

# INSPECTION REPORT

**RAWTENSTALL NEWCHURCH ST NICHOLAS  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VOLUNTARY  
CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rosendale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119390

Headteacher: Mrs C Cornthwaite

Lead inspector: Mr C Smith

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 267543

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 161

School address: Dark Lane  
Newchurch  
Rossendale  
Lancashire

Postcode: BB4 7UA

Telephone number: 01706 229478

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of Mrs C Hustwick  
governors:

Date of previous November 2002  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Newchurch St Nicholas Church of England Primary is a small school catering for 161 pupils (82 boys and 79 girls) aged 4 to 11 years. The majority of children live on one of the two neighbouring local authority estates and a minority of children live in private housing. Nine per cent of the children have free school meals, which is below average, but this figure may not entirely reflect the number of families eligible. Forty-one children (25 per cent) have special educational needs, which is above average, and three children have statements. Pupils' special needs are largely related to learning and emotional difficulties. All of the children are white and English speaking. Pupil numbers have decreased over recent years, in keeping with downward trends in the area. Movement of families in and out of the school is typical of that found in most schools. The school is involved in community provision for adult education and before and after school care. There have been several changes in staff over recent years, including the recent appointment of the headteacher. When children enter the school their attainment is broadly typical for their age, although many have distinct weaknesses in their spoken language and in their knowledge of the world around.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25211	Colin Smith	Lead inspector	English Music Physical education
9952	Lillian Brock	Lay inspector	
17907	Mike Bowers	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Geography History
23887	Peter Nettleship	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology Religious education
32750	Peter Jones	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>3</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>5</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>11</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>21</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Rawtenstall Newchurch St Nicholas Church of England Primary is an effective school that gives good value for money. Leadership and management have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Pupils achieve well to reach standards that are higher than in similar schools, before moving on to secondary school. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage (reception class);
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science to reach above average standards by Year 6;
- Teaching is good overall and very good in Year 3;
- Pupils' weaknesses in speaking and handwriting restrict their achievement in English;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, but the achievement of the more able pupils is not consistent;
- The school's good ethos enhances pupils' personal development.

Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. A determined effort on the part of staff, governors and Local Education Authority advisers has ensured that the former serious weaknesses have been remedied. Despite a succession of temporary headteachers, leadership and management has succeeded in raising achievement. As a result, standards have significantly improved in writing and information and communication technology (ICT) and now reach the levels expected. A more carefully planned curriculum ensures that children's learning is no longer fragmented by gaps and unnecessary duplication. Reception children are now able to experience all areas of learning because an outdoor play area has been provided.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	D	C	B
mathematics	A	B	B	A
science	B	C	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.*

**Pupils' achievement is good.** Standards are improving throughout the school. Reception children are achieving well in their personal, physical, language and mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are on course to comfortably reach the learning goals expected by the end of the reception year. Standards by the end of Year 2 had been declining largely because of the weaknesses in teaching identified during the previous inspection (2002). Teaching is now settled and the decline has been reversed. Standards are still below average in reading, writing,



mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory and increasing. The chart above shows that standards achieved by Year 6 pupils have been rising well over recent years. Standards in Year 6 are currently average in English. Many pupils are not articulate speakers and weaknesses in their spoken English creep into their written work. Junior pupils achieve well in mathematics and science to reach above average standards. Achievement is satisfactory in ICT and religious education. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. More able pupils make satisfactory progress overall but do not achieve their full potential in two classes.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual moral, social and cultural development, develop successfully.** Attendance is good. Almost all pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to learning and behave well.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good and teaching is effective overall.** Children get off to a good start because of good teaching in the reception class. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 2 and 4 but there are occasions when the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Consequently, in these classes the more able pupils do not always reach the higher levels of which they are capable. Teaching is mainly good in Years 1, 3, 5 and 6. In these classes, the level of challenge in the work provided is consistently high. Pupils are well managed and the atmosphere for learning is good in all classes. Teachers use imaginative approaches, which pupils find interesting. Consequently, pupils become enthusiastic and independent learners. Although skills in reading and most aspects of writing are taught well, the teaching of handwriting is a weakness. This leads to untidily presented work in upper junior classes.

The school provides a good curriculum, which stimulates pupils' imagination and enables them to build their knowledge and skills smoothly. The good range of activities outside normal lessons enriches pupils' achievement in subjects such as physical education, and enhances their personal development. Pupils are well cared for. They are encouraged to offer their views and are beginning to have an influence on school organisation. The school's relationship with parents is satisfactory and the new headteacher is working hard to involve them in their children's learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** This is a considerable achievement in view of the fact that the headteacher has only been in post for three months, the post of deputy headteacher is currently being advertised and the leader of the infant classes has only recently been appointed to this post. The new headteacher has made a good start in identifying what needs to be done and in securing the commitment of staff and governors towards school improvement. Although subject leadership is effective in some subjects, many of the staff have changed and some subjects are being managed temporarily. Governance is good and statutory requirements are fully met.

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

Parents are satisfied with the education provided for their children and appreciate the openness that has accompanied the changing leadership. Parents' earlier concerns about

bullying, homework and the quality of information they receive are being alleviated and their views have already become more positive since the original questionnaire was sent out. Pupils are proud of their school and relish the opportunity to take responsibility for others through the school council.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do are:

- Improve pupils' spoken language;
- Ensure that handwriting is taught consistently and the presentation of pupils' written work improves;
- Ensure that the level of challenge for the more able pupils is consistently high in all classes.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve well overall to reach standards that are above average in mathematics and science and average in English by the time they are ready to leave primary school.

