

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BARNABAS & ST PAUL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blackburn

LEA area: Blackburn with Darwen

Unique reference number: 119499

Headteacher: Mrs E B Smith

Reporting inspector: Sheila Pemberton
20810

Dates of inspection: 3 - 7 July 2000

Inspection number: 185428

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oakenhurst Road Blackburn Lancashire
Postcode:	BB2 1SN
Telephone number:	01254 698413
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd Peter Hallett
Date of previous inspection:	11 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Sheila Pemberton	Registered inspector	English Art Physical education	What the school should do to improve How high standards are How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents/carers
George Halliday	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good curricular and other opportunities are
Keith Roberts	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Information technology Design and technology	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Kath Wallace	Team inspector	Under-fives Special educational needs English as an additional language Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full-time pupils:	264 - 130 boys, 134 girls (broadly average)
Number of four-year-olds:	10
Age range:	4 to 11.
Pupils with English as an additional language:	70.6 per cent (very high).
Pupils entitled to free school meals:	48 per cent (well above average).
Pupils on the register of special educational needs:	43 per cent (well above average).
Pupils with statements of special educational needs:	2.7 per cent (above average).
Average class size:	26.4

The school was placed in special measures in June 1995 because it was likely to fail to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Following an inspection in November 1997, the school no longer required special measures and was providing an acceptable education for its pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides its pupils with a good education and gives good value for money. Further improvements have taken place since 1997 with the appointment of a new headteacher, who, together with the chair of governors and the deputy headteacher is working hard to bring about change. The success of their efforts is due in part to their good understanding of the social problems faced by many families, and the difficulties many pupils encounter in learning to speak English. Over the last two years effective leadership has made its mark on the difficult task of raising standards for pupils in Year 6 from a very low level. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests in mathematics and science show that this has been achieved successfully.

What the school does well

- Pupils in Year 6 are better at information technology than most 11-year-olds.
- Pupils work hard. Most have good relationships with one another and are sensible and responsible.
- Teachers keep a close check on pupils' learning and personal development.
- Most of the teaching in the juniors is good.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships with parents are very good.
- The headteacher gives the school good leadership.

What could be improved

- Many pupils' spoken English, writing and understanding of the books they read.
- The work provided for children in the reception classes.
- The attendance levels of pupils who take long holidays abroad.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since her appointment in 1998, the headteacher has successfully tackled any weaknesses remaining from the ten issues identified during the first inspection in 1995. Six issues from a short inspection in 1997 were added to weaknesses still existing from the first inspection. In dealing with 16 weaknesses since 1995, the school has done remarkably well and has improved at a good rate. Teaching and standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 have

improved. They are not, however, matched by improvements to standards in English, which are continuously featured for action in the school's development plan. Programmes of work for different subjects now provide clear guidance for teachers' planning, and standards have risen in Year 6. The expectations of teachers that more able pupils will do their best have improved with the appointment of new staff. There is still a lack of work at the right level for these pupils in some lessons in mathematics and in history and geography. Good, new procedures for assessing pupils' learning have improved teachers' planning, especially in Key Stage 2. The assessment of children's achievements in the reception classes lacks the accuracy needed to plan the next steps in their learning. Detailed systems are now in place to check the effectiveness of all teachers' work.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	E*	E	C
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	C
Science	E	E	E	C

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The grade recorded in comparison with similar schools has been changed from D to C because pupils have a wider range of difficulties than their entitlement to free school meals suggests.

Standards have risen in National Curriculum tests in mathematics and science for 11-year-olds in 2000. There is a marked improvement on last year's results in science, since 77 per cent of pupils in Year 6 reached the level expected for their age. This improvement indicates that far more pupils have done the best they are capable of in science this year. More pupils, 58 per cent, in the current Year 6 have achieved the level in mathematics expected of 11-year-olds than in the previous three years. Although this leaves room for further improvement, it is a considerable rise in standards since 1999.

Standards in English are still low, with only 48 per cent of pupils reaching the level expected for their age. The main cause of this low standard lies in the problems met in speaking grammatically correct English by the very high percentage of multi-lingual pupils whose first language is not English. With comparatively few English-speaking pupils to provide examples of more accurate spoken English, the school is fighting an uphill battle to improve speaking and writing. Also, many pupils take extended holidays abroad where they neither hear, speak, read, nor write English. When they get back to school, many have fallen behind with their learning and join the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The school is aware that the most important task in raising standards for seven and 11-year-olds is to improve pupils' understanding of English and this issue will be at the basis of much of its work after this inspection.

There has been a very good improvement to standards in information technology since the last inspection. All pupils now reach levels above those expected for their age. Seven and 11-year-olds are doing better in music and art; their work is no longer unsatisfactory and is now typical for their age. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, the standards achieved by 11-year-olds are now satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils work hard and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Although most pupils are well-behaved, the school has small groups of pupils with special educational needs whose behavioural problems are difficult to manage.
Personal development and relationships	Most pupils have good relationships with one another. They respect each other's feelings and beliefs.
Attendance	Attendance is below average but it has improved recently. It is affected adversely by the long family holidays taken by some pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Most of the teaching is satisfactory or good. Two per cent is excellent, 5 per cent very good, 38 per cent is good, 49 per cent satisfactory and 5 per cent unsatisfactory.

Strengths in teaching and learning: Good teaching in information technology has lifted pupils' skills with computers to a high standard. Improvements to teaching in mathematics and science are raising the standards pupils reach in National Curriculum tests in Year 6. Better teaching in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education now provides pupils with a full and satisfactory curriculum.

Weaknesses in teaching and learning: Planned activities for children in the reception classes do not always meet their needs. The support provided for bi-lingual pupils is not strong enough to improve their speaking and writing. Teachers lack the knowledge of how to teach English as an additional language. Sometimes teachers find it difficult to deal with the challenging behaviour of several pupils with special educational needs for their behavioural problems. This slows the pace of learning for other pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum for information technology ensures that older pupils' learning is a strength of the school. Planning in the reception classes does not meet the needs of many of the school's bi-lingual pupils in speaking, and knowledge and understanding of the world.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The help provided for pupils with special educational needs has a satisfactory effect on improving their learning and behaviour.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The support provided for the large number of pupils who speak English as an additional language does not help many pupils to speak the language clearly and with sufficient accuracy.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Teachers make good provision for pupils' personal, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school gives good support and guidance for pupils' educational and personal needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher works closely with the deputy headteacher and governors to provide good leadership for the work of the school. Management of the school's provision for its youngest pupils and those who speak English as an additional language need improving.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil all legal responsibilities. They are closely involved in planning the school's development and in managing its finances.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher's good understanding of the school's performance provides issues for improvement in the school's development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Staff do their best to get the best value from all spending. There are enough teachers and support staff to provide a full curriculum. Satisfactory resources and accommodation are used effectively for teaching and learning. Better use could be made of the skills of staff who support the learning of bi-lingual pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They think that most of the teaching is good.• Parents are pleased that teachers help their children to become mature and responsible.• They are glad that the school works closely with them.• Parents are pleased that their children like school.• Parents believe that their children are making good progress in school.• They are glad that their children are expected to work hard and do their best.• The school keeps them well-informed about how their children are getting on.• The school is well-led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no important areas that parents would like to see improved.

The inspection confirms parents' positive views about the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On entry into the reception classes, most children's early achievements are very low in spoken English, reading, writing, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Although their achievements in mathematics are well below those reached by many four-year-olds, they are slightly better than in speaking, reading and writing. At the end of their third term in school, most children have made slow but steady progress towards expectations for five-year-olds in personal and social development. Few children, however, are ready to work at the first level of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Although improvements are evident in their knowledge and understanding of the world, their achievements in this area of learning remain very limited. Children's experiences before they start school do not, in many cases, prepare them well for the work they need to do at school. Consequently, the gains that they make in their first year in school are quite small. Most children make satisfactory progress by achieving the nationally recommended targets for creative and physical development by the time they are five.
2. Standards in National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Although they remained low or very low when compared with national standards, they rose sharply in all three subjects from 1996 to 1997, platformed for a year and rose again between 1998 and 1999. In mathematics and science, standards have continued to rise in National Curriculum tests in 2000. The stronger improvement has been in science, where for the first time, 77 per cent of pupils have reached the level expected of 11-year-olds. Science has overtaken mathematics in Year 6 as the subject in which seven and 11-year-olds did their best over the last four years. This has been achieved with improved teaching and with additional support from a specialist science teacher who works with pupils in Year 6 for one afternoon a week.
3. Although the rise in standards is not as high in mathematics as in science, pupils have done well in that considerably more of them than in the previous four years, 58 per cent, are working at the expected level. Teachers in Year 6 have helped pupils to achieve this result by improving their own expertise in mathematics when taking part in training and work in the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards in mathematics and science are keeping up with the nationally rising trend. The school is doing its best to raise standards and to narrow the gap between national average standards and pupils' performances.
4. The picture is different in National Curriculum tests in English in 2000. Although standards rose at the same rate as the national trend over the past four years, comparatively few pupils, 48 per cent, in Year 6 reached the level expected for their age in 2000. The school is faced with a series of obstacles that stand in the way of higher achievement in English. The first, and most important of these problems, results from the very high proportion of pupils at both key stages whose command and understanding of spoken English is not good enough for them to reach satisfactory standards in National Curriculum tests. Inaccurate use of grammar and limited vocabulary is preventing standards from rising quickly enough. The school's strategies to remedy this situation are only partially effective in that bi-lingual pupils form the main group of pupils in the school. In most situations, they talk English to one another or to older brothers and sisters. As a result, common errors in spoken language are re-enforced and become increasingly harder to change. While standards in spoken and written English remain so low, it is difficult for all but a few 11-year-olds to reach higher levels in English, mathematics and science.

