

INSPECTION REPORT

Longshaw Junior School
Blackburn

LEA area: Blackburn with Darwen

Unique Reference Number: 119119
Inspection Number: 186691

Headteacher: Mr J Hodkinson

Reporting inspector: Mr S Bywater
18463

Dates of inspection: 13th - 16th December 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Kay
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Steve Bywater <i>(Registered Inspector)</i>	Science; Information technology; Music.	Attainment and progress; Teaching; Leadership and management.
Colin Herbert <i>(Lay Inspector)</i>	Equal opportunities.	Attendance; Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Parents and the community; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources; Efficiency.
Kuldip Rai Singh <i>(Team Member)</i>	English; History.	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Jo Mitchell <i>(Team Member)</i>	Religious education; Design and technology; Art.	Curriculum and assessment.
Derek Pattinson <i>(Team Member)</i>	Mathematics; Geography; Physical education; Special educational needs.	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- In most subjects pupils make good progress throughout the school.
- Teaching is good overall with many very good features.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and behave very well.
- School management is very good. There is very clear educational direction. The leadership of the headteacher is very effective.
- The school manages its finances very well and provides good value for money.
- The school has gained good support from parents.
- The school's arrangements for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils are good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Pupils' attainment in writing is unsatisfactory.
- II. There are too few opportunities to develop pupils' independent writing skills in subjects other than English.
- III. The drugs and sex education policy is inconsistent with current curriculum practice.

This is a good school with many very good features and very few weaknesses. However, the weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan following the inspection.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection. There have been significant improvements in formalising assessments and recording procedures, and in establishing firmer links between planning, teaching and learning to help raise attainment. Very good developments in analysing data to establish realistic targets have had a significant impact on raising standards, especially in mathematics and science. Only in writing has the school failed to develop satisfactorily and this is currently a priority of the school's development plan. Pupils' information technology skills have developed very well over the past year or so as a direct result of the staffing and resource benefits of the Educational Action Zone. The quality of teaching has improved significantly as has the role of subject co-ordinators. In many other aspects of the school, for example the attitudes and behaviour of pupils, the high standards recognised in the previous report have at been least maintained and in some areas, for example the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, they have improved. The school continues to have a good capacity for further improvement.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
English	E	C	<i>Average</i>	C
Mathematics	C	A	<i>below average</i>	D
Science	B	A	<i>well below average</i>	E

The table shows that pupils' attainment in English was well below the national average, but average in mathematics and above average in science. When compared with schools with similar intakes, pupils' attainment in English was about average, but well above average in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are below average; whilst pupils' reading skills are average, writing skills are below the levels expected. Attainment in mathematics, science and information technology is average. In information technology pupils' attainment in the aspect of handling and communicating information is above average. Attainment in religious education is at the level expected for 11 year olds in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Attainment exceeds expectations in physical education and in all other subjects is similar to that expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Some pupils attain very highly in all subjects.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	7 – 11 years
English	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Information technology	Good
Religious education	Good
Other subjects	Good

Teaching is good with many very good features. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons, good or better in 82 per cent and very good or excellent in 30 per cent of lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and particularly impressive in mathematics, history, physical education and religious education. They develop pupils' use of information technology through many subjects.

Teachers have warm and supportive relationships with their pupils, control them well and use praise and encouragement to good effect. Lessons are planned well and consistently provide interesting starting points to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. Teachers' skills in questioning are often very good. Pupils are given opportunities to solve problems, handle materials and use and enhance their skills and knowledge. All teachers use encouraging and

constructive remarks in effective marking to help pupils to improve their work.

Pupils with special educational needs receive good teaching through in-class support and through withdrawal of groups. Work is geared to achieving precise targets in individual education plans.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. Pupils are well mannered and very courteous. Very good attitudes to learning have a positive impact on the day to day life of pupils.
Attendance	Satisfactory and marginally above national average.
Ethos*	Very good: successfully promotes high attainment and equality of opportunity.
Leadership and management	Very good. Very effective systems ensure that everyone in the school is helped to develop and improve. Very good aims and policies have built a strong community. The governors' drugs and sex education policy is not clear.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and fully reflects the aims of the school. It effectively promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them very well for the next stage of their education. Planning is thorough, detailed and developmental.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are clear, informative and detailed, with precise targets to enable them to make good progress. Reviews of progress are held regularly, to which parents and outside agencies are invited, as required.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good; provision for their social development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school is very well staffed and benefits from additional staffing from the Education Action Zone. Accommodation is very good and resources are good.
Value for money	Good.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The evidence for the judgements below are based on the comments made by 23 parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting, the 175 who returned questionnaires, and other parents who offered comments during the inspection week.

