

INSPECTION REPORT

WALTON-LE-DALE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Walton-le-Dale, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119286

Headteacher: Mrs C Entwistle

Lead inspector: Mrs J Morley

Dates of inspection: 7 – 9 February 2005

Inspection number: 268194

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	436
School address:	Severn Drive Walton-le-Dale Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR5 4TD
Telephone number:	01772 335065
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Leaver
Date of previous inspection:	23 - 26 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- The school caters for pupils aged three to 11.
- Currently there are 436 full-time pupils on roll; and 46 children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis.
- Almost all pupils are white and British; a tiny minority come from other ethnic groups.
- There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language, and there are no pupils from travelling, refugee or asylum seeking families.
- Thirty-four pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. Fifteen have more significant difficulties including dyslexia, autism, physical disability, visual impairment and speech, communication, social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. Five of this group have statements of educational needs. Overall, these proportions are below the national average.
- Social and economic factors are broadly average.
- Attainment on entry to the school broadly matches that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average.
- The school is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools.
- It received an Achievement Award in 2002.
- Mobility amongst pupils is fairly low.
- Mobility in staffing and long-term staff absences have been high and, until recently, have been significant barriers to learning.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25470	J Morley	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology
31718	D Shields	Lay inspector	
20038	G B Watson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs
29188	G Ulyatt	Team inspector	Personal, social and health education and citizenship History Physical education The Foundation Stage
11901	P Lowe	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. Factors linked to staffing have been significant barriers to achievement over the past few years, and they led to below average standards and unsatisfactory progress. There is now stability in staffing, and recent appointments have been judicious. The 2004, Year 6 national test results were well below average overall, but these bear little resemblance to current standards, which now meet expectations. Pupils are currently making good progress because they are being well taught. The turnaround of this school has been very skilfully managed by the headteacher, who has been appointed since the previous inspection. Value for money is satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are improving rapidly, but are not yet high enough.
- Teachers and support staff work effectively in helping pupils to make good progress.
- The headteacher has led the school very well through a difficult few years.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to work.
- Pupils know too little about how well they are doing and what they could do to improve.
- Staff have too little expertise in teaching music.
- The school makes no specific provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- The curriculum is good: it has innovative features and offers many out-of-school activities.
- Pupils are cared for well. This helps them to feel safe, secure and happy to learn.

The school was last inspected in November 1998. Since that time it has dealt adequately with all key issues: improving attainment in science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and the presentation of pupils' work; making more effective use of assessment information, and meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship. Standards in English and mathematics remain unchanged but both have dipped in the intervening years. The current trend is an upward one. Overall therefore, improvement has been satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E* - very low*

Attainment on entry to the school meets national expectations. **Achievement is good in all year groups** but, because this is only a recent development, it has not yet led to above expected attainment at the end of Reception, Year 2 or Year 6. By the end of Reception, most children reach the goals expected in all six areas of learning. By Year 2, reading, writing and mathematics standards meet expectations. Inspection evidence does not support the 2004 Year 2 test results, which indicated well above average standards in reading and writing, and very high standards in mathematics. Current English, mathematics and science standards meet those expected in Year 6. Attainment in ICT, religious education, geography and physical education meets expectations. No secure judgements were possible in other subjects.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual and cultural development, is satisfactory. Their moral and social development is good. Attendance is close to the national average and pupils arrive punctually for school. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes towards school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good, as is the quality of teaching. Three-quarters of the lessons seen were at least good, and none was less than satisfactory. Scrutiny of pupils' work over recent months confirms that teaching of this quality is now typical. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and to work hard. Pupils are routinely told what they are to learn in a lesson and the work that teachers set is almost always well matched to their ability. Support staff work in classes where the need for them is greatest and they contribute well to the good progress that pupils make. The school has started to set individual targets, but pupils are not yet adequately involved in judging how well they have done. As yet, there is no specific provision for those who are gifted and talented. Musical knowledge amongst some staff is limited. Assessment is satisfactory overall and it is particularly effective when used to trigger intervention programmes for pupils, such as for the below average literacy group in Year 5. The curriculum is good, as is the range of activities on offer outside the school day. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Links with other schools and the community are good, as is the care offered to pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Since her appointment, the headteacher has led the school skilfully. Difficulties linked to high mobility and long-term absence amongst staff have been real barriers to achievement, and should not detract from the overall very good quality of her leadership. She has a clear vision for the further development of the school and this is explicitly laid out in the very good quality school improvement plan. The senior management team work effectively with her to implement this plan. Leadership of Nursery and Reception, of special educational needs and of focused support for less able pupils is good. Subject leadership has been developed well in English, mathematics and science, in line with the school's key priorities. It is not yet well developed in other subjects. Governance is good. Governors have been instrumental in shaping the direction of the school since the last inspection, particularly through appointments of the headteacher and teaching staff. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and fulfil all of their statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold mixed views about the school. They feel that teaching is good and they are happy with the progress their children make. Their main concerns relate to the amount of information the school gives them and to the extent to which it consults them. Inspectors find that the flow of information from school to home is adequate. Day-to-day information is good. Pupils are happy to attend. The recently inaugurated school council is opening doors for them to be consulted, and for their views to be heard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Increase pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and of what they can do to improve.
- Ensure that there is sufficient expertise amongst staff in order to teach music effectively.
- Make specific provision for those who are gifted and talented.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children join the Nursery with skills and aptitudes that broadly meet those expected nationally. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently working at standards in English, mathematics and science that meet national expectations. Achievement is good throughout the school and the trend is an upward one.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils now achieve well and although current attainment is average, standards are improving.
- Standards in science, ICT and religious education have improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