5. Comparing the school's results with those of similar schools gives a better picture of standards. This does not give the whole picture, as comparisons with similar schools make no allowance for the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs for learning difficulties and physical disabilities. Standards are also affected by the constant struggle some teachers have in maintaining order with small groups of pupils with special educational needs for behavioural problems. Similarly, many pupils take prolonged holidays abroad, adding further complications to the job of raising standards in English. Added to the ill-effects of absence, the school often loses some higher attaining pupils to other schools once their parents leave the locality.
6. As in Year 6, standards in reading and writing were low in Year 2 in 1999. Standards in reading were consistently below average from 1996 to 1999. In writing, they fluctuated from below average in 1997 to satisfactory in 1998 and below average in 1999. There was little high attainment in reading and none in writing in 1999. These low results stem from the same difficulty that older pupils encounter with spoken and written English and there has been little improvement to standards in reading, writing and mathematics in 2000. In some instances, standards are lower in Year 2, because pupils have less time to become conversant in English than by the time they reach Year 6. However, pupils did well enough in reading and writing in 1999 when their performances were compared with those of pupils' in similar schools.
7. Over the four years from 1997 to 2000, pupils did much better in mathematics than in reading and writing in Year 2. Standards in National Curriculum tests in 2000 were satisfactory and more able pupils did their best. Clearly, seven-year-olds' achievements in mathematics are very good in relation to their early achievements on entry into school. In 1999, a greater proportion of pupils reached the higher level in mathematics than in most schools nationally. As in Year 6 in 1999, the performance of more able pupils in Year 2 was as high as could be expected. Standards in all three subjects were high when compared with pupils' results in similar schools. Given the very low starting point of most pupils on entry into school these results represent good progress in reading and writing and very good progress in mathematics. Pupils' performance in science in 1999 was as low as in Year 6. It has risen this year in Year 2, but not at the same good rate as in Year 6.
8. There are enough planned opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in different subjects of the curriculum. They use word processors to present their writing, and develop their reading when researching information in history and geography. Information technology is used to good effect on improving the mathematical accuracy of pupils with special educational needs. Work in science provides pupils with the chance to use their mathematical knowledge of tables, graphs and charts to record the findings of their investigations. Measurement has become more accurate in recent years in design and technology. Pupils also learn how to record scientific experiments.
9. By examining differences in the performances of different groups of pupils, teachers have discovered that white and Punjabi-speaking boys are the lowest attainers. However, the school has advanced no conclusive reasons as to why this is the case. The school's targets for English and mathematics were met precisely in 1999. The school set higher targets in 2000. It just missed them in English but did far better than expected in mathematics.
10. Standards in information technology have improved at a very good rate since the first inspection when they were unsatisfactory. All pupils are now reaching levels above those expected for their age and their learning is particularly good in word processing, the use of graphics and the control of mechanisms. Seven and 11-year-olds are doing better in music and art than in 1995. Their work is no longer unsatisfactory and their achievements are typical for their age. Standards are at their highest in observational

drawing. They have also risen from the low levels observed in 1995 in design and technology, geography, history and physical education; 11-year-olds now achieve satisfactory standards. Improvements to pupils' achievements in all these subjects are related to the clear guidance for teaching and learning contained in new programmes of work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils show good attitudes to school. They enjoy coming to school and take an active part in discussions and activities in lessons. Even pupils who find it hard to express themselves in clear, accurate English do their best to answer questions. Most pupils work together productively in groups and co-operate with teachers and one another. Their interest in learning extends beyond the classroom and many pupils attend a very good variety of clubs at lunchtime and after school.
12. The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory overall. Most pupils settle quickly, listen attentively and follow instructions, so that no time is wasted establishing order. Many are very well behaved at all times. However, a small group of pupils with special educational needs for their behavioural problems is reluctant to obey instructions from teachers, and this can disturb the continuity of lessons. Around school and in the playground most pupils behave sensibly. They get on well with one another and with adults and show respect for their surroundings. Most cope well with cramped conditions in the playgrounds, although some pupils in the juniors play too boisterously at times. Children in the reception classes are particularly well-behaved. This is attributable in part to their willingness to learn and to the influence of bi-lingual and other support staff. They become restless in lessons when teachers talk with the whole class but otherwise their attitudes to school and behaviour are good.
13. Pupils sometimes lack self-discipline and need to be reminded how they are expected to behave. Many start to chatter as they arrive in assemblies, for example, or push through doorways as they leave the building. Bullying is rare and is handled firmly by the school. There is no evidence of racism, or of sexism other than in Year 6, where some boys show little regard for the work of girls. There has been only one exclusion in the two years that the headteacher has been in office.
14. The good level of pupils' personal development is reflected in their increasingly confident approach to the life and work of the school, as they grow older. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 show initiative when they carry out their duties as monitors and in their work on the School's Council. Relationships in the school are mainly good. The positive relationships evident between teachers and most pupils, and among pupils themselves, improve the quality of many pupils' learning. Most pupils show responsible and caring attitudes when working alongside pupils with physical disabilities. They are very supportive of these children and can be seen helping to move wheelchairs and looking after them during break time.
15. Attendance at the school has improved significantly since the last inspection, although it remains below the national average. This is because many pupils take extended holidays overseas during term time. These long absences from school interrupt pupils' education and have a bad effect on their learning at school and use of the English language. The school works hard to combat this. Other absence is acceptable, since it is caused mainly by illness. Pupils' punctuality is generally satisfactory. Most arrive promptly each day but a small group of pupils often arrive a few minutes late in the morning. This disturbs the beginning of some lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. Two per cent is excellent, five per cent very good, 38 per cent is good, 49 per cent satisfactory and five per cent unsatisfactory. Teaching has improved in the juniors since the first inspection in 1995 where teachers' lack of understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum had an adverse effect on pupils' learning. With the appointment of new staff, and the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, most of the teaching in the juniors is now good. It is contributing to a current rise in standards in mathematics and science in Year 6. Through recent training, teachers have gained the expertise they needed to raise standards in information technology from low levels in 1995 to levels that are now above those expected of seven and 11-year-olds.
17. Teaching of children under five is mainly satisfactory. When it is good, teachers plan interesting activities that extend children's experiences and learning through practical activities. Teaching is unsatisfactory when children are expected to sit for a long time listening to instructions that many of them cannot follow. Not enough attention is given to the needs of children in the reception classes whose knowledge of English and understanding of the world is limited. Because some activities are not matched carefully enough to children's identified needs, many children need considerable support from adults to complete them and they make little real progress. Teachers and support staff establish good relationships with children and reward their achievements effectively. This was evident when children showed great pleasure at receiving a coloured counter for doing their best.
18. Teachers understand the school's clear policies and procedures for working with pupils with special educational needs. In some instances, the targets of pupils' individual education plans are not recorded clearly enough. This could cause weaknesses to the effectiveness of support for these pupils. However, teachers are good at identifying pupils' specific difficulties at an early stage and know the weaknesses that need addressing in their learning. As a result, teachers work effectively with support staff to provide suitable activities that improve pupils' learning. Teachers and support staff work well together to provide sensitive support for pupils with physical disabilities. They take good care to ensure that pupils take as full a part as possible in all activities.
19. The greatest challenge facing teachers lies in improving the spoken and written English of white boys and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Although teachers are competent at using the National Literacy Strategy to improve pupils' knowledge of reading and writing, their skills and strategies do not go far enough to meet the needs of pupils whose weaknesses in English go beyond those met in most schools. In some classes, particularly in the juniors, teachers are very good at extending pupils' vocabulary and checking their understanding of the purposes of lessons. This is still not enough to improve some pupils' English. In other classes, teachers spend too much time talking and too little time encouraging pupils to speak. Although this provides good examples of clear, spoken English it does not contribute to pupils' use of the language.
20. The skills of teachers who support the learning of bi-lingual pupils are varied. In one instance, a multi-lingual teacher's own command of the language is not good enough to improve pupils' English. In another, a language support teacher is sometimes expected to spend time helping a teacher to deal with the challenging behaviour of small groups of pupils rather than improving the language of pupils who speak English in addition to their mother tongues.
21. Small groups of pupils with special educational needs for their emotional and behavioural difficulties take up too much of the time allocated to teaching in some lessons. An all-out effort to raise standards by grouping the most able pupils in a year

group in the same class worked well this year in contributing to higher standards in Year 6. However, this strategy is not as beneficial to other pupils in the same year group who are taught in mixed-age classes. Teachers in some mixed-age classes find it difficult to deal with pupils with special educational needs who also have language and behavioural problems. In very few instances does pupils' behaviour get out-of-hand. What does happen is that teachers spend too little of the time they deserve with other pupils. With hindsight, teachers intend to modify organisational strategies in September.

