

INSPECTION REPORT

LOWERCROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bury

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105295

Headteacher: Mrs J Boardman

Lead inspector: Mr A Markham

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th March 2005

Inspection number: 267252

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 249

School address: Ashington Drive
Bury
Lancashire
Postcode: BL8 2TS

Telephone number: 0161 761 2798
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Ken Airey

Date of previous inspection: 28 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lowercroft Primary School is about the same size as most other primary schools with 249 boys and girls aged from four to eleven years. Classes are generally organised according to age with some mixed age classes. The socio-economic circumstances of the area served by the school are better than elsewhere. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools. The number of pupils with special educational needs is well below what is usually found and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below national figures. The school has few pupils for whom English is not the mother tongue and the proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is low. Mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission is below average. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is average, with relatively few lower ability pupils.

The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy School status and received an achievement award for excellence in the three consecutive years 2000-2002. It was chosen by the *Sunday Times* as State Primary School of the Year in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1390	Mr A Markham	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship English as an additional language
32661	Mr P Hopkins	Lay inspector	
30398	Mr C Scola	Team inspector	English Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs
16773	Mrs R Arora	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. Teaching very effectively engages all pupils so that they achieve very well and attain very high standards. Parents have extremely positive views of the school. Pupils like the school, have excellent attitudes to learning and their behaviour is excellent. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Her drive and commitment have successfully created a hard-working and committed team.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The curriculum is very good and is enriched by a very wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Promotion of pupils' personal development is outstanding.
- The school caters for the needs of all its pupils very well, including those with special educational needs.
- Links with parents are very good and support learning well.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The weaknesses identified have been addressed very successfully. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained at a very high level. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved and standards are now well above those expected. Standards have also improved in art and design and design and technology. The quality of teaching has improved and is significantly better than last reported. Curriculum planning has improved and a very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities is presented to pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is very good. Most children enter the school with average levels of attainment, with relatively few lower ability children. Children in the reception class make good progress and, by the time they enter Year 1, virtually all attain the expected standards and some attain standards above those expected in the six areas of learning. Pupils continue to achieve very well in Years 1 and 2. The standards attained in reading by pupils in Year 2 over the last four years have been very high and often in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. Standards in writing and mathematics have generally been well above average, but they dipped in 2004 because the group of pupils contained a larger than usual number with special learning needs. The standards of the current Year 2 pupils are

well above average and they are set once more to attain high standards in all three subjects.

At Year 6, test results have been exceptionally high during the last four years. In mathematics and science performance has consistently been in the top five per cent of all schools nationally as indicated by the A* grading, and in English it has been well above average in two years and in the top five per cent of schools in the others. Comparisons with the performance in similar schools have also been as impressive. A feature of these results has been the high number of pupils who attain the higher Level 5 and the fact that throughout this period all pupils have consistently attained the expected Level 4. The present Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are well above those expected. In other subjects standards are at least in line with those expected for pupils of this age, and in art and design, design and technology and religious education they are above those expected.

Pupils' personal qualities are excellent. They relate very well to one another and to the adults in the school. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils' behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. They have very positive attitudes towards their work and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is very high.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. Examples of very good lessons were seen throughout the school and there is some excellent teaching in the Year 6 class. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and know their pupils well and, as a result, lessons are very well planned. They make learning fun and present stimulating and challenging activities to pupils. Good links between subjects enable pupils to use their high level basic skills in a range of learning situations. The end result is that pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning, participate in lessons with lively enthusiasm and work hard. Assessment procedures are very good, but marking does not always give pupils clear pointers for improvement.

The curriculum is very good. A variety of school visits and visitors, and a very wide range of extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' experiences and motivate them as learners. Provision for children in the reception class is good overall, but there is no dedicated outdoor play area. Pupils are very well cared for. Their progress in learning is carefully monitored in order to plan appropriate support and guidance and a detailed action plan has been drawn up for improving the health of pupils that gives close attention to healthy eating and the development of physical activities. Support staff are used very effectively to ensure that the differing needs of pupils are catered for and equality of opportunity is consequently very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She presents a very positive role model, motivates staff well and has created a committed team approach within the school. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. Procedures for school self-evaluation are good and information is used very effectively to inform strategic planning. Governors have a very good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, fulfil their responsibilities very well and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school in very high regard and are very pleased with the education received by their children. Pupils have very positive views about the school, enjoy taking on responsibility and feel that the school council is very effective in enabling them to contribute to school life.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no significant areas of weakness; however, the most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Develop a dedicated outdoor play area for children under five.
- Ensure that a more consistent approach is made to the marking of pupils' work in order that it gives pointers for development.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall standards in the school are well above average. Pupils enjoy their learning and achievement throughout the school is very good. By the end of Year 2 standards are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement throughout the school in English, mathematics and science is very good; children enter the school with average levels of attainment, and greatly exceed national levels by the time they leave.
- Standards in national tests at Year 6 have been maintained at a very high level over the last four years.
- Pupils do very well to reach well above average standards in ICT and above average standards in art and design, design and technology and religious education.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve very well.

Commentary

1. At Year 2 results have generally been very good over the last four years, although performance dipped in 2004 because the group of pupils contained a higher than usual number with special learning needs. During this period the standards attained by pupils in the tests at Year 6 have been very high. In mathematics and science performance has been in the top five per cent of schools in all four years and in English in two of those years and well above average in the others. This is the result of very good teaching and strong leadership that give a determined focus to ensuring that all pupils enjoy their learning and achieve at high levels.
2. In 2004, test results at the end of Year 2 were well above average in reading, but only average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessment shows that the standards attained by pupils in science were well above average. The school has taken positive action to ensure that this group of pupils receive additional support and as a result there are clear signs that their achievement is improving markedly. Similarly the school is aware that results in mathematics at Year 2 have been on a downward trend in recent years and has taken determined action to redress this situation.