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
IV. Children enjoy coming to school. V. The school keeps parents well informed and encourages them to take an active part in the life of the school. VI. Parents find it easy to approach the school with problems. VII. The school encourages good behaviour and parents support the school's values and attitudes. VIII. Parents are pleased with the standard of their children's work.	IX. A very small number of parents are

Inspectors share the parents' very positive views and feel that the school provides appropriate homework to support pupils' learning and prepare them for the secondary school.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve the quality of education and raise standards, the school the headteacher, governors and staff should:

X. Raise attainment in English by:

(Paragraphs: 12, 17, 35, 46, 106, 107, 128, 134, 151, 153)

*.providing more opportunities for pupils to write independently in subjects such as history and religious education;

*.improving pupils' planning, drafting, evaluating and editing of their writing across the curriculum;

*.ensuring that grammar, punctuation and syntax are addressed systematically in all subjects as well as in the literacy hour.

The following minor point for improvement should be considered as the basis for inclusion in the action plan:

*.Clarify the governors' statements about the teaching of drugs and sex education so that parents are clear about what is being taught and, in the case of sex education, parents are informed of the right to withdraw their children should they so desire.

(Paragraphs: 44, 81)

*

* **INTRODUCTION**

* **Characteristics of the school**

1. Longshaw Community School is a County Maintained School catering for children aged 7 - 11 years. It was originally built in 1950 and is situated on the outskirts of the town of Blackburn. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Most of the pupils come from the council houses and terraced properties, which surround the school. Others travel further from new estates, of privately owned dwellings.

2. The school is part of an Educational Action Zone which has seen positive developments in raising standards, especially in mathematics and information technology.

3. The number on roll is 326 (163 boys and 163 girls), which is 20 lower than last year. The school is larger than other schools of the same type (326 pupils compared with the average size nationally of 242 pupils). Children arrive at school with attainment levels which are below average overall but includes the full range of attainment. There are 102 pupils on the special educational needs register (over 30 per cent), including 28 at stage 3 and above, 10 pupils having statements of special educational need. The national average is 18 per cent. There are 25 pupils from ethnic minorities, for whom English is an additional language; at 8 per cent, this is close to the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 153 (47 per cent). This is similar to previous years and is high compared with national figures of 20 per cent.

4. The school aims to provide a warm, friendly atmosphere, where children can learn, have fun and make friends, and also 'to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils at the school and in society'. It has set realistic and challenging targets for pupils in English and mathematics.

5. Since the previous inspection in 1996, the school has continued to address the following key issues:

- *.to ensure that standards are raised in reading and writing throughout the school, and urgently complete the review of the scheme of work for English;
- *.the headteacher and subject coordinators should further develop the existing strategies for assessing pupils' work to ensure that the results of assessment procedures inform curriculum planning and delivery;
- *.the senior management team should ensure that there is a more uniform approach to curriculum planning and implementation within and between year groups to achieve continuity and progression in all subjects;
- *.curriculum coordinators should continue to develop their monitoring roles;
- *.the senior management team, in conjunction with subject coordinators, should identify examples of good classroom practice and disseminate them throughout the school in order to raise standards.

6. The main priorities for this year are to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy and raise pupils' attainment in writing.

6.

7. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	40	47	87

7. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	22	24	31
At NC Level 4 or Above	Girls	32	36	39
	Total	55	60	70
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	62 (53)	68 (41)	81 (48)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

7. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	21	22	29
At NC Level 4 or Above	Girls	30	34	37
	Total	51	56	66
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	58 (48)	64 (48)	76 (52)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

7. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

			%
Authorised	School		6.0
Absence	National comparative data		5.7
Unauthorised	School		1
Absence	National comparative data		0.5

7. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

7. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	30
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

7.

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

7. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

7. Attainment and progress

1. Attainment on entry to Year 3 includes the full range of attainment from well above to well below average, but is best described as below average. This judgement is consistent with the end of Key Stage 1 national test results from the feeder infant school.