22. To bring about good improvements to their planning since the inspection in 1997, teachers use the guidance from new programmes of work to raise standards in many subjects. Pupils aged seven to 11 have benefited from this. Teachers have done well to improve standards in a wide range of subjects. In addition to mathematics and science, standards have risen in information technology, art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. This has happened because teachers in Years 3 to 6 place greater emphasis on providing pupils with skills, as well as knowledge, to develop their learning in these subjects. Also, better planning for English and mathematics through the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has a good effect on teachers' planning for other subjects.
23. Assessing pupils' learning has improved to a good standard in the last year. Teachers are far more confident than at the first inspection in using the information from assessment to plan the next step of pupils' learning. The effects of more thorough assessment procedures are evident in improvements to standards in mathematics and science in National Curriculum tests this year. The use of day-to-day assessment is evident in lessons. It is particularly notable when pupils are engaged in practical work and teachers modify their expectations to help pupils improve their performances. The only real difficulty remaining with assessment lies in the form of testing used in the reception classes to gauge the achievements of children in their early days in school. Tests currently in use for this purpose give an inflated view of what children are capable of. This is of no help when teachers plan activities to meet children's needs.
24. Some weaknesses remain in teachers' expectations of more able pupils. These occasionally happen in some lessons in mathematics when the work is too easy for higher attainers. It is also evident in history and geography when teachers provide all pupils with the same level of tasks. Steps to improve this situation are already in place in history, where planning for next term places greater emphasis on ensuring that more able pupils do the best they are capable of.
25. Teachers do their best to use homework to increase pupils' learning in classrooms. In classes with pupils aged four to six, teachers try different techniques to encourage parents and older pupils to help younger children with reading. Teachers encourage older pupils in Year 6 to form helpful reading partnerships with younger pupils during break times. Teachers also provide study packs in an attempt to ensure that pupils whose families take long holidays abroad have the chance to continue their studies.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

26. The school provides a suitable curriculum that promotes most pupils' learning and their physical and moral development effectively. It has done a good job in remedying weaknesses evident at the previous inspection in information technology, art, geography, history, music and physical education. The curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and the school meets statutory requirements for English, mathematics and science. Health and drugs abuse education are integrated with science and new arrangements for personal, social and

health education. The policy of the governing body is only to teach sex education to prepare pupils in Year 6 for puberty.

27. A very good range of sporting and other forms of extra-curricular activity adds to pupils' learning in different subjects of the curriculum. For example, drama, dance and chess clubs are run at lunch times or after school. Athletics and sporting clubs are provided according to the season. Football, netball and cricket teams receive good support. Visits to museums and local outdoor study centres aid pupils' learning in science, history, geography and physical education. A school choir and club for pupils who want to play the recorder extend pupils' interest and skills in music. Their involvement strengthens pupils' social skills and personal development.
28. The curriculum for children under five is not planned with sufficient attention to their specific needs or to the recommended areas of learning. Support for the development of pupils' spoken language is not strong enough. This is because the school lacks sufficient staff who are trained to teach English as an additional language. As a result, the planned curriculum does not make it easy for pupils to use accurate speech or to gain wide-ranging experiences or vocabularies. Lack of suitable support slows pupils' progress and makes it difficult for them to correct early mistakes in the use of English as they get older.
29. The school is committed to equality of opportunity. All pupils study the full range of subjects. A lack of qualified bi-lingual support staff and opportunities for young children to learn in their own mother tongue limit their access to learning on entry into school. However, the school does its best to raise all pupils' awareness of their own cultural backgrounds. Resources are chosen with care to appeal to white and Punjabi-speaking boys whose attainments in reading are not high enough for their age. Boys and girls have equal access to all extra curricular activities. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory support for their learning, sometimes at an individual level. This usually allows them to take part and benefit from all activities. For example, pupils with physical disabilities take part in physical education with tasks that are modified to meet their needs.
30. Relationships with its local community are much stronger since the last inspection. The school has satisfactory links with local organisations, and members of the community are involved with its work through the governing body and the parents' and friends' association. This means that the different cultures and lifestyles co-existing in the community are reflected in the school, and contribute to pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils visit places of worship, not just from the school's Christian tradition, but also from other faiths represented in the school. Visitors from emergency and health services help to extend pupils' learning. The school has a new policy to form links with industry and intends to develop these in the future. There are good, supportive relationships with playgroups and other schools, particularly a neighbouring nursery school, which enable pupils to transfer easily from one stage of education to the next.
31. The school's provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. It is satisfactory for spiritual development. This represents an improvement in provision since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted through planned opportunities in collective worship and religious education. Collective worship is led effectively by the headteacher and other teachers, and half-termly by the clergy. Themes such as *Special Journeys*, and hymns and prayers are introduced so that pupils from different faiths can take part. Many older pupils, however, do not join in the singing and some do not respond to prayers. As a result, there is sometimes a restless atmosphere in assemblies in the hall.
32. Class worship sets an intimate and calm atmosphere. In Year 4, for example, it was a deeply spiritual occasion. The teacher and pupils shared their thoughts about happy

things in life, such as marriage, sharing and religious ceremonies. The teacher made ample time for prayer and reflection and pupils responded with respect. At the close of morning and afternoon school, teachers share a moment of prayer with their pupils. The curriculum in religious education provides opportunities for spiritual development. For instance, when learning about Judaism, pupils in Year 6 considered the idea of repentance. The school does not provide a sufficiently structured programme to promote pupils' spiritual development in other subjects.

33. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Teachers provide a strong moral code that embraces the values that are promoted by Christianity and other major religions. By setting clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour, most teachers promote moral values effectively. After discussing the importance of reliability in Year 5, pupils revealed their understanding in stories. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong from the time they start school. This is seen in advertisements they produce to promote exemplary moral behaviour; *To be good is to be the best*. Teachers expect pupils to explain unacceptable actions and to say that they are sorry for any hurt they cause. Most teachers insist that pupils follow the school's code of conduct, which is displayed in classrooms in clear and simple terms. To keep the code foremost in their minds, the teacher asked pupils in Year 6 to repeat it aloud. *We listen to our teacher... Be kind and considerate*. Together, they questioned *What is a bully?* They then wrote a story entitled, *You'll regret it*. Older pupils are expected to consider the morality of issues, such as the deforestation of the Amazon basin.
34. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers encourage pupils to work co-operatively and fairly in lessons, especially in mathematical investigations, science and physical education. Teachers create opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others. They give them duties as monitors as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 6 run the school office at lunchtimes, look after the library, set out playground equipment and collect registers. Volunteers are expected to help younger pupils with their reading on a regular basis. A recently elected School Council of pupils in Key Stage 2 present important concerns to teachers. Pupils take minutes and are not afraid to remind staff, politely, of the need for action.
35. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils have many opportunities to learn of their own and other cultures. Lessons and fieldwork in geography and history develop pupils' knowledge of their own locality and the wider world. Pupils listen to music from Western and Asian traditions and hear stories from various cultures during the literacy hour. They celebrate Eid, Diwali, Christmas and Easter. Visits are arranged to churches and mosques. Teachers use interesting and colourful displays to raise pupils' awareness of religious practices such as pilgrimages. Pupils in Year 5 discuss and write about their *culture and traditions*. The school's approach to cultural development is encapsulated in the naming of its house system, *Gandhi, Mandela, Teresa and Waite*.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school offers its pupils the same good care as it did at the time of the last inspection. Improvements exist in the form of very good policies for behaviour, and health and safety, and a good, clear policy for extended leave. These policies, together with a detailed and clear handbook of instructions for teachers, provide a framework for consistent practice across the school in these aspects of its work.
37. Pupils' welfare is a primary consideration at all times. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and do their best to meet their needs. Efficient daily routines in classrooms and well-organised procedures for breaks and lunchtimes allow the school to run smoothly so that staff and pupils waste little of the time allocated to teaching and

learning. The school admits children under five gradually during the first few weeks of the autumn term. This arrangement is beneficial in that it helps them to settle easily into the routines of school life. Less effective is the lack of use of many children's home language to make them fully aware of the school's routines and requirements. Many children attend a neighbouring nursery school and a local playgroup before coming to school. Staff make every effort to ensure that they move happily into the reception classes.

38. Systems for administering first aid work well and staff look after pupils with physical or medical needs very carefully. The school makes good use of health and welfare services to back up its efforts. It also makes good use of the advice and skills available from outside agencies to ensure that bi-lingual pupils and pupils with special educational needs make progress with their learning. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and meet legal requirements. The headteacher is responsible for child protection, and the school follows the local area policy. As a result, staff are aware of what to do if they have any concerns. Health and safety issues are managed effectively. The caretaker and cleaning staff maintain the building to a high standard of cleanliness.
39. The school has worked hard to improve attendance since the last inspection. A recent policy on extended leave is already beginning to have an effect. The school checks absence carefully and places emphasis on the value of good attendance. Teachers promote good behaviour but some do not always manage it well. The school's behaviour policy does not always work successfully with pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties, or in classes containing the least able pupils in a year group. Most teachers have good strategies for managing behaviour but a few are unable to control their classes effectively. Teachers investigate any instances of bullying or similarly unacceptable behaviour thoroughly and deal with it firmly.
40. Most of the procedures for assessing pupils' learning are good. Procedures for assessing children's early achievements are unsatisfactory since they fail to identify what children already know and what they need to learn next. As a result, they are of little value for teachers in planning work to meet the needs of the school's youngest pupils. Everyday assessments take place throughout the school. Their results enable teachers to make quick, accurate judgements about how pupils' knowledge and understanding have developed during lessons. This helps teachers to plan the next steps of learning with good levels of accuracy.
41. Teachers plan formal assessments systematically. They check pupils' progress through a variety of school and national tests. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is checked regularly to ensure that their learning and behaviour is improving. Staff analyse the results of all tests and communicate them to governors. Analysis leads to changes in the organisation of classes or teaching groups. The headteacher checks differences in the attainment of boys and girls, and of different ethnic groups. This activity has not led to any firm conclusions about these differences, although teachers have taken action to improve standards in reading by providing boys with books that they enjoy. Teachers also make helpful assessments of pupils' personal and social development. They note, record and report to parents qualities such as persistence, co-operation and concentration. With this information, teachers are placed in a good position to eliminate unkindness and anti-social behaviour.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school's efforts to involve and inform parents are numbered amongst its strengths. This area of its provision represents a significant improvement since the first inspection. Parents are very positive in their views about the school and appreciate all its hard work

for their children. They say that their children like school and make good progress with their learning. Parents also believe that the teaching is good, that teachers have high expectations of pupils and that the school is well-led and managed. The findings of the inspection support these positive views.