This performance in tests is shown in the table below.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.8 (18.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.2 (16.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.7 (17.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. At Year 6, over the last four years the school's performance in tests has been impressive compared to both national averages and results in similar schools. In 2004 test results were maintained at a high level. Performance in mathematics and science was again in the top five per cent of schools both nationally and compared with similar schools. In English, standards were well above national averages and those in similar schools. A major factor in this performance is the large number of pupils who attain the higher Level 5, reflecting the school's close attention to ensuring that all pupils are challenged at a high level. Another notable feature of the school's performance is that in each of the last four years all pupils have achieved the expected Level 4. In particular, the progress made by some pupils with special learning needs has been impressive as a result of the close attention given to meeting their needs. In 2004 the school successfully achieved the challenging targets it had set for attainment at both Level 4 and the higher Level 5. This excellent performance in tests is reflected in the average points score table below. An indication of the school's performance is given by comparing the school's average point score for mathematics with that nationally. The broad average is that pupils gain one point every term. The table shows that pupils at the school do very well. In 2004, pupils nationally averaged 27.0 points but at Lowercroft Primary School, they averaged 31.5 points. On average, pupils were therefore 4.5 terms ahead of pupils nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.1 (30.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	31.5 (31.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	33.0 (32.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. When children join the school in the reception class, attainment varies but overall is average compared with that expected for children of this age. Because of the effective teaching they receive, children make good progress in all areas of learning and, by the time they enter Year 1, most attain the expected standards in all the areas of learning and exceed them in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development.
5. In Years 1 to 6 current standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is very good. They make very good progress throughout the school because there is an excellent learning ethos. Pupils consequently have excellent attitudes to learning. They have very well developed basic skills in English and mathematics and apply these very well across the curriculum. They have a very good understanding of scientific methodology and their knowledge of a wide range of topics is very good. Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement in the standards pupils attain in ICT and standards are now well above average. Pupils enjoy the subject and make very effective use of their skills in other subjects.
6. Above average standards are being reached in a number of other subjects, for example art and design, design and technology and religious education. In other subjects standards are average. There is a determined approach to improving standards and very close attention is given to meeting the learning needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, these pupils make very good progress and are achieving very well in relation to their prior attainment. The gifted and talented pupils are challenged at

a high level and consequently they achieve very well. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are achieving as well as their peers due to the sensitive support they receive. In the inspection, no difference in achievement between boys and girls was noticed. The school's very strong commitment to inclusion ensures that pupils of all ability levels achieve very well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very positive about all aspects of school life and their behaviour is excellent.
- The high levels of attendance support pupils' learning and development.
- The high emphasis given to pupils' personal and social development creates very mature attitudes to relationships and learning.

Commentary

7. Pupils like coming to school and they have a very positive attitude to all aspects of school life. They get on well with each other and all the staff. The excellent behaviour in class supports an atmosphere where lessons are interesting and fun and pupils are keen to learn. Playtimes and lunchtimes are relaxed and pupils socialise and play very well together. Pupils relate to adults in a mature way and are keen to discuss the lessons and activities they enjoy. They have a pride in their school and this is particularly evident when they sing the school song enthusiastically.
8. The school actively supports the social and personal development of the pupils. This is an integral element of the school ethos and is evident in all aspects of school life. In addition to timetabled personal, social and health education lessons, personal development is a key part of circle time¹ and lessons such as art and design and religious education. Good citizenship and positive relationships with others are the subject of assemblies where good and positive behaviour by pupils is recognised by the whole school. Pupils are encouraged to play a major part in assemblies, for example by saying the prayer or by explaining the theme of the assembly. This gives pupils responsibility and confidence. Children in the reception class are on course to exceed the early learning goals for personal and social education by the end of the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate helpful, caring attitudes towards others' difficulties and a clear awareness of the difference between right and wrong. They are generous in their charitable fund-raising activities. School plays, sport, visits and a residential visit all make a significant contribution to the personal development and maturity of pupils and the positive relationship between pupils and staff.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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¹ A time when pupils sit together in a circle and discuss issues and concerns.

School data	2.6
National data	5.1

School data	0.0
National data	0,4

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

9. The level of attendance is very high compared with other schools and this high level has been consistent in recent years. The school takes every opportunity to promote good attendance through its information to parents. The importance of not taking pupils out of school for holidays is emphasised. Effective use is made of a computerised system to track attendance and identify pupils who have a higher than average absence rate. The school then sends letters to parents to inform them of the situation and ask for reasons why. Punctuality is very good. The vast majority of pupils arrive promptly for school and only a small number arrive slightly late. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good and an enriched curriculum is provided. Pupils are cared for very well by staff. There are very good links with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good overall. Pupils' learning mirrors the very good teaching. Pupils are well-motivated and enthusiastic learners. The procedures for formal assessment and the uses of assessment information to inform teachers' planning are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In all age groups, strategies used to encourage and engage pupils' attention are very successful.
- Teachers and teaching assistants expect and receive high standards of behaviour and co-operation from pupils, which supports collaborative learning highly effectively.
- Arrangements to ensure that pupils of all backgrounds, ethnicity and prior attainments receive equally strong opportunities to learn are very good.
- Formal assessment procedures are very good, but marking of pupils' work does not always guide them on how they can improve.

Commentary

10. The proportions of good and very good teaching observed during the inspection have increased significantly since the previous inspection and there is some excellent teaching. This contributes directly to the pupils' very good achievement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (8%)	20 (51%)	12 (31%)	4 (10%)	0	0	0

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

11. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and often very good and impacts effectively on children's learning, especially in personal, social and emotional development. Teachers and support staff have warm relationships with children and plan their lessons well to make learning interesting.
12. Teaching has many strong features. In most lessons, teachers' very good subject knowledge is demonstrated in the way they explain new ideas and inspire and encourage pupils to answer fully or ask challenging questions. Teachers are very good at engaging pupils and helping them to concentrate on their learning. Planning of lessons is consistently very good and ensures that lessons are lively and stimulating. The learning outcomes in the majority of lessons are clear and specific and referred back to at the end of the lesson to reinforce learning. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants are quick to praise and encourage pupils for their good efforts. These strategies help to motivate pupils and securely support their acquisition of skills and knowledge. Teaching assistants contribute strongly to pupils' learning through well-focused group and individual support. They are well trained and have many strategies at their disposal to keep pupils busy and working hard. Teachers' expectations in terms of pupils' work are high across the school, and often excellent in classes with older pupils. They present many opportunities for pupils to collaborate with each other and as a result pupils work well together and share ideas sensibly.

13. Teachers give a high emphasis to the teaching of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy and, as a result, pupils make very good progress in these areas. They make good use of resources to ensure that tasks are interesting and challenging and links with other subjects are used effectively.
14. Teachers are skilled in adapting lessons to meet pupils' different learning requirements, including those with special educational needs. Lesson plans clearly indicate the skills that pupils need to develop in order to learn effectively. As a result, learning is thorough and pupils' achievements are very good.
15. There has been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching in ICT since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is now very good. In all other subjects inspected in depth, including religious education, teaching is of good quality and supports good overall learning and achievement.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are identified in good time. A suitable programme of learning is planned and work is very well matched to the pupils' needs. Very good use is made of skilled teaching assistants to support these pupils and they deliver programmes of learning that are very well targeted to pupils' needs. The targets that are set for pupils are highly relevant and address all areas of the curriculum including managing relevant aspects of behaviour.
17. Formal assessment arrangements are very good. Assessment information is used very effectively to ensure that planning reflects pupils' current levels of understanding. However, the quality of teachers' marking, although positive, for instance in its use of house points, does not sufficiently guide pupils in how to improve further.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good and meets all statutory requirements. It is broad, balanced and well planned and contains a range of interesting and exciting learning opportunities. There is a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities to enrich the curriculum. Accommodation is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ethos of the school ensures that all groups of pupils are fully included in the experiences it offers.
- Visits into the local community and further afield enrich many subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good.
- Children in the Foundation Stage receive a good start to their school life.

