evidence. Planning shows that children have regular opportunities for physical development. They use the hall to help them develop their physical skills and learn to respond to music. The school has improved the outside play area. Good use is made of a sheltered area and the playground, so that children can use tricycles and small equipment such as balls. However, there is no large fixed climbing equipment for children to practise their skills informally. Children develop their manipulative skills by handling dough, scissors and small toys.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative areas are used well to extend creativity and language skills.
- Children's pleasure in artistic activities is promoted very well.

Commentary

41. Children enter Reception with a range of skills, with most having had opportunities to play imaginatively at nursery or playgroup. Teaching is good, and by the end of the Reception year children achieve well and many exceed expectations in developing their artistic and musical skills. They have regular access to a good range of materials, with many planned opportunities to paint, draw and make models, for example painting in the style of Monet, making collages in the style of Matisse and printing Indian and African patterns. The classroom has an attractive imaginative play area, which is linked to each topic and changed regularly. Because care is taken to provide experiences that appeal to both boys and girls, they play well together. Very good use is made of a music specialist. There are regular planned opportunities for children to sing rhymes and use musical instruments, which they do with real pleasure.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- Pupils' writing is not good enough.
- Teachers make very good use of classroom support assistants.
- The subject is well led.

Commentary

42. The 2004 test results at Year 6 showed standards to be below national averages. However, inspectors find that standards have improved and are now broadly average – a judgement that matches the unconfirmed 2005 results. Standards have varied since the last inspection as a result of the small numbers in each year group, the number who transfer into the school, the large number of pupils with SEN in some classes and the effect that this has on test results. Overall achievement is good, but this good achievement does not always show in the results because of the number of pupils with SEN who transfer to Howick from other schools. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. It has been good in speaking and listening and reading but not good enough in writing.

43. Standards in speaking and listening are high. Pupils speak confidently and are happy to try out their ideas because they know they will be listened to with interest and respect. They talk confidently about local history and their visits to the church. Pupils have good opportunities to join in discussions in lessons and to speak to wider audiences in termly productions. Listening standards are good in all classes. Pupils are attentive in whole-class sessions and give sensible, well thought out answers. When they are working in a group or independently, they are quick to respond to the teacher's request for attention. Pupils make good use of words specific to subjects such as geography and science, which they have heard their teacher use.

44. Reading standards are good. In the 2005 tests, about half of all pupils reached higher than expected levels by the ages of seven and eleven. The school places great emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to read a variety of texts, as in a class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils reading poems about school life, written by Alan Ahlberg. Teachers make very good use of guided reading sessions to raise standards. Year 5 and 6 pupils use a well-chosen scheme that matches their ability levels very well. The texts are challenging but allow pupils to succeed. They not only learn to speak the words clearly but also learn research techniques when finding out about spiders and geckos. The school has developed two libraries which, although small, are well stocked with attractive books. Pupils take responsibility themselves for borrowing books, using a bar code reader connected to a computer. Teaching assistants, who challenge pupils to express ideas they have read in books in different ways, give pupils with SEN very good support so that they achieve well.

45. Standards in writing are not good enough. In the unvalidated 2005 test results, no pupils in Year 6 reached higher than expected Level 5 and nearly half were below the expected Level 4. This matches results in previous years. The school is aware of the need to improve standards but the planned strategies to do this have not yet produced the desired results. An audit of writing across all subjects shows that pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and too much of their writing is limited to short pieces. In some classes, too much use is made of worksheets that require only one word, short phrase or single sentence answers. However, teachers make sure that pupils develop their vocabulary well in subjects such as geography and history. Pupils' handwriting is not as good as it should be. The approach to teaching handwriting is inconsistent. One-third of all writing carried out by Year 1 and Year 2 pupils consists of handwriting exercises but in Years 5 and 6 pupils do not practise their handwriting enough. When teachers

mark work, incorrect letter formations are often marked correct. Most teachers use handwriting styles that do not match the style adopted by the school, so they do not provide good role models for pupils to follow.