43. The quality and range of links with parents are very good. The school does its best to inform and support parents through plentiful, well-presented newsletters and regular meetings and courses. Its prospectus, for example, provides a very good overview of the school's organisation. Newsletters give a good picture of its daily life and successes, and of the work provided for pupils. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning by borrowing toys and books from a toy library, or by attending events such as literacy workshops. A meeting for parents, whose children will soon be joining the reception classes, gave very good advice on helping young children to read. It was planned with care to meet the needs and understanding of different groups of parents. The school's bi-lingual staff are always ready and willing to act as interpreters for the many parents whose first language is not English. By running good initiatives, such as a parental involvement group, multi-lingual staff involve parents from all backgrounds in the work of the school.
44. Reports to parents on their children's progress are good. They meet requirements and include details about attendance that were missing at the last inspection. Reports give a clear picture of attainment and progress, but do not link attainment to national standards to give parents a clear indication of how well their children are doing. All reports contain targets for individual pupils so that parents know what they need to improve their work. Most targets are clear and achievable, but a few are too imprecise to be useful to parents. The school does its best to involve the parents of pupils with special educational needs in supporting their children's learning and teachers encourage them to attend annual reviews of their children's progress.
45. Parents support the school and are interested in their children's education. They attend parents' evenings and uphold the school's values. Where they can, parents ensure that homework is completed, but many have too little English to provide effective support. Some parents give practical help as governors, members of the parents' and friends' association, and the parental involvement group. One parent helps pupils to improve their skills in an extra curricular football club. The school appreciates their support in providing time and extra resources to improve their children's learning. These contributions by parents help pupils' social development and strengthen the school's position in the community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Since her appointment, first as deputy headteacher just after the time when the school was judged to be failing to give pupils a satisfactory education in 1995, and then as headteacher following the inspection of 1997, the headteacher has worked tirelessly and effectively to address the ten issues for improvement from the first inspection. These far-reaching issues covered most aspects of the school's provision. They included
 - improving the leadership of governors
 - restoring teachers' confidence in governors
 - appointing a deputy headteacher
 - agreeing aims for the curriculum
 - raising standards in subjects for pupils aged seven to 11
 - reviewing policies in many subjects for pupils aged seven to 11
 - checking pupils' attendance
 - reflecting pupils' cultural heritage in the work of the school
 - establishing closer links with the community

- reviewing the length of the school day.

Since the first inspection, each of these issues has been met with a good level of success.

47. Six issues identified in 1997 were added to weaknesses remaining from the first inspection. These emphasised
- standards in literacy and numeracy
 - the assessment of pupils' learning
 - the need for new programmes of work
 - improvements to many subjects
 - teachers' expectations of more able pupils
 - procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning.
48. It is only in the last year that the headteacher has been supported by an effective deputy headteacher in the task of dealing with these issues. As a result of good leadership and determined management, the headteacher has turned the school round in the last two years. She has now begun to address the issues that she identified as having the most relevance in raising standards and improving teaching. Through the National Numeracy Project and consequent improvements to teaching, the issue about raising standards in mathematics has been met this year in National Curriculum tests in Year 6.
49. The difficulties faced by the many pupils with special educational needs, and those whose knowledge of the spoken English is not good enough, form the basis of the headteacher's agenda for improvement in the school's development plan. By identifying this issue, the headteacher's views correspond with inspection findings. Programmes of work for different subjects that were missing in 1997 are now in place. As a result, teachers have clear guidance from co-ordinators for their planning and standards have risen in most subjects in Year 6. The expectations of teachers that more able pupils will fulfil their potential have improved with the appointment of new staff. There is still room for improved expectations in some lessons in mathematics, history and geography.
50. Good, new procedures for assessing pupils' learning, formulated by the deputy headteacher, have improved the accuracy of teachers' planning, especially for pupils aged seven to 11. The co-ordinator has identified weaknesses in the procedures used to assess children's early achievements on entry into school. This weakness forms part of the school's plan to improve provision for children in the reception classes. Detailed systems are now in place for checking the effectiveness of teachers' work. This is done in a thorough way by combining the skills of curriculum leaders with advice from the local education authority to identify specific aspects of teaching and learning in need of improvement.
51. Good support for improving the school's provision has come from the chair of governors who is very experienced and involved. Selected originally to heal the rift between staff and governors, the chair of the governing body uses considerable knowledge of the educational and social problems faced by many pupils to provide informed back-up for the headteacher's efforts. Members of the governing body, many of whom are recently appointed, have formed close links with co-ordinators. As a result, new governors are gaining the knowledge of their roles needed to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They have informed views about standards, take an active part in development planning and in managing the school's finances.
52. Governors set targets for pupils' attainment and for the work of the headteacher. Realistic targets for attainment in National Curriculum tests in Year 6 are based accurately on the results of careful and regular assessments of the achievements of different groups of pupils. The school exceeded the targets set for National Curriculum tests in mathematics for 11-year-olds in 2000 by a considerable margin. It missed its target for English by four per cent.

53. The management of provision for the under-fives takes too little account of what young children should learn, or of the needs of children who have little understanding of English. However, the school has identified these weaknesses in its development plan and has taken steps to change this situation early next term. Improvements will involve a complete restructuring of accommodation, resources and the work of teachers and support staff. This action will allow the school to replace the current curriculum and to introduce a better one that meets the needs of young children more effectively.
54. The school works well to help pupils who have special educational needs. The co-ordinator keeps all records up-to-date and makes sure that parents are kept fully-informed. When individual education plans lack specific targets for learning they make the task of improving pupils' learning more difficult. Although many pupils with special educational needs also have difficulties with spoken English, there is no system in place to link the management of these two areas of provision. The management of English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. The school recognises that if its provision for special educational needs and for English as an additional language are to be effective the co-ordination of these two aspects of management are an area for development and plans to improve them next year. The school uses all funding for special educational needs to satisfactory effect on pupils' learning and well-being. The governor for special educational needs ensures that this is the case.
55. Since the last inspection, the governing body has become closely involved in planning and checking the school's budget. It carries out its responsibilities effectively by discussing decisions about spending and holding the school to account for them. Finances are spent wisely and the school makes satisfactory use of all resources. The budget is linked to the school's priorities for improvement so that the effects of expenditure on the school's success are often measurable. In Year 6, for example, the school has bought in the services of a specialist science teacher for a few hours each week, and this has resulted in better results in National Curriculum tests. The school is reducing its large reserves sensibly by targeting money at priority areas such as establishing a new stage of learning for the school's youngest pupils.
56. Grants for specific purposes, such as staff training and information technology, are generally used effectively. Funding for staff who support the development of pupils' spoken English is not used effectively enough to ensure that pupils gain accurate command of the language. Financial and school administration are carried out efficiently, and the recommendations of a very recent audit are being addressed systematically. The good communication skills of the school's secretary help to establish very good relationships with parents. The school pays satisfactory attention to gaining best value from all spending. It compares its financial work with that of other schools, consults parents about their views and uses the services of the local education authority to provide resources that are of good value.
57. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers are appropriate to teach the National Curriculum to pupils of primary age. Their expertise has increased in subjects, such as information technology, due to the school's commitment to improvement and staff development. This emphasis on improving teachers' knowledge has a direct effect on raising standards. A satisfactory number of qualified or experienced classroom assistants and assistants for pupils with special educational needs work with teachers and are effective in supporting pupils' learning. There is a general shortage of teachers qualified to support the learning of pupils whose mother tongue is not English. The main benefit gained from the services of multi-lingual staff is that some pupils benefit from helpful discussions in their mother tongue. The effectiveness of the two teachers who work with bi-lingual pupils is reduced when they fail to speak accurate English, or their work is not targeted towards supporting identified pupils throughout lessons.
58. The governing body has adopted a good range of policies for staff training. The school's continuing commitment to monitoring and developing the professional skills of

all its staff led to the award of the *Investors in People* standard in March this year. The programme planned to achieve this award has remedied weaknesses in staff expertise identified in the first inspection in 1995. The school's accommodation is maintained to a high standard of cleanliness and is adequate to teach all aspects of the National Curriculum effectively. Lack of appropriate storage prevents the use of large outdoor play equipment for the under-fives but this is to be remedied in next year's plan for school development. The insecurity of an unfenced field for games and other activities, first identified in the 1997 inspection, is a matter for continuing concern.

59. Resources are mostly satisfactory and good in subjects such as information technology where they have improved since the previous inspection. Multi-media computers, access to the Internet, and a digital camera raise standards in research and presentation to a good level. Staffing and resources for pupils with physical disabilities are good and enable them to integrate well into the life of the school and to make good progress. The library is adequately stocked with reference books of good range and quality. There is, however, a shortage of suitable reading materials for bi-lingual pupils. This is a weakness in provision for an important aspect of the school's work with pupils who need to read with understanding as well as fluency. The school lacks the range of outdoor equipment needed for the physical development of children under five.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Governors, headteacher and staff should:

raise standards in English throughout the school by

- co-ordinating the teaching of English as an additional language within the management team of the school
- improving teachers' understanding of the best methods for teaching English as a second language
- placing greater emphasis on the accurate use of spoken and written English
- targeting the use of specific vocabulary in different subjects and areas of learning
- providing texts that pupils whose general knowledge is limited can understand
- placing greater emphasis on story-telling to improve pupils' knowledge of how narratives work
- providing a wide range of experiences in the locality to increase pupils' knowledge and vocabulary.

