

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST OSWALD'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Knuzden, Blackburn

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119450

Headteacher: Mr G Barnes

Lead inspector: Mrs Rachael Andrew

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 267162

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 aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	209
School address:	Mount St James Stanhill Road Knuzden Blackburn Lancashire
Postcode:	BB1 2DR
Telephone number:	01254 667222
Fax number:	01254 699992
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Christine Hughes
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average size Church of England primary school with voluntary-aided status. It draws most of its pupils from Knuzden but around 40 per cent come from the outskirts of Blackburn, which is in a different local education authority area and a district of considerable deprivation. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is broadly average. It is growing steadily, reflecting the fact that increasing numbers of pupils are drawn from the Blackburn area as the number of school-age children in Knuzden declines. Most of the pupils are of white British heritage. Of the rest, most are of Asian origin. A few of these children speak more than one language at home but none is at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs, mostly related to specific learning, physical or behavioural difficulties, is average and there are fewer than average pupils with statements of more serious needs. Pupils' attainment on entry has been broadly average in the past. There is a downward trend and the overall attainment on entry of this year's Reception class is below average. The school is involved in the national Primary Leadership Development Strategy and family learning programmes.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21460	Rachael Andrew	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Music Physical education Personal, social and health education
13485	Paul Widdowson	Lay inspector	
25439	Kath Halifax	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs
18505	David Matthews	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus  
BPS Business Centre  
Brake Lane  
Boughton  
Nottinghamshire  
NG22 9HQ

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>



## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUTION

**This is a reasonably successful school which provides a sound education for its pupils.** Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory overall. The school provides interesting work in many subjects but is not giving enough attention to information and communication technology (ICT) where pupils do not do as well as those in other schools. Standards are broadly average in other subjects. Leadership, management and governance are all sound. Taking account of pupils' starting points and standards when they leave, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- Skilful teaching in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils to do well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The subject leader makes sure that mathematics is taught well in Year 1 to 6 and that pupils are challenged to do their best.
- Progress in writing in Year 3 to 6 is patchy and some pupils should move on more quickly.
- Pupils are not doing as well as they should in ICT because lessons are not frequent enough.
- The headteacher is a good leader and he knows what to do to improve the school but new ideas are not always followed up thoroughly.
- Pupils get on well, behave sensibly and work hard most of the time.
- The school is making learning more exciting and this is capturing the enthusiasm of the pupils including boys, who have been difficult to interest in the past.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. In many areas, for example improving the building, helping pupils to do much better in their first three years and encouraging boys to work hard, improvements have been good. On the other hand, standards at the end of Year 6 have not improved at the same rate as in other schools and in English they have fallen.

### 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	B	D	D
mathematics	C	B	B	B
science	D	C	C	B

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

**Achievement is satisfactory overall.** Achievement is better in Years 1 to 2 than in Years 3 to 6. Pupils do better in mathematics than in any other subject because the teaching is consistently good or better. Children in the Reception class do well. Most are on course to reach the goals set for the end of the year in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world. About one in three children is unlikely to reach the goals for mathematical

development because their progress is not as good in this area of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do well in reading, writing and mathematics and reach above average standards. Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen faster than in most other schools. Pupils' progress in science and ICT is satisfactory and they reach average standards. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well in mathematics and reach above average standards. In English and science achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. In English, standards have improved since last year where the table shows that standards were below average. Standards in ICT are below average and pupils are not doing as well as they should. Pupils with special educational needs do well and receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils from ethnic minorities, including those who speak more than one language at home, make good progress, especially in mathematics

**Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils behave sensibly, take an interest in school life and get on well. The school is a friendly place where pupils of different ages, backgrounds and aptitudes take care of each other. Attendance is very good and pupils are punctual.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall** and pupils make steady progress in most subjects. Mathematics is taught skilfully so pupils do well. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 1 to 2 and in the Reception class and pupils make better gains in learning than in Years 3 to 6. On the whole, teachers provide interesting lessons and try to include plenty of first hand experiences to make learning enjoyable. This has been an important development in school. Pupils say how much they enjoy this type of lesson and their response in lessons is enthusiastic. The school takes good care of its pupils and guides them well. Parents are keen to support their children's work where they can.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.** The leadership of the headteacher is good. The quality of subject leadership is mostly effective but varies from subject to subject. It is particularly strong in mathematics. The provision for special educational needs is managed well and helps pupils to do their best. All pupils are included in what the school offers, where this is possible, because the school takes particular care to make sure they are. Management is satisfactory. Although the school has its sights on continuous improvement and sets out what needs to be done in order of priority, not all its endeavours are entirely successful. This is because the checks made on how things are going are not rigorous enough. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. Governors support the school well and committees are well organised. They are not as critical of the school's shortcomings as they should be.

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

With few exceptions, parents are pleased with what the school has to offer. They find the school well ordered and welcoming, have confidence in the headteacher and staff and are happy with the progress their children make. They are finding it a burden to continue to raise the money to pay off the loan for the school building. Pupils like mathematics and the personal, social and health education lessons. They wish they could do more investigations in science and use the ICT suite more often. They are particularly proud of the school council's work



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve achievement in English, especially writing in Years 3 to 6 by:-  
ensuring the work is matched carefully to suit the ability of different groups and challenges higher attaining pupils;  
making thorough checks to make sure intended improvements are working well.
- Speed up progress and raise standards in ICT by:-  
teaching skills more frequently;  
ensuring that pupils use their computer skills to support work in other subjects;  
checking the use of the suite and pupils' progress more closely.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and in the Reception class. In Years 3 to 6 achievement is satisfactory. Standards are average overall. They are below average in ICT at the end of Year 6. They are above average in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

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

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in reading and writing because of good teaching and high expectations.
- Pupils do well in mathematics in Years 1 to 6 because the subject is well led.
- Achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 because pupils are not using computers frequently enough to make sufficient progress.
- Children in the Reception class achieve well in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world because of interesting activities and skilful teaching in these areas of learning.
- Although achievement is satisfactory overall in writing and in science in Years 3 to 6, progress is patchy because the work is not always matched well enough to pupils' needs.
- The presentation of work in Year 6 is of a high standard because the teacher insists on it.