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

- Standards in the infant classes are starting to improve and are rising quickly in the junior classes;
- Standards in writing have improved since the last inspection but pupils' spoken English lets them down and many of them present their written work untidily;
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well;
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well but the progress made by the more able pupils is not consistent.

#### **Commentary**

1. When children enter school, their attainment is broadly at the level expected for their age. However, previous assessments show that over the last four years children's attainment was lower than expected on two occasions. Children's literacy skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world are the weaker areas. Children's good achievement is attributable to good teaching of reading, writing and number skills and the good range of activities designed to encourage them to explore and learn for themselves. The current reception children are on course to comfortably reach the goals expected in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.
2. Standards had been declining in the infant classes (Years 1 and 2) until 2004, when results began to improve. Until last year infant pupils had been taught by a succession of supply teachers. Their achievement had lost momentum. Staffing is now stable and the results of intensive training to improve teaching and assessment of pupils' learning are taking effect. By the end of Year 2, standards are still below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, given their starting points.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.9 (13.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.6 (16.1)	16.2 (16.3)

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

3. Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 have been improving at a good rate over recent years. Staffing has been more settled in the junior classes and the strategies introduced to improve teaching and learning have

had the greatest impact in this part of the school. Consequently, standards by the end of Year 6 are higher overall than they are in similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (25.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.2 (27.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.0 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Pupils' achievement in English is satisfactory. However, their progress accelerates significantly in Year 3, where teaching is very good. Consequently, by the end of Year 3, standards in English are average and remain so until the end of Year 6. Achievement in English is held back by weaknesses in pupils' speaking. Many pupils have only a limited vocabulary and often use words incorrectly. Talk, such as paired discussions, is not used enough to aid thinking, deepen understanding and improve writing. The rate at which pupils develop reading skills is increasing, particularly in the infant classes, where phonics (blending letters to make words) is taught well. Junior pupils benefit from good teaching of how to analyse passages to determine the meaning. Consequently, junior pupils read fluently, although many do not read expressively. Standards in writing were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection but there has been extensive development in this area. Pupils now write with feeling and accuracy in many different styles. Their skills in writing have improved because they are extended well in learning other subjects, such as ICT. Standards of spelling and punctuation are broadly at the levels expected. However, pupils' handwriting is a weakness that results in untidy presentation of written work.
5. Pupils achieve well in mathematics, particularly in the junior classes. They develop quick and accurate recall of number facts and enjoy experimenting with different methods of calculation. An analysis of assessment results shows that pupils find problem solving more difficult. Consequently, teachers are now targeting this area and pupils' confidence is increasing. Pupils also achieve well in science. This is largely because the emphasis placed on developing their skills of investigation enables them to gain a clearer understanding of scientific ideas. Pupils' achievement and the standards they reach are satisfactory in religious education and ICT, which represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.
6. Pupils' learning is assessed regularly in the key subjects. Their progress is carefully tracked and where any underachievement is detected, action is taken. The school has a proud tradition of supporting its pupils with special educational needs very well. Much of their good progress is attributable to the dedication of the special needs co-ordinator and the skills of teachers and support staff. The able, gifted and talented pupils have been identified and placed on the school register. For the most part, they are given sufficiently challenging work to enable them to fulfil their potential. Overall, their progress is satisfactory. However, mainly in Years 2 and 4, there are still occasions when more could be expected of them. The performance of boys is similar to that of girls.

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

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with others are good. Attendance and punctuality are good. The provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance and punctuality are well monitored and effectively promoted;
- Pupils are interested in school life and in the range of experiences provided;
- There are good relationships between all members of the school community;
- Pupils' personal development is effectively promoted.

### **Commentary**

7. Good attendance has been maintained since the last inspection. Parents are keen for their children to learn and send them to school regularly and on time. Effective monitoring procedures help staff to identify and remedy any poor attendance.
8. Pupils' positive attitudes towards school are evident in their happy disposition. They take pride in their school, enjoy the activities provided for them and develop an enthusiasm for learning. This was very evident when reception, Year 1 and 2 pupils together made electric circuits to wire lights for their model cars. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, for example to act as 'Buddies' for reception children. The head boy and girl and their deputies take their duties seriously and feel proud to be chosen as role models. Children in the Foundation Stage are well on target to meet the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development.
9. Pupils' good spiritual development is reflected in their response to assemblies and the sensitive poetry they produce. Teachers and support staff value the achievement and development of every pupil, which significantly raises their self-esteem. Pupils' moral development is good and demonstrated well through their considerate behaviour in lessons and courtesy around school. Occasionally, one or two pupils misbehave but staff have effective strategies to support them, such as time in the nurture room where pupils can quietly reflect on their difficulties. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour have a positive impact on their learning. For example, Year 3 pupils' enthusiasm in literacy led to marked improvements in their learning of how to write play scripts.
10. Good relationships enhance pupils' personal development. They work together well and help each other. They have confidence in their teachers and know that there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a problem. Some parents expressed concerns about bullying, but these largely relate to the past. Pupils' social development is good. They show consideration towards each other and there is no evidence of any harassment. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They develop a good understanding of their own culture by studying their locality. Music in assemblies lifts pupils' spirits. Pupils' knowledge of other faiths and cultures is satisfactory and mainly explored through religious education. For example, Year 2 pupils have explored how Muslims pray and Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of the Jewish faith.