(see paragraphs 19, 20, 28, 54, 59, 63, 65, 70, 73, 74, 76 and 78 of the main report)

provide a suitable curriculum that meets the needs of children in the foundation stage by

- assessing children's early achievements on entry into school with greater accuracy
- training teachers and support staff to meet the needs of children whose achievements on entry into school and spoken English are very low
- planning a new curriculum with suitable activities that will allow children to meet the early learning goals
- improving the resources available to provide children with a good range of practical experiences and the equipment needed for outdoor physical development
- increasing children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

(see paragraphs 23, 28, 29, 37, 40, 50, 53, 59, 62, 65 and 66 of the main report)

improve levels of attendance by

- ensuring that the school's new attendance policy is put firmly into place.

(see paragraph 15 of the main report)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	5	38	49	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	264
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	128

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	117

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	165

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	20	21	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	15
	Girls	19	21	21
	Total	31	32	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76	78	88
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	12
	Girls	20	20	16
	Total	34	35	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83	85	68
	National	82	86	87

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	19	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	10
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	16	17	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44	47	56
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	10
	Girls	11	9	12
	Total	17	15	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47	42	61
	National	68	69	75

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	48
Pakistani	116
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	0
White	55
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.4
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	230

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	448242
Total expenditure	453483
Expenditure per pupil	1680
Balance brought forward from previous year	63146
Balance carried forward to next year	57905

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	264
Number of questionnaires returned:	111(42%)

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 My child likes school	61	33	5	1	0
2 My child is making good progress in school	62	32	5	0	2
3 Behaviour in the school is good	52	37	7	1	3
4 My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	53	38	5	2	2
5 The teaching is good	64	33	1	1	1
6 I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	58	35	5	2	1
7 I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	57	29	7	3	5
8 The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	71	22	3	3	2
9 The school works closely with parents	57	36	3	3	2
10 The school is well led and managed	60	28	4	0	8
11 The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	59	37	1	0	3
12 The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	43	38	6	1	12

NB: figures are rounded to nearest integer; sum may not = 100%
Nil responses (i.e. blank boxes) are included in category 5.

5 parents made additional comments

Strongest points in order:

- The school does its best to work with parents.
- There is adequate provision for sports outside school hours.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. On entry into the school, four-year-olds are placed either in the reception class, or in a mixed-age class with pupils from Year 1. At the time of inspection, all but ten children were five-years-old. Most children come from minority ethnic homes and English is not their first language. Their early achievements on coming to school are well below those expected for their age, especially in spoken English and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their understanding of the local and wider environment is very limited.
61. Children make slow but steady progress towards the personal and social development expected of five-year-olds. By the time they are five, most children learn to behave sensibly in school and to play amicably with friends during break times. They usually treat one another, teachers and other adults with respect. Although they work comfortably either in groups or independently, many children lack the confidence to seek help when they need it. An activity that arouses great enthusiasm takes place when children sit in a circle and learn how to play a simple game. Many find it hard to follow instructions. When asked to *Put your hand up if you've not had a turn*, all hands were raised. It took considerable patience and three explanations from the teacher before the message got across. Because of a general lack of confidence or accurate spoken English, very few children initiate their own ideas or attempt to solve simple, practical problems. Most are happy to follow directions, to copy their names, to sort objects or to draw round templates. They do, however, take good care of their own personal hygiene and join in whole- school activities, such as assemblies.
62. Teachers relate too much of the work to subjects of the National Curriculum rather than planning suitable activities in the recommended areas of learning for the under-fives. There are too few discussions and explanations about the work in their mother tongue for children who speak English as an additional language. As a result, many children, who are trying their best to learn English, do not acquire clear understanding or enough new vocabulary to improve their learning. Instead, they spend too much time in large groups listening to their teacher, trying to make sense of what is going on around them. Although children listen attentively, many have such a poor command of English that they are reluctant to talk about their own experiences.
63. Stories, nursery rhymes and poems are not necessarily part of children's home cultures and as a result, their responses to them are inhibited. Many children have little sense of the sequence of stories or rhymes and this prevents them from acting out stories or anticipating what will happen next. They know that words and pictures in a book describe events and how they are organised. Most children recognise their own names and some familiar words. Many copy their names from cards where teachers record them. Higher attaining children write independently using spellings built up from the sounds of letters, for example, *'I lick my shoes'* instead of, *'I like my shoes'*.
64. Children recognise simple shapes such as circles or squares, place objects *in front* or *behind* other objects and know the meaning of mathematical language such as *bigger than* and *more*. Their progress towards the learning expected of five-year-olds is satisfactory. It is stronger in mathematics than in the use of language. They understand how to count on or count back when using practical equipment, but many do not understand that digits represent the numbers of objects they count. Most children recognise and use numbers to ten and know the names of numbers to 20. When six more able children were asked to talk about their learning, they told the class different numbers that add up to 20. By putting smiley faces on a chart the teacher provided them with strong motivation for their learning. With help from their teacher, the same group use mathematics to solve problems.

65. Few children have the range of experiences common to four-year-olds and as a result, their knowledge and understanding of the world is very restricted. Although they know their way around the school, few talk confidently about the area they live in, relationships in their families, or events in their own lives. In one lesson, for example, when the teacher shared a story about a hen and a fox with a small group of children, she asked them where they would find a chicken house. They answered, *in the street* or *in a building* and after considerable prompting, the teacher told them that the illustrations showed a *farmyard*. Other children, preparing for a visit to a zoo, constructed enclosures and packed them closely with zoo animals. When asked to name the animals, they all identified elephants but were hesitant about other well-known creatures. Children are good at using computers. With very limited knowledge and understanding of the world, children's progress is inhibited in other areas of learning.
66. Many children make satisfactory progress and reach expectations for their age in physical development by the time they are five. As a result of the teacher's good expertise in physical education, children in a mixed-age class with pupils in Year 1 showed good co-ordination when jumping as different types of beans. With strong encouragement from the teacher, their control of a ball improved as they practised dribbling with large balls. They managed to kick balls to one another with reasonable accuracy. A shortage of resources limits the opportunities available to develop children's physical control and co-ordination outside the school hall. Neither reception class has access to large outdoor equipment for climbing, jumping, scrambling and using a variety of wheeled vehicles. Most children handle pencils, brushes and scissors competently and build realistic models. Several find it hard to control pencils when writing or drawing.
67. Most children make satisfactory progress in developing their creativity. When practising for a class assembly, children enjoyed singing a familiar hymn with sweet, tuneful voices. Their paintings show that children are competent when exploring colour and texture. Teachers provide a good range of materials to raise children's awareness of shape and form. This is apparent in the models they produce from junk materials. Children use a widening range of materials, suitable tools, instruments and other resources to express their ideas and to communicate their feelings. Some aspects of creative development are limited by a lack of space for practical activities.
68. No information about the school's provision for children under five was contained in the previous report, so it is not possible to compare the quality of past and present provision. Planned changes to the curriculum next term place the school in a good position to extend children's spoken language, to widen their knowledge and understanding of the world and to provide a better range of resources to develop their learning.

ENGLISH

69. In 1999, pupils in Year 6 reached low standards in National Curriculum tests in English. Standards have risen slightly in English in 2000, but remain below the level expected of most 11-year-olds and just miss the school's target for the subject. While these results appear to be unsatisfactory, they have risen from a very low level at the time of the first inspection and continued to rise gradually since the inspection in 1997. Standards are also rising at the same rate as those of most schools nationally. The performance of white and Punjabi-speaking boys in English is lower than that of girls. The school does what it can to address this shortfall by providing books and other resources that are selected to appeal to boys and to gain their interest.

70. Low standards in English arise because a very high proportion, 70 per cent of all pupils, speaks English as an additional language. Many pupils enter the school with little spoken English and their use of the language is very limited. Learning English is slow because most pupils have too few contacts and experiences in the world outside the local community. There are also few English-speaking pupils in the school to help them use the language accurately in everyday situations. This means that pupils build rather than improve on the initial errors they make when learning English. This weakness keeps standards low in speaking, writing and understanding of the books pupils read.
71. Standards in English are not improved for the significant number of pupils whose families take long holidays abroad. As these pupils miss school for weeks and, in some instances, months at a time without speaking, writing, reading or hearing English, their learning suffers. Standards are also depressed by the arrival of families into the area with children at different stages in their primary education. This happens because many of these pupils have special educational needs, or speak inaccurate English. Some families, who can afford to move from the area, take pupils, whose achievements in English are satisfactory or good, to other schools before they reach Year 6. As a result, there is no gain to the school's standards from these pupils' achievements in National Curriculum tests.
72. A similar picture of apparently unsatisfactory standards was reflected in the results of National Curriculum tests in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 in 1999. There was little high attainment in reading and none in writing. Although standards have risen slightly in National Curriculum tests in both reading and writing in 2000, there is little evidence in the findings of the inspection of strong improvement.
73. Many pupils' achievements in speaking accurate English or in expressing themselves with varied and interesting words are low. To address this problem, most teachers place careful emphasis on the use of clear speech and accurate vocabulary in lessons in different subjects. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, very good relationships created a calm and quiet atmosphere for learning. They provided pupils with the chance to reflect the teacher's language in their own speech and to take initiatives by using new vocabulary in their writing. In classes where teachers spend considerable energy dealing with pupils with special educational needs for their behavioural problems, discussion is limited and other pupils have few opportunities to widen their knowledge of English by expressing their ideas. Most pupils' listening skills are developed well. They listen carefully during the literacy hour to explanations from their teachers and as a result, pupils' knowledge of books, grammar, spelling and punctuation is gradually improving throughout the school.
74. While teachers and additional staff provide satisfactory support for pupils with special educational needs in English, many pupils' problems are linked to their weak understanding of the language. This suggests that for most pupils their difficulties with reading and writing stem from a lack of accurate spoken English and that both forms of support are less effective than they could be if they tackled the same sort of problems in a concerted way.
75. An area for improvement lies in the ability of some bi- and multi-lingual support staff to improve pupils' grasp of the English language. While support staff are effective at clarifying meaning for pupils whose English is weak, their own English is not accurate enough to raise standards in speaking and writing. In a mixed-age class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, the class teacher missed opportunities for the language support teacher to work more closely with pupils who needed her help. Until these weaknesses in support for bi-lingual pupils are addressed, teachers' efforts to raise standards through the National Literacy Strategy and additional lessons in reading and writing will not be as effective as they could be.