2. The 1999 test results at the age of 11 show that the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English is well below the national average. However, it is in line with the average for similar schools. When test results in 1999 are compared with those from the previous three years, they continued to rise consistently until 1998, when results were close to the national average, and well above the average for similar schools. The reason for the lower test results in 1999 is that, although the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 was greater than that in 1998, there was a considerable drop in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5. This affected the school's average adversely in comparison with both the national average and the average for similar schools. In addition, the school's performance was significantly affected by the above average number of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' progress in English across Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school, due in part to improved teachers' planning in year group teams, and the emphasis on focused and explicit teaching during the Literacy Hour.

3. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening are in line with the national average. Most pupils speak with confidence and talk clearly about their work using standard vocabulary and grammar. Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2 and show growing confidence as speakers.

4. Standards in reading are broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 2 and most pupils read competently. Higher and average attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. Pupils' dictionary skills are satisfactory overall, but many pupils do not make sufficient use of the dictionary or thesaurus. In research work, although pupils' note taking skills are satisfactory, most pupils make insufficient use of skimming and scanning to locate information quickly. Pupils' comprehension skills, particularly at the level of inference and deduction, are below average. Pupils make good progress in reading as they move through Key Stage 2. However, at the start of the key stage, although pupils' phonic skills are satisfactory, overall they have insufficient confidence in reading texts with understanding and expression.

5. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is below national expectations. Fewer pupils than expected in Year 6 are able to develop and sustain ideas in an interesting and imaginative way to produce extended pieces of writing. Although pupils write for a variety of purposes and some write complex stories, a significant number of pupils have below average skills in independent and extended writing. Standards of presentation and handwriting are usually satisfactory, although many pupils frequently produce untidy work. Punctuation and spelling are satisfactory. Progress in writing is satisfactory, although the amount of extended writing produced both in English and across the curriculum is overall limited. In some classes

there is an over-reliance on worksheets. Pupils are regularly taught to spell and to use punctuation marks correctly but progress is not as good as it should be because most writing is done in English lessons and pupils have too few chances to develop independent writing in other subjects such as history, geography or religious education. Grammar, punctuation and syntax are being addressed systematically in the literacy hour but are not yet having an effect on pupils' independent writing.

6. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are supported well within class and through being withdrawn from class for small group lessons. They make good progress because teachers and support staff focus on helping pupils to understand what words mean and to use them. Teachers encourage pupils to extend their speech but there is no 'mother tongue' teaching for pupils who speak English as an additional language. All pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them.

7. National test results for mathematics in 1999 improved significantly on the results of the previous year. They indicate that pupils are now performing broadly in line with national levels, with more pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 than the previous year. However, whilst the proportion of girls attaining the level expected is above the national average, boys' scores are below. There is no obvious reason for this. The school is monitoring the progress of all pupils and sets individual targets for each pupil which build on their previous attainment. Pupils are performing well above average in comparison with similar schools. The school has attributed this improvement to the increasingly high profile now given to mathematics. There has been very good recent support provided through the Education Action Zone, the introduction of setting in Year 6, and appropriate emphasis has been given to staff training to deliver the National Numeracy Framework. The increased emphasis on analysis and evaluation of test results in all years, and the individual target setting and tracking of pupils resulting from this are also helping to raise standards. Inspection evidence also indicates that pupils are performing close to national levels, with good levels of challenge provided in all years, especially for the lower and average attaining pupils. Pupils of lower and average ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most areas of mathematics throughout Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils make sound rather than good progress across the key stage. This is because they are not always given work which is appropriately matched to their abilities for them to make the best possible progress.

8. In the 1999 National Curriculum science tests for 11 year olds, 81 per cent of pupils reached the level expected for their age. This was slightly above the national average. Thirty per cent of pupils achieved the higher level. This was also above the national average. Compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level and the higher level was well above average. Results of the 1999 tests show a significant improvement on 1998 tests. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils' attainment is average at the end of Key Stage 2.

9. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have secure scientific investigation skills. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of physical processes and of life and living processes. For example, they have a secure understanding of light and photosynthesis and use scientific vocabulary well. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties is satisfactory. The significant majority of pupils, including those with special

educational needs, make good progress in all aspects of science. Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted well through the science curriculum. For example, pupils plot graphs, calculate angles and draw tree diagrams. Literacy is supported well within science lessons when pupils develop and consolidate their scientific vocabulary through cloze procedure exercises and word searches.