### **Attendance**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.1
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.*

### **Exclusions**

11. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

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

The quality of education provided is good. Pupils benefit from good teaching, a well planned curriculum and good levels of personal support.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. The assessment of pupils' learning is good, particularly in English and mathematics.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Purposeful, well managed, interesting lessons enable pupils to learn successfully;
- Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported but more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently;
- Reception children benefit from effective teaching and the welcoming atmosphere;
- Skills of handwriting and presentation are not taught well enough.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0)	6 (17)	15 (43)	14 (40)	0 (0)	0 (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.*

12. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. This is largely because teachers have received constructive feedback on their lessons and much training has been provided. This has increased their subject knowledge. Lessons now have a clear purpose and teachers and pupils know exactly what they are trying to achieve. Teachers explain new ideas clearly and make particularly good use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas together. This is partly why their spoken, and aspects of their written, English do not develop as effectively as, for example, their reading skills. Lessons are planned carefully and methods are chosen that pupils find interesting, such as investigating and using drama. As a result, the atmosphere for learning is very positive. Teachers manage pupils well. Lessons are very rarely disturbed. Pupils settle quickly and concentrate on their work. Teaching is invariably successful in the whole class teaching part of the lesson. Teachers make good use of visual aids, such as overhead projectors. Pupils can see and hear what is going on and this encourages them to join in enthusiastically. The teaching of reading, writing and mathematical skills is particularly effective on these occasions.
13. On the whole, pupils' learning is assessed well in English and mathematics. Pupils' completed work is constructively marked and targets are set to enable them to know what they need to do to improve. This has a significant impact on the quality of learning. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is very accurately assessed. This enables teachers and classroom assistants to provide tasks at exactly the right level. This develops pupils' confidence and enjoyment in learning and significantly improves their literacy and numeracy skills. Where teaching is most effective, the information gained from assessing pupils' learning is used very effectively to tailor activities precisely to match their different learning needs. In these lessons, challenging work is provided for all pupils, particularly the more able ones. These pupils are often given freedom to decide how they should organise and record their work. This works well and leads to a mature and independent approach to



learning. However, there are occasions when the learning of the more able pupils is not extended enough. Sometimes they have to complete exercises which have been set for the whole class, and they do not have time to move on to more demanding work. On isolated occasions, no checks are made to ensure that they are working to the best of their ability. The headteacher has rightly identified the need to ensure that a consistently high level of challenge is provided for these pupils. There are weaknesses in the way in which pupils present their work, which in some instances is poor. Handwriting skills are not consistently taught and some teachers accept untidy presentation. Although pupils work hard, they do not all take enough pride in their finished work.

13. Teaching in the reception class is good and children learn successfully. They settle quickly into the welcoming atmosphere and enjoy exploring the many interesting experiences provided, which now includes a good range of outdoor activities. Literacy and numeracy skills are skilfully taught. Teachers and support staff employ inventive methods, such as using puppets to engage children's attention. Consequently, children enjoy learning about letters, words and numbers and achieve well in these areas. Reception children benefit from learning alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils in the afternoon sessions. There are many instances where younger children have watched, copied and learned from the older children. For example, reception children produced very expressive dance movements for their age, in response to observing older children at work.

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a good curriculum. Pupils' learning is enriched and extended well through a good range of out of school activities. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' learning is increasing, as a result of a more creatively designed curriculum;
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well catered for;
- Tasks are not consistently matched to the learning needs of the more able pupils;
- Out of school activities enhance pupils' achievement and personal development well.

### **Commentary**

14. A good curriculum is provided, which is much improved since the previous inspection. Weaknesses identified then have been rectified. For example, good outdoor provision has been made for children in the Foundation Stage. Teachers have also benefited from guidance on how and what to teach, which ensures that there are no gaps or unnecessary duplication in pupils' learning. Better hardware and software, along with teachers' increasing skills in using computers, have raised standards in ICT. The pace of these initiatives has accelerated since the appointment of the present headteacher. Afternoon sessions have been redesigned to cater for mixed age groups of reception and infant children. This has proved very beneficial for most pupils, particularly the younger children who learn from the older ones. It has also enabled teachers to use their individual specialist subject skills with a wider range of pupils. Promoting pupils' thinking and problem solving skills is beginning to raise achievement.

15. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator has forged a strong team of support assistants, who operate skilfully and check pupils' achievement through regular assessments. Detailed records on their progress ensure that future work is tailored closely to their needs. There is a strong commitment to include all pupils. Teachers have identified and listed a wide range of factors that may have a bearing on a pupil's ability to learn. This enables closer checks to be made on all those who may require extra consideration.
16. The more able, gifted and talented pupils have been identified and placed on a separate register. Their progress is now being monitored to ensure that their skills and abilities are suitably extended. However, there are still inconsistencies in this provision. For example, the work for the more able pupils in Years 2 and 4 is not challenging enough to ensure that they fulfil their potential.
17. Many pupils take advantage of the good range of clubs open to them after school. A wide variety of sporting activities and team games provide opportunities for competition. There are arts activities, such as drama and music. The headteacher has introduced a Publishing Club and a French Club. The latter is to be open to infant aged pupils on a half termly rota. An annual residential visit offers pupils a valuable experience of outdoor pursuits. These activities raise pupils' achievement and enhance their personal development.

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

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are well provided for. Their progress is carefully assessed and the information is used well to guide and support them. The headteacher has established satisfactory arrangements to seek and act upon pupils' views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are cared for and well supervised in all school activities;
- Pupils have access to well informed support, advice and guidance;
- Pupils are increasingly exerting an influence over what happens in school.

### **Commentary**

18. Pupils are well looked after. Adults pay good attention to their day-to-day needs and thorough health and safety risk assessments are carried out for activities in and out of school. Pupils are well supervised, qualified first aiders are on hand and the designated teacher for child protection ensures that concerns are dealt with sensitively. The personal and social education programme equips pupils with the knowledge to make decisions about personal safety and healthy lifestyles.
19. The good support, guidance and advice offered to pupils are firmly based on the careful monitoring of their individual needs, both in their work and personal development. Teachers and classroom assistants know the pupils well and support is sensitively directed towards raising achievement. For example, well informed comments on aspects of pupils' personal development, such as attitudes to work, motivation and behaviour, are passed to the next teacher.