76. However, daily lessons in reading and writing in addition to work in the National Literacy Strategy, are improving pupils' fluency in reading. More and average able pupils in both key stages experience little difficulty in using the sounds of letters to read fiction and information books. In Year 6, they tackle new words like *triceratops* and the names of places such as *Llanpistyll* without hesitation. When less able pupils read at Key Stage 2, their progress is limited by a lack of the general knowledge needed to make sense of the books they read. Pupils with special educational needs read accurately and at a confident pace. When asked to discuss the meaning of a text, they show that their reading lacks understanding and is mainly mechanical. Some pupils in Year 2 with special educational needs experience similar difficulties when trying to make sense of simple stories. At both key stages, a lack of books that are easily understandable to less able bi-lingual readers and pupils with special educational needs stands in the way of improving standards.
77. To compensate for many parents' inability to support their children's reading in English, teachers have adopted a helpful scheme that uses the skills of more able readers in Year 6 to improve pupils' reading in the infants. This initiative adds to the confidence and self-esteem of older pupils while increasing younger pupils' skills and enjoyment of reading. Teachers encourage pupils from all ability groups to borrow books from the school library. A significant number of pupils are taken to the public library by parents and older brothers and sisters. While adding to the range of books available for reading, library membership extends pupils' knowledge of library classification systems to locate information books and fiction.
78. While teachers make good use of regular assessments of pupils' learning to provide targets for improvements to spelling and punctuation, they are less successful in targeting spoken English to improve pupils' writing. Many pupils in Year 6 lack the confidence to use the more adventurous language needed to achieve higher levels in National Curriculum tests. Similarly, many pupils in Year 2 write in short simple phrases and sentences. Opportunities to produce the sorts of stories that are typical of those written by seven and 11-year-olds are limited by the small amount of time available for telling stories. Without good models for story-writing, pupils find it difficult to produce good stories themselves. Insufficient attention to punctuation means that pupils who are capable of using speech and exclamation marks sometimes forget to use capital letters at the beginning of names.
79. Leadership for the subject has undergone recent change. The co-ordinator is at present supported in the management of English by the headteacher, who has done most of the work in checking the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the headteacher has a clear view of what is needed to raise standards in English and staff appreciate that the inaccurate use of spoken English lies at the heart of the school's struggle to raise standards. A well-stocked reference library provides good opportunities for pupils to carry out research in subjects such as history and geography. In most lessons during the literacy hour, teachers make good use of a range of computer programs to improve the basic skills of reading and writing.
80. With the language and cultural barriers that hinder most pupils' grasp of the subject, the school has a difficult and complex task ahead before standards in English can rise. Effective systems for checking teaching and learning, that have grown since the last inspection, and careful assessments of pupils' learning have already improved teachers' understanding of what needs to be done. A common determination that all pupils will do their best and the strong leadership of the headteacher place the school in a good position to ensure that they do.

MATHEMATICS

81. Standards in mathematics are below national expectations at both key stages. Although this appears to be unsatisfactory, pupils' achievements in National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 have risen. Standards have improved from low and very low levels and are better than at any point in the previous four years. They have risen at the same rate as the rising national trend and more 11-year-olds than in 1995 reached the level expected for their age. This happened because the school took part in the National Numeracy Project and as a result, teachers have had three years to successfully implement its strategies. The school has done well to achieve these standards and has exceeded its targets for National Curriculum tests in 2000.
82. Teachers work hard to overcome the difficulties many pupils experience with their learning. When the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs is combined with those who have an unsatisfactory grasp of the English language, the school is doing a good job by raising standards. Many pupils take extended holidays and this has a detrimental effect on their learning. Pupils joining the school in older year groups often add to the numbers of pupils with learning difficulties. In this situation, the school has done well to raise standards in National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds from very low levels on entry into the reception classes and from the levels pupils attained at both previous inspections.
83. Inspection findings reflect the slightly better standards shown in the results of this year's National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds. As in Year 6, this is because of the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Although a substantial proportion of pupils experience learning difficulties they are all doing their best and achieving as well as can be expected. Boys' achievements in mathematics are not as strong as those of girls and teachers work in awareness of this difficulty.
84. The quality of teaching is mainly good, with some that is very good in Key Stage 2. Teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved the quality of teaching and learning. Good teaching is also responsible for pupils' enthusiasm for mathematics and their consequent good progress. Good work in mental mathematics is conducted at a brisk pace, which challenges and motivates pupils. In Year 6, for example, the teacher maintained a strict time limit for every question in a written test so that pupils had to think deeply and quickly. Not all sessions of mental mathematics are conducted at this challenging pace. In a few lessons, a lack of pace reduces the opportunities for pupils to think quickly and limits the challenge for more able pupils, hindering their progress.
85. A good and much improved feature of teaching since the last inspection is the way that teachers share the aims of lessons with pupils. This helps pupils to understand what they are expected to learn as the lesson develops. Teachers often ask pupils to read the objectives of lessons aloud. As a result, pupils are aware of the purpose of their learning. Teachers develop lessons with informative, lively introductions that promote interest and enjoyment of the subject. By making time for them to recall what they learned in previous lessons, teachers build on what pupils already know. Most lessons end with carefully planned discussions that remind pupils of what they have learned, place emphasis on the correct use of mathematical vocabulary and help teachers to plan the next step of learning.
86. Teachers provide opportunities that were missing at the last inspection to develop pupils' investigative and problem solving skills. In Year 4, for instance, they solve real-life problems with money, while in Year 2, pupils use *private and confidential bankbooks* to show how much they have spent and the amounts left in their accounts. Every opportunity is taken to link mathematics to other subjects. In science and information technology, pupils use tables, charts and graphs to record results. Their measurements

are now more precise in design and technology. In history, pupils gain some understanding of the passage of time.

87. The grouping of pupils with others of similar ability is only partially successful because of wide differences in the needs of pupils in these groups. The good use of resources, clear explanations and questioning in a mixed-aged class of pupils in Years 5 and 6 ensured that pupils could work at a brisk pace in a methodical fashion. In most lessons, teachers ask pupils to explain the strategies they use to work out problems. This technique underlines the point that getting answers right is not necessarily the most important part of learning. It also clarifies pupils' thinking and gives them insights into other pupils' ideas. Teachers recognise the need to develop mathematical vocabulary by giving pupils numerous opportunities to talk about their work in accurate terms. They emphasise the use of correct terminology and expect pupils to do the same.
88. Good relationships between pupils and teachers encourage pupils to succeed in mathematics. Teachers, especially in the juniors, convey clear expectations of behaviour and performance and pupils respond well. Clear expectations in a lesson in Year 4, produced a busy working atmosphere that allowed the teacher to give very effective support for pupils as they worked. As she moved round the class, pupils listened attentively as the teacher drew their attention to points arising from assessments of their work. A firm though pleasant approach to class management in Year 6 held a few dominant pupils in check, so that all pupils had the chance to learn in a keen working atmosphere. Occasionally, some teachers are inconsistent in their approach and allow pupils to call out the answers to questions. This weakness discourages quieter pupils who become reluctant to play a full part in lessons.
89. The school has taken suitable action since the last inspection to provide guidelines to support the teaching of mathematics. Early participation in the National Numeracy Project has contributed to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Time is made to check the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved recently and are partly responsible for the current rise in standards in Year 6. The school recognises the need to ensure accurate assessments of pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2. The commitment and quality of the school's leadership gives the school the capacity to raise standards.

SCIENCE

90. Standards in all aspects of science have improved at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection, and have risen sharply from the results of National Curriculum tests in 1999. Good planning and better teaching has raised the standards reached by 11-year-olds in 2000 from well below the national average. As a result, many more pupils in Year 6 now reach the level expected for their age than in the previous four years. The school has gained good value in terms of pupils' learning from the skills of a specialist teacher who was employed this year to support teaching and learning in science. This extra help has undoubtedly had a marked effect on improving pupils' knowledge of the subject. Good teaching has also improved pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary. Although there is a trend of lower attainment by boys than girls, their achievements during the inspection appeared broadly similar.
91. The results of teachers' assessments of science in Year 2 show some improvement this year, but not at the same rate as in Year 6. This is explained by the inability of many seven-year-olds to speak accurate English and to use correct scientific vocabulary. Also, the time allocated to science is insufficient to raise standards. Younger pupils find it difficult to record the results of investigations because of the limited amount of time allocated to science and the low level of their skills in writing. Some of the work

provided in Year 2 is not tied closely enough to the National Curriculum to improve pupils' learning. Although standards at the key stage have improved over the last four years, they still remain below those reached by most seven-years-olds.