#### **Commentary**

1. The table below shows that pupils at the end of Year 2 did well in last year's national tests. Their results were better than the national average. In reading, pupils did as well as those in similar schools. In writing and mathematics they did much better. The improving trend in results is above the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' good achievement has been maintained this year in writing and mathematics. In reading it has improved so that it now matches achievement in writing and mathematics. On the whole, expectations are high in these classes and teaching excites pupils and holds their interest, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in ICT and science are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.3 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.9 (15.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.2 (17.6)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The table below shows that at the end of Year 6 last year, standards in national tests were above the national average in mathematics, broadly average in science but well below average in English. Pupils did better than those in similar schools in mathematics, as well in science but not as well in English. Although there has been a

slight improvement in results over the last three years in mathematics and science, results in English have been erratic. The overall trend in the three subjects is below the national trend of improvement. Inspection evidence shows that standards reached last year have been maintained in mathematics and science and improved in English to an average level.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.0 (28.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.8 (27.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.1 (28.7)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Children in the Reception class at the Foundation Stage are on course to reach the goals set for them at the end of the year where teaching is particularly effective, that is in communication, language and literacy, personal and social development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In mathematical development, a significant minority are unlikely to achieve the goals set for this area of learning. Children's achievement is good overall. In mathematical development it is satisfactory. Their starting points were slightly below average this year and there is an unusually high number of lower attaining children. Progress has not been as good in mathematics as in other areas of learning because the children do not have enough opportunities in their play to practise mathematical skills.
4. Pupils do well in mathematics in Year 1 to 6 because the work interests and excites them. Pupils say how much they enjoy mathematics and many are reluctant to stop work at the end of the lesson. Teachers teach a range of useful strategies and plan well for mental work, games and investigations that extend pupils' thinking skills. The work is overseen by the subject leader who works effectively to improve provision and maintain high standards.
5. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve standards in ICT that are below average. Although the computer suite is timetabled for use weekly and available at other times by agreement, pupils do not use it often enough to learn new skills quickly and to keep existing skills up to scratch. As a result, pupils are not keeping up with pupils of similar ages in other schools. Computers in classrooms are not used routinely to support work in other subjects, except in the Reception class where the computer is in almost constant use and children are confident.
6. The work set for pupils in different groups to build on whole-class teaching is not always matched to pupils' needs in English and science in Years 3 to 6. In particular it does not always challenge higher attaining pupils. Too often, all pupils do much the same work irrespective of their capabilities. This is preventing progress in English and science from keeping pace with that in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school in relation to their prior attainment. Early identification enables teachers to track progress and provide work that is well matched to the abilities of the pupils so that they are not overwhelmed by what is asked of them. However, a few occasions were observed when the tasks provided were too difficult and pupils became frustrated and lost concentration. Pupils who speak more than one language at home make good progress overall and school information shows that many do particularly well in mathematics.
7. The work in pupils' books in Year 6 is neatly done and carefully presented. The teacher has worked hard to improve handwriting skills in response to school initiatives. The improvement is more noticeable in Year 6 than in other years.

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

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and other personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school develops good relationships and racial harmony.
- Pupils have been involved in establishing a code of conduct and they work hard, with consistent support from staff, to uphold it.
- Parents co-operate well with the school and so attendance is well above the national average

### **Commentary**

8. Relationships are very good. Teachers show concern and respect for pupils and pupils follow their example in their relationships with each other. Teachers expect that pupils will work sensibly together and rely on them to work purposefully when not directly supervised. Pupils respond well. They have good attitudes to work and take a keen interest in what the school has to offer. The school's efforts to make learning more exciting, by providing more hands-on experiences, are contributing well. In particular, boys are more enthusiastic learners than previously. This is an important improvement since the last inspection. Even pupils in Year 1 manage to persevere with their group tasks without interrupting the teacher. As they get older, pupils are increasingly able to give each other support and help with their work and with their worries. The school's emphasis on Christian values encourages pupils to be kind to each other. Pupils understand the consequences of their action for others and are encouraged to say sorry and forgive when things go wrong. Pupils know that all of them have equal value in teachers' eyes whatever their attributes or backgrounds. Respect for individual differences is promoted well and pupils of different racial backgrounds get on well together. Pupils are quick to include those with physical difficulties and help them when they need it, without being patronising.
9. Pupils behave well. The school's code of conduct is clear, simple and based on the Christian principle of loving one another. Pupils have been involved in making decisions about it. All pupils know what is expected of them because the code is displayed in each room and staff promote it consistently. From the start in the Reception Year children are taught what is expected in the school setting and helped to understand that because of being with many other children this might be different from what is expected at home. Children quickly settle in and accept school codes and routines because their social development is encouraged throughout the school day. When pupils fall short of what is expected or break the school's code they know what the sanctions will be and accept them. There have been no recent exclusions. Pupils expect teachers to be fair and say they are, although they do not like class punishments which result from the misbehaviour of a few. They are pleased with the rewards they receive because they know they are deserved. Pupils say they are confident in turning to teachers, including the headteacher, when things go wrong in school or at home. They say that incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and not allowed to get out of hand. Most parents agree. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds who have moved from other schools say that they feel much more comfortable in this school because although they are few in number they are treated with respect. They are confident to talk about their own culture and religion in class and

to wear traditional dress on non-uniform days. Pupils' cultural development is good. There are many opportunities to learn about different festivals, ways of life, dress and religions through the curriculum and special occasions. This is a big improvement since the last inspection when cultural development was considered unsatisfactory.

10. Attendance is well above the national average and pupils are prompt. The school has worked hard to maintain high levels of attendance and parents' support is good.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.5	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in the Reception class, Year 1 and Year 2. The curriculum is broad and often enlivened by first-hand experiences in the classroom and outside normal lessons. Provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and parents have constructive links with the school.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in the Reception class and Years 1 to 2.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is challenging and interesting and promotes good achievement, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching in mathematics is good throughout the school.
- Teaching and learning in ICT are unsatisfactory because skills are not being taught quickly enough and teachers do not make the most of opportunities provided by computers to support the work in any subject.
- There is a strong drive to improve achievement through assessment and target setting but some teachers use the systems and information they provide better than others.
- Teaching assistants support pupils skilfully and contribute well to the achievements of pupils with special educational needs.
- The school's initiative to make learning more interesting and enjoyable is capturing pupils' enthusiasm and beginning to improve achievement in some subjects.