20. The newly formed school council is increasingly having a 'voice' in school developments. Pupils are encouraged to pass their ideas and concerns on to school council representatives. The headteacher has recognised that this process does not necessarily reach all pupils and a suggestion box has been introduced to encourage greater participation. The school has good procedures to help children settle into the reception class. Parents appreciate the opportunities to attend meetings before children commence school and the occasions when children have 'taster' lessons. By the time children are attending full-time, they are familiar with the teacher's expectations and are already developing good attitudes to learning. Pupils confirm that they feel safe and secure within the 'family' of the school.

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

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents and good links with the community and other schools and colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The new headteacher is gradually strengthening the partnership with parents;
- Courses for parents are proving successful;
- Good links with local schools, businesses and churches are an important factor in pupils' good personal development.

### **Commentary**

21. The school's partnership with parents has suffered since the last inspection because staff have been concentrating on internal matters, such as improving leadership and pupils' achievement in response to the former serious weaknesses. However, those objectives have now been achieved and informing and involving parents is one of the headteacher's current priorities. Only a few parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection or returned the questionnaire. Whilst there were very positive comments about many aspects of school life, some concerns were raised about bullying, homework and the lack of information regarding their children's progress. Concerns about bullying largely stem from the past. Adequate homework is provided but this is not consistent between classes. Evidence gathered from discussions with many parents during the inspection week, indicates that the current members of staff are quickly gaining parents' confidence and that their children are happy, settled and free from any form of harassment.
22. The information that parents receive is satisfactory and fulfils legal requirements. A recently formed Magazine Club is now providing regular news bulletins. Satisfactory written reports are provided for parents, explaining their children's progress in all subjects. However, the targets set for improvement are clearer in some reports than others. Parental involvement in the school is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed into school and often meet teachers informally, before and after school. Valuable and well attended courses, such as the 'Parents as Educators' and 'Dads and Lads', are provided. A few parents help in classrooms. Most parents want to help their children with learning at home and would like a homework timetable to help them to know what to expect.
23. There are good links with the community, which encourage pupils to be good citizens. Pupils support a good range of charities and there are productive links with

two local churches, where pupils attend services. Local businesses have donated funds to support school developments, such as the outside play area. Staff liaise with the local nursery to ease the transfer of children to school and positive links with local high schools prepare pupils well for transfer at the age of 11. Arrangements with a 'Sports College' make a valuable contribution to pupils' achievement in sport.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has made a good start in guiding the school forward. The contribution made towards leadership and management by key members of staff is satisfactory and school governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The strong and decisive leadership of the recently appointed headteacher is building well on the work of previous acting headteachers to bring about improvements;
- Changes of staff have created some difficulties in subject leadership and financial management, although the picture is improving;
- Governors' understanding of how the school operates and the effectiveness of their monitoring of its work is developing well.

### **Commentary**

24. Weaknesses from the time of the last inspection have been tackled with energy and determination by acting headteachers, governors and Local Education Authority advisers. The new headteacher has exciting, purposeful and realistic ambitions, tempered with diplomacy and sensitivity in the way changes are introduced. The headteacher has made a good start and quickly gained the respect of staff and pupils. Staff commitment is evident in the way teachers talk about 'our school' and teamwork is becoming a strong feature. The headteacher has quickly reviewed the current situation and formulated a perceptive school improvement plan that focuses well on raising achievement, driving up standards and improving pupils' personal skills. Teaching and learning in the reception, Year 1 and 2 classes have been remodelled. The success of the innovation is already apparent in the younger children's increasing achievement. The determination to ensure that all pupils achieve well is reflected in the current work being done to raise the challenge for the more able pupils. The leadership and management of subjects are satisfactory. Subject leadership is now effective in literacy, ICT, science and the Foundation Stage and stronger than at the time of the last inspection. During a period of staff changes the head teacher is overseeing developments in the other subjects satisfactorily until subject leaders are appointed.
25. Staff and governors have become proficient in measuring how well the school is performing. The new headteacher has further improved the tracking system. Careful checks are made of the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Consequently, any underachievement is quickly spotted and tackled. Teaching and Learning have been subjected to rigorous checking over recent years. The new headteacher is determined to continue the close scrutiny of standards and has implemented plans to involve even the less experienced subject leaders in the process. The professional development and training of staff has been the key priority over the last two years

and standards have risen as a result. Previously declining trends in standards in English and mathematics in the infant classes are being reversed.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	514,169	Balance from previous year	-10,484
Total expenditure	490,870	Balance carried forward to the next	12,815
Expenditure per pupil	3,049		

26. Governance of the school is good. Governors work well with the headteacher. They are knowledgeable about the school, central to all decision making and have an important role in strategic planning and checking the work of the school. As a result, they have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have used their knowledge well to make good appointments and raise important questions about future developments. Management of the budget has not been strong enough in the past and financial audits have pointed out deficiencies. The new team of staff and governors is busily reassessing the data and their administrative procedures. Financial planning and control are now satisfactory.

## **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** and has improved since the last inspection.

The 15 children in the reception class are achieving well. Children's attainment on entering the reception class varies from year to year. Over the last four years, assessments made of children's starting points show that their attainment was close to the levels expected for their age on two occasions and below the levels expected on the other two. A common feature is that children's language skills and their awareness of the world around them are frequently at lower levels than their social and mathematical skills when they begin school. The majority of children achieve well, because teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to their needs.

Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been successfully remedied. The new outdoor play area enables children to practise and improve their physical and social skills. Children have a much greater choice of activities and are now encouraged to explore and learn for themselves. Adults manage children well. All staff work well as a cohesive team, carefully monitoring children's progress.

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

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

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

- Reception children benefit from working alongside older pupils;
- The welcoming atmosphere enables children to make good relationships.

#### **Commentary**

27. Sensitive and thoughtful teaching enables children to achieve well. Almost all of them are on course to reach the learning goals expected for their age and many children are likely to exceed them. Children's personal, social and emotional development improves significantly as a result of mixing the reception and infant pupils together during the afternoon sessions. The younger ones are set a good example of how to behave. The older ones take responsibility well for their younger charges. Children live up to teachers' and nursery assistants' high expectations that they will follow the class rules and routines. Children respond well to the rich opportunities to explore the many activities provided. This helps them to become confident and independent learners. The warm relationships that exist create a happy and secure environment in which children gain trust and confidence. For example, the friendliness shown towards a new child helped him to settle quickly and become fully involved in the activities.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff are effective in improving pupils' speaking and listening skills;
- Children's reading skills are skilfully developed;
- Children make better progress in writing using ICT, than with pencil and paper.

## Commentary

28. Teaching is good and children achieve well overall in this area of learning. Despite the lower starting point, most of the children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals expected for their age. Much emphasis is rightly placed on extending children's spoken language. Staff support children's use of language well by engaging them in conversation and improving their vocabulary. This is often done imaginatively through the use of puppets. The class teacher is particularly effective in developing children's skills of letter and word recognition. Totally engaging teaching of letter sounds helps children to make a positive start in reading. Writing is not given quite the same focus. Although children show good computer skills, with many composing their names and the more advanced children beginning to write sentences, relatively few choose to write using pencil and paper.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical activities are successful in developing children's understanding of number and shape;
- Children encounter greater difficulty in solving simple mathematical problems.

## Commentary

29. Children achieve well in this area of learning. The vast majority of children are on course to reach the learning goals expected and a good proportion are likely to exceed them. Teaching is good and experienced classroom assistants provide effective support. Lively whole class teaching sessions encourage children to count forwards and backwards, quickly and accurately. During group tasks, children are encouraged to estimate and explain the possible outcome, for example when two different objects are placed on weighing scales. Children are encouraged to investigate for themselves but adults are close at hand to prompt their thinking and guide their understanding. Key mathematical ideas are reinforced well through activities in the sandpit, the water tray and with construction apparatus. More advanced children use computer programs accurately to create, for example, snake patterns using two and then three alternating colour triangular patterns. Children find it more difficult to use mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems. However, this area is receiving attention and children's reasoning skills are gradually improving.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many exciting opportunities for children to explore and investigate;



- Children's understanding of scientific skills is well developed;
- Good opportunities for children to examine artefacts enable them to develop a sense of history.

### **Commentary**

30. Children's knowledge of the world around them is less than might be expected for their age when they start school. However, good teaching and the interesting range of indoor and outdoor activities provided enable children to achieve well in this area of learning. The afternoon mixed age learning sessions are proving successful because the younger children learn from the older ones. For example, reception children learnt how to connect a bulb to a battery to make headlights for their model cars. Children carefully handle an array of toys, accurately ordering them into 'old' and 'new' categories. They skilfully sketch these historical artefacts and scan reference books and CD-ROMs to search for information about Florence Nightingale. Barnaby Bear's journey to the Sydney Harbour Bridge is followed and the locality in and around the school is investigated well.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

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

- The new outdoor play area is making a significant difference to children's physical development and increasing their powers of imagination;
- Children develop good skills of control, co-ordination and creativity in dance.

### **Commentary**

31. Almost all children are on course to reach the goals expected in this area of learning. Teaching and learning are good. Foundation Stage staff have been particularly successful in developing the new outside play area. This is improving children's sense of balance and control, stimulating their imagination and increasing their skills in all areas of learning. For example, the task of throwing beanbags to hit a target improved their aim and their counting skills. There are good opportunities for children to improve their movements, agility, balance, co-ordination and awareness of space. For example, reception children's dance was both expressive and creative for their age. Working alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils had clearly stimulated their response to music. Finer co-ordination skills are extended well by such activities as threading, weaving and stitching. However, finger painting and sand drawing is not systematically planned to enhance children's letter formation.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

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

- Children benefit from good opportunities to handle and explore different materials;
- Good adult support helps children to learn difficult skills.

### **Commentary**

32. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. They are virtually all on course to reach the learning goals expected in this area. Children benefit from activities that stir their curiosity and stimulate their imagination. For example, they examine fruit and vegetables, draw and paint pictures of them, cut them in half to make prints and experiment with graphics programs to create images. A good ratio of adults help children to learn difficult skills, such as sewing and weaving. These skills are given purpose and meaning by encouraging children to apply them in projects such as puppet making. Role play in the 'toy shop' indicates that children are investigating the role of adults such as shopkeepers and purchasers.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are rising because teaching is improving;
- Many pupils are not articulate speakers and this holds their achievement in English back;
- Whole class teaching is good and is often better than the group work that follows;
- Pupils' handwriting and skills of presentation are not good enough.