92. In both key stages, teaching is mainly satisfactory and occasionally good or very good. Teachers' confidence and knowledge of the subject has improved since the last inspection. Under the influence of planning for the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies their planning in science is more thorough. As a result, pupils in Year 6 make very good progress from the very low levels of knowledge and understanding of the world apparent when they first start school. In Years 3 to 6, tasks are matched carefully to pupils' needs. The good support provided for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make the same good progress as other pupils. All aspects of the subject are covered effectively, although sometimes in Years 1 and 2, teachers concentrate on extending pupils' knowledge without providing the practical experiences needed to develop their scientific understanding. For example, photocopied diagrams of flowers lack the effectiveness of live plants to develop pupils' observational skills in Year 2.
93. Teachers' high expectations of positive behaviour create good relationships in lessons. This strength allows pupils to work productively and harmoniously in groups. By targeting the use of correct scientific vocabulary, teachers lead pupils to a better, more accurate understanding of science. For example, in a discussion in Year 4 about slugs and snails, pupils with poor spoken language received additional attention to establish understanding and the correct use of scientific vocabulary. Pupils extend their work in mathematics, when they use tables, charts and graphs to record the results of scientific investigations. Computers are used effectively to support pupils' learning in lessons.
94. Teachers assess pupils' work during lessons and use their good understanding of what pupils know to provide them with targets for improvement. In Key Stage 2, they use information gained from marking pupils' work and the results of regular tests to keep parents informed of their children's progress. Marking is used inconsistently in some classes in Key Stage 1 and it is sometimes unclear what pupils must do to improve their attainment. The high value teachers place on pupils' achievements is evident from extensive, lively displays of their work in science. Pupils' pride in their work is evident when they point out and explain their contribution to displays.
95. The lack of an adequate scheme of work, reported at the 1995 inspection, has been addressed with the adoption of a new national programme. As a result, standards in science at Key Stage 2 have improved. This is a relatively recent innovation and its long-term benefits to pupils' learning are yet to be seen at Key Stage 1. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator provides a clear direction for improvements to standards by checking and supporting teachers' planning. There are adequate resources for learning. Given that the new programme for science is implemented fully and that standards at Key Stage 2 continue to rise, the school has made a good start to raising standards in science.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards in information technology have improved since the first inspection, when they were unsatisfactory. This improvement has been so strong that most pupils reach a higher level than many 11-year-olds and their achievements in information technology are a strength of the school. Word processing and the presentation of graphical information are developed to a high level. The control of mechanisms begins at a simple level when children learn to use a controllable buggy at the beginning of their time in school. It develops to a good standard by the time pupils reach Year 6. There is some weakness in sensing and recording environmental factors like temperature, but

planning to strengthen this is in place. Almost all classes use multi-media CD ROMs effectively and pupils know how to access the Internet. Knowledge of these systems is developed and used when pupils search for and extract information on specific topics. In a lesson in Year 4 in reading and writing, for example, pupils found and read poems.

97. Standards in Year 2 are typical of those reached by most seven-year-olds. High standards are evident when younger pupils manage computer systems, by using a large controller ball to move a cursor, and a keyboard to write simple sentences. Standards were also high when pupils in Year 2 transferred information from surveys to the computer in the form of various charts. They show increasing confidence when operating programs to support their work in English, mathematics and art.
98. Because the subject now has a well-designed scheme of work to provide guidance for teachers, pupils use computers effectively to support their learning in different subjects. Teachers have improved their expertise in information technology to a good standard since the last inspection. As a result, pupils improve their knowledge and skills with a good range of software. Teachers use carefully chosen programs to improve the skills of pupils with special educational needs. For example, in mathematics, bi-lingual pupils and pupils with learning difficulties use programs that increase their accuracy in mental mathematics.
99. In Year 6, a high level of skill allows pupils to produce complex and dramatic designs that incorporate artwork and different forms of text. When writing independently about topics of their own choice, pupils carry out research from compact discs or the Internet. They extract text and illustrations and use suitable programs to produce their own artwork. By evaluating the quality of their work critically, pupils reach high standards of presentation. A notable feature of attainment in Year 6 is the skill lower attaining pupils demonstrate in the use of computers. Pupils of all ages are keen to use computers. Teachers harness their positive attitudes to learning to raise standards in information technology. By working in pairs, sharing tasks and helping one another, pupils develop their technological skills as well as their personal and social skills. Pupils are reliable while working without direct supervision and sometimes out of the sight of their teachers.
100. The subject has developed considerably since the last inspection under the good management of a knowledgeable co-ordinator. Pupils' learning has benefited from the use of better resources. In almost all classes, they use modern multi-media computers together with a good variety of programs and compact discs. The likelihood of further improvements is good as teachers' commitment and skills increase through continuous training. Adoption of the new national scheme of work for information technology will strengthen teachers' knowledge of sensing and control and will provide the stimulus for this final development.

ART

101. Standards in art have improved since the first inspection in 1995 and the second inspection in 1997. They are now satisfactory and pupils' work is comparable to that produced by most seven and 11-year-olds. Improvements to teaching and learning result from the use of a programme of work that provides clear guidance for teaching the skills related to different aspects of art. A lack of these guidelines in 1995 led to unsatisfactory standards.
102. Pupils' work is at its most varied and interesting in the juniors. In a mixed-age class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, high standards are evident in observational drawing and papermaking. Observational drawing was previously identified as a weakness in pupils' achievements. Pupils now produce very effective ink drawings of insects that extend

their understanding of science. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 have also raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve. In Year 4, for example, pupils were asked to compare the work of Van Gogh and Kandinsky at two different levels. Observations of *Lane with Cypresses under Starry Nights*, added to pupils' knowledge of different brush strokes and techniques for mixing colour by painting in the style of Van Gogh. After examining *In Blue*, by Kandinsky, pupils' awareness of the effective use of shape in art was raised.

103. A successful strategy was used by teachers in Years 5 and 6 to draw pupils' attention to special features of *Bizarre* ware, pottery produced by the ceramic artist Clarice Cliffe. By selecting three features, *colour*, *shape* and *style* and incorporating them in a practice piece, pupils were prepared to produce effective and colourful paintings that reflected the *Bizarre* style accurately. The attention teachers give to the work of artists from different eras and traditions has a good effect on pupils' cultural development.
104. The co-ordinator uses her expertise in art to provide good leadership for the subject. By giving advice to other teachers about issues such as mounting pupils' work, colour co-ordination and labelling displays, art now plays a strong part in establishing an attractive place for learning. The co-ordinator checks the quality of teaching and learning by examining pupils' work. This provides an opportunity, missing at the last inspection, for the co-ordinator to consider elements of the subject that need developing. Staff throughout the school link art to work in other subjects. This is not the only strategy used when selecting topics for pupils' work. The co-ordinator is keen that pupils should get a wider view of art by doing art for its own sake and as a means of self-expression. An example of this was evident in the origami work produced after pupils attended a Japanese exhibition at a local art gallery. Three-dimensional art such as this has improved since the last inspection.
105. Improvements to teaching and learning in art since the last inspection, a clear programme of work and the expertise of the co-ordinator place the school in a good position to continue to raise standards in art, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards in design and technology are typical of those reached by most seven and 11-year-olds. The adoption of a new programme of work, coupled with improvements to teachers' confidence and knowledge of the subject, have led to good improvements from the low standards reported at the first inspection. By comparing pupils' models from present and previous work, improvements to teaching are evident, as is teachers' commitment to continue raising standards in design and technology.
107. Pupils in Year 6 now show sufficient knowledge of materials and techniques and use these effectively to produce satisfactory models and artefacts. Since the last inspection, pupils have become more accurate at measuring, cutting and shaping materials. As a result, they finish their work to a better standard. A strength of teaching and learning is the careful and consistent planning of tasks and pupils' evaluation of their success. The school is aware of pupils' unsatisfactory understanding of structures and mechanisms. Plans are in hand to strengthen this aspect of design and technology. Projects in both key stages lack an element of problem-solving and pupils produce too much of the same kind of work. For example, fabric pictures in Year 2 show little originality in planning, making or the choice of materials. This weakness was first identified in the 1997 inspection.
108. Skills with measurement, and in the use of cutting and shaping tools, now reach a satisfactory standard. In the past, teachers' planning lacked a systematic structure for the development of these skills. Since then, the co-ordinator has introduced a new

programme of work that provides structure. The programme is now used effectively to guide teachers' planning. Skills, which were previously identified as weaknesses, are now developed in both key stages and computer graphics are used frequently to create ideas for designs. Based on recent advances, the school is in a good position to further improve standards.

109. Teaching of design and technology is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good. Lessons are prepared with care and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond by showing positive attitudes to their work and work together readily with good levels of co-operation. The subject is managed effectively by a well-informed co-ordinator who provides clear direction for continued improvement. There are sufficient resources to extend the quality of pupils' achievements.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Standards in geography have improved in Year 6 since the first inspection in 1995. By the time they are 11, pupils' achievements are typical for their age and their knowledge and understanding of different aspects of geography are satisfactory. Although standards remain satisfactory in Year 2, teachers provide fewer opportunities to develop the geographical understanding of younger pupils. As a result, their progress is slower than in the juniors.
111. Most of the teaching in geography is good. In Years 3 to 6, teachers link tasks that motivate and engage pupils' interests with a clear programme of work that develops their skills in a systematic way. This programme is responsible for improvements to pupils' learning in Year 6 and teachers have developed it effectively since the inspection in 1997. As a result, pupils enjoy geography and understand its relevance. They join in discussions willingly and with enthusiasm.
112. A good feature of teaching is the use of fieldwork both in the locality and further afield. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit a small village in Cumbria and compare it with Blackburn. Before older pupils visit Pendle Hill and Clitheroe, they use different sources of information to carry out research. For example, when thinking about transport and routes to the region, pupils study maps and aerial photographs. While learning about their own locality, pupils develop the skills of fieldwork in preparation for studying a contrasting area. When working in different localities, teachers build on pupils' existing skills by providing good opportunities to compare and contrast them with Blackburn.
113. Teachers extend the knowledge and skills pupils learn in fieldwork through research. For example, pupils in Year 6 found out for themselves that, unlike Clitheroe, Blackburn is not a tourist attraction. In a mixed-age class of pupils in Years 5 and 6, pupils constructed a bar graph to record the differences between shops in Clitheroe and a nearby street. From what they learned during their visit to Clitheroe, pupils could explain the reasons for these differences. In Year 5, the teacher improved pupils' ability to read maps as they researched the potential of tourism in the northwest. Pupils in Year 3 used information gathered in Storth in Cumbria to find out from large-scale maps where people shop and visit cinemas.
114. A good feature of some lessons is the way teachers use the final minutes to ask pupils for clear explanations of what they have learned. While drawing the threads of learning together, this strategy helps pupils to clarify and express their thoughts while practising their English. At the same time, it gives teachers time to assess pupils' learning. Pupils usually work hard on activities. Sometimes, however, teachers fail to maintain the pace of lessons and tasks are left unfinished.