1. Standards in English and mathematics now match those reported at the last inspection, although they have dipped in intervening years. Standards in science, ICT and religious education have improved from being below expectations to now meeting them. The reason that good achievement does not currently lead to standards that are above national expectations is because the school is still emerging from the underachievement of the past several years. Nevertheless, the current good teaching is enabling pupils to achieve well, and the trend in attainment is now clearly an upward one.
2. Children in the Nursery and Reception achieve well and the large majority are on course to meet the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1. Achievement in the Nursery is particularly good.
3. Year 2 test results from 2004 showed attainment in reading and writing to be well above average, and that in mathematics to be very high (in the top five per cent nationally). Teachers' assessment in science indicated that a very high proportion attained the expected level, and that the proportion attaining the higher level matched the national average. Currently, Year 2 pupils attain the nationally expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This appears to show a significant decline in standards since 2004. However, this is not the case. Careful scrutiny of the work of the pupils (now in Year 3) who took the 2004 tests, together with discussions with pupils and with current staff, confirms that they, too, are working at the expected level in all four areas. They are now making good progress because they are being well taught.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.9 (13.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (13.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.8 (15.7)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Currently, Year 6 pupils attain the nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science. This shows an improvement in all three subjects since last year when standards in English and mathematics were below average and those in science were well below. The improvement is attributable to teaching that is good overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (24.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.1 (26.7)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.4 (28.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 66 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards in ICT, religious education, geography and physical education meet expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Inspectors gathered too little evidence in other subjects to make a secure judgement on attainment.
- In broad terms, pupils achieve well. As is evident from the text above, this good achievement has not existed long enough to result in above average standards at end of Reception, Year 2 or Year 6. However, the potential for it to do so is evident in planning, in lessons, and in pupils' recorded work and understanding, where the impact of judicious appointments by the headteacher and governors is beginning to show. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Their progress is secured through the close liaison between support and teaching staff. In addition, the grouping of Year 5 pupils by ability for their English and mathematics lessons enables the least able to progress well and often very well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work and school are good. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' moral and social development; their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils, whatever their ability or background, enjoy learning.
- Pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- In some lessons pupils become restless and do not concentrate on their work.
- Too many families take holidays during term time.
- The school is a harmonious and friendly community.

Commentary

- Pupils like school and get on well with their classmates, teachers and other adults who work with them. This begins in the Nursery and Reception classes where provision for their personal development is good. In discussion they state that instances of bullying are rare, and that an adult will help them if they are unhappy. Nearly all pupils, whatever their background or ability, play and socialise together well. Pupils gain a good understanding of right and wrong because of the school's emphasis on this aspect of their development. Pupils are valued and treated with respect. As they move through the school, the good emphasis on social and moral development helps pupils to become confident about themselves and about life outside the school.
- Regular involvement in community activities, educational visits and sporting competitions effectively raises pupils' awareness of their local culture. Discussions, even with the younger pupils, indicate that they have a good understanding of what constitutes racism. Older pupils, especially, speak confidently about the fact that everyone is equal no matter what country they come from, or what colour their skin. However, pupils' understanding and preparation for life in a multi-ethnic society are more limited. The school is aware of this and has a clear action

plan to address the issue. The school now meets the requirement for a daily act of collective worship. Assemblies have a good moral theme and there is time for pupils to reflect on how these themes might apply to their own lives. However, there are missed opportunities to raise pupils' spiritual awareness; for example, to reflect on a piece of music or the beauty of art. Spiritual development is not specifically planned for in many areas of the curriculum.

9. Overall, pupils are able to get on with their work because they behave well. One reason for this is that nearly all adults have a consistent approach to behaviour management. The other is the priority that the school gives to pupils' social and moral development. Pupils say that there are clear and fair rules but add that there are inconsistencies between teachers in the use of 'golden time'. Pupils who sometimes have difficulty controlling their behaviour are usually managed well. They receive good support from other adults who work in the school and from external support agencies. As a result, they are usually able to continue with their lessons. Although both pupils and parents express a less positive view about the overall behaviour of pupils, there is no evidence to substantiate the opinion that lessons are significantly disrupted. Where behaviour is only satisfactory, this is in lessons when mild inappropriate behaviour and restlessness of pupils sometimes slows the pace of learning. This can be attributed to lessons and activities that are not sufficiently matched or challenging to the pupils' abilities.
10. Pupils confirm, in their responses to a pupils' questionnaire and in discussions, that lessons are usually interesting. They say that they like most of their teachers and receive help if they get stuck with their work. Nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, show good levels of interest in school activities and in their lessons. This has a positive impact on what they achieve. They confidently discuss their work with visitors and are proud of their achievements. Overall, pupils concentrate well and try hard with their work. Sometimes a few pupils show less motivation and willingness to listen to their teacher or to apply themselves to tasks. These occasions can be directly linked to teachers' behaviour management skills, or to activities that do not fully engage pupils.
11. There was one fixed term exclusion in the year prior to the inspection. The school works hard to support both pupils and families and only uses exclusion when all other avenues have been exhausted.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	363	1	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	14	0	0

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

12. Systems to monitor and promote regular attendance are good. Nevertheless, attendance has steadily declined over the last three years and is broadly the same as that found in most schools. This is despite the school's best efforts to improve attendance levels by discouraging family holidays during term time. Most pupils arrive on time at the start of the school day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

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

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good, as is the quality of teaching. The curriculum is good, as are the opportunities for learning outside the school day. Pupils are cared for well. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, while those with the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Pupils learn well because the overall quality of teaching is good. Assessment is satisfactory: good in some aspects but underdeveloped in others.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching quality has improved significantly since the last inspection, and is now good or better in three-quarters of lessons.
- Teaching and support staff provide well for the least able pupils.
- Teachers' expertise in music is weak, and there is some disparity in the depth to which science is taught.
- Assessment information is used well to target specific support in English and mathematics, and this is proving instrumental in raising standards.
- Pupils' involvement in their own learning is not yet good enough.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 63 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (5%)	11 (17%)	34 (54%)	15 (24%)	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.

13. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection when 11 per cent was unsatisfactory, and the proportion that was good or better was 50 per cent. This improvement is the result of judicious appointments by the headteacher and governors, most of them very recent. Staffing arrangements are significantly more settled than they have been over the last two years, although there are still issues to be dealt with relating to two long-term absences.
14. Children get off to a very good start in the Nursery where teaching is consistently good and sometimes excellent. In Reception classes teaching ranges from sound to good. Here, planning is good but there are times when the organisation of teaching does not consider the needs of all children; for example, when group sizes are too large or teaching lasts for too long. This impacts on children's concentration. Teaching through Years 1 to 6 is predominantly good.