### **Commentary**

11. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good gains in learning because teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. The work is challenging and captures pupils' interest so that they work hard. Teachers explain new learning well. They provide tasks that build on class work, match the needs of different groups within the class and draw the learning together well at the end. The teaching in the Reception class is good overall and in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development in particular so that children get a good start in these important areas.
12. Mathematics is taught well throughout Years 1 to 6. It is led and managed well so that teachers' skills have been developed, teaching has improved where weaknesses have been identified and information from checks and assessments have been used to raise achievement. Teachers make particularly good use of mental work, investigations and games to teach different strategies and extend understanding.
13. Teachers are not using the computer suite frequently enough to teach computer skills or to enable pupils to use these skills to support other subjects. Pupils forget what they have learnt in ICT because of big gaps between lessons and their progress and achievement are not good enough to enable them to reach the standards attained in most other schools.
14. Teachers have set targets for pupils in English and mathematics. This helps pupils to focus on the next steps in learning and leads them to a better understanding of what

they need to do to improve. Pupils like targets and say they are helpful. In many instances they are contributing to progress but they are not always demanding enough to move pupils on quickly. In Years 3 to 6, the work set, for English in particular but also in science, does not take sufficient account of pupils' different needs and so not all pupils make the best possible progress. In science this applies mostly to higher attaining pupils and to pupils throughout Years 1 to 6. Assessment information is used well to provide 'booster classes' and additional help where needed, for example to help pupils who find the transition to Year 3 difficult. Pupils in Year 6 say how much they benefit from the smaller group work that these classes provide. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in small group work led by teachers and teaching assistants mostly in lessons but also when withdrawn for short periods. Well-chosen targets in their individual education plans provide a good focus for learning. All members of staff have a good knowledge of how to manage behaviour.

15. Particularly lively teaching was observed in history, art and music. In these lessons as well as in many mathematics lessons and in investigative work in science, pupils respond well to the practical emphasis of hands-on learning. Pupils, particularly boys, whom the school recognises as hard to engage, responded enthusiastically and achieved well when a hands-on approach was adopted. Teachers are not afraid to take risks with pupils with behavioural difficulties in adventurous practical lessons. This pays dividends as pupils respond well to the trust placed in them.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	2 (7%)	12 (40%)	15 (50%)	0	0	0

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

**The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are good. Staffing, resources and accommodation are satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Though significant improvement has been made to this aspect since the last inspection, the provision for ICT remains unsatisfactory.
- The action taken to make the curriculum more interesting is enlivening teaching and capturing pupils' enthusiasm.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and contributes to their achievement.
- The provision for personal, social and health education contributes well to pupils' personal development.

**Commentary**

16. Since the last inspection, improvements to the curriculum have been satisfactory overall. Although there have been good improvements in some aspects of the curriculum, the provision for ICT remains unsatisfactory. While the number of computers has been increased and the confidence of some staff improved, no one has had oversight of the subject until a few months ago. As a consequence, the subject has not been taught consistently and this has affected pupils' achievements,



particularly in Years 3 to 6. At the time of the last inspection, the accommodation was judged to be poor and resources inadequate. Considerable sums of money have been invested in upgrading the building and playground areas, and in providing resources. This has resulted in classrooms that are of a suitable size and allowed teachers to be more imaginative in the way they work. In addition, resources have been improved which is contributing to achievement, for example in history. There has been good improvement in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage and this has had a positive effect on learning and achievement. Good planning and improved teacher knowledge ensure that children now have valuable experiences in all the required areas of learning.

17. The school's response to the national guidelines 'Excellence and Enjoyment in the Curriculum' has made teachers think carefully about how they plan for and present their lessons. As a consequence, learning has been made more enjoyable through more practical work, meaningful links between subjects, visits, visitors, and out-of-school activities. In mathematics, pupils have increased their understanding through opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in investigations. Similarly, in science, pupils undertake more work of this kind. Visits to outdoor activity centres and historical and geographical locations make learning meaningful as well as promoting personal development. Pupils were particularly enthusiastic when recounting the visits of poets who, in addition to reading their own work, contributed significantly to standards in poetry writing.
18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The provision is well organised by a committed co-ordinator. Documentation is in good order and annual reviews of statements of need are conducted on time. All pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans, the targets of which are referred to in lessons thus aiding progress. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is monitored carefully by the co-ordinator from her records and from whole-school tracking produced by the headteacher. Since the last inspection, the practice of withdrawing pupils for individual and small group work has been revised so that pupils are usually withdrawn during literacy and numeracy lessons. Staff and governors are committed to including all pupils regardless of need, gender or ethnicity and the school evaluates the performance of these groups carefully. While the extensive improvements made to the building since the last inspection benefit all pupils, the upper floor, where the ICT suite and special educational needs rooms are located, is not accessible to wheelchair users. The cost of installing a stair lift is prohibitive. In order to ensure wheelchair users feel part of their class, computers in classrooms have been networked and lessons moved to other rooms to enable inclusion.
19. Pupils of all ages and capabilities benefit from the programme for personal, social and health education. In addition to weekly lessons, one day is set aside each term for pupils to consider aspects of the subject. For example, days have been held to consider relationships and to draw up a school code of conduct. Because they have been instrumental in compiling the rules, pupils feel strongly that they should be adhered to. Substance misuse awareness is highlighted well by members of staff and through the use of the Life Education Caravan when activities are tailored to the needs and maturity of each class. Older pupils have gained confidence and knowledge through attendance at the Primary Young People's Conferences about 'Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco' and 'Growing Up'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides a safe and caring environment for pupils and relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and there are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision making.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good relationships with their teachers, the headteacher and all adults in the school.
- The school has very good induction procedures for children coming into the Reception class.
- Pupils' views are sought, valued and acted upon, particularly through the school council.
- The school has effective procedures in place for child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism and health and safety.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for and supported.
- Pupils have individual targets and know what they need to do in order to improve.

### **Commentary**

20. Pupils have very good relationships with their teachers including the headteacher. There is a strong sense of respect and trust between pupils and staff. Because of this, pupils feel confident to approach staff with any problems or concerns they may have, knowing that they will be listened to.
21. There are very good induction procedures for children coming into the Reception class, which ensure a smooth transition from home to school. There is an induction meeting for all new parents and three coffee mornings where parents have the opportunity to meet in small groups to learn about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how they can help support their children before they start school. Children can make two visits to the Reception class, which gives them the opportunity to meet their teacher and familiarise themselves with school routines.
22. The school listens to pupils and takes their views seriously. The school council meets on a weekly basis to discuss a wide range of issues based on suggestions discussed within their class or submitted through the suggestion box. These have included ideas for reducing the number of cars bringing children to school by investigating cycle routes and discussing the idea of a walking bus, deciding on playground games and furniture, setting up a friendship stop in the playground to help children who have no one to play with and organising fund-raising events in school. Council meetings are run on formal lines and there is a record of ideas discussed which is passed on to a member of staff. Pupils value the opportunity to have their views represented by the council and being involved in making improvements to their school.
23. The school has very effective policies and procedures in place for child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism and first aid. A serious incident register is kept by the headteacher and this ensures that any incidents involving bullying or racism are effectively dealt with. Because of this, pupils and teachers do not perceive bullying as a problem and there is no evidence to support the concerns of a small number of parents that bullying is an issue in the school. Regular health and safety inspections and risk assessments ensure that the school provides a safe environment for all pupils and staff.

24. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported both within the school and by outside agencies. Teachers plan well for their needs and there are consistent approaches by teachers to identify pupils with special educational needs and to monitor and record their progress. However, there are no systems in place to record the achievement of pupils working below National Curriculum level 1. Plans are in hand to introduce this in the future so that progress in the early stages is easier to measure. Good links have been established with other professionals to support pupils with special educational needs. Programmes devised by speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists are carried out methodically by classroom support staff. This contributes significantly to the well-being and achievement of these pupils. Staff and pupils alike respect the individual needs of those with difficulties. The contribution of those with special needs who are members of the school council is especially appreciated. Suitable transition arrangements for pupils in Year 6 are in place, though this is complicated because pupils come from more than one local education authority.
25. Pupils' personal development is effectively monitored and is specifically commented on in pupils' annual reports. Teachers know the pupils well and information is passed on as pupils move up through the school. Pupils receive good advice and support on their academic development. They have individual targets in mathematics and English which are regularly reviewed. This helps pupils to understand what they need to do in order to improve, although not all targets in English are sufficiently challenging. There are very good systems in place to track the progress of individuals and different groups within the school. These are relatively new and although they are already providing much useful information they hold further potential for improving pupils' achievement.

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

The school has established a good partnership with parents. Parents are provided with very good information about the school and pupils' attainment and personal development. The majority are supportive of the school and the work it does. Links with the local community are good. Links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' annual reports provide parents with very good information on attainment and personal development.
- Parent teacher consultations keep all parents, particularly those of children with special educational needs, well informed about attainment and progress.
- The school has good links with the local community.
- Parents make a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home.
- The Friends of the School, now known as the Extension Committee, are very active and supportive.

## **Commentary**

26. Pupils' annual reports provide very good quality information on attainment and set individual targets for improvement. They include a detailed report on personal development and attitudes and behaviour. This provides parents with a clear picture of what their children know and understand and what they are doing at school. Information for parents about the school is provided through a clear and easy to read school prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents and regular newsletters which keep parents up to date on what is happening in school. Parents' views are sought annually through a questionnaire and this ensures that they have the opportunity to express their views on what the school is doing well and what could be improved.
27. Parent/teacher consultations are held every term and provide a good opportunity for parents to discuss pupils' attainment, progress and personal and social development with the teachers. Links with parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs are very good. Parents are informed at an early stage, fully involved at all stages and are involved in reviews. Conscious that these parents often need reassurance and more teacher time, the school organises two consultation evenings each year especially for parents of pupils with special needs. These meetings are always well attended. In addition, parents are invited to contribute to targets in individual education plans and to work on these at home. This contributes well to pupils' learning and achievement.
28. There is a special meeting for Year 6 parents to discuss transfer to secondary school and Key Stage 2 national tests, which all parents attend. Parents' evenings have been held to explain drugs and sex education, numeracy, and how parents can support their children's learning.
29. The school has good community links, including links with the local church. Pupils support local and national charities and, at Harvest Festival, food is sent to a local refuge for the homeless. Pupils in Year 6 visit the refuge to experience at first hand the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. Representatives of all the local emergency services are regular visitors to the school when they talk about their roles in the community.
30. Parental support both at home and at school is good. There are a number of parents who regularly help in school, particularly in Key Stage 1 where they support reading and numeracy. Parents also support outside activities, particularly geography and educational visits. Help with homework is variable but most parents support pupils with their topic work, which has an impact on the quality of work produced

31. The Friends of the School, now known as the Extension Committee, are currently involved in raising money for completed building work and have set themselves a target of £45,000. They hold a range of social and fund-raising activities and have successfully obtained sponsorship from local businesses. Since 2003, they have raised £20,000 towards their target. Many parents at the meeting prior to the inspection said that they are finding raising the outstanding sum a burden and feel that it is hindering their efforts to provide other resources for the school.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership.
- The school's improvement plan sets out the right priorities for raising standards but the action taken is not followed through with sufficient rigour and this limits effectiveness.
- The school has gathered a wealth of information about its work but it is not always used well enough to improve pupils' learning.
- The effectiveness of co-ordinators, while satisfactory overall, is inconsistent.
- Finances are managed well to help the school to achieve its priorities.
- There is a strong and successful commitment to inclusion.

### Commentary

32. As at the time of the last inspection, the headteacher provides good leadership. He has carefully managed significant improvements to the school building, recommended in the last report, of which he and governors are justly proud. The additional space supports well the headteacher's determination to make learning more lively and engaging for all pupils. The focus on making learning more engaging is beginning to bring subjects such as science, art, music and history increasingly to life with activities that effectively help the school to address its identified need to more fully involve boys. The headteacher is particularly good at fostering the school's church affiliations, for example through assemblies, while at the same time ensuring that pupils from all religious backgrounds feel valued members of the school community. His exact knowledge of what needs to be done to improve standards, where they might be better, is reflected well in the priorities set out in the school's improvement plan. The effects of some of the initiatives in the plan, however, including those for ICT, are not coming to fruition as speedily as they might.
33. The headteacher and the co-ordinator for assessment have worked successfully to establish very good arrangements for gathering information about what pupils know, understand and can do and their progress. Checks on teaching and learning provide further insights. The detailed analysis of test results enables the school to identify how well different groups of pupils are doing and highlights, for example, those who might be doing better. The wealth of information that results from these systems is not always used as well as it might be, however, to spot falling standards, as happened recently with pupils' writing. The management of English was not rigorous enough to anticipate and deal quickly with such a decline in performance, while initiatives to improve writing have been slow to take root and are still not wholly effective.
34. The co-ordination of some other subjects and areas of the school's work is good. For example, good leadership of the Reception and infant classes means that pupils achieve well. Similarly the mathematics co-ordinator has a good impact on learning through an effective analytical approach so that pupils reach good standards by the end of Year 6. The co-ordinator of the provision of pupils with special educational needs successfully ensures that the school's strong commitment to inclusion is reflected in what it offers to these pupils. As a result most do well in relation to their capabilities. The deputy headteacher has had a good effect on developing the school's

effective programme for pupils' personal, social and health education and she makes an important contribution to staff morale.