115. Most pupils behave well, but some respond only to firm discipline. Not all teachers are sufficiently firm and consistent in managing pupils' behaviour. In an unsatisfactory lesson, there was not enough challenge for more able pupils who were expected to do the same work as the rest of the class. Most of the lesson was spent checking pupils' behaviour and they made little progress. On the other hand, in Year 6, the teacher's clear expectations of good behaviour set a working atmosphere which allowed pupils to work steadily and to make good progress with their learning.
116. The school has taken suitable action to raise standards since the last inspection. A start has been made on using a rich resource of first-hand knowledge about India available through pupils' own experiences and those of the community. This has yet to become a planned part of the school's work. Teachers do not plan systematically to meet the needs of the most and least able pupils and the co-ordinators have yet to check the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. Based on current improvements to standards stemming from greater depth in pupils' work in the juniors and good management, the school is strong enough to move ahead and further improve standards in geography.

HISTORY

117. Standards in history have risen since the last inspection and are now typical of those reached by most pupils by the age of 11. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of several different eras and they have sufficient understanding of why some historical events happened to appreciate the consequences of what took place. Better standards result from the way that teachers plan together as a team. They provide pupils with a clear programme of work that builds on their understanding of history as they progress through the school. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the past by sequencing events and identifying differences in the way people lived at different times. In the juniors, they add range and depth to their historical knowledge as they study characteristic features of particular periods and societies.
118. Most of the teaching in history is good. In Years 1 and 2, teachers develop pupils' sense of the passage of time by reminding them about what they were like as babies and toddlers and what they are like now. Teachers do their best to compensate for many pupils' inaccurate language by providing careful explanations of words and phrases related to the past and present. In the juniors, teachers make sure that pupils place famous people, past events and eras in the period they belong to when studying the Romans, Vikings and Britain since the 1930s.
119. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 use a good range of resources. These include pictures, information books, videos and visits to places of historical interest that help pupils to find out about the past. To link pupils' understanding of history and geography, for example, younger pupils visit Blackpool. In preparation for this visit, the teacher in Year 2 gained pupils' attention and increased their understanding of history with illustrations of dress materials and of transport used in the past for going on holiday. Pupils became absorbed in the subject by listening to colourful anecdotes. However, lengthy explanations about the work left little time for discussion to improve pupils' vocabulary and to record their learning. A good strategy in a mixed-age class of pupils in Years 1 and 2, involved the use of picture postcards to extend pupils' learning in a step-by-step exploration of the differences between *then* and *now*. As in other lessons, all pupils were set the same task with the result that many were unable to work or concentrate without intensive support from adults. While most pupils observed differences from the postcards, a general lack of knowledge and suitable language left many unable to express the differences adequately.

120. A strength of teaching comes from the way that teachers develop older pupils' ability to find out about the past through research from historical sources. For instance, in Years 5 and 6, they ask pupils to select and analyse information about unemployment during the Depression. They record the information as a block graph and write explanatory notes. Teachers make good use of a regional museum for pupils to study events from the Second World War. However, teachers waste this good opportunity to extend pupils' learning by providing them with unchallenging tasks. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 arouse pupils' enthusiasm for history by asking them to find out about the features and purposes of a Viking warrior's arms and armour.
121. In Years 1 and 2, teachers do not develop pupils' recording skills sufficiently well. They often provide pupils with worksheets that make it difficult for them to communicate their awareness and understanding of history. Recording is better in Years 3 to 6 where, for instance, a pupil in Year 5 wrote a moving poem in response to the Jarrow March. *Walking this road I see...agony...I hear silence.*
122. The co-ordinator for history has helped to raise standards from the low levels observed at during the first inspection. Improvements to teachers' planning, pupils' attitudes and achievements place the co-ordinator in a good position to continue to raise standards.

MUSIC

123. Standards in music have improved in Years 3 to 6 since the previous inspection. Seven and 11-year-olds reach standards that are typical for their age.
124. Most pupils' enjoyment of music influences the pride they take in creating their own compositions and singing in harmony. They appreciate different styles of music from a variety of cultural traditions. A small proportion of pupils in the juniors spoil the pace of lessons by taking too much time to settle down to work. When they build up their knowledge of rhythm and tune, older pupils accompany themselves to a reasonable standard with untuned percussion. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in singing simple rounds and in understanding that music consists of layers of sound. They build on this skill so that by the end of the key stage pupils recognise repeating patterns in songs and in musical accompaniment. Pupils in Year 2 sing a good variety of songs. They understand how music creates different moods and how it can represent people or animals. This was seen in Year 2, when pupils sang about *Going to the Zoo*, and appreciated the way that the instruments of the orchestra described different animals in the *Carnival of the Animals*.
125. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. This is because teachers make good use of a new programme to guide their planning. The programme develops pupils' appreciation of music and provides them with opportunities to improve their performances. Good teaching in a mixed-age class of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is based on the teacher's good knowledge of music. Her very firm control of behaviour allows all pupils to take an active part in lessons. The teacher makes very good use of the skills of a classroom assistant to help maintain order. She perseveres with challenging tasks to give pupils a sense of achievement when they complete them successfully.
126. The new programme for teaching and learning provides pupils with opportunities to listen, to appraise and to perform. It promotes the music of different cultures effectively and places value on the music of pupils from ethnic minorities. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used a poem written in Punjabi to produce repeating patterns of sound. Although the school's choir is open to all, it is usually girls who attend. They strengthen the school's involvement with the local community by performing in concerts, such as that held at Blackburn Cathedral when a new canon, the vicar of St. Barnabus' church,

was installed. Older pupils in the juniors take part in a mass concert with local schools in Blackburn Rovers' football stadium. All pupils in the infants take part in an annual musical performance. Pupils in Year 3 added to both their enjoyment of music and their cultural development when practising *Bravo Bravissimo* in two parts in preparation for their next concert. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder through an extra-curricular club run by the music co-ordinator.

127. Music is organised and managed effectively by the co-ordinator. The school's ability to raise standards could increase when the recently published national guidance for teaching and learning is in place. Resources for music are adequate and are built upon each year. The school possesses sufficient instruments from different cultures to widen pupils' knowledge of a variety of musical traditions. Music and singing are part of pupils' daily worship. Teachers promote pupils' social and cultural development effectively in music, although ethnic minority pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 become less willing to sing in assemblies.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. At the time of the first inspection, pupils' achievements in physical education were below those typical of seven and 11-year-olds. Teachers now pay close attention to the guidance provided in a new programme of work and as a result, standards have risen and are satisfactory at both key stages. A particularly effective feature of all teaching lies in the care taken in all aspects of the subject to provide a clear sequence of activities that allow pupils to improve their skills. This was evident when, after intensive practice, many pupils in Year 5 began to demonstrate high levels of co-ordination in balancing tennis balls on racquets.
129. An improvement to teaching that works particularly well is the way that teachers boost pupils' self-confidence through encouragement and praise. Pupils who find activities hard get the best out of lessons when attention is drawn to their efforts. With praise, pupils who are doing well work even harder and get a lot of enjoyment from lessons. In gymnastics in Year 2, for example, the performance of other pupils in jumping and balancing improved when the teacher repeatedly praised a boy who was trying very hard to improve his balance.
130. Teaching is less successful when teachers spend too much time telling pupils how to carry out tasks instead of keeping them active and interested. Too much talk and inactivity gives pupils the chance to become restless and for their concentration to slip. A good example of how to maintain a brisk pace to a lesson was seen when the co-ordinator for physical education taught pupils in Key Stage 1. From start to end of the lesson, pupils were kept busy. They finally wound down by walking in a large circle. After several minutes, they came quietly to a halt and then walked out of the hall in single file. This effective strategy was as familiar to pupils as the routine their teacher used for them to warm up at the start of the lesson. It provided firm and consistent control of pupils' actions and behaviour and ensured that pupils made good progress with their learning and that no time was wasted.
131. Very good support is provided for pupils with physical disabilities. Teachers and support staff work together closely to tailor tasks to meet pupils' specific needs. They take good care to follow the objectives from pupils' statements of special educational needs. As a result, pupils benefit from sustained exercise and gain enjoyment from taking part in physical education. Occasionally, other pupils have the chance to become involved in these modified activities as part of their personal development.

132. The new co-ordinator's enthusiasm for the subject is widening the range of sporting activities on offer, raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. In the last year, the co-ordinator has checked the quality of teaching and learning in Year 6, to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress towards the school's targets for physical education. In this way, she has discovered what needs to be done to raise standards still further. By having taught physical education throughout the school, the co-ordinator is aware of what is achievable by pupils in different year groups. This places the school in a good position to bring further improvements to the subject. Later this year, the school will become involved in the *Tops Sport* scheme. This will bring increased expertise for teachers, a wide range of new resources and new experiences for pupils.
133. The co-ordinator tries hard to give physical education a good profile in the school by involving pupils in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and taking part in inter-schools competitions.