Commentary

18. The school provides a broad and rich curriculum for its pupils. Planning has greatly improved since the last inspection and subjects such as design and technology and physical education have greatly benefited from the implementation of detailed action plans, which have improved provision. Resources and provision in ICT have also greatly improved leading to much higher standards in ICT across the school. Older pupils now have the opportunity to learn French. Curriculum planning is very thorough and interesting activities are developed in all subjects. Very effective links have been created between all subjects with a very good emphasis on promoting literacy,

numeracy, science and ICT skills. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

19. Close attention is given to ensuring equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The learning needs of pupils are diagnosed and analysed from a very early age and careful attention is given to planning appropriate learning programmes for individual pupils. Teaching assistants, who work very closely with the teachers, play a vital and skilled role in supporting these pupils who consequently make very good gains in their learning and achieve very well. Close attention is also given to ensuring that the gifted and talented pupils who have been identified are given suitably challenging programmes of work. Similarly the few pupils with English as an additional language are provided with activities and support from which they benefit well.
20. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. Activities in all areas of learning are interesting and linked to national guidance. These youngest children receive a good start to their school life. There are ambitious plans to improve the provision of outdoor play facilities, which the school has recognised as an issue.
21. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. There is a very strong emphasis on developing the pupils' personal and social skills, which permeates throughout the whole school. Pupils work collaboratively and independently in lessons and class discussions develop their understanding of themselves, relationships and the world around them. All teachers follow a well-structured programme that focuses on keeping safe and developing a healthy life style. The programme includes sex education and the misuse of drugs, which are well covered and dealt with by the school. One of the results is that the school has achieved the Healthy School Award.
22. A very wide range of interesting and exciting opportunities enriches the curriculum. Opportunities for every pupil to take part in activities in the arts include learning to play a musical instrument and taking part in various music and drama festivals and workshops. A very wide range of physical and sporting activities is presented to pupils outside school hours. These include fencing, 'fit kids', swimming, street dance and orienteering clubs as well as the more traditional football, netball, rugby and cross-country running. Pupils take part in theatre workshops, give public performances, go on residential adventure trips, visit a whole range of places as part of their work in humanities, science, and literacy and make extensive use of the local area.
23. Very good use is made of visitors to extend pupils' all-round education. The school has developed good links with other local schools and the school to which most pupils transfer at age eleven. The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teaching and support staff and the well-maintained indoor and outdoor accommodation is used very effectively to promote learning.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is very good. Pupils' involvement through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent relationships in school support a happy atmosphere and a positive learning environment.
- The school has a thorough approach to care and safety that ensures a safe environment for the pupils.
- The Healthy Schools initiative supports the welfare of pupils.
- The school council provides an opportunity for pupils to express their views and play a significant part in the life of the school.

Commentary

24. Pupils have excellent relationships with their teachers and support staff. As a result, pupils know that they will be listened to, that what they have to say is important and that they can rely on and trust the adults in the school. This effectively gives pupils confidence and reinforces the warm and friendly atmosphere which exists in the school. The pupils are consequently very keen to answer questions and participate in class, are keen to volunteer to carry out tasks and willingly take responsibility. This relationship is strengthened by school trips and a residential visit where staff and pupils go to an outward-bound centre and take part in a range of teambuilding activities such as rafting and climbing together. These experiences develop pupils' social skills and build trust and understanding between staff and pupils.
25. There are very good arrangements for personal safety and effective child protection procedures. Everyone in the school community works together to ensure that pupils are secure and very well cared for. As a result pupils are very confident in turning to their teachers and other staff when they are upset or need help and the headteacher leads the way in the great care she shows for pupils as individuals. There are regular health and safety inspections by the governors and headteacher. The child protection policy is very detailed and all staff have received child protection and first aid training.
26. Teachers use the school's very good assessment procedures well to monitor pupils' academic progress, especially in English, mathematics and science. They use the information this provides to highlight any extra support that they should offer to individuals. Very good support is given to those pupils with special educational needs and parents agree that as a result of this their children make very good progress.
27. The school has received the Healthy Schools Award and is encouraging pupils to eat healthy food. The school has a detailed action plan for improving the health of pupils that includes information and consultation with parents about healthy eating and the development of physical activities. These include after-school sport such as cross-country running, football and fencing and a 'fit kids' class before school. The school nurse talks to pupils about personal hygiene and the older pupils about sex education and works closely with staff to provide training if a child has a particular medical need.
28. The views of the pupils are important in the school and are taken seriously. The school council is making a significant contribution to school life. Pupils make many good suggestions; for example, they have contributed to organising play times and have developed 'friendship stops' for pupils that have no one to play with and they ensure that the younger pupils are happy. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to take responsibility and make an increasing contribution to their school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Very good links with parents make a significant impact on pupils' learning and personal development. The links with other schools and the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a very positive view of the school.
- The school provides parents with an extensive range of information about the school and the progress of their children.
- The partnership with 'Jay Jays' provides parents with an extended day facility that shares the ethos of the school.

Commentary

29. The parents have a very positive view of the school. They appreciate the school's commitment to working with parents and the systematic way that it works to promote the partnership. They feel that the school is very well led and managed and standards and expectations are high. They are very pleased that the school gives a high priority to pupils' personal development as well as to the attainment of high academic standards. The school welcomes and values the very good help which parents provide. Many parents, as well as grandparents and members of the governing body, help in the classrooms or with practical jobs. The Parent Teacher Association plays an important role in both school and community by arranging well-supported social and fund-raising events.
30. The quality of information made available to parents is excellent. Parents are kept very well informed about school matters and the progress of their children. The school brochure and the governors' annual report provide detailed information about school policies and performance. The brochure clearly sets out the ethos and values of the school together with the responsibilities of the parents to support learning in the school. Pupils' progress reports contain clearly written information and the school regularly sends newsletters to parents about school activities. Parents are consulted about important issues such as homework policy and healthy eating in order to develop a partnership approach. There is a very good school website which gives details of the school ethos, activities in the school and school performance. The website has very useful links to information about the Parent Teacher Association and websites that parents would find useful in supporting their children's education. In addition to the regular parents' evenings, the school has an open door policy and parents feel they can raise any issues with the staff at any time and receive a helpful response.
31. The school has forged good links with the local cluster of schools, especially in sporting activities held between them. There are close links with two nearby secondary schools, enabling older pupils to feel confident to transfer to secondary education. There is a close partnership with an independent provider of pre and after-school care (Jay Jays) and a large number of pupils use the provision every day. The children clearly enjoy being there and the relationship with staff is very good. Many parents, particularly those that have full-time jobs, find this facility to be very useful to both them and their children.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that the needs of all children are met and that they achieve high standards. Governance is very good.