35. Governors are very supportive of the school, giving time as generously as they can. A range of skills from different walks of life is used wisely to support the work of different committees. Some governors make valuable contributions as classroom volunteers, helping to provide pupils with unforgettable experiences, as in history lessons. Governors know about the school's strengths and aspects for development such as raising standards in writing. They have more limited awareness, however, of the application of best value principles such as how the school's test results compare with those of similar schools.
36. Governors manage the allocated finances carefully and allocate them appropriately to the priorities that the school identifies. Most notable is their use of funds to improve the building so dramatically. However, an unfortunate consequence of this is that there is little money left for current initiatives such as ICT where further resources are needed.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	489,689
Total expenditure	503,966
Expenditure per pupil	2,520

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	31,866
Balance carried forward to the next	17,589

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

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

37. Children get a good start to school life. There is good planning for all areas of learning and good links are made between the areas to make the learning relevant and meaningful. Leadership and management are good. The early years' leader, Reception class teacher and teaching assistant work well together to make sure children have interesting and worthwhile experiences. The arrangements for introducing children and their parents to the school and the information provided help children to settle quickly. There are good links with a local nursery and records are passed on. Careful checks are made on children's progress on a daily basis so that teachers are able to plan the next steps for individuals and groups. The special educational needs of some children are known before they enter school. Others are identified early and good provision is made for them all, including support from outside professionals. There has been a significant improvement in provision and achievement since the last inspection. No overall judgements have been made about provision in the creative and physical areas of learning. As in other areas, planning is good for both inside and outdoor learning. Children use the hard play area for energetic play and learning small games skills. They use the hall for dance, climbing and balancing activities. There are opportunities for children to participate in art activities, to sing, play instruments and listen to music. Good attention is given in all areas to cultural development.

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

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

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

- The teacher and teaching assistant make sure that children's personal, social and emotional development is given emphasis at all times.
- Children work and play well together.
- Snack time is used well to encourage good manners and an understanding of healthy eating.
- Sometimes children call out and fidget during whole-class teaching and the teacher does not always insist that they are still and quiet.

#### **Commentary**

38. There is good teaching in this area of learning. Most children are on course to reach the targets for their age at the end of Reception. Developing children's social skills is a continuous thread in all areas of learning. Adults give them good opportunities to talk about their feelings and the feelings of others. They remind children of classroom routines and the need to listen carefully to the teacher. However, children do not always sit still and listen carefully enough when the whole class sits together and the teacher tends to carry on rather than waiting for complete attention. Children are given appropriate opportunities to choose for themselves what to do but they also understand that at certain times they must take part in the group activities planned for them. They co-operate well and concentrate hard. Children achieve well.



39. Good attention is given to promoting children's spiritual, moral and social development. Children are kind to each other because of the emphasis given to this and the praise they receive. There is little evidence of squabbling or falling out. Most children have learnt to take turns but a few still interrupt and call out when others are talking. Most listen well to what others have to say when they work and play in small groups and appreciate the successes of their friends. They handle toys and equipment sensibly. They are confident in organising activities for themselves and persevere with tasks even when not directly supervised. They appreciate the world around them and know how fortunate they are when they look at the lives of other children in different times and countries.
40. Daily snack and fruit times are happy social occasions. Children act as servers whilst others sit quietly and wait to choose their snack. Most remember to say "thank you". They know that fruit is healthy and the 'five a day' song encourages good eating habits

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children enjoy the singing games that help them to remember letter sounds
- The teacher makes good use of big books to draw children into stories and to develop reading skills.
- Small group activities support new learning well.
- There are good opportunities for children to talk to the class or group.
- Although there are good opportunities for children to use simple reference books, the 'book corner' is not encouraging many of them to choose stories in free-choice activities.

### **Commentary**

41. This area of learning is taught well and children are on course to reach the goals set for them at the end of Reception. They achieve well, often from a low starting point. Children's knowledge of letter sounds is developed well, especially through the use of songs and rhymes. The teacher's records show that more than half of the children already know the names and sounds of all the letters in the alphabet. A few higher attaining children can use this knowledge to sound out words. They can read simple stories on their own. Many others use the initial sounds of words together with pictures to help in the early stages of reading.
42. Children enjoy stories and the teacher uses story time well to encourage a love of books and to develop reading skills. She encourages children to look at individual word and sentences. She points out where characters are speaking and uses her voice well to make speech obvious. Children are drawn into the story and many are able to say how the characters might feel and why. For example, they gave several reasons why Jack might be frightened or excited when he climbed the beanstalk. A few higher attaining children can give reasons why characters behaved in certain ways. The children were able to join in confidently with the "fee, fi, fo, fum" refrain and to pick out words they recognised such as 'up' and 'down'.

43. The teacher uses her knowledge of children's attainments to provide work and activities in reading and writing in small groups that match the attainments of children in the group, including those with special educational needs. She and her assistant support these groups skilfully and move the learning on. Children have good opportunities in these sessions and during whole-class activities to talk about what they have been doing, share their ideas and answer questions. Good attention is given to developing children's vocabulary so that, for example, they learn that 'ogre' is another name for 'giant'.
44. Simple reference books provide children with further information about other areas of learning. These are displayed so that children can remind themselves about what they have learnt, for example about the life cycle of frogs. There are good opportunities for children to use writing in play activities and informal situations. For example, children made lists of what a baby needs to grow when they played in the 'nursery'. Higher attaining children used the whiteboard to write words they know. Most children can write their names and a few can write simple sentences about what they have been doing. There are a suitable range of books of good quality in the 'book corner'. These are not easily accessible and there is nowhere conducive for 'curling up' with a book. As a result children rarely choose from the book corner whereas a good number choose to write.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Games and rhymes are used well to develop children's understanding of numbers both indoors and outdoors.
- Group work provides good opportunities for children to build on what they have learnt.
- There are missed opportunities to consolidate learning especially to help lower attaining children in free-choice activities, in activities associated with other areas of learning and in incidental learning in classroom routines.

### **Commentary**

45. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory. Children are making steady progress, often from low starting points, but their achievement, although satisfactory overall, is not as good as in other areas observed. As a result, although many are on course to reach the expected targets, a significant minority are unlikely to reach the targets set for the end of Reception.
46. Children participate happily in games and rhymes such as 'What's the Time Mr Wolf?' and 'Hickory, Dickory, Dock', which help them develop a sense of number. Well-pitched group work helps children to develop their knowledge and understanding further. Most children can count to five and many to ten and beyond but a significant minority find it difficult to take the right number of strides in their games and are not able to recognise, read and write these numbers confidently. Opportunities were missed to consolidate the work more frequently, especially to help lower attainers to retain what they have learnt, by encouraging children to choose games and activities in free-choice time. There are games available in the classroom and children borrow them to take home but sorting, counting, matching and ordering activities are not easily accessible in the classroom and few children choose them. The teacher and assistant do not always make the most of everyday situations which promote a better understanding of numbers, shape, size and ordering, for example when children line up, go to groups, sit in a circle or put on their coats.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning makes sure that children have good opportunities to explore areas of science, geography and history that are a good introduction to National Curriculum work in Year 1.
- Good use is made of visitors, first hand experiences and ICT.
- Although children answer questions, more could be done to encourage them to be more curious and to ask questions of their own.