15. Support to the least able pupils, including those with special educational needs, is thoughtfully provided. Teachers work closely with the support staff. They ensure that the work undertaken by pupils with special educational needs is appropriate for them. The close support for pupils with statements of special educational need frequently enables them to achieve as well as their classmates. At other times, pupils are taught in small groups in order to meet their specific learning and personal needs.
16. When teaching is good, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, concentration, contribution and work rate. Lessons have clear intentions, and pupils know what these are. Where teaching is very good or excellent, there are added dimensions. For example, in an outstanding Nursery session with a literacy focus, all children knew what they had to do and what their teacher wanted them to learn. They were wholly engrossed in the activity, and this enabled them to meet her expectations. An excellent ICT lesson in Year 6 promoted both subject skills and collaboration between pupils, and a geography lesson in the same class took precise account of pupils' previous knowledge and built on this in a way that challenged pupils of all abilities.
17. When teaching is satisfactory, all generic teaching skills are in place. The weaknesses that are evident vary from lesson to lesson. For example, there are pockets of weak subject knowledge in science, leading to teachers of parallel classes not teaching all topics to the same breadth and depth. Very occasionally, the pace of a lesson is slow. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to include pupils in an evaluation of how well they have done in a lesson. Some lack of subject expertise is evident in music.
18. Assessment is satisfactory. There are clear strengths and equally clear areas for development. Assessments are well analysed in the Nursery and used to inform teaching. At times, teaching in Reception does not consider the needs of all pupils. In Years 1 to 6, the school has plenty of assessment information about how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics. Careful analysis of data gathered at the end of each year enables the school to track the attainment and achievement of all pupils. Usefully, this is recorded in a way that shows at a glance the attainment and achievement of the least capable, average and most capable pupils. The conclusions drawn from this analysis are intelligently used to target support where it is most needed. For example, the three-group setting in the two Year 5 classes is designed specifically to boost literacy and numeracy standards. Elsewhere in the school, support staff are deployed in an equally focused way. Each pupil has an assessment and achievement book in which reading, writing, mathematics and science work is entered on a termly basis. Currently, however, this work is not marked / levelled in a way that would provide teachers with useful information about the progress their pupils are making, or the standards they have reached. Pupils have literacy and numeracy targets, and most can recall what these are. However, on a lesson-by-lesson basis, pupils are insufficiently involved in gauging how well they have done against their teachers' intentions.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. There are good opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development, including innovation, is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils are prepared well for transfer to secondary school.
- The siting of non-class based computers does not facilitate whole class teaching.
- Curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils is weak.

Commentary

19. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship. Issues from the last report have been addressed. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and a good range of opportunities for enrichment. Well-managed innovation includes creativity weeks; for example, a cultural arts week, based on music, drama and art. The school has purchased a website which will facilitate links with parents. It is working with another primary school, locally, to develop creativity across the curriculum. Pupils in all classes undertake local studies and benefit from talks by visitors from the local community. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils broaden their skills in physical education, science and geography during residential visits to Whitehough Outdoor Activity Centre. Staff from local high schools contribute to the development of pupils' physical and technological skills. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of sports and to develop their interest in the arts and other activities. There is a school choir, a recorder club, music and drama groups and a photography club. The school regularly competes in local sporting events, and pupils have access to specialist coaching. A flourishing after-school club provides well-directed activities and care for 30 children until 6.00 pm.
20. Curricular planning is very good in the Nursery where directed activities, and activities from which children can choose, are well planned with a clear learning outcome. Assessments are well analysed and used to inform planning. In Reception classes planning is good, but at times the organisation of teaching does not consider the needs of all pupils. Group sizes are sometimes too large and teaching lasts for too long. This adversely affects children's concentration.
21. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from well-matched work in all areas of the curriculum. Their numeracy and literacy skills are given particular focus. Support staff withdraw groups of pupils from classes, to work with materials specifically planned to raise achievement in English and mathematics. However, at present, there is little contribution from ICT to enhance teaching and learning for these pupils. There is no specific identification of, or provision for pupils with particular gifts and talents. This is an area for development that is acknowledged by the school.
22. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship and, where appropriate, sex and drugs awareness, is good. The positive ethos of the school promotes self-esteem and equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. Individual differences and achievements are acknowledged and celebrated. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibilities, express opinions and recognise and support the needs of others.
23. Preparation for pupils' transfer to local high schools is good. There are two-way links and visits between staff, pupils and parents. Pupils in Year 6 undertake units of work in mathematics and science that will link with their work in Year 7. Care is taken to ensure the smooth transition of pupils from one year group to another, within the school.
24. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory in the Nursery and Reception classes and good, overall, in Years 1 to 6. Teachers have a broad range of knowledge and experience, enabling all aspects of the curriculum to be covered, although recent changes of staff have made it difficult to secure experienced leadership in all curriculum areas; for example, in music. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to curricular provision in Years 1 to 6, particularly in enabling pupils who experience difficulties to access the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are good, overall. However, the ICT suites, though useful, do not facilitate whole class teaching. The school has two halls, large classrooms, two libraries, ICT areas and a swimming pool. The latter is widely used by the school and the community. External facilities are good. Informative displays celebrate pupils' work. The accommodation is well maintained by the site manager and cleaning staff, and this contributes positively to the school ethos.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Pupils receive satisfactory support, advice and guidance. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to be involved in, and to influence, the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and are content with the care they receive.
- Academic guidance is not always sufficiently targeted so that pupils clearly know what they must do to improve their learning.
- Arrangements to help pupils of all ages settle into the school are very good.
- Pupils have a trusting relationship with at least one adult in the school.
- There are good arrangements to encourage pupils to develop healthy lifestyles.

Commentary

25. Pupils say that they enjoy school and feel safe there. They talk enthusiastically about all that the school has to offer and are confident that there is an adult they can talk to if they are unhappy. Pupils speak knowledgeably about the recently established school council. They know who the representatives are and how they can make suggestions for discussion. They feel their views are listened to, and, where possible, acted upon, and that they are now able to make a difference to school life. Pupils also confirm that they can offer their views during circle time and state that it is a good forum for addressing concerns such as playground behaviour. However, they say that not all classes have circle time even though it appears on the timetable.
26. Teachers monitor pupils' personal development informally, through discussion and because they take time to get to know the pupils in their care. Pupils' work and effort is valued and celebrated and pupils appreciate this. Relationships with pupils are good and when teachers notice or are told that pupils are having difficulties, they take action quickly to put matters right. Pupils confirm this. A pupil in Year 3 stated, 'Teachers ask you what's the matter and try and cheer you up!' Healthy lifestyles are encouraged through regular swimming lessons, even for the very youngest pupils. Free fruit is available. However, the personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) is not consistently planned across the curriculum so that it supports and guides pupils effectively. The school is aware of this and has clear plans to develop this area. Pupils are confident that they can ask their teachers for help in lessons. During the inspection good examples of one-to-one support were seen in some lessons. However, pupils are not encouraged to evaluate their own work. Assessment information is not used sufficiently well to set and share academic targets with pupils and to help them understand how they can improve their learning.
27. Welfare arrangements are good; for example, to deal with any illness or accident that occurs during the school day. The practice relating to health and safety has been improved, although some aspects have only been improved recently. There is now an established health and safety committee and risk assessments are undertaken and monitored. Staff effectively follow agreed policies and clear practices relating to child protection. These procedures permeate all aspects of school life and are clearly understood by all who work or help in school.
28. There are very sensitive arrangements for supporting children when they start in the Nursery and Reception classes. The very good relationships between home and school, established before children start at school, contribute strongly to helping them to quickly feel at home and adjust to the routines of school life. Arrangements to settle older pupils into school are equally very good; pupils confirm this.
29. The support and guidance for pupils who have special educational needs are good. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and show genuine concern for their welfare. Much of the work they do has been planned to match an individual's targets. These targets are regularly reviewed and class teachers and support staff assess pupils' progress towards them.