Governors have a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and meet their responsibilities very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's strong leadership gives a very clear educational direction to the school.
- The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff.
- There is a very effective team approach within the staff with a strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Self-review procedures are good and the performance of pupils is analysed closely to inform decisions.
- Governors are committed and fulfil their responsibilities very well. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Finances are managed very effectively and there are clear long-term plans for the funds carried over.

Commentary

32. The headteacher provides very strong, enthusiastic leadership. Her very clear vision, hard work and determined approach to improving the work of the school, present an excellent role model for staff. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. The high quality of relationships in the school creates a happy, hard-working atmosphere and there is a strong team approach within all staff. Close attention is given to inclusion and ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met. Whilst a strong emphasis is given to the achievement of high academic standards, great emphasis is also placed on ensuring that pupils develop as responsible and caring individuals. The result is a very positive school ethos, which successfully enables all pupils to experience success and achieve their full personal, social and academic potential.
33. The school runs smoothly because it is very well managed. School self-evaluation procedures are good and give a clear steer to improvement planning; as a result school improvement planning is extensive and thorough. A wide range of assessment procedures is used to track pupils' progress throughout their time in the school. Data is analysed carefully and information used effectively to plan action to further improve provision. Performance management is used well. The governors set challenging targets for the headteacher and rigorously monitor her performance. The performance management of all people in the school is well established and good use is made of in-service training to support staff development. For example, training in ICT has developed teachers' skills and they are now much more confident and skilled in teaching the subject. Staff are deployed well and their impact on learning is analysed. Staff induction procedures are very good. The requirements of the remodelling of the workforce legislation have been implemented effectively and there are clear plans to give teachers the required planning, preparation and assessment time in the near future.
34. Leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. The school deploys its reasonable number of support staff well to meet the educational needs of pupils with special learning needs and some gifted and talented pupils. The co-ordinator has a very high level of personal expertise and there

are very good systems for monitoring and recording pupils' progress. This makes her particularly effective in supporting the teachers.

35. The governing body has a wide range of expertise. Governors monitor the work of the school closely, have a good awareness of its strengths and weaknesses and carry out their statutory duties very well. The chair of governors meets with the headteacher on a regular basis and is very involved in the life of the school. Other governors are linked to a class and this ensures that they are well informed in order to both challenge and support the school, which they do very well. This clear awareness of the work of the school enables them to take a very strong role in strategic management. Governors are knowledgeable about educational initiatives and have a strong desire to see pupils achieve high standards.
36. The finances available to the school are used well to meet clear educational priorities. Financial planning and control systems are very good and spending is closely linked to priorities in the school development plan. The governors have clear plans for the use of the funds carried over, including the provision of a classroom and outdoor play area for the reception class. Governors work closely with the headteacher and school administrator to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of financial decisions in relation to the impact they have on pupils' learning and ensure that the principles of best value are applied. The last financial audit showed that the finances are well managed. The few recommendations for improvement have since been addressed.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	542745
Total expenditure	531266
Expenditure per pupil	2,620

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	6001
Balance carried forward to next year	17480

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

37. All children are well prepared for their start in the reception classes, with frequent visits beforehand. There are good links with parents, who feel welcome in school and consider that they receive good information. At the time of inspection, six of the comparatively older five year olds were taught in a combined reception and Year 1 class. When children start in the reception their skills and knowledge are around average for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, all children have made good progress and achieved well as a result of good teaching. Growth in confidence, maturity and communication is considerable. What is taught is carefully planned and based on national guidance. Children are provided with a suitable range of interesting activities. Their attitudes to learning are very good and contribute much to the overall achievement.
38. The reception classes are well managed. Staff plan and work closely together and there is a good approach to monitoring children's progress on a regular basis. The class teachers and the teaching assistants are fully aware of the principles that underpin quality teaching for young children and there is a strong emphasis on teamwork. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The outdoor accommodation places some restrictions on the delivery of the curriculum because there is no dedicated outdoor play area, but the staff work very hard to overcome this difficulty. The school is well aware of the improvements needed and appropriate plans are in place.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and most exceed the relevant goals by the end of the reception year.
- Very good teaching develops a high level of self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning in children.
- The warm and pleasant relationships between all adults and children result in a very supportive learning environment.
- Children's' attitudes and behaviour are very good.

Commentary

39. A high priority is given to the children's personal, social and emotional development. By the end of the reception year, almost all children achieve very well and exceed the expected goals for their age. All adults are very good role models, helping children to form positive relationships and care for others. Children are encouraged to be independent and make choices about activities. They settle down quickly and feel both happy and secure. Children value the rewards they receive for good work and behaviour and this boosts their confidence and self-esteem. They co-operate very well with each other and show enthusiasm and enjoyment in what is provided for them.

40. Teaching is very good. A wide range of activities is planned with clear learning outcomes. Children's play and responses are supported and extended sensitively through good questioning. The staff in both classes create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels very special.
41. All children enjoy coming to school and take pride in their achievements. They are attentive and eager to learn. They know routines well, settle to tasks easily and behave sensibly at all times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the good teaching of basic skills.
- Children have well-planned opportunities to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- A home reading system is well established.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are good. The literacy lessons, which are modified to suit the very young, effectively promote the development of early reading, writing and spelling skills. The well-planned activities provide interest and enjoyment. Close attention is given to the development of the children's conversational skills. Children talk about their experiences interestingly and develop new vocabulary in all aspects of their work. Reading and writing are promoted well. Children handle books carefully and know how these are organised. They are beginning to associate sounds with words and letters and all are encouraged to take books home. The regular and very comprehensive comments in the reading diaries indicate that the home and school partnership effectively supports children's achievements in reading. Most children show good control of writing instruments and a few higher attainers put together short and simple sentences. Opportunities such as writing 'news' in small groups are suitably planned and supported by staff. While this provides a focus for learning to construct a sentence, it does not give children enough stimulus or freedom to try out their own ideas in words independently. Nevertheless children, as a result of the teachers' hard work and their own willingness to learn, improve rapidly in relation to their capabilities and achieve well. By the end of the reception year, almost all children achieve the early learning goals² and some exceed them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of number is emphasised in a good range of situations.
- Good teaching ensures that learning is secure in all aspects of mathematical development.