10. In information technology, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national expectation overall but is above average in the aspect of communicating information. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. The significant development in information technology since the previous inspection has been due to a broader curriculum, an improved range of computer equipment and software, greater staff confidence and knowledge, and higher standards of attainment. A major and positive influence on pupils' attainment has resulted from the staffing and additional resources gained by the school's involvement in the Educational Action Zone. Pupils use their skills effectively to support their learning in other subjects. For example, they produce bar, line and pie graphs to support mathematics and science, information on a CD-ROM to provide information in music, history and geography. A variety of computers and programs support literacy work although there are missed opportunities for pupils' extended writing, redrafting and editing processes.

11. In religious education, attainment at the end of Year 6 is in line with the levels expected for 11 year olds in the locally Agreed Syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. A strong feature throughout the school is the empathy which pupils show towards other people's feelings. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a knowledge and satisfactory understanding the beliefs of the major religions of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism.

12. Physical education is one of the strengths of the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in the development of games' skills, dance and gymnastics. This is due to: high quality teaching, which places considerable emphasis on the acquisition of important skills; effective organisation, which keep groups of pupils as small as possible; a broad and balanced curriculum, and the generous time allowance for physical education. In design and technology, history, music and physical education, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, and by the age of 11 their level of knowledge, skills and understanding is appropriate for their age. In art and geography, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are appropriate for 11 year olds.

13. Most pupils on the special needs register and many of those who speak English as an additional language attain at levels which are below national standards. However, the good provision, teaching and support, and work which is generally matched to their needs, ensure that all pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school.

20. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

14. The behaviour of pupils in and around school and their attitude to learning are very good.

15. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are able to maintain concentration and apply themselves well to the tasks that are set for them. For example, in a Year 3 physical education lesson, pupils were carrying out self evaluation and peer evaluation in a very sensible and mature way, and in a history lesson, they took a genuine interest in planning a Roman town. In a Year 4 physical education lesson, pupils were excited by what they were doing and they responded to the enthusiasm of the teacher. In a Year 5 design and technology lesson, they were taking real care in the design and manufacture of slippers. In a Year 5 numeracy lesson, pupils chanted their nine times table with enthusiasm. Response in lessons was always satisfactory or better. In 93 per cent of lessons, it was good or better, and in 39 per cent of lessons, it was very good. In particular, the response of pupils in Years 3 and 4 was very good in half the observed lessons.

16. Pupils are able to work sensibly in collaboration with others. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson, they worked very well together as they carried out an investigation on absorption, using a variety of different materials.

17. Pupils of all ages share resources sensibly and show appropriate respect for them, and there was no evidence of any vandalism, litter or graffiti in or around school.

18. Pupils are very courteous and well mannered towards their teachers and to visitors. They hold doors open for visitors and, when thanked, many respond with a chirpy and genuine, 'You're welcome!'

19. Most pupils with special educational needs demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. Most are keen to learn, ask and answer questions appropriately; enjoy succeeding; behave sensibly, and form good relationships with their peers and with adults. They respond well to praise and encouragement, which enhances their occasionally low self esteem. However, a small minority of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems can be aggressive on occasions, necessitating firm but fair handling.

20. Relationships in school between pupils and between pupils and adults are also very good. Playground relationships are totally acceptable, and no anti-social behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection. There are currently no exclusions from school.

21. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility for activities in and around school. In addition to normal monitoring duties in all classes, elected pupils in Year 6 are now members of the newly constituted School Council. The House system allows for captains and prefects, and the Christmas Concert provided very good opportunities for pupils to act as narrator, soloists and a conductor in front of 170 parents and friends. Older pupils also benefit from a residential visit to a Shropshire outdoor activity centre which helps to develop their independence. Pupils show a sense of citizenship and thought for others as they also collect generously for a number of local and national charities.

22. The high standards of behaviour and the very good attitudes to learning have a very positive impact on the day to day life of pupils, promote an effective working atmosphere and enable good progress to be made. In the parents meeting and questionnaires returned prior to the inspection, well over 90 per cent of parents expressed their positive opinions of the behaviour within school and the attitudes and values promoted by the school.

29. Attendance

23. Attendance rates have improved slightly since the last inspection. At 94 per cent the rate is satisfactory and marginally above the national average. However, the un-authorised absence rate is above national average.

24. The punctuality of pupils to school is satisfactory. Registration sessions are carried out promptly and effectively and comply with statutory requirements. They create a positive start to the school day.

31. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

31. Teaching

25. Overall, the teaching is good with many very good features. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons, good or better in 82 per cent and very good or excellent in 30 per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and the school responded very well to the key issue raised. Teaching standards improved partly due to the departure of some staff, and appointment of new staff, but also because teachers' planning has improved significantly and monitoring of teachers' practice has been effective.

26. Pupils' good progress throughout the school is directly linked to the high quality of the teaching in all year groups and in most subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall and the school utilises teachers' talents very well through specialist teaching, for example in music and information technology. Teachers extend pupils' learning and teach lessons with confidence and flair. During the inspection, teaching throughout the school was particularly impressive in mathematics, history, physical education and religious education.

27. All teachers have warm and supportive relationships with their pupils, who are very happy and secure in their teachers' presence. Teachers mostly have high expectations of their pupils, using praise and encouragement regularly. However, there are occasions when pupils produce untidy work which is not always dealt with appropriately.

28. A very good feature of teachers' planning is the good use of links between subjects. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding, and to realise that learning can be fun and not an isolated experience. In many subjects, teachers make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' use of information technology. The teaching of numeracy and literacy is good overall, but teachers sometimes miss opportunities to develop pupils' writing in other subjects. The use of worksheets in some subjects such as history, geography

and religious education restricts the opportunities for pupils to produce grammatically complex sentences in independent writing outside of literacy lessons.

29. All teachers know their pupils very well and, with the exception of higher attainers in mathematics, generally set realistic and challenging targets for them. Teachers plan their lessons well and indicate clear objectives. In many lessons, they communicate objectives to the class from the onset of the lesson so that pupils are focused. They work conscientiously to provide interesting starting points to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. This was especially true in an excellent history lesson in Year 6. Local senior citizens were invited into school to share their memories of life in the Second World War. Their recollections, photographs, artefacts and information technology were effectively used to inspire the class. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of what life was really like were greatly deepened and their personal and social development significantly enhanced. The very high level of pupils' collaboration and discussion was a joy to observe and the obvious enjoyment of the pupils could be measured by their disappointment at the lesson's ending.

30. Teachers' skills in questioning are often very good. Pupils know that their contributions are valued. They are enthusiastic in their response and expand on their answers fluently, encouraged by the open-ended and probing nature of the questions asked. Challenging work, along with very good encouragement, checking, guiding and supporting, raises pupils' self-esteem and pride in their achievements. All teachers manage and control the pupils very well; a task made easier by the very sensitive and caring relationships that exist in the school.

31. Teachers use a variety of methods to teach their classes. They successfully balance giving direct information with opportunities for enquiry, and for pupils to work independently and co-operatively. The different strategies for the organisation of groups and classes provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their progress and to refine and enhance their work. Pupils are given opportunities to solve problems, handle materials and use and enhance their skills and knowledge.

32. Teachers and educational support staff are enthusiastic and highly committed to the school, its work and its pupils. They all work very well together, sharing values and a common sense of purpose and thus making significant contributions to the achievements of pupils.

33. Pupils with special educational needs receive both in-class support and support through withdrawal of groups from the good special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Work is generally matched carefully to their individual needs to ensure that they make the best possible progress. They are supported well by classroom assistant and outreach teachers. Work is geared to achieving precise targets in individual education plans, but time scales are not always clearly stated to ensure that targets are met in the shortest time possible. However, the special educational needs co-ordinator, in consultation with class teachers, regularly evaluates progress towards the achievement of targets, and keeps detailed records for these pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language, which are frequently updated.

34. Pupils' work is marked regularly and all teachers use encouraging and constructive remarks to help pupils to improve their work. Other techniques of day-to-day assessment, such as questioning and the observation of work, are used well to assist most teachers in their

planning.

35. The amount and type of homework varies from year to year but it is always appropriate and supports pupils' learning. The homework policy is consistently followed and 91 per cent of the parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire are satisfied with the homework given to pupils.

36. Classrooms are well organised and teachers use time and resources efficiently. The very good quality of the environment, with displays reflecting the diverse and rich curriculum, combined with the many other good features of teaching has a positive effect on, the pupils' learning.