An assistant who gives one-to-one support to a pupil with a statement of special educational need, meets with the class teacher each week. From these meetings she gains the information needed to plan her support in line with the teacher's intentions for the whole class. There is no specific support and guidance for pupils with particular gifts and talents.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. Links and liaison with the community, schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with schools and the community improve the quality of pupils' education.
- Although the school welcomes parents' help and support, they are not as closely involved in their children's education as they could be.

Commentary

30. Parents express mixed views about the school, the information they receive and how their views are taken into account. Inspection findings support some of these concerns. The school is trying to establish an open and welcoming approach towards all parents and it has been successful in some respects. There is a thriving parents' association that raises money to support the school financially. Several parents help in classrooms and this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Parents strongly support events that directly involve their children. However, there are very few initiatives to directly involve parents in their children's education, such as practical curriculum workshops to enable them to help their children at home. There is no provision to help parents of the youngest pupils to support their children; for example, through story sacks or early maths games. The views of certain groups of parents have been sought on specific issues but the findings have not been published. The school acknowledges the need to both seek the views of parents in a wider and more systematic way, and to find ways to encourage them to play a greater part in their children's education.
31. Parents of pupils who have given teachers concerns, are involved and are kept informed from an early stage. Parents of statemented pupils are invited to review meetings, as are the pupils.
32. Wherever practicable and possible, the school has tried to keep parents up-to-date with the many changes to the teaching staff. Whilst parents are provided with day-to-day information about many aspects of education, which is both practical and helpful, some information about aspects of the school, such as that related to its policies and practice for the care and guidance of pupils, is not made widely available. This has led to a lack of clarity amongst some parents. End of year reports about pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection but they are variable in quality and still do not indicate pupils' progress, strengths and areas for development clearly enough. Although targets are sometimes included, these are often broad and are therefore not helpful to those parents who wish to help their children to improve. The school is aware of the need to increase its level of communication with parents.
33. Both the local and wider communities provide a good source for school visits and activities. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about these experiences. Pupils regularly take part in local events; for example, singing carols for local senior citizens at Christmas. These opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' social development. Close working relationships have been established with local schools. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting events with other local primary schools. Staff from the local cluster of schools meet regularly and this has resulted in good initiatives to develop the curriculum; for instance, in ICT. Good practice is regularly shared and this has a positive impact on teachers' professional development. The good liaison with local secondary schools ensures that pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. These links also provide opportunities to broaden pupils' curriculum experiences, particularly through sport. The school regularly accepts students from further education colleges and also trainee teachers, and this extra pair

of hands in classrooms is used to good effect. A range of community groups regularly uses the school facilities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The governance of the school is good. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and that by key staff are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many improvements in leadership and management have been made since the last inspection.
- The headteacher has a laudable vision for the development of the role of subject leaders and the school overall.
- The school improvement plan sets out clearly the strategic direction of the school.
- The monitoring of performance data is being used very effectively to improve provision for specific age groups and levels of ability.
- Too little progress has been made in providing for the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

Commentary

34. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their vision for its development was clearly demonstrated at the time of the appointment of a new headteacher. Whilst governors have a good awareness of the priorities for the development of the school, they understand that they need to become more familiar with assessment data. This would enable them to hold the school to account for the standards it attains. They are eager to gain this knowledge. The headteacher provides data to the governors and they are beginning to link this information to the school's improvement plan and its priorities. The governing body fulfils all of its statutory responsibilities.
35. The headteacher is wholly committed to the National Strategy for primary schools and combines its principles with her own priorities to promote a clear vision for the school's future. She empowers those with a leadership role throughout the school in order that they will have a positive impact on teaching and will raise standards. The leadership of English and mathematics have already been such priorities and the outcome has been more focused monitoring of planning, pupils' work and teaching. As a result of lesson observations, teachers are given clear direction and guidance to improve their teaching in these subjects. Plans to repeat the process in science are in place.
36. Throughout school, there is a strong sense of mutual respect and value. Teachers are prepared to seek guidance from colleagues. This is a spin-off of the headteacher's desire to raise the profile of the subject leaders. She shows her value of others' contributions when she speaks of the adults working in school. Newly qualified teachers are particularly appreciated for the up-to-date skills that they bring. They are very well aware of the value placed upon them and talk very enthusiastically about the amount of support and guidance that they have received in their first year of teaching.
37. Each year, attainment and progress data from a variety of sources are carefully monitored. The result of this annual process is to enable the school to direct support to where it is needed. For instance, the analysis of data from 2004 identified the need for intervention in order to support a specific group of pupils in Year 5. Additional teaching and support staff have been deployed so that the pupils from two classes could be taught in three ability sets for mathematics and English. As a result, the needs of pupils in each set are more effectively met. The leadership of this and of other intervention strategies such as Additional Literacy is good.
38. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator keeps all documents relating to individuals in an accessible form, so that essential, up-to-date information can be retrieved easily. She uses the services of the local education authority

effectively, and implements specialist advice to improve provision for specific pupils. Good use is made of assessment data to identify the need for extra support and target resources. The co-ordinator values the support that parents provide for their children. She expounds a clear determination that the support children receive will improve their self-esteem by raising achievement. Regular meetings between the co-ordinator and newly qualified staff are part of the school improvement plan and are intended to identify issues in the provision for pupils with special educational needs.

39. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The co-ordinator is clear about how she would like the Foundation Stage to improve. She has been successful in a bid for the school to be one of a number of Foundation Stage providers to be trained for the local authority's 'Kitemark'.
40. The headteacher is aware of the pressing need to develop strategies for the identification of gifted and talented pupils and to make appropriate provision for them. The local education authority's adviser for this aspect has held two meetings with the staff. Whilst the school improvement plan includes priorities to raise standards, it does not address the needs of those who are gifted and talented in specific subjects or activities. Doing so would improve the overall quality of inclusion in the school, which currently is satisfactory.
41. Financial administration is good and best value principles are applied well.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,061,70 3
Total expenditure	1,014,42 0
Expenditure per pupil	2,244

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	5,253
Balance carried forward to the next	52,536

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is **good** with some **very good** features.