² Early learning goals: The standards expected by the time children complete the reception year.

Commentary

43. Almost all children achieve well as a result of good teaching. They attain the expected levels by the start of Year 1. Some children, including those in the mixed age group, exceed the early learning goals. Resources are used well and this helps children to develop their mathematical understanding and vocabulary. This was noted in some group sessions, where real items of fruit and vegetables were used to make comparisons of 'heavier than'/'lighter than' objects. Teachers carefully plan and use a good range of teaching methods. The learning is made interesting by linking it with fun topics, for example making repeat patterns with natural materials during the autumn season. The use of number rhymes, games and songs is enjoyed by all and reinforces counting, recognition and understanding of numbers. Children are encouraged to apply what they know to practical problems, for example counting the number of children at registration and working out how many are not there or how many are staying to lunch. Most children in the reception class correctly identify and put into order numbers up to 10 and many go up to 20. The higher attaining children identify numbers that are more than or less than other numbers with ease and have begun to record simple addition within 10.
44. Children recognise basic shapes and gain knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. Some very confidently use their basic mathematical vocabulary to describe objects by position, shape, size, colour and quantity. Children enjoy working with large and small construction equipment, for example lego and mobilo. There is effective adult involvement in children's activities and useful timely assessments are made of the individual children's progress.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are keen and eager to find out about the world around them.
- Children achieve well because both teaching and learning are good.
- Resources are used well to arouse children's interest and broaden their knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

45. Children attain the expected levels and achieve well because of the effective teaching. The staff have a good understanding of this age group and present a wide range of opportunities to learn through observation and investigation. Children enjoy learning and remain totally absorbed, especially in the free-flow activities involving role-play or making models out of construction materials. Resources of a good range and quality are used effectively to support learning. Interesting and challenging activities such as collaborative work with bubble sculptures and making a long dark tunnel out of large boxes and using torches to explore 'space', make learning fun. Adults ask well-constructed questions that lead children to make discoveries, formulate ideas and increase their general knowledge. There is effective adult intervention in activities and encouragement for children to explore ideas. For example, children were effectively helped to explore how the light reflected from bubbles makes a rainbow and

consequently learned to name all the colours. Children are encouraged to talk about their experiences and develop good vocabulary. They make good use of computers when counting and ordering numbers and almost all children are developing good control in the use of the mouse. Some children are on course to exceed the goals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and contributes to children making very good progress and achieving very well.
- A range of small tools and materials is used to develop hand and eye co-ordination effectively.
- The outdoor play facilities are limited.

Commentary

46. The children learn quickly and achieve very well because of the very good teaching and well-planned activities. Nearly all children exceed the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Staff work hard to ensure that the outdoor provision is not unduly affected by the lack of a fenced area. Outdoor activities are regularly planned and the infant playground is often used to allow children the opportunity to use large and small equipment outside. Children move about with good body control, showing understanding of the spatial needs of others. They are confident and well co-ordinated in the use of various tools and equipment. In the hall children have a regular opportunity for movement with music and use the large and small floor apparatus. In two very good lessons, older children were effectively taught the skills of balancing and travelling in various ways, and the younger children learnt to master ball skills of throwing, bouncing and catching. In both lessons, children moved imaginatively, demonstrating good body control and awareness of space. They carefully followed instructions and showed growing awareness of safety. Children enjoy physical education lessons and respond very positively to the praise and encouragement that they are given. In the classroom, the available resources are effectively used. Children use pens and scissors safely to draw, colour, cut out and shape.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very positive attitudes to learning.
- There are not enough stimulating opportunities for developing imaginative role-play.

Commentary

47. Teaching and learning are good overall. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children achieve the expected early learning goals in this area. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for creativity. Children draw, paint and make collages. They are given opportunities to explore colour and texture when working with different

materials. Although they are given some scope to make their own choices and use their own ideas, in general there are limited opportunities for imaginative play. For example, there are 'dressing up' clothes to help children use their imagination and create their own role-play, but during the inspection very few children were seen using these. Children enjoy making music and they are presented with well-planned opportunities to sing and clap favourite songs and express enjoyment. They have a good repertoire of songs, which they sing from memory. In a very good lesson, the teacher used her own expertise very effectively to develop children's listening skills and their ability to match musical sounds to different creatures. Children worked with total involvement when using musical instruments and investigating different sound effects. The teacher in this lesson had high expectations of children's responses and kept constant checks to ensure that all children were fully involved.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very good teaching leads to very high standards.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well because they consistently work very hard and have excellent attitudes to learning.
- There are very good links with other areas of the curriculum.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- A very well organised library enables pupils access to a good range of fiction and non-fiction books.
- The quality of handwriting of most pupils in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

48. Standards throughout the school are very high. In Year 6 more than half the pupils attain at the higher Level 5 and virtually all pupils attain at the national average. In Year 2 attainment is better than in 2004 because a greater proportion of pupils are now attaining at the higher levels and no pupils attain below average. Throughout the school, the very high motivation and enthusiasm of the pupils explain why they all make very good progress, achieve so well and attain such high standards.
49. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking skills. In all year groups, most pupils speak very confidently. This is particularly noticeable during whole-class discussions when the teachers' questioning skilfully addresses all abilities and results in all pupils being involved. Teachers value what their pupils have to say and the pupils respect each other and listen very well to one another and their teachers. Drama workshops, visits to and from theatre groups, and the many opportunities the school gives to develop self-confidence, whether speaking in assemblies or performing publicly in a school production, ensure that all pupils achieve very well in this area of literacy.
50. Standards in reading are very high because early skills are very well taught and the development of reading skills has a very high profile throughout the school. The library is very well organised and used effectively to encourage all pupils to read a range of interesting books. Parents are very closely involved in the teaching of reading and give very good support. Comprehensive reading diaries are used very effectively, particularly in the infant classes. During lessons, all pupils confidently use the skills they have been taught as they read or closely follow the texts they have been given. Very skilled and effective teaching assistants give very good support to those pupils with special educational needs, sometimes by withdrawing them for group work. By the end of Year 6, virtually all pupils are very accomplished readers who have read and are able to discuss a very wide range of traditional and modern authors, poets and playwrights.
51. The standard of pupils' written work is well above average. Pupils' writing is developed very well from the time they enter the school. They write extensively, drafting and redrafting their work, sometimes producing the finished version in word-processed form. All pupils throughout the school have many opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and for different audiences and in their work in other subjects. ICT is used very creatively to enhance presentation and standards of work are very high, such as some excellent brochures by Year 5 pupils advertising Bury's Victorian Heritage. The school has recognised that skills of handwriting need improvement and has introduced a new writing scheme. Whilst the presentation of work is generally very good, the handwriting of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is not well formed. The new scheme is effectively raising the quality of handwriting of younger pupils, but has had less impact in these two classes.
52. Across the school teaching is very good. The very detailed planning, relevant and specific lesson objectives and very fast pace of lessons ensure that teaching is very effective. These are very good improvements since the previous inspection. The excellent quality of teachers' relations with pupils and their high expectations of work and behaviour generate excellent attitudes to the subject. Where there are interactive whiteboards, these are used very effectively to promote the pupils' learning. Grammar and spelling are very well taught and pupils are motivated to improve their spellings. Teachers plan work well to take account of the pupils' abilities. Pupils with special