46. In all the lessons seen teaching was good or very good, and was good overall. Teachers make very good use of ICT to introduce lessons but they do not give pupils enough chances to use computers to develop writing skills. Lessons are planned well and take account of the needs of pupils of different abilities. This is because teachers assess pupils' work well and evaluate their own teaching carefully. Consequently, pupils, including those with SEN, achieve well, except in writing. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and constantly encourage them to think hard and try to answer questions. They know their pupils well and give individual pupils special tasks to perform to boost their confidence. Teachers make very good use of teaching assistants, who reflect the high expectations shown by teachers when they challenge pupils to express themselves in different ways. Pupils' work is marked regularly and, particularly in Years 5 and 6, this marking is helpful in showing pupils what they have done well and how to improve.

47. The subject is led well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. Her emphasis so far has been on developing reading, speaking and listening skills, and this has been successful. She is aware of the need to raise standards in writing. The school has good systems for checking how well pupils are doing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Pupils' good reading skills allow them to carry out research in other subjects. However, they are not provided with enough opportunities to develop their writing in subjects such as science, religious education, history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils with SEN are well supported in lessons.
- Pupils enjoy practical and interesting activities.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to use their speaking skills.
- Leadership and management are good.
- A few pupils do not attain their expected targets.

Commentary

49. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2, with all pupils attaining the national average and a few above. Standards are average by the end of Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2004, standards were below average but the results of the 2005 tests show an improvement, with a quarter of pupils gaining the higher Level 3. The results in the tests for eleven-year-olds in 2004 were average, and they dipped slightly in 2005 because a quarter of pupils did not reach the expected level and some of those capable of gaining the higher Level 5 narrowly missed doing so. However, in lessons, these borderline pupils were well challenged and operated at the higher level. This represents good achievement because a high proportion of pupils in Year 6 have SEN and did not attain the levels expected of their age. Consequently, this depressed the overall standards. Pupils with SEN achieve well throughout the school because of good provision from teachers and teaching assistants.

50. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with evidence of some very good teaching. All teachers develop pupils' mathematical mental skills well. Teachers use the start and end of lessons

both to explain tasks and to give pupils the opportunity to share their learning. Consequently, pupils use mathematical language confidently. Good use is made of the team of knowledgeable teaching assistants to support small groups. Key strengths of the good teaching include a very positive insistence on very good standards of behaviour, and a good use of resources. The quality of marking is generally good, with helpful comments to help pupils to understand what they need to do next to improve. Older pupils know their individual targets and what they are working towards. There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff. As a result, pupils know that their efforts are valued; they work hard and have very positive attitudes to learning.

51. Pupils develop their skills through practical interesting activities. They have good opportunities to apply the skills they have learned to practical situations in an interesting and relevant way. For example, in a very well taught lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2 extracted information from graphs of a fruit-preference survey in order to design a school poster. All teachers cater well for the very wide range of ability in the mixed-age classes. They ensure that work is usually pitched at the correct level to challenge all abilities. There are good systems to help the pupils who need additional support. Mathematics makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development as they work in small groups, share resources and discuss their learning.

52. The subject is well led and managed by the headteacher. She checks the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons, talking to pupils about their work and analysing test papers. Teachers check regularly how well pupils are doing to identify areas of weakness, and the system for tracking each individual's progress is used effectively to help teachers to plan future work at the right levels. The school has improved its resources, the lack of which were criticised at the time of the previous inspection. They are now sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Good use is made of mathematical skills in other subjects. There are regular opportunities to measure and calculate accurately. For example, pupils record temperatures in science, plot information in graph form in geography and use time lines and dates in history. Teachers and pupils use interactive whiteboards and computer programmes regularly to assist learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Science lessons cover all aspects of the subject in a practical way to keep pupils involved and interested.
- Teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils in lessons.