Provision has improved since the last report. It is now good. When children enter the Nursery their level of attainment is at the expected level. Teaching is good overall, children achieve well and the majority are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. It is often very good in the Nursery. Some adults are new to the school and the good provision has not had time to impact sufficiently on standards. Both Nursery and Reception classrooms have recently been re-built and each area of learning has a designated place. The area outdoors is used well to provide an extensive range of interesting and challenging activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a positive attitude to learning.
- Adults are caring role models and encourage children to work and play together.
- Because relationships at all levels are good, children are well behaved, confident and relaxed.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. This is because adults are good role models and foster good relationships. In the Nursery adults make sure children are very clear about rules and routines. In this positive environment children flourish. They are guided well towards making choices and are taught the skills they need for the activities on offer. Adults work with small groups of children so all remain on task and their concentration develops well. In the Reception class children show pride in their achievements, whether it be scoring a goal during physical activity or writing a story. A minority of Reception children find it difficult to concentrate when group sizes are too large. Children show care and concern for their classrooms. They willingly tidy away, sometimes without immediate adult support. Reception children play well together taking turns when playing subtraction games or when sharing glue spreaders. Behaviour is good overall and in particular when activities captivate children's interests. In the Nursery all the children understand the basic rules of 'good listening', 'good talking' and 'good thinking', because staff explain them clearly. Staff from the Nursery and Reception classes visit children in their homes before they start school. This very good practice makes children feel valued, so they settle well into the new environment. Children are confident and friendly, and easily engage staff and visitors in conversation.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff place strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills.
- Children learn well because adults adopt a systematic approach to teaching basic reading and writing skills.
- Learning slows down when group sizes are large.

Commentary

43. Children are developing good listening skills and this has a significant impact on their learning. Teaching is good overall and children achieve well. The majority are likely to reach the early learning goals. Children are encouraged to talk throughout the day and this helps develop their speaking skills. Most are confident to explain their ideas in front of the whole group, using good, clear sentences. Adults place strong emphasis on listening skills and plan games to help children hear sounds in words. In the Nursery the children identify the first sound in the names of objects and in Reception they use their knowledge in writing and reading. Nursery children learn to handle books carefully and enjoy browsing through their favourites. Reception children visit the local library and enjoy listening to stories. Children are learning to read simple words and make sensible predictions about what might happen. Standards in reading are above what is expected and Reception children attempt to sound out unknown words with confidence and accuracy. They know many words by sight. This is because they have daily opportunities to consolidate their learning. More able Reception children are beginning to write with minimum support. They know they have to put a full stop at the end of a sentence. They are well supported in small group situations, where the learning is good. It is less good when groups are large. Children overall are motivated to learn, especially in the Nursery. In the Reception classes the planning and organisation do not always match children's stages of development and adults expect children to sit for too long during whole class literacy sessions. Children are therefore less enthusiastic.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because staff know exactly what they understand and can do, and build systematically on it.
- Learning is at its best during the well planned practical activities.

Commentary

44. Teaching is good overall and children achieve well. Most are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of Reception. In lessons, adults are very focused on what they want each child to learn and they place good emphasis on number skills. They use assessment well, systematically building on previous learning. In the Reception classes, whole group numeracy activities are sometimes too long. There is limited interaction with the result that children do not always concentrate well enough. Learning is better through the good range of practical activities that adults plan because they consolidate understanding. For example, Reception children enjoy learning about subtraction when they play outside knocking down skittles and then calculate how many are left standing. They make currant buns with dough, sing the rhyme and learn the language associated with subtraction. Children in the Nursery count up to 25 by rote. They know stories about three bears, three pigs and three goats. They are well challenged to make repeating patterns and build tall and short buildings with solid shapes. Reception children order bears by size, and compare weight. They learn to identify the names of flat shapes and match similar solid shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good play opportunities both indoors and outside for children to explore, investigate and learn about the natural environment.
- There are missed opportunities to fully develop children's awareness of cultures and traditions.

Commentary

45. Staff plan a range of interesting activities for children to experience and enjoy. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Outdoors, children play with water. They paint with it, splash in it and use brushes to make raindrops. Reception children investigate materials to see which let light through and which are waterproof. Nursery children decide which clothes are best for teddy to wear in summer and in winter. Children have daily chances to access computers and know how use the mouse to play the games linked to mathematics, reading and art. Some need support when playing games. Children make models using various materials. They play with small models, matching camels to desert conditions and penguins to a cold climate. They have access to artefacts from different cultures and learn about special events. However, children are not involved in related activities and there are missed opportunities to experience special cultural occasions. For example, they had limited involvement in Chinese New Year and Shrove Tuesday.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an extensive range of play opportunities both indoors and outside for children to develop good co-ordination and balance
- Children are learning to swim in the school pool.

Commentary

46. Adults use the school accommodation to full advantage. Teaching is good. Children achieve well and are likely to reach the early learning goals. They have regular access to the area outdoors where they use wheeled apparatus with increasing skill. The slide is a challenge for them and many use alternate feet to climb up it. Children have good opportunities to run vigorously, and to play with a good range of equipment. All children benefit from well-planned lessons in the school hall where they improve their throwing, catching, kicking, balancing and co-ordination skills. All children have weekly lessons in the school swimming pool where they develop their confidence well and learn to co-ordinate arm and leg movements. Children enjoy these sessions and make good progress. There are many good opportunities for children to develop fine motor skills. Children learn to use spreaders, brushes, pens and pencils. They thread beads and use rolling pins and cutters. They manipulate large construction equipment and small objects with good control. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle. For example, children enjoy fresh fruit and milk every day, they know when they need to wash their hands and know that physical activity is good for them.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the accommodation both indoors and outside.