needs are well supported and have detailed targets for improvements and this enables them to achieve very well.

53. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, closely monitors the subject and has a very good overview of the teaching across the school. Determined action has been taken to give greater support to the current Year 3 pupils who did not attain quite such high standards as usual in the tests at Year 2. The very good assessment procedures enable pupils' progress in all aspects of the subject to be very carefully tracked. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Literacy skills are used very well across the curriculum. Much of the pupils' extended writing is carried out in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. Science and design and technology lessons also provide a very good context for writing plans, instructions and results of experiments and evaluations. Pupils make very good use of their considerable expertise in ICT to support learning in the subject. For example, they use word processing to enhance the presentation of their work and employ their skimming and scanning skills effectively when they are using the Internet for research.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good and they attain high standards due to very good teaching.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes and enjoy mathematics lessons.
- Pupils apply their well-developed mathematical skills effectively.
- Formal assessment procedures are rigorous and information is used very well to track pupils' progress and provide additional support.
- Marking is not consistently used to make developmental pointers to further improve pupils' learning.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

55. Standards throughout the school are well above average. The school has taken positive action to address the downward trend in standards in Years 1 and 2 in recent years. Standards in Year 6 have been maintained at a high level over the last four years, as shown by results in national tests. Pupils make very good progress throughout the school and are achieving very well. The more capable mathematicians are suitably challenged and a very high proportion of pupils are working at higher than expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress because of the very effective support they are given in lessons. There is no marked difference in the performance of boys and girls.
56. Pupils' very high achievement levels are a direct result of very good and often excellent teaching. Lessons are very well planned and teachers' explanations are clear and

succinct, with the result that pupils understand what they are doing and acquire new knowledge well. Excellent use is made of a range of resources to support explanations including the interactive whiteboard and laptop computers. Lessons are stimulating and a very fast pace is maintained throughout. In Year 6 in particular the pace of lessons is often electric and pupils' attention levels are most impressive. They respond to the teacher's questions eagerly and speedily apply their well-developed basic skills mentally to problems in order to answer his very challenging questions. Throughout the school, teachers' expectations are high and so pupils apply themselves well, take a pride in their work and show tremendous enthusiasm for the subject. They are highly motivated and extremely well behaved. Pupils' relationships with each other and their teachers and teaching assistants are very good. These factors, combined with the teachers' very good subject knowledge and understanding of the approaches to learning, lead to the high standards being attained.

57. Formal assessment is very good. Regular testing procedures enable pupils' attainment to be recorded and individual performance to be tracked. Teachers make effective use of this information to plan challenging work for different abilities and to ensure that teaching assistants are used well to support those pupils who need it. However, although teachers diligently mark pupils' work, not enough use is made of pointers for development to help pupils to understand where they can improve.
58. The subject is very well led and managed. The headteacher has recently taken over the co-ordination of the subject and she has ensured that effective action is taken to improve provision even further. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the subject are very well organised. She has observed lessons and monitored planning and pupils' work is scrutinised. Pupils' test results are carefully analysed and the information used very effectively to track pupils' performance and identify any who are not making the expected progress. This enables intervention to be planned effectively. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Mathematics is used very well across the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils apply mathematical skills in measuring accurately and in recording data collected in the course of investigations. In art and design, pupils make references to shapes when they design and paint pictures. Opportunities to apply mathematical skills in data handling and to practise basic skills in number are extended through the use of ICT. Opportunities for pupils to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum are also found in subjects such as design and technology, history and geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall very good teaching means that pupils achieve well and attain standards well above those expected.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes and high level of enjoyment in science lessons contribute to their very good achievements.
- Good attention is given to practical and investigative approaches.

- Marking is not always used well to help develop pupils' understanding of how they can improve.

Commentary

60. By the end of Years 2 and 6, most pupils attain well above the expected standards. Teacher assessments for Year 2 show that pupils' performance in 2004 was very good with all pupils achieving the nationally expected level, but the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was relatively lower than previous years. The performance in tests of Year 6 pupils in the last four years has been in the top five per cent of schools, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. In 2004, the percentage achieving the higher Level 5 was very high. The inspection evidence mirrors these findings.
61. Pupils' recorded work indicates a very good understanding of 'fair testing'. They learn to obtain evidence by careful observations and measurements. Pupils are encouraged to use an enquiring, critical approach to problems and develop skills in an atmosphere of enjoyment. The pupils' understanding of technical vocabulary is developed well and used consistently in most lessons. However, occasionally teachers do not do enough to adjust the activities and tasks in lessons for groups of pupils of differing capability. Photocopied worksheets, often the same for a whole class, restrict challenge and reduce opportunities for independent recording.
62. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and much attention is given in lessons to making sure that pupils are clear about what they are expected to do and what this will help them to learn. All teachers effectively use the analysis of test results to establish and address weaknesses and this has a very positive impact on standards. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are fully engaged in lessons and given very good support by teaching assistants. Several examples of good and very good practice were seen during the inspection and in one lesson teaching was excellent.
63. Pupils have excellent attitudes to the subject. They enjoy science lessons especially where there is an emphasis on practical work and this is leading to a particular increase in pupils' enquiry skills. Pupils work well together when collaborating on scientific observations or carrying out tests and experiments. In Years 1 and 2, however, whilst the recorded work indicates a very good knowledge base, there is less evidence of the developing of pupils' observational and investigative skills. The quality of teachers' marking is regular and encouraging, but not always diagnostic.
64. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and supports teachers effectively. Assessment is well organised. A review of the subject is carried out each year in order to inform the drafting of an action plan. The co-ordinator consequently has a clear view of the areas for development. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high proportion of pupils, throughout the school, attain levels well above those normally expected for their age.