### **Commentary**

47. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well and most are on course to reach the goals set for the end of Reception. There is much to interest and excite children because this area is well planned to provide first-hand experiences. Children are involved in planting seeds and recording growth with the digital camera. They benefit from visitors who come to talk to them. For example, they learnt about child development from regular visits of a mother and her baby. One of the governors, who visits regularly, has told children about what life was like when he was a boy. There are interesting displays of objects that children can handle and books and pictures in the room support the learning further. There are good links with other areas like stories and art and the chosen themes, for example 'growth and change', make the work relevant.
48. Children are becoming familiar with computers and what they can do because they use them frequently. They have a good level of confidence in using simple programs to support learning in many areas.
49. Although the teacher provides good opportunities for children to explore their ideas through talk and she questions them well to extend their thinking, few children ask questions of their own. Opportunities are missed to promote this and to develop children's curiosity.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Standards and achievement are good by the end of Year 2 because of good teaching.
- Unsatisfactory leadership and management of the subject are affecting achievement in Years 3 to 6.
- Targets for improvement are helping most pupils make progress, but these are not always sufficiently demanding for higher attaining pupils in some classes.
- Speaking and listening are developed well in all age groups.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning in English.

#### **Commentary**

50. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Following the criticism of the previous inspection when standards in writing were unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2, teachers of pupils in this age group have worked hard to remedy this. As a result, in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2, standards in writing were above average. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 are equally good in reading and writing, as is achievement for pupils of all abilities. Teachers are very confident, planning activities that are carefully matched to pupils' abilities. Questions are used skilfully to check understanding and further knowledge. Pupils enjoy learning because activities are interesting. For example, the imagination of pupils in Year 2 was captured as they decided on a setting for their story. They made contributions such as, "I can hear the cool, blue water trickling down the hill towards a pond."

51. The co-ordinator is responsible for a number of subjects and has not given English the attention that has been needed. She has delegated important aspects to colleagues. Consequently, no one has a clear overview and information is fragmented. Teachers are working without adequate guidance. Despite tracking by the headteacher and a detailed analysis of test results by the assessment co-ordinator, it has not been made clear enough to teachers which areas of specific weakness, such as sentence construction and the use of grammar, they should be working on. This is affecting progress in some classes in Year 3 to 6. The school's own tracking information reflects this and identifies a small but significant number of pupils who should be making better progress. For the first time in many years, the 2004 results in national tests for pupils in Year 6 were below average and poor when compared to those in schools for pupils from similar backgrounds. Far fewer pupils than would be expected attained the higher level 5.
52. Following the appointment of a leader for a writing project and the inclusion of 'guided' and 'extended writing' on the timetable, standards are improving. Teaching, learning and achievement are now satisfactory. Inspection findings indicate standards in Year 6 are average with almost one third of pupils in line to attain level 5. Pupils in this class are writing more complex sentences and choosing their vocabulary carefully. All teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and use lesson time and support assistants well. A concerted effort has been made to make tasks of interest to both boys and girls. As a result there has been improvement in boys' writing. For example, boys' imagination has been captured by topics such as the work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel and life in war-torn Britain. Standards in reading were average in the national tests. Inspection findings show this continues to be so. In an effort to improve standards further, 'guided reading' has been taken out of literacy lessons and a greater focus placed on the achievement of individual pupils. This is beginning to pay dividends.
53. All pupils have targets for improvement in their English books. However, these are not always sufficiently challenging, especially for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 5. For example, some pupils who are already working at level 4 of the National Curriculum have targets taken from level 3. This slows their rate of progress. A handwriting scheme has recently been introduced. This is adhered to well in Years 1, 2 and 6, but in Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils alternate between printing and joining their letters and some are inconsistent in their use of pen or pencil.
54. In all subjects, teachers promote speaking and listening well. In mathematics, for example, pupils are expected to reason their answers and in physical education, pupils follow increasingly complex instructions. In most classes, pupils have 'talking partners' with whom they discuss, for instance, the differences in the lives of wealthy and poor people in Tudor times. When answering questions, pupils are expected to give their answer as a sentence, to speak up and to make eye contact. While standards are good in this aspect, there is no system to record achievement.
55. As at the time of the last inspection, too little use is made of ICT. Pupils are not encouraged to use computers on a regular basis to draft and refine their work or to enhance the appearance of their finished work. A notable exception is in Year 6 where, for example, pupils have used different fonts and imported images imaginatively into their poetry. While there has been good improvement in standards and achievement by Year 2, and standards by Year 6 appear to be rising, they are not as high as at the time of the last report when standards were improving at a greater rate than the national trend. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Opportunities for pupils to use and improve their skills in other subjects are, overall, satisfactory. In all classes, pupils are provided with opportunities to read worksheets and textbooks. Work is recorded in a variety of ways so pupils have experience of, for example, writing reports, diaries and instructions. Where literacy is extended well pupils write articles for the 'Greek Guardian', comparing the ancient and modern Olympic Games or, as in geography, persuading visitors to holiday in St Lucia. However, in some classes there is a heavy dependency on worksheets where pupils have only to fill in a missing word.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work hard and do well because of good teaching
- The subject leader knows what works, what sometimes goes wrong and why, and takes action to put things right.
- Good attention is given to mental work, investigations and games that capture pupils' enthusiasm and develop strategies and thinking skills.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT and other subjects to develop pupils' skills further.

### Commentary

57. The standards achieved by the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Pupils' achievement is good overall.
58. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn by the end of the lesson and explain this carefully. The tasks and activities that teachers prepare are well judged to build on the main teaching points and are pitched at the right level to challenge different groups. This contributes to good progress in the lessons. Pupils know that the teachers will come back to the main teaching points at the end to check their understanding and this helps them to keep focused. Pupils work hard because they are interested and because teachers expect them to and ensure the lesson moves on at a good pace. Teachers do not need to remind pupils to concentrate or to behave because they are engrossed in their work. Exercise books indicate that pupils have completed a lot of work over the year so far and reflect the progress seen in lessons. The amount of work increases from year to year so that by Year 6 pupils are well into their second exercise book. The presentation of their work in this year is of a high standard. Targets are helping pupils to make progress in specific areas. In Year 2 this works especially well because the targets for higher attainers are taken from the work in Year 3 to give them extra challenge. Pupils in Year 6 say how much they are benefiting from booster classes because the work is directed at areas of weakness in that group and the small groups ensure that they get plenty of adult help. Pupils with special needs are well supported. Teachers provide work at the right level and teaching assistants support and encourage them in lessons, keeping a careful eye on any relevant targets in their individual education plans. For example, they make sure pupils understand which calculation to use before they start to solve a problem.