Commentary

47. There are good opportunities for children to express their ideas, both in the classroom and outside. Teaching is good. Children achieve well and are likely to reach the early learning goals. Children are carefully guided when painting portraits so they develop a sense of colour and shape. Children use a range of materials in their artwork. Adults include the works of famous artists to inspire them. For example, teachers demonstrate the style of Andy Goldsworthy so that children can copy his ideas when playing outdoors. Staff teach children a good variety of songs and rhymes. They have regular access to musical instruments. Staff provide opportunities for role-play and dressing-up activities to develop their imagination. Children pretend-play using small figures. They re-enact well known stories using them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and now meet national expectations overall.
- Good leadership over the past year has made a positive contribution to standards.
- The work of teachers and support staff is good.
- Writing remains a relatively weak element, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

48. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently at the level expected nationally. These standards replicate those reported at the last inspection. However, they have dipped between then and now: currently the trend is an upward one. From average attainment on entry to Year 1, pupils achieve well because they are taught well. The reason that standards are not yet higher is because teachers are still working with pupils who have underachieved in the past.
49. Listening skills are good. Teachers' expectations of pupils' listening skills are high and pupils nearly always respond well. On the few occasions when their attention wanders it is because the lesson is insufficiently engaging. Speaking skills are satisfactory. Pupils adequately acquire the technical vocabulary linked to literacy and to other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils respond well to the encouragement and intelligent questioning that they receive in most lessons. However, there was no evidence of a specific focus on speaking skills in any lesson seen, despite the fact that the end of lesson session provides an ideal forum for doing so.
50. Reading standards are satisfactory. The younger pupils in school say that they regularly read to their parents. From Year 4 onwards this practice is significantly less prevalent, even amongst those whose reading skills are weak. The majority of older pupils say that they read to themselves on a regular basis but very few are avid readers, or enthuse about a particular book or author. Reading sessions in school are generally of good quality. Teachers pose a range of questions to build pupils' understanding of text and this ensures that pupils' ability to understand what they have read develops in line with their ability to read the words on a page.
51. Writing standards are below average overall, particularly beyond Year 2. Presentation is generally satisfactory, but very rarely better. Continuing to improve on presentation skills is an important component in the drive to improve overall standards in writing. Pupils have regular opportunities to write and these are not hampered by excessive use of worksheets. Indeed, few worksheets are to be found in the school. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length: too often writing takes the form of numbered exercises or answers to comprehension questions.

52. Literacy lessons are generally taught well. Teachers make clear to pupils what it is they are expected to learn in the lesson. They give clear explanations and plan well for the range of ability in the class. They ensure that all pupils have appropriate targets to meet. They expect pupils to work hard and usually give them a minimum requirement for written work. They deploy support staff very well, and they in turn provide high quality support to individuals and small groups. Teachers are less effective at using the wind-up session at the end of the lesson to check that the intended learning has taken place, and at involving pupils in this process. However, most pupils are aware of the literacy targets towards which they are working.
53. Leadership and management of the subject are good, demonstrated by the action that has taken place since the appointment of the co-ordinator four terms ago. For example, training on guided reading and writing sessions has been a key focus in ensuring that all staff have the skills to teach literacy at least adequately. In addition, the use of assessment information to split the two Year 5 classes into three ability sets is proving very effective.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Most pupils read well enough to access the information they need in other subjects of the curriculum. Good support is in place for those who cannot. Pupils have adequate opportunities to write in science, geography, history and religious education. However, the nature of those opportunities is such that pupils' overall writing diet is not as well balanced as it should be. Too much writing is in the form of single sentences or short passages. Improving this balance is a crucial factor in the drive to improve standards in English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving, but are not yet high enough.
- Teaching is good, overall, leading to good achievement.
- Improved planning has led to greater consistency between parallel classes and better continuity from one year group to another.
- Recent emphasis on mental and oral strategies has sharpened pupils' skills.
- Pupils' knowledge of their own learning is limited and they are not sufficiently aware of how to raise their attainment to expected levels.

Commentary

55. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 match the national average and are rising due to good, and sometimes very good, teaching. The achievement of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, is good. The school is aware of the fact that boys consistently achieve better than girls, overall, particularly in mental work, but girls tend to be better than boys in solving problems. Measures are being taken to reduce the gender gap and boost achievement. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
56. The school has put a number of initiatives in place to raise standards. With the support of consultants from the local education authority, over the last eighteen months, the co-ordinator has successfully developed pupils' mental and oral strategies and is now focusing on written calculations. Training needs of individual staff have been met. The introduction of a uniform planning system has improved equality of opportunity for pupils, both within and between year groups. A learning support programme has been successful in improving pupils' confidence and understanding in areas where they were falling behind their peers. Focused monitoring of teachers' planning, pupils' work, and of teaching and learning in the classroom by the co-ordinator and the consultants has been instrumental in improving the quality of teaching and learning and providing greater challenge for pupils. However, sharper assessment is needed in order to identify the specific needs of individual pupils. Gifted and talented pupils are not

yet formally identified. Together with more able pupils, they are ready for the challenge of more open-ended, investigative opportunities. Although targets are set, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is limited; they are not aware of their progress within National Curriculum levels or how to raise their attainment to a higher level. Variable marking and pupils' lack of pride in the presentation of their work have an adverse effect on the pace of improvement.

57. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and is sometimes very good. Teachers' planning is consistent and leads to equality of opportunity for pupils of similar ability within year groups. Teaching creates and sustains interest, and success is encouraged through the effective use of questions, the provision for pupils to demonstrate methods and reasoning and opportunities to address mistakes and misconceptions. Teaching assistants contribute effectively to the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships promote good learning.
58. Leadership and management are good. The experienced and knowledgeable subject leader is a good role model for staff and pupils. Under her leadership, the subject has become more unified. She has clear and achievable targets for future development and has created an effective team. With so many recent changes in staff, however, it will take time for the results of her work to become fully apparent.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. There are some planned opportunities for the development of mathematics across the curriculum. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in geography, when working on plans, routes, directions and map co-ordinates. They record the results of traffic surveys and litter surveys in graphical form. However, potential opportunities in some subjects are missed, because they are not incorporated into planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Leadership of science is well informed and embodies good levels of subject knowledge and expertise.
- Teaching is often good and is raising standards.
- The depth of studies in topics differs in parallel classes in the same year group.

Commentary

60. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, when low standards in science was a key issue. Standards are now in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The achievements of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are satisfactory. Achievement for those pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory and, where good levels of support are available, their achievement is good. Too few pupils achieve standards that are above expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
61. Teaching is satisfactory overall and often good. All teachers expect high standards of behaviour. Good teaching is typified by high levels of personal skill, knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject, and is raising standards. The recent increase in the frequency of opportunities for pupils to investigate scientific questions, has also contributed to improved standards and achievement. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher presented the groups with printed questions based on everyday scenarios. These were all linked to the process of drying and evaporation. As they discussed their work, within their groups, the teacher was very active in his support and challenge. Pupils were expected to formulate their own questions and to devise an investigation to answer them. This good approach gave pupils more control over their work. Too frequently, teachers of parallel classes, in the same age

group, do not teach all topics to the same breadth and depth. This results in disparity between classes over time and is not satisfactory.