Commentary

54. Pupils achieve well in science and attain above average standards at Year 2 and Year 6. The results of the 2005 national tests for eleven-year-olds show that more than half of the pupils gained the higher Level 5 and the rest gained the expected Level 4. This is a slight improvement on the results from the 2004 tests. The results of the teacher assessments at Year 2 in 2004 showed standards to be below average but currently they are better than that and are above average. Pupils with SEN achieve well throughout the school because of good provision from teachers and teaching assistants. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

55. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Pupils are interested in their lessons because teachers give them practical investigations to work on. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning about friction and how to conduct a fair test as they saw which toy car

went furthest in their investigation. The way the lesson was organised also helped them to develop their speaking, listening and thinking skills, as they discussed ways to make sure the test was fair and how they could improve it. The strong emphasis on learning scientific words was demonstrated in a lesson on habitats with Year 3 and Year 4 pupils. The pupils were very keen to show their real understanding of the term habitat at every opportunity, reinforcing their knowledge of the term and its meaning. Pupils in a Year 5 and Year 6 class concentrated hard on finding out why some species are endangered and others have become extinct. The lesson made very effective use of computers to enable pupils to search the internet for information as well as reinforcing their literacy skills by providing texts for them to work with. In all lessons, teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. They work very well as a team with the teacher and ensure that the group that they are supporting understands their task and succeeds with it. This good support from teaching assistants ensures that pupils with SEN make good progress in their learning.

56. The school has good systems for checking how well pupils are doing in science and for recording their progress. Pupils complete a test at the end of each unit of work. However, there is less evidence of the results of such tests being used as effectively as they might be to plan activities more closely to the various abilities in a class and make learning even better.

57. The leadership of science is good. The subject leader has a clear idea of how well pupils are doing because she checks their books and observes lessons. She sets clear priorities for further improving science in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

58. As no lessons were seen in ICT, it is not possible to make judgements on the quality of teaching and learning or of the overall provision. Where pupils were observed using ICT, standards were at least average. Pupils in a Year 5 and Year 6 class confidently sought information from the internet during a science lesson. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils enjoyed demonstrating their multi-media presentations that included text, pictures and music. Pupils had great fun testing their knowledge of multiplication tables through a program on the computer that posed increasingly difficult challenges. Year 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed using the Internet to find information for their history topic. In most cases where ICT was seen it was supporting other subjects very effectively, and pupils were confident in its use, displaying skills at a level to be expected for their age. Teaching assistants were very confident in supervising pupils using computers and in ensuring that they made good progress in the tasks they were doing.

59. The long-term planning for the subject shows that all aspects should be covered as the pupils move through the school. However, an analysis of work done by pupils in ICT showed a great deal of work in word-processing and multi-media presentations but less evidence of work on control technology or data handling. This was an issue at the time of the last inspection and has not yet been fully addressed. The subject is managed by the headteacher, who is relatively new to the post. She has identified very quickly the strengths in the subject and the areas for development, and has drawn up an action plan to ensure these issues are tackled. The school is now well placed to ensure that provision in ICT improves very quickly and that pupils receive an appropriate balance between its various aspects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. The use of ICT in other subjects is good and has been well documented above.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in history or geography, so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching or of overall provision in these subjects.

61. Standards in work seen in **geography** are average by the age of seven and eleven. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 develop their geographical understanding and basic map skills through studying the features of the local area. They learn about the wider world through the travels of Barnaby Bear. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 extend their mapping skills through an in-depth study of the local area, and through a residential experience. They explore environmental issues and study contrasting localities. Year 6 pupils demonstrate appropriate mapping skills and use correct geographical terms. The curriculum planned makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development. More use could be made of pupils' writing skills to record their work.