#### Commentary

33. Infant pupils are now achieving steadily. Standards in reading and writing are still below average at the end of Year 2 but they are improving. Infant pupils benefit from good teaching of phonic skills and they learn how to blend letters to read words successfully. They also make a good start in learning how to find information from books. Infant pupils are encouraged to write independently and they respond well by expressing their ideas in their own words. Teachers then work on improving spelling and punctuation. These strategies are proving successful. The earlier decline in test results in English has been reversed.
34. Standards in English, including reading and writing, are average by the end of Year 6. At the time of the last inspection, standards in writing were unsatisfactory. Since then, teachers have benefited from extensive training and they now teach the skills of writing more effectively. This has largely focussed on teaching pupils to plan ahead and edit and improve their work. Pupils are now writing fluently and imaginatively in a wide range of styles. Their progress in both reading and writing is now carefully tracked. Any signs of underachievement are quickly identified. Targets are set to help them to reach the next level. The robust systems of checking and improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning are now an integral part of the good leadership and management of English. This is the main reason why junior pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress and standards in Year 6 improved by two grades in 2004.
35. Pupils' listening skills are at the levels expected but their spoken language is weaker. Infant pupils often speak in single words. Junior pupils do not speak articulately and their reading, although fluent, is rarely expressive. Pupils often struggle with the meaning of particular words. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, none of the pupils could define the meaning of the word 'distress'. Many pupils struggle with past, present and future tenses and incorrect patterns in their speech, such as 'I were,' filter through into their writing. Teachers are well aware of these difficulties. They ensure that pupils listen carefully and question them to check that they have understood. Children's listening skills develop satisfactorily. Teachers also try to improve pupils' speaking skills by encouraging them to explain their ideas and by making effective use of drama. Although these experiences are invaluable in

improving pupils' confidence in speaking to an audience, there is only enough time for a few pupils to speak. Opportunities for all pupils to improve their spoken language are rarely provided. For example, only limited use is made of discussions where pairs of pupils share ideas about what they are reading or writing. Similarly, pupils do not have glossaries of terms needed in science or other subjects and are not encouraged to use dictionaries sufficiently to improve their vocabulary.

36. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but the whole class teaching part of the lesson is always good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and skilfully explain new learning. As a result, pupils are able to grasp complex ideas, such as the difference between formal and informal styles of writing. Teachers' thorough planning of lessons and imaginative choice of methods stimulate pupils' interest from the outset. For example, the Year 1 teacher's multicoloured glasses intrigued pupils and concentrated their minds well on predicting what would happen next in the story of 'Anna's Amazing Glasses'. The second part of literacy lessons, which are concerned with helping pupils to practise, apply and improve their skills, is not always as successful as the first part. In the best lessons, tasks are set which require pupils to read and respond to passages or write short pieces in their own words. Skills such as correct spelling and accurate punctuation are taught crisply and integrated into pupils' own work. In less successful lessons, pupils are required to complete exercises, which can become tedious and the skills are not necessarily transferred into their free writing. However, during the group sessions, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good quality adult support they receive. Teachers always plan different tasks for the more and less able pupils. In the best lessons, the more able pupils relish the opportunities to tackle challenges such as writing short plays. However, in a minority of lessons their progress is restricted by having to complete exercises set for other pupils and they do not reach the challenging tasks before the lesson ends.

### **English across the curriculum**

37. Teachers make good use of other subjects to extend and improve pupils' literacy skills. In religious education, for example, pupils write with feeling about their personal experiences. In history and geography, they read widely to research information. Pupils edit their written work and add illustrations, using ICT. In most respects, standards in writing are at the levels expected. However, pupils' written work is often spoilt by poor presentation. Handwriting skills are not taught well enough and some teachers accept untidily presented work too readily. This is an area to improve.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good in most classes;
- Assessment is used well to plan and adapt work, especially in the junior classes;
- Work for more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging.

#### **Commentary**

38. Pupils achieve well in most classes. Frequent changes of teacher in their earlier education has affected standards in the infant classes and pupils in Year 2 are currently working at standards below those expected for their age. However, standards are beginning to rise. Greater emphasis is being placed on practical

activities and this is improving pupils understanding. Good teaching in Years 3 and 5 is apparent in the high level of challenge for pupils' of all abilities. Recent improvements in Year 6 are evident in the development of pupils' skills of reasoning. Teachers expect pupils to concentrate and work hard, which they do. Lessons are well planned and the activities provided are varied and interesting. Consequently, pupils enjoy mathematics. Good teaching of methods of calculation ensures that pupils acquire new skills successfully. Teaching is very successful in Years 3, 5 and 6. In these classes, pupils are constantly asked to discuss mathematical problems and explain exactly how they reached a solution. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and consequently they achieve well. Adequate use is made of ICT in learning mathematics. Classes visit the computer suite specifically to develop their understanding of data handling and spreadsheets, particularly in Year 6. In a Year 6 lesson, an overhead projector was creatively used in a problem solving activity, using coloured discs to make expanding patterns. However, classroom computers and homework are insufficiently used to reinforce calculation skills or to improve pupils' weaknesses in solving mathematical problems.