62. Leadership is good. Through her own high levels of knowledge and understanding, the co-ordinator is well placed to help her colleagues, and thereby, contribute to raising standards. Priorities for development have already been established and, in line with the school improvement plan, they are being put into practice. The subject leader and an adviser from the local education authority have given guidance to teachers. The main thrust relates to promoting opportunities for pupils to develop their own questions and scientific methods to answer them. The style and thoroughness of teachers' marking vary in their potential to help pupils improve their work. The need to improve this is in the school development plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There have been good levels of improvement since the previous inspection, especially in standards in Year 6.
- Teaching is good and sometimes, excellent.
- There is a very good range of software, especially for older pupils.
- The hardware resources are unreliable and too few are available for the younger pupils.

Commentary

63. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are inline with expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall although there are weaknesses in some younger classes. This is because of limited resources for some lessons. Achievement by pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.
64. Teaching is good overall and is never less than satisfactory. In lessons in Year 2, it was very good, and in lessons in Year 6 it was excellent. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used the interactive whiteboard very effectively. She used it to inform the pupils of the lesson's objectives and to give the lesson impact. Pupils were given a clear understanding of what they would be able to do by the end of the lesson. The teacher grouped pupils so that they could share laptops and work collaboratively. Support for pupils with special educational needs was good: the support assistant used a light-touch approach enabling the pupil to interact with the group and receive one-to-one support when needed. The lesson was a very good example of the potential of ICT to enhance teaching and learning in other subjects. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher had good subject knowledge and skills, but the impact of her teaching was limited because there were too few computers.
65. The management of ICT is satisfactory and the plans to increase the number of computers and interactive whiteboards are appropriate. While there has been very good improvement in resources since the last inspection, more is to be done to maximise the use of these resources for the benefit of the pupils. For example, although the services of a consultant technician are bought in, the technician has not yet acquired a full understanding of all software and peripherals that are available. He does not always ensure that computer batteries have been fully charged, and that all computers have the required software installed. Hence, frequently, when teachers plan lessons requiring 15 laptops, the numbers that actually work may be as few as ten. This has a negative impact on teachers' lessons and occasionally results in less good achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. By the time pupils are in Year 6, the range of subjects in which they are able to use ICT resources is satisfactory. Pupils use science simulations to gain greater understanding of forces and of electrical circuits. In history and science, pupils find information from CD-ROMs

and from the Internet. They use ICT to produce graphs in data handling work in mathematics. When they studied the Victorian era, the older pupils used a specialist application to present their work as a computerised slide show. The co-ordinator, who will take over in September, is enthusiastic and has several key priorities and the personal expertise to carry them out. He is developing the school's website and intends that it will promote learning across several subjects. His intention is that, eventually it will be accessible from home.

HUMANITIES

67. There was too little evidence to support an overall judgement on **history**, but it is clear that pupils enjoy the subject. Pupils in Year 6 recall periods that they have studied recently and speak with good understanding. They particularly enjoyed the visit to the Museum of Lancashire where they had first-hand experience of a Victorian classroom and learned about the games children played in Victorian times. In the lessons seen, teachers made good use of resources to enhance learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 had researched information about George Stephenson's life and his inventions from books, from videos and from the Internet. The school makes good use of National Curriculum guidance, and pupils' recorded work shows progression in skills and knowledge. For example, Year 3 pupils had illustrated their work on invaders and settlers, Years 4 pupils had improved their understanding of Tudor times when they learnt about differences between rich and poor, while the work of pupils in Year 5 showed that they had considered difficulties faced by children during World War II. The history co-ordinator has been absent for some time and as a result there has been no subject monitoring. This is evident from the books of some year groups, where very little history has been recorded.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on geographical enquiry skills encourages independent learning.
- Pupils' understanding of how they can improve is limited.

Commentary

68. Standards match expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. They are rising, due to the recent broadening of the curriculum to include greater emphasis on enquiry skills, multi-cultural issues and the environment. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve well. During the inspection, they demonstrated their ability to respond to geographical issues. Pupils in Year 4 discussed the results of a recent survey of rubbish and recorded their results on a tally chart and bar graph. They accepted the need to recycle as many materials as possible. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 demonstrated care and concern for the plight of people in a village in India, with regard to land issues. Pupils in Year 6 drew on their geographical, literacy and ICT skills when expressing their views about the problems caused by traffic outside the school.
69. Teaching is good, overall. In the five lessons observed, it varied from good to excellent. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, successfully engage pupils' interest, and encourage independent enquiry skills. Pupils apply themselves well to their work and make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, and good resources support learning. Pupils apply their literacy skills through discussion, research and writing. They use their mathematical skills, when working on plans, map co-ordinates and directions, and recording results of surveys in the form of charts, tables and graphs. The Internet is used well to obtain data about weather and other things, from around the world.
70. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader was appointed to the role less than three months ago. He has raised the profile of geography, introduced the study of fair trade and developed links with other subjects. He has a clear vision for future

development and is keen to have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. The curriculum is enriched by studies of the local environment and the residential visits by pupils in Years 5 and 6 to Whitehough Outdoor Education Centre. Assessment is satisfactory, overall. It is used well to inform planning and to respond to pupils' needs, but pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve is limited. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Cross-curricular links have a positive impact on standards.
- Pupils' understanding of how they can improve is limited.

Commentary

71. Standards match those expected in the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus, in both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. Aspects of Christianity are studied in all classes. In addition, pupils learn about Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. The breadth of the curriculum was apparent in the lessons observed. Pupils in Year 1 developed their understanding of the concept of 'new life'. Pupils in Year 2 learnt about the importance of the sacred writings of Judaism. Pupils in Year 3 increased their understanding of how the writings of the prophet Mohammed teach Muslims how to live. Pupils in Year 4 learnt that, for Muslims, the purpose of life is to serve Allah. Pupils in Year 5 responded positively to new learning about Buddhism, relating it to their own experiences. Pupils in Year 6 considered the Christian view of 'forgiveness' in relation to their own lives and the lives of others. Pupils show a high level of respect for the values and beliefs of others. They recognise that there are many similarities between the major world religions.
72. Teaching is good, overall. In the seven lessons observed, it varied from good to very good. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge, and provided opportunities for pupils to relate their knowledge to their own beliefs. Pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. They use their literacy skills well in role-play and writing, and their ICT skills in research. Their geographical and cultural development is enhanced through the study of the major world religions. In PSHE, pupils have opportunities to reflect on values, beliefs, choices, relationships and other issues. The curriculum builds upon pupils' own experiences and cultural identity, and they are helped to understand the concepts specific to a faith tradition. The annual carol service takes place in St Mary's Church and pupils visit the church to learn more about the Christian faith. Good resources support pupils' learning.
73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has been in the post for less than three months. She provides knowledgeable leadership of the curriculum and gives good support to staff. She is keen to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. Her plans for future development are appropriate and include establishing links with all the major faith groups. Assessment is satisfactory. Although it is used well to adjust planning and to meet emerging needs, pupils are not aware of how well they are doing or what they should do to improve their attainment. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. Insufficient evidence was gathered in **art and design, design and technology** and **music** to support judgements on quality of provision.
75. The standard of all of the **art and design** work currently on display meets national expectations. The standard of a significant proportion of the work exceeds national expectations. Much of this work was produced during the '*Earth, Air, Fire and Water*' Art Day,