59. Mathematics is well led. The co-ordinator is well organised, analytical and determined. Problems of under-achievement noted amongst higher attaining pupils during the last inspection have been overcome. Teaching and learning have continued to improve because pupils' books are checked, information from tests and assessments is analysed carefully and action is taken to put things right where problems are identified. For example, checks in lessons identified that teachers were not using whole-class time at the end of lessons well enough to move the learning on. Particularly good use was made of this plenary time in two other lessons seen in Years 1 and 5, where new challenges were set, springing from the answers pupils gave. Checks on the answers given in national tests indicated a weakness in word problems. It is evident that teachers are now helping pupils to get to grips with this in lessons, for example in Year 3, by asking them to make up a written, real-life problem to match given 'sums'.
60. Pupils are enthusiastic about the investigations, problems and games chosen by teachers to develop particular skills. This is no soft option. In the lessons seen pupils were required to make many calculations to arrive at solutions, to check their work for emerging patterns, to use a range of strategies and in the best lessons to explain their answers. Older pupils are guided skilfully towards drawing more general conclusions. Even the youngest pupils were explaining how to use doubles, how to hold the biggest number in their heads, or how to split numbers that were too big to handle into smaller parts. They recall facts quickly so that they can do a range of addition calculations efficiently. In this Year 1 class, achievement is very good. In all lessons teachers stress the importance of mathematical vocabulary and encourage pupils to use it so that they can explain their work more precisely. Pupils in Year 4, for example, were able to describe their calculations by using the words 'multiple', 'factor' and 'prime number'.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. There are missed opportunities to plan for mathematics in other subjects. For example, there is little evidence of the systematic development of measuring skills in design and technology, or of the use of graphs and data handling in geography or in ICT. Computers are not used often enough, for example, to provide practice in calculation skills and to use control programs to explore shapes. Links with other subjects, especially ICT, are unsatisfactory. The school has identified this area as part of its current action plan and has made a start but there is further to go. It has been successful with other primary schools in bidding for funds to develop this work further.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' investigation skills and this is beginning to take effect.
- Teachers do not always set work that accurately matches the needs of pupils of differing abilities.

### Commentary

62. The standards achieved by the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils broadly reflect those expected for their ages. Pupils of differing abilities are achieving satisfactorily overall. There has been a steady improvement in the test results of Year 6 pupils in recent years, though fewer are expected to reach the higher level 5 in this year's tests than in 2004. While higher attaining Year 6 pupils have a good grasp of facts – for example, they know about the function of organs such as the heart – some are unsure about scientific methods, such as how to set up an investigation to test the conditions needed for seeds to germinate.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school's emphasis on making learning more engaging, particularly to increase boys' motivation, is beginning to have a positive effect on learning. Where teaching provides pupils with hands-on experience and the chance to make decisions as in a Year 1 lesson about the properties of materials, pupils focus well on their learning and make good progress. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' skills of investigation and such lessons are a good example of encouraging pupils to work as 'scientists'. In the Year 1 lesson the more capable pupils learned successfully about 'transparency' because the teacher took care to provide well for pupils of differing ability. Just occasionally teachers do not develop pupils' investigation skills as well as they might. For example, pupils' understanding is less effectively built by worksheets in Year 2 and by some over-directed explorations in Year 6. Recent teaching in Year 6 is having a better impact on pupils' practical abilities because it is enabling them to use their own ideas to plan and carry out tests and to evaluate their outcomes.
64. Teachers do not always set work that accurately matches the needs of pupils of differing abilities and on these occasions the progress of some pupils slows for a time. The work that is given to the most able Year 2 pupils, for example, is sometimes not significantly more challenging than that given to those of average ability. Their understanding of 'forces' for instance, is not always extended significantly beyond that of the majority of pupils. At times, teaching requires Year 6 pupils to work at the same level regardless of their abilities and at such times this restricts the progress of some. Good links with design and technology include making a 'steady hand game' using electricity and finding out which colours are best for making a coat to wear in the dark.
65. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. There are effective systems for recording how well individual pupils are progressing. However, test results are not always carefully analysed to compare how well differing groups of pupils are doing, including comparing the achievements of boys and girls. There is a good focus



on developing important practical skills that is having a positive effect on learning and attitudes.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not make sufficient use of its resources to develop pupils' skills quickly enough. As a result standards are below average by the end of Year 6 and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- There have been good improvements to resources since the last inspection but standards have not risen quickly enough.
- ICT is not linked effectively to other subjects to support learning, particularly where there are identified weaknesses in standards.

### Commentary

66. Pupils reach expected standards by the end of Year 2 and their achievement is satisfactory. They know how to program a floor robot and use the computer for word processing and art work, though some are unsure about how to save their work on a computer and later retrieve it. Infrequent use of resources means that by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 most pupils fail to reach the standards expected for their age. Insufficient access to computers, to more demanding control technology resources and to sensory equipment, prevents many pupils from doing as well as they should. Since the last inspection the school has done well to provide a computer room equipped with enough computers for a whole class to work together. The length of time between lessons, however, is often unsuitably long for many pupils to remember what they have learned before, to practise and refine their new skills and to make the progress of which they are capable. Some Year 6 pupils, for example, do not recall how to save their work on spreadsheets because of the time lapse since the previous lesson. Skills in the use of control technology, the use of sensory equipment and the ability to exchange information through email are similarly limited.
67. Although teaching is unsatisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 because it fails to promote adequate progress over time, in the lessons seen teaching and learning were satisfactory. There was little direct teaching to be observed during the inspection because of the lack of use of the computer room. In Year 6 the teaching observed enabled pupils to learn and practise new skills successfully, such as how to enter formulae onto spreadsheets. In classrooms teachers give pupils the guidance and support they need when using computers although the computers are not used often enough.
68. The leadership and management by the new co-ordinator are satisfactory. The school has wisely appointed a teacher with the necessary knowledge of the subject to support this identified priority for development. Already, problems with the compatibility of some of the computers have been successfully resolved. Other technical problems, however, take too long to be remedied through outside support, up to a month at times. This hampers teachers' efforts to ensure effective learning. The school's plan for improvement recognises this weakness and the fact that some staff need further training to support their teaching of the subject. It also acknowledges that the assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent through the school and that additional resources are needed for specific aspects of ICT. The development plan accurately identifies the right things to do to improve provision, though the action needed to

accomplish the improvements has not been rigorous or prompt enough to bring about the necessary improvements in pupils' progress. The aim to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning, for example, has received limited action.