62. Standards in work seen in **history** are above average by the age of seven and eleven. The curriculum planned is interesting, with very good use made of visits and visitors to help bring the subject to life. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 enjoyed a trip to Clitheroe Castle and museum, and older pupils went to Broughton Cottage. 'The Tudor day' was impressive because of the contribution of other subjects, and children experienced life in the past through drama, music and art. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 talk enthusiastically about a class visit to a castle and have good factual knowledge. Older pupils build up their historical skills and knowledge through in-depth topics covering different periods. Year 6 pupils clearly enjoy history. They understand the difference between factual information and opinion. They have regular opportunities to research by using the internet. However, not enough use is made of pupils' writing skills in all classes to record their work in depth. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' social and cultural appreciation of the wider world.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Standards are above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils learn to be reflective.

Commentary

63. Standards by the end of Year 6 have improved since the previous inspection and are now above expectations. The higher than average standards by the age of seven noted at the previous inspection have been maintained. Pupils at both ages achieve well.

64. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 study the Bible and discover how it provides guidance on how Christians should live their lives. They learn about the importance of the Bible and other religious books such as the Qur'an and Torah. They show insight when they say that the Bible is like a map because it shows the right path to choose. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn what it means to be a Christian by studying the life of St Francis. When they discuss the story of 'The Wolf of Gubbio' they are thoughtful in suggesting that the wolf would not attack the villagers if he was provided with food and space to live. Skilful questioning by the teacher made pupils consider how much they would trust the wolf and what they would do if they ran out of food.

65. Pupils enjoy their lessons and take part enthusiastically because teaching is good overall and often very good. Teachers know the subject well and make lessons interesting to illustrate the point they are making. In a very good lesson with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, the teacher blindfolded a pupil before giving him instructions to get him to find his way back to his seat. This showed effectively how the pupil had to trust the teacher, and the authority the teacher had in controlling his actions. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils developed their sense of spirituality when they sat in a circle and listened to 'The Prayer of St Francis'. The teacher made very good use of paintings of St Francis by the Italian artist Giotto di Bondone to show how the paintings illustrated the way St Francis lived his life. Teachers make good provision for pupils with SEN to take a full part in lessons, for example enlarging print to make it easier to read.

66. The subject leader is keen and enthusiastic. She has identified a need to improve the way the school checks how well pupils are doing and is introducing new systems for doing so. She regularly looks at the work of pupils across the school to ensure that she has a good understanding of the standards reached by pupils and of the quality of teaching and learning. Work in religious education makes a significant contribution to the school's overall ethos and to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education, so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching or of overall provision in these subjects.

67. Standards of **art and design** seen during the inspection were broadly average. This included displays of pencil sketches of local buildings by pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 who had also produced collages of Greek myths. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 had painted warm and cold pictures and those in Year 1 and Year 2 had made paintings of people, collages of birds for a display on St Francis, and drawings to go with their homes topic. Pupils learn about famous artists and work in the style of some of them, as when they made portraits in the style of Warhol and Picasso. They also learn about art from other cultures, as shown in the display of work in the style of some African art.

68. **Design and technology** work is planned to cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Not much work was on display during the inspection but what was seen was of the quality to be expected for the pupils' ages. Year 5 pupils have worked on designing packaging for pizzas and produced their ideas on a computer. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils had designed a house to go with their history topic.

69. No lessons were seen in either **music** or **physical education**, so it is not possible to make judgements about standards or provision. Pupils sang sweetly and in tune in assemblies. In music the school makes use of a specialist music teacher so that all classes have the opportunity to benefit from her expertise. Planning shows that pupils are involved in a good range of physical and musical activities, and after-school clubs enhance their learning in lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

70. Not enough lessons were seen in PSHE to be able to make judgements on teaching and learning or the overall quality of provision. Where they were seen, teaching and learning were very good, as in a lesson aimed at helping to ease the transition to secondary school. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught partly through science as pupils consider healthy eating and the impact of exercise on their bodies. They also learn about sex and reproduction and about the dangers of drug misuse.

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	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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