held earlier this term and owes its quality to the ideas provided by a newly qualified teacher with particular skills in the subject, and to her guidance to staff. Work is varied; for example; it shows printing with polystyrene blocks from Year 1, wax resist techniques from Year 2, observational drawings of insects from Year 3, colour-mixing techniques from Year 4 and work with charcoal and rubbers from the oldest pupils in the school. Apart from some reference to the work of Cezanne and Ben Nicholson in Year 5 and attractive sculptures in the style of Giacometti in Year 2, there was little evidence of the study of famous artists. The newly qualified teacher (who will shortly take on the co-ordination of the subject) is aware of this shortfall and plans to rectify it.

76. No **design and technology** lessons were seen during the inspection, and there was no photographic or written evidence. Because art and design has been the recent focus, there was little design and technology work on display. Long-term plans suggest there is adequate coverage of the subject, and pupils confirm that this is the case. There is no co-ordinator for the subject at the moment; but the art and design co-ordinator will take it over later in the year.
77. At the time of the previous report, standards in **music** were found to be unsatisfactory as were the expertise and confidence of teachers. Whilst no judgement can be made on provision in music, there is some evidence to suggest that the issue of teacher expertise remains. In the limited amount of teaching seen, there was a common thread in that the good quality of general teaching was not supported by sufficient musical knowledge and expertise. The teachers are very open about this and try hard to give pupils a range of musical experiences. However, basic misconceptions and confusion exist; for example, between beat, rhythm and tempo. Hence, pupils can be misinformed and teachers do not have the knowledge to correct it.
78. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 show that they know the definition of musical elements such as pitch, dynamics, tempo etc. However, in practice, they do not use the instruments in a sufficiently broad context to enable them to use this factual knowledge. They could recall very few occasions when they worked together in small groups, composing their own work. When music was discussed with pupils from Year 6, they state that singing is their main activity. They remembered using untuned instruments in previous years, but had no recollection of using instruments capable of playing a melody.
79. When pupils sing in large groups, they lack vitality, skills in maintaining accurate pitch and a sense of phrase. They find many intervals difficult and do not have the technique to sing them accurately. In a whole school assembly, a song involved hand movements, representative of a worm; this was inappropriate for the older pupils, many of whom did not join in, and the lyrics and melody were too demanding for the younger pupils. When younger pupils sang together, the material was better suited to their skills, and they sang with improved tonality and accuracy.
80. There is no co-ordinator. Although governors have tried to appoint a teacher with the required expertise, and who would be a good classroom practitioner, they have been unsuccessful so far. Resources are satisfactory in range and variety. Indeed, they include several low register, tuned instruments that have the potential to add richness and resonance to pupils' music; unfortunately, many of them need repairing.

Physical Education

Provision for physical education is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The scheme of work supports teachers well
- Good teaching leads to good skill development
- Pupils benefit from regular swimming lessons in the school pool.

- There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils outside the school day.

Commentary

81. The subject has a high profile in the school. Pupils enjoy lessons, and standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The scheme of work ensures pupils make good progress in skills, and lessons are well paced to give pupils plenty of time to practise and improve. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop a variety of skills. They learn skills such as throwing, catching and dribbling. They learn to co-ordinate the body in gymnastics, and to respond to music through dance.
82. Teaching is good overall. In good lessons teachers make sure that pupils are clear that good exercise supports good health, and they emphasise what pupils are to learn. During lessons teachers encourage pupils to demonstrate good practice so that others can improve. Pupils are given time to discuss and evaluate their work, and the work of their classmates. This helps pupils understand what constitutes good standards. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from expert tuition organised by the local high school. In the lesson seen pupils achieved very well and reached standards in gymnastics that were above those normally seen. The lesson was very well organised and pupils worked very hard at improving and developing skills, posture and co-ordination. In a good dance lesson in Year 3, the teacher acted as a role model very well, and as pupils copied her, they too improved their performance. The teacher supported pupils well as in pairs they devised a simple routine.
83. The school has a swimming pool and a swimming instructress. It offers weekly lessons to Nursery and Reception children and pupils from Year 1 to Year 4. All pupils are able to swim 20 metres by the end of Year 4.
84. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator works hard to support teachers and through the Schools Sport Partnership has increased the time allocated to the subject. He has devised a curriculum plan for each year group. A new assessment system is good, but has not had time to show its effects on teaching and learning. There are increased opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and interests in out-of-school seasonal activities, which include gymnastics, football and netball.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. PSHE was not inspected in depth. Teachers' planning shows that the curriculum for this aspect of the school's work is developing. In all lessons pupils are encouraged to respect others and to take good account of school rules. They enjoy talking in pairs and discussing a range of issues. Pupils take full advantage of games and activities that teachers provide after school, learning to work alongside others with whom they might not otherwise engage. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' understanding of citizenship as they find out how society works. In Year 4 they consider the need to care for the environment. During a lesson in Year 6, pupils watched a video and subsequently discussed the United Nations Charter for children's rights. Older pupils play an active part in the life of the school. They prepare the hall for assemblies and they answer the telephone at lunch times. The school council was democratically elected at the beginning of the academic year and it is through the council that the views of pupils are sought. Recently pupils raised money from Christmas cards and other activities. They used the proceeds to purchase football nets and other resources that they had requested. In science and physical education lessons, and through the range of after-school activities, pupils learn about keeping healthy. Residential visits make a good contribution to pupils' health and social development. The school nurse visits regularly to discuss issues with pupils. The school is part of the Healthy Schools programme that encourages pupils to exercise more and to get into the habit of eating a healthy diet in order to promote a healthy lifestyle.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