69. As at the last inspection, attainment in different aspects of ICT is uneven and the same areas of weakness, for example control technology and the application of ICT in enhancing the quality of pupils' writing, remain. The accommodation for the subject, however, is now good.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. ICT is not linked well enough to other subjects to support learning. The school has rightly begun to improve these links and there are some effective examples. Word processing includes opportunities for changing the way pupils present text, and for exploring different colours, sizes and styles of font. There are too few chances, however, for them to draft and edit their written work to improve the quality of its content. Consequently ICT has too little impact on the school's identified priority to improve the structure of pupils' writing. While, in science, Year 6 pupils make good use of a microscope connected to a computer to look at germinating seeds, opportunities in other aspects of the subject, such as recording work in a range of ways, are limited. Although ICT is sometimes used to support pupils' work in mathematics, as when Year 3 pupils learn about division, teachers do not plan to use it systematically in many aspects of the subject. Pupils research the Ancient Greeks in history using ICT and they record recycled materials in their geography work. In both subjects, however, opportunities are not sufficiently comprehensive and planned.

## HUMANITIES

71. **Religious education** is the subject of a separate inspection organised by the diocese of Blackburn. Only one lesson in **geography** was observed. Examination of pupils' work in **geography** indicates suitable coverage of both human and physical geography. Written work is generally presented well and carefully illustrated with maps, plans and pictures. Too little use is made of ICT to support learning in the subject.

### History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of imaginative teaching and meaningful experiences.
- Inspirational teaching in Year 2 resulted in excellent learning and achievement.
- Pupils extend speaking and listening well, but opportunities to improve writing and computer skills are variable.

### Commentary

72. Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress and standards were judged to be satisfactory. Provision has improved in response to the national guidance on 'Excellence and Enjoyment in the Curriculum'. Activities are more practical so that pupils learn through first-hand experience. Pupils in all classes confidently use different sources such as photographs, text, video and interesting objects as they question and reason about the past. Speaking and listening are actively promoted; for example, pupils discussed why they thought that the Tudors shown in a painting were wealthy. This was successfully extended as they dramatised a meeting between poor and wealthy Tudors. Talking to pupils and studying examples of their work indicate that overall teaching and learning are good. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and encourage good links with other subjects. This was so when pupils investigated Roman artefacts and used their scientific knowledge of materials to determine their use.

73. Good use is made of visits and visitors to make learning interesting. Pupils have visited Smithill Hall and taken part in a working day at Clitheroe Castle, experiencing life in the past. An appreciation of their local heritage is successfully acquired through a study of the history of Knuzden including the Accrington Pals and the prisoner of war camp at nearby Knuzden Hall. In addition to contributing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the past, these activities make a useful contribution to pupils' personal development. Boys in particular have benefited from a careful choice of topics in response to the school's concern that they were not as well motivated as girls.
74. Pupils in Year 2 made excellent gains in their knowledge and understanding of life in the past through their experiences in a 'mediaeval castle'. The teacher very successfully encouraged pupils' curiosity by asking them to close their eyes whilst she used her voice skilfully to set the scene. When pupils opened their eyes, they were bursting with excitement to experience the numerous activities available to them. As the lesson progressed, they worked in the kitchen preparing broth, made ceramic tiles, played shuttlecock and battledore, talked with a knight in armour, and worked alongside a blacksmith in his forge. In addition to thoroughly enjoying the experience they increased their knowledge and understanding at an outstanding rate.
75. While some use is made of the Internet for pupils to research their topics, this is not done regularly. Neither are computers used for pupils to present their work. Equally, the promotion of writing is variable. Some useful examples of pupils writing at length and imaginatively were seen in accounts as to why the Fire of London spread and articles in the 'Greek Guardian' comparing the ancient and modern Olympic Games. However, on some occasions there is a high dependency on worksheets where pupils all pupils have to do is fill in a missing word.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Only one lesson was seen in **art and design**, one in **design and technology**, one in **music** and two in **physical education**. It is not possible to make overall judgements about the quality of provision, teaching, learning or achievement in these subjects. The school's focus on making lessons more interesting and exciting in response to the national guidelines 'Excellence and Enjoyment in the Curriculum' and its own concern that time allocations to subjects other than English, mathematics and science were being reduced have contributed to some lively teaching. For example, in an **art and design** lesson on sculpture in Year 6, pupils' achievement was very good, as their work, built up over several weeks, began to come to fruition. Pupils had a sound understanding of the work of artists around the beginning of the 20th century, and what had inspired them. They talked about the work of Giacometti and were able to interpret his ideas in their own work. The one lesson observed in **design and technology** included several effective features that enabled the Year 1 pupils to make good progress. Teaching took care to refer the pupils back to their original designs for the vehicles that they would make. This approach kept them well focused and aware of the importance of designing. The teacher's good subject knowledge enabled her to guide pupils well and give them clear instructions so that they knew exactly what they were expected to do next to develop their vehicles. Pupils learned correct terms such as 'axle' and they had good attitudes to their learning because the practical task appealed to them. Evidence of pupils' completed work points to some good links with science, as when Year 4 pupils designed and made a night-light using their knowledge of electric circuits. Here pupils produce labelled diagrams and used a range of materials to make the finished product. The teaching of **music** is benefiting from an audit and an action

plan for its improvement. The co-ordinator has, through her own skilful teaching, shown what can be done and is passing on her expertise to her colleagues. In her lesson, pupils had a good grasp how to compose ostinato accompaniments with tuned and un-tuned percussion to complement their singing. Even those pupils who were hardest to engage in other lessons took part with real interest. Pupils sang well and with enjoyment in this lesson and in school worship. Pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder and boys, girls, pupils with physical disabilities and pupils from minority groups within the school have responded with enthusiasm. The school is currently working with the local education authority to provide instrumental teaching. Parents are keen to see the process come to fruition but are anxious about the costs involved. The effective teaching of physical education in the two lessons seen, gymnastics in Year 3 and dance in Year 2, also shows the school's commitment to making lessons interesting. Good use was made of the large gymnastic apparatus and in dance there were imaginative links with literature and history, which inspired pupils to make the most of the dragon theme. Substantial remodelling of the building and better resources have contributed well to improvements in provision for physical education.

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

77. Only one lesson in personal, social and health education was observed. The school has given careful thought to the introduction of a taught programme in all classes in Years 3 to 6. The programme includes education about racism, sex and relationships, the misuse of drugs and other substances, healthy eating, feelings and emotions. Children in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 benefit from opportunities to talk about aspects of this programme appropriate to their age during regular informal discussions with their teacher (circle time). Even the youngest children know that fruit and vegetables are good for them and that they should try to eat five portions a day. Pupils are enthusiastic about what the school provides in terms of the weekly lessons, and about the special days provided by outside experts (see the curriculum section above). Older pupils said that the opportunity to talk about their feelings has helped them to cope better with problems they have encountered outside school. The school's provision contributes well to attitudes and relationships in the school and to pupils' understanding of their responsibilities.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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