- Pupils achieve very well, because teaching and learning are very good.
- The subject is well resourced and very well managed.
- Teachers make good use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

65. The standards pupils achieve in Years 2 and 6 are well above average. All groups of pupils achieve very well. In Year 6, there are very good elements of pupils' work, for example they use *Microsoft publisher* with great skill and confidence, import images from a digital camera or download information from the Internet. Pupils use computers to develop their own multimedia presentations to illustrate work on various projects across the curriculum. Pupils, including identified as having special educational needs and those from different ethnic groups, make very good progress in lessons. At the last inspection, the standards and provision for ICT were judged as satisfactory. There has been considerable progress since then, which has enhanced the overall provision and the quality of pupils' learning very well. The school now has a very well resourced computer suite, which is effectively used by all classes and standards have improved markedly. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.
66. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT is very good and sometimes excellent. Staff are generally very skilled and those who have less confidence take advantage of training and the very good support within the school to improve their expertise. Pupils are enthusiastic, very well motivated and behave well in lessons, both in the suite and when using laptops and computers in the minisuites in the shared areas. They use basic instructions very well and understand control technology programs and how these are used. Almost all pupils use computers confidently to support their learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they can enter data from a survey, create bar charts and graphs and then interpret the data to reinforce their mathematical understanding. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils efficiently created a branching database for animals or minibeasts of their choice. Year 2 pupils very confidently log on and access folders and files with ease and use the Internet with confidence and skill.

Example of outstanding practice

A Year 6 lesson, where pupils were using *Microsoft publisher* to create their own cover for a DVD.

The teacher used his considerable computer knowledge as he successfully showed pupils how to import pictures from the digital camera and the internet. Using the interactive whiteboard he showed pupils exactly the steps they needed to take and any likely trouble spots. His personal enthusiasm was infectious so that pupils were fired up with an enthusiasm to work when they went to the ICT suite. The teacher's confidence when showing the pupils how to change the size of an image and his excellent response to questions resulted in pupils being inspired and working with commitment and enjoyment. They showed very good skills and rapidly imported images, sized them to suit their cover and successfully created very attractive finished products. The lesson moved fast and the pupils rose to the challenge of the teacher's very high expectations. His excellent relationship with pupils and his ability to make learning fun resulted in lively teaching of a very high quality. He successfully generated an atmosphere which gave responsibility to the pupils for their own learning. Pupils consequently displayed very mature attitudes when working individually and in pairs and their achievement was very good.

67. The curriculum is good and well supported by the very good range of resources. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator has very good expertise and a firm grasp of the areas for future development through a constant review of the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. Very good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. In English, ICT is used well to support the development of pupils' writing skills. In mathematics, pupils use a range of software to support the development of their number skills. Effective use is made of the Internet to support learning in geography and history. Throughout the school there are very good examples of pupils' use of ICT in art and design.

HUMANITIES

69. No lessons were seen in history and only one in geography. It is therefore not possible to judge the quality of provision.

70. In **geography**, the work in pupils' books and in the one lesson seen indicates that standards are similar to those expected nationally. In the lesson observed, pupils showed very positive attitudes to work and demonstrated good acquisition of knowledge in learning the directions of a compass when studying a map of the north of England, centred on Bury. This Year 3 lesson was well planned, developed with rigour and showed good use of teacher's knowledge of the subject. Work in books indicates that pupils cover a suitable range of topics. Year 2 pupils successfully learn about buildings, the land use and people's jobs in their study of an island home linked to the story of Katie Morag and the Island of Struay. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their own locality and are able to carry out geographical enquiry using maps, plans, diagrams and graphs.

71. In **history**, pupils throughout the school generally make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of historical events and periods. Pupils in Year 2 show reasonable understanding of changes over time as they make comparisons between hospital cleanliness in the time of Florence Nightingale and now. They enjoy learning about schools 100 years ago and about famous people, for example Captain James Cook. Pupils in Year 6 show good research skills in their work for their topic on World War 2.

72. Discussions with pupils and with the co-ordinators indicate that both subjects receive reasonable attention. Pupils' work is well organised and there are clear indications that teaching in both subjects is at least good and that pupils learn well. The curriculum is well organised and effective use is made of national guidance. There is adequate coverage of the expected areas for study in both history and geography. Learning in both subjects is enhanced by visits to the local area, museums and places of interest. Very effective links are made with literacy and other subjects such as ICT, art and design and design and technology. Both subjects are well managed. There are satisfactory resources such as books and artefacts to support learning.

Religious education

The provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve standards above those expected because teaching is good.
- There is a well-developed and interesting curriculum.
- The subject is led and managed well.

Commentary

73. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved since the last inspection and are now above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. A well-planned scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus has now been drawn up which systematically develops the pupils' learning as they move through the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well.
74. There are good links with the local church for school events, productions and to support the humanities curriculum. Representatives from various Christian groups regularly visit the school and give good input into whole-school worship. There are very good links with other areas of the curriculum such as English, history and ICT, exemplified by the work resulting from pupils visit to Fountains Abbey when they spent the day as Tudor monks and subsequently researched the Internet to look for historical evidence that Jesus really existed.
75. Teaching is good and lessons are well planned and structured. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, which create a supportive learning environment where pupils and staff alike feel confident about sharing their ideas, values and beliefs. The combined expertise of the staff is well used and there is some very effective teaching by teachers with specialist expertise. All pupils behave very well and get on well with their work. Consequently opportunities for reflection are very well used and there are very good links to personal and social education.
76. Leadership and management are good, with the co-ordinator having a clear overview of the subject. The work to adapt the local syllabus to the needs of the school has been very effective and older pupils say how much they enjoy and are interested in their religious education lessons. Teachers make good use of assessment systems to track and monitor the pupils' progress.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. Only one lesson was seen in music and two lessons were seen in art and design. It is therefore not possible to judge the quality of provision in these subjects.
78. In **art and design**, pupils' work is of a good standard and indicates that they achieve well. Pupils' work is carefully done and well displayed and this creates a stimulating and aesthetically pleasing learning environment. Good use is made of the work of famous artists to develop pupils' understanding of particular techniques. The use of ICT features in much of the artwork across the school. Graphics programs, such as *Paint* and *Dazzle*, are used well to create attractive designs and repeat patterns. For example, displays of pupils' work based on Matisse's *The Snail* and symmetrical patterns based on Islamic art show very good use of the *Dazzle* program. There is a clear focus on three-dimensional work, particularly in model making with different materials.
79. There are clear indications of significant strengths in teaching. For example, in a lesson with Year 6, the teacher's very effective use of comments and questions focused the pupils' attention on the use of colour and shade to create a three-dimensional effect and, as a result, the quality of pupils' observational drawings of fruit were of high quality. Pupils' skills are developed and extended well in their learning in other subjects, such as history and geography. At the previous inspection standards in

art and design were above average and the work that is currently on display indicates that this situation has been maintained.

80. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has compiled a detailed portfolio of photographs of pupils' work and links with a nearby secondary school with arts college status are being developed. The curriculum is well planned and clear guidance is given to teachers to ensure that pupils' skills are developed progressively through the school.
81. In **music**, there has been very good progress since the previous inspection. This has largely come about because of the very good leadership of the music co-ordinator. Her own expertise enables her to develop good singing skills across the school and this was shown in some good quality and tuneful singing in a whole-school assembly. Pupils participated enthusiastically and showed very good attitudes to the subject. In the one lesson seen in a class with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, teaching was very good. The pupils achieved very well as a result of the very good subject knowledge of the teacher. She enthusiastically led the class in a lively performance of *Old Macdonald*, using her voice well to develop the quality of the singing. The pupils showed a good sense of rhythm when using percussion instruments to accompany their singing. A wide range of musical activities significantly enhances the curriculum and provides the pupils with much enjoyment. Choir and recorder clubs are well attended and a wide range of outside agencies provides support for the music curriculum. There are also very good links with other areas of the curriculum such as English and drama in whole-school productions. There is a well-designed scheme of work with good resources to support teachers with less confidence in the subject.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very well planned and carefully structured curriculum.
- Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum.
- Teaching is good with some interesting and challenging lessons.
- The leadership of the subject is good.

Commentary

82. Standards are above those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A clear scheme of work based on national guidelines has now been drawn up which systematically develops the pupils' learning as they move through the school. Resources have been considerably improved. There has also been a thorough programme of staff development to raise teachers' expertise and confidence in the subject. Specialist teaching is used very well. These are good improvements since the previous inspection.
83. Teaching is good. The new scheme of work sets out a progression of interesting projects that captures the pupils' interest. Links with other areas of the curriculum provide a good context for the pupils' learning. For example, Year 6 pupils use ICT to control model vehicles they have built themselves. Year 5 pupils have a very good understanding of different sorts of cam and use ICT in their design of a moving toy. In

Year 3, there are good links with English and science when pupils make moving monsters that use pneumatic systems. Older pupils remember particular projects they have done, such as making various pizzas, different kinds of bread and healthy sandwiches, and have good knowledge of what constitutes healthy food.

84. Leadership of the subject is good because the co-ordinator has ensured that there is now a well-structured curriculum and greatly improved resources and, as a result, standards have risen. A specialist teacher with specific expertise provides challenging and imaginative teaching for several classes. Samples of pupils' work and photographic evidence enable the co-ordinator to have a good overview of standards.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very good relationships with pupils generate excellent attitudes to the subject.
- Pupils' achievement and standards in swimming are good.
- The pupils receive a broad curriculum, which is enriched by residential visits and effective use of outside expertise for a range of games.
- Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' learning are not fully implemented throughout the school.

Commentary

85. It was not possible to judge standards at Year 6, but school records show that virtually all pupils achieve the expected requirement to swim 25 metres. In the lessons seen in Years 1, 2, 4 and 5 standards in gymnastics were generally similar to those expected for pupils of those ages, but pupils demonstrate good standards in games. Overall their achievement is good. They participate enthusiastically in competitive games and are very successful in matches with other schools.
86. Teaching is good overall with some very good teaching. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils who enjoy the subject and display excellent attitudes and behaviour in lessons. Teachers plan their lessons well and demonstrate a good understanding of the different elements which make up an effective lesson. They give good attention to health and safety, start lessons with a lively warm-up, follow with very well organised and challenging activities and end with a suitable cool down session. Learning is good because teachers present lessons in a stimulating manner and pupils consequently respond with great enthusiasm. Teachers demonstrate a good level of knowledge and skill and present very good role models to pupils when demonstrating movements and particular techniques. For example, in a lesson with Year 4, the teacher showed very good football skills when showing pupils how to pass and receive a ball. Teachers make effective use of questions and comments to challenge pupils to improve. Pupils respond well to this and put great effort into their activities in lessons.
87. The curriculum is well planned and covers all aspects of the subject. During the inspection lessons were observed in gymnastics and games, but the school undertakes all elements of the physical education curriculum. Links with a local secondary school are being developed and good use is made of external coaches. As

a result, a wide range of sporting opportunities is presented to pupils. In addition a residential visit widens the experiences presented to pupils.

88. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Physical education is a focus for attention and senior management have ensured that the co-ordinator is able to teach across the school. She consequently has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and a clear view of areas for development. For example, she is aware of the need to develop assessment and recording procedures and to incorporate lesson observation into the monitoring and evaluating of the subject. A new scheme of work and range of equipment have been purchased and training has been given to staff. This is successfully supporting the raising of standards in the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education and citizenship were sampled.

89. There is a strong, well-planned, personal, social and health education and citizenship programme and great emphasis is placed on pupils' personal development. The ethos in the school is excellent; it is warm and friendly and very conducive to developing a sense of security and well-being in pupils. Careful attention is given to ensuring that each pupil is cared for very well. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and, as a result, pupils are confident and articulate. They carry out a wide range of duties very conscientiously and demonstrate very mature and sensible approaches to life in the school. They are given many opportunities to express their views and the school council plays an important role. Members of the school council take their responsibilities very seriously and their positive suggestions about how to improve the school have been acted upon. A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how important elements of the community and society work.
90. Teaching is very good and lessons are orderly, with pupils showing excellent attitudes to their learning. Pupils benefit from regular lessons dedicated to their personal, social and health education and citizenship, during which they are given the opportunity to discuss their feelings and examine specific issues to develop their understanding of right and wrong. All aspects of a healthy lifestyle are very well covered in the curriculum. The school has attained the Healthy School Award and careful attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of the value of a good diet, sex and drugs education and personal health and safety. Discussions on moral issues in religious education lessons effectively develop pupils' understanding of right and wrong. A good range of outside visits is used to develop pupils' awareness of the dangers that may be encountered in the community. For example, Year 5 pupils participate in the Crucial Crew workshops.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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