39. The assessment of pupils' learning is good. Teachers are skilful in probing pupils' understanding, particularly through discussions at the close of lessons. The marking in pupils' work is uniformly good and teachers judge the success of their teaching by checking completed work. As a result, teachers are able to modify their lessons to meet pupils' emerging needs. Assessment results are rigorously analysed to identify where pupils experience difficulties. One such area is problem solving, for which pupils are receiving extra coaching.
40. The more able pupils are now identified and greater attention is being given to their specific needs. So far, however, with a subject leader very new to the school, there has been insufficient time to check how well the needs of these pupils are being met in all classes. For the most part, teachers' planning shows that their learning needs are identified and they are taught in ability groups, usually at the appropriate level. However, there are occasions when opportunities are missed to give them extended challenges to spark their thinking skills in problem solving tasks. Test results at the end of Year 2, for example, indicate that some of the more able pupils have not fulfilled their potential.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

41. Increasing links are being made between mathematics and other subjects. In science, design and technology and geography, skills such as data handling, measuring and working with co-ordinates are extended well. However, opportunities to use classroom computers are missed.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- The strong emphasis on investigative work, particularly in junior classes, enables pupils to acquire a good understanding of the different aspects of science;

- Teaching and learning are good in junior classes, with some very good teaching observed;
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

### **Commentary**

42. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2. However, pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, given their more limited knowledge and understanding when they start school. Infant pupils are now benefiting from an early grounding in investigative skills. Much practical work is carried out, which enhances their knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and forces. As a result, their skills of making predictions and observing outcomes are improving steadily. Currently, Year 1 and 2 pupils are taught alongside children from the reception class. This has significant benefits for both Year 1 and reception pupils, who become more deeply involved in the investigations involving Year 2 pupils. However, the achievement of the more able Year 2 pupils is not as effective and teachers are amending their plans to incorporate greater levels of challenge.
43. Standards are currently above average in Year 6. Junior pupils are immersed in practical investigations. They learn to identify the problem, reason out the possible solutions and set up fair tests to ensure the results are accurate. Junior pupils show a high level of interest in their work and develop a good understanding of the subject.
44. Teaching is good overall and often very good in the junior classes. Teachers have good expertise, which enables them to explain new ideas and to clearly guide pupils successfully in carrying out experiments. In Years 4 and 5, for example, pupils grasped the relationships between solids, liquids and gases successfully following their investigations. Similarly, in a very effective Year 6 lesson, pupils of all abilities displayed high levels of concentration and mature analytical and reasoning skills as they experimented with soluble and insoluble materials. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in their tasks. They are encouraged to talk about their findings and helped to use the correct language. More able pupils respond well to the good opportunities to investigate and solve problems, achieve well and reach the higher levels by the end of Year 6. They talk knowledgeably about the topics they have studied, although many of the other pupils do not find it easy to explain their findings. Untidy presentation of pupils' written work, in some classes, does not do justice to the mature and thoughtful content. ICT is used satisfactorily in handling and interpreting data from experiments.
45. The leadership and management of science are good. Teaching and learning are rigorously checked. The recently appointed subject leader has improved the curriculum and worked hard to improve assessment to ensure that the setting of targets is accurate. Her role also includes a regular and thorough scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, the outcomes of which are shared enthusiastically with colleagues. These strategies have worked well in ensuring that pupils' skills of investigation develop consistently through the school and standards continue to rise.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have improved since the last inspection as a result of improvements in teaching, learning and resources;
- Leadership and management of ICT are good and have significantly contributed to the improvements in pupils' achievement;
- The contribution of ICT in the learning of other subjects is satisfactory.

### **Commentary**

46. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are now at the levels expected in both infant and junior classes. The school has benefited from the installation of two computer suites with Internet facilities, a good range of software and a large display screen. In addition, all classrooms have at least one computer. Pupils now receive regular ICT lessons and their skills have improved as a result. Teachers have received effective training in ICT and their confidence and expertise have improved.
47. The subject leader has introduced an effective computer program that comprises all of the different skills needed for Year 1 and 2 pupils. Through using the programs infant pupils are already confident in logging on and off, saving and retrieving information and using the mouse to control and change menus and icons on the screen. Year 2 pupils are now beginning to carry out searches.
48. Junior pupils have developed their skills further. For example, Year 4 pupils demonstrate good skills in combining text and graphics to produce a decorated menu for a Tudor royal feast. Year 6 pupils are able to use the simpler elements of the PowerPoint program to produce effective presentations about themselves and their interests.
49. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. New skills are taught effectively. The large screen is used particularly well to demonstrate procedures and illustrate their effects. A weakness in teaching is a tendency to give the same work to all pupils, irrespective of their different learning needs. Consequently, there are occasions when some pupils struggle to keep up, whilst others finish quickly and have to repeat the task until the others have finished. However, good supervision during the time they are completing tasks ensures that any misunderstanding is swiftly dealt with.
50. Good leadership and management of the subject have resulted in improved standards. Checking teachers' planning and pupils' work saved on harddrives ensures that the subject leader has a good grasp of how pupils are achieving throughout the school. Effective procedures for assessing pupils' learning have been established and accurate targets are now being set to move pupils' learning on.

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



51. The influence of ICT upon the learning of other subjects is satisfactory. Although classroom computers are not used enough in literacy and numeracy lessons, all classes make two weekly visits to the computer suite. During the first visit, new skills are introduced and practised. During the second visit, pupils use their ICT skills well to improve their learning in other subjects. For example, they develop word processing skills in literacy, data handling in numeracy and research information for subjects such as science, geography and history. Pupils are also using graphics increasingly to enhance their finished work.

## HUMANITIES

52. Only one **geography** and one **history** lesson was observed, not enough to make a judgement on the provision in both of these subjects. Discussions with pupils and an examination of their work indicate that in geography and history pupils achieve steadily, as they did at the time of the last inspection.
53. In geography, Year 4 pupils are encouraged to identify opportunities to 'renew', 'recycle' or 'reduce' materials in everyday use, rather than discarding them. This helps them to understand the finite nature of the world and to appreciate the need to conserve everyday resources. The school has recently implemented effective assessment procedures in geography and history. This helps teachers plan challenging activities for all pupils. ICT is used effectively in some studies, although a good opportunity to use data handling in the 'conservation project' was missed. Pupils' completed work is often poorly presented, which devalues the efforts they have made in gathering, assembling and sifting the information.
54. In history, visits to local and more distant places of interest provide a valuable starting point for the topics to be studied. Strong links between history and drama in Year 3 give pupils very clear insights into different historical periods and events. In other classes, pupils extend their skills of enquiry well. They are challenged and stimulated by exciting activities, for example pretending to be archaeologists analysing historical evidence. Year 6 pupils gather important information about the Victorian period of British history by studying the lives of key figures. They apply their English skills effectively, for example, to the task of writing biographies to celebrate the achievements of these celebrities. Pupils are skilled in assembling time lines and teaching is tailored effectively to meet pupils' different learning needs.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in learning to understand their own and other peoples' feelings and beliefs;
- Pupils' understanding of religious education is enhanced through links with other subjects;
- Pupils do not have enough first hand experiences to enable them to develop a depth of understanding of different faiths.

### Commentary

55. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they reach the standards expected in Lancashire schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. These findings mirror those found at the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Religious ideas are taught with skill and sensitivity. Pupils are asked to consider the values and principles of other faiths in the light of their own beliefs. This helps them to learn successfully how religion influences people's lives. Pupils find this approach to religious education interesting and they are keen to write down their responses to the topics covered. This is particularly true in Years 3 and 4. For example, Year 4 pupils researched their own information on famous people, such as Mother Theresa, as a homework task. Having discussed their findings, they then produced their own extended biographies. This activity enabled them to learn facts but it also deepened their respect for people who dedicate their lives to serving others, through religious commitment.
56. The new subject leader has made a satisfactory start in identifying areas for improvement. A very successful recent move has been to extend the weekly religious education studies over two sessions. This has enabled extra links to be made with other subjects. For example, in Year 2 the story of King Herod was studied in the Bible. Pupils later went on to act out certain scenes and draw pictures of their experiences. Their written work shows considerable sensitivity for their age. Religious studies also extend pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. In preparation for the forthcoming celebrations of the birth of Jesus, a parent visited Year 1 together with her baby. Pupils considered both the baby's 'needs' and her 'wants'. One girl, with special educational needs, said 'She also needs toys so that she can smile and have fun.'
57. Last year, eight children from an orphanage in Tanzania visited the school. They sang songs in Swahili, played drums and spoke to pupils. This was a rich experience for all concerned and stimulated pupils to raise money for them. However, such contact with worshippers of faiths other than Christianity is quite limited. Pupils in Year 6 have had very few visits or visitors to personalise and bring alive their studies of Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam. Resources such as videos and CD-ROMs are being introduced to help pupils to understand more about different faiths.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

58. No **art and design** or **music** lessons were observed and only one **design and technology** and one **physical education** lesson was seen. This is not enough to make a judgement on provision in these subjects. However, discussions with pupils and an examination of their work in folders and on display enabled some evaluation to be made.
59. The art and design curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Pupils now work in two and three-dimensions and displays of pupils' work are plentiful and of good quality. Planning for each year group ensures that pupils are able to build on the skills learnt earlier. Examples of graphics linking work in art and design to ICT are evident in pupils' files. A specialist teacher from a local high school has worked successfully with Year 3 pupils on a three-dimensional project on Monsters. An assessment system, with easily understood targets, has been recently introduced and there is a comprehensive portfolio of pupils' work to aid the process.
60. In design and technology, pupils work with a variety of materials and techniques. However, provision in the subject is patchy. The best work, in Year 3, is exciting and varied. Pupils apply the skills of planning, making, evaluating and adapting their designs thoroughly. Much more work is produced in this class because it is also stimulated by studies in other subjects. In other classes, pupils do not have such rich opportunities to be creative. The newly appointed subject leader has provided teachers with a list of skills to build up pupils' learning as they move from one year to the next. Similarly, their learning in the subject is beginning to be assessed. These measures are necessary to ensure that the best practice in the school is shared and pupils' skills and creativity develop smoothly.
61. Pupils enjoy physical education and benefit from a wide range of activities, which include gymnastics, dance, games, swimming and outdoor pursuits. Standards in swimming are typical. Most pupils achieve the 25 metre standard and a quarter of them gain advanced survival or distance awards. A major strength in pupils' sporting achievements, noted at the time of the last inspection, continues to flourish. A wide selection of well attended, extra-curricular sporting activities has been extended through productive links with a local sports college. Infant pupils achieved well in the dance lesson observed. Good teaching of movement skills, coupled with frequent opportunities to watch and comment on each other's performances, led to well controlled and co-ordinated sequences. Pupils' imaginations were stimulated by an interesting selection of music. They responded creatively by hopping, twisting and spinning their way around the hall.
62. Music is a focus of development this year. Teachers are benefiting from opportunities to observe a specialist music teacher working with their classes. They then take music lessons themselves. A scheme of work comprising lesson plans and selected CDs for each year group has wisely been introduced. Teachers are learning how to use the materials by watching the specialist musician. Approaching music in this way ensures that pupils develop skills in singing, listening, playing instruments and composing pieces of music, and teachers develop their skills in teaching the subject. Pupils explain that they like music lessons and their interest in music is

growing. Pupils' singing is typical for their age. They are able to sing in tune and their love of singing is reflected in the enthusiastic response.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)**

63. There is a strong sense of caring that permeates the school. Pupils know they are accepted and that they belong there. Their views are sought and respected. The school council gives them a taste of democratic responsibility as concerns of pupils are aired and discussed. 'Circle Time', where pupils sit together and discuss aspects of their lives, helps them to understand, for example, the need for rules and for respect. As a Year 3 pupil explained 'Responsibilities will make us a good person when we grow up, so we have to work at it.'

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
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>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
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).*