43. The curriculum and assessment

37. The curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant, places considerable emphasis on numeracy and most aspects of literacy, and fully reflects the aims of the school. It effectively promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development, and prepares them very well for the next stage of their education. It fully meets statutory requirements to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum, and also religious education as guided by the locally Agreed Syllabus. Time allocations for all subjects, and the efficient use of time allocated for them, enable the school's curriculum to be effectively delivered. Health education is an integral part of the school's science programme. However, drugs education, emphasising the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, is not given a sufficiently high profile within the school's broad curriculum. The present provision for sex education does not match the governing body's policy, which requires clarification and amendment.

38. The school delivers its curriculum through the full range of National Curriculum subjects. There are policies and schemes of work in all subjects, some of which are being refined by the incorporation of new guidelines. These provide sufficient detail in most subjects to enable teachers to plan effectively for all pupils to develop important skills, acquire knowledge, and build on levels of understanding in a logical sequence. Planning is thorough, detailed and developmental, and includes clear and focused learning objectives. These are almost always shared with pupils, to enable teachers to assess accurately what pupils know and understand. A consistent approach to planning and the implementation of plans, both within and between year groups, helps to ensure that work carefully builds on previous learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

39. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced, with teachers now increasingly confident in teaching both frameworks. The Numeracy Strategy, in particular, has been implemented very well and consistently across the school, with a good balance of direct teaching, written and mental mathematics and pupils' practical activities. However, writing is given insufficient emphasis in the school's curriculum, both as part of English and within other subjects, resulting in lower than required standards by the end of the key stage.

40. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. A range of clubs take place which enrich and extend the curriculum, through activities such as: brass, cross-country, football, and drawing. Educational visits, although relatively few in number, successfully broaden pupils' experiences. Occasional and regular visitors, such as a group of senior citizens who visited

during the inspection, make further significant contributions to curriculum enrichment.

41. The school aims to provide equal opportunities for all within a framework which pursues respect for all, whatever gender, race, creed or ability. Both boys and girls participate in all activities with equal chance of success. All pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. The school implements successfully the Code of Practice with regard to the identification, assessment and monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are clear, informative and detailed, with precise targets to enable them to make good progress. Reviews of progress are held regularly, to which parents and outside agencies are invited, as required. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate support and individual targets are set for all pupils to ensure that they make progress.

42. The school's arrangements for the assessment of pupils have improved substantially since the last inspection, and are now good. This is because there is a good match between assessment practice and the requirements of a clear, comprehensive and informative policy statement, and there are now firm links between planning, assessment, teaching and learning to help raise attainment. Statutory tests, teacher assessments, a moderated school portfolio of levelled work, school based tests and assessments carried out by pupils themselves are all used to help give teachers a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do.

43. Assessment is now used well to inform future planning. A rigorous approach to the analysis and interpretation of test data provides essential information to help class teachers to track progress as pupils move through the school. It enables targets to be compiled, monitored and reviewed, which are personal to the needs of each child. This is another significant improvement since the last inspection. Records in English and mathematics, which chart the individual progress of pupils over time, help to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to set targets. Marking is consistent, positive and developmental, often referring to specific learning objectives to help ensure that pupils make the best possible progress. Assessments are increasingly carried out against precise learning objectives, and this enables teachers to build effectively on learning from one lesson to the next. The assessment co-ordinator has played a key role in the successful implementation of these developments.

50. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

44. Overall, the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Following the previous inspection, standards in the provision of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development dropped as the school passed through a turbulent period. Effective action, taken by the head and governors and supported by the whole staff, has resulted in considerable progress in the last three years.

45. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school fully meets the conditions for a daily act of collective worship which overall are of good quality. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to reflect quietly while they listen to recorded music as they enter and leave the hall. Assemblies are events where the school community meets and shares common beliefs and values. For example, adult wishes for the next millennium are shared with

pupils, emphasising that the future belongs to them and they can make a difference. Pupils and adults then have time to reflect on the future. Through religious

education lessons, pupils reflect on the feelings and beliefs of others. While studying the Christmas story, pupils reflect on the feelings and the reactions of the characters involved as the events unfolded. Year 3 pupils act out parts of the Christmas story and then respond to a 'reporter' on their feelings. Year 5 pupils consider the qualities that Mary would have possessed, while Year 4 consider people for whom Christmas is not a happy time. Wonder was seen in lessons when pupils marvelled at the technology that made images appear on the 'white board' or made a square flash on a computer screen when they had successfully finished a piece of programming. Pupils were excited to find that the alarm system they designed worked successfully.

46. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school sets high expectations for the moral development of pupils. The school's policy on Care and Control is effective. The aim of providing a disciplined environment where good behaviour is recognised and rewarded is fully met. The school is successful in promoting a sense of respect and tolerance and an appreciation of the importance of honesty, integrity and courtesy. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are trusted and respond with honesty. For example, house points are awarded verbally for good behaviour, good work, kindness or politeness. They are also occasionally deducted, also verbally. The pupils are then trusted to record the points themselves. Pupils show respect for each other and towards adults. In class they listen carefully to each other and respect other people's points of view. Moral development is encouraged through all aspects of school life as pupils learn to operate within appropriate rules, and teachers take time to explain reasons for decisions taken. For example, on a bright and sunny, but very icy day, the decision taken to keep pupils indoors at playtime was carefully explained on the grounds of safety and of making sure that pupils did not get hurt. The excellent role models provided by the headteacher, teachers and support staff, and the strong relationships between staff and pupils, which are firmly built on a foundation of mutual respect, have a significant impact on pupils' moral development.

47. Provision for pupils' social development is good. They are given opportunities to work together in groups and in pairs, where they learn to co-operate and collaborate. In a physical education lesson, pupils worked together in groups to make up a game which involved the use of ball throwing skills that they had been practising. In a Year 3 religious education lesson, pupils worked together to allocate parts and create a short piece of drama. Within lessons, pupils are confident at evaluating the work of their peers in a way that is both sensitive and fair. The link with Blackburn Rovers Football club provides opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills during their visits to the club. Pupils are encouraged to organise their own charity events and have raised money for the premature baby unit at the local hospital. During the time of the inspection, pupils were organising a bring and buy sale for Blue Peter. The newly formed School Council gives responsibility to pupils in the Year 6 and they have already decided that they would like to improve playground language. As this initiative develops, there is scope for responsibility to be extended to younger pupils within the school. The quality of school productions is good and gives pupils the chance to perform individually and in groups as well as narrating and working sound equipment.

48. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school provides opportunities for the pupils to find out about their own heritage and culture through visits to museums and art galleries and to Blackburn Rovers Football Club. Through the curriculum, pupils gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Throughout the study of

Christmas, staff sensitively include pupils who are not Christian. Muslim pupils are given

the opportunities to share their beliefs and compare Christmas with Eid. For example, in a Year 6 class, the lighting of Advent candles was followed by a period of quiet reflection at the suggestion of the pupils, after Muslim pupils said that Ramadan was a time for thinking and reflecting about those that are less fortunate than themselves. In history pupils appreciate the culture of ancient Greece, while in geography they learn about life in St. Lucia. In art, pupils look at the work of famous artists developing opinions about their work and learning about aspects of their lives. Music plays an important role in pupils' cultural development through their experiences of the music of different times, places and cultures. For example pupils listen to the music of Bach as they come in for assembly and later develop dance routines to Abba. In music, they have the opportunity to play musical instruments from different cultures.

55. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

49. The school has good procedures for the support, welfare and guidance of its pupils. It has improved this aspect of school life since the last inspection.

50. The school takes very good care of its pupils, and the atmosphere created by all the staff is very caring and friendly.

51. Effective child protection procedures are in place and, where appropriate, there is close liaison with the appropriate agencies. The school ensures that all members of staff are properly trained. The support and supervision given to pupils at lunch and in the playground is effective. The supervisors are also well prepared for indoor breaks in wet weather.

52. The school has good procedures in place for health and safety. There is very good cover for both first aid and medical matters. The school holds regular emergency evacuation drills and pupils and staff vacate the building in good time. Visitors to the school Christmas concert were very well briefed on evacuation procedures before the concert started. Both the governing body and the local education authority inspect the premises regularly and this ensures that the school is a safe environment. Comprehensive pupil records are held in the school office. These enable the school to make urgent contact, if required, with parents or carers.

53. The school is well supported by specialists such as the education welfare advisor and school nurse, who visit on a regular basis.

54. The large number of specialist 'outreach' teachers and classroom assistants, who mostly support pupils with statements of special educational need, are deployed effectively. They make a significant contribution to the good progress made by pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported satisfactorily. Their progress towards meeting their individual targets is monitored by teachers in the same way as all other pupils in school.

55. The procedures for the monitoring of attendance are good. Absence trends are identified on a weekly basis and the school works closely with the education welfare officer to bring about appropriate improvements. The school works hard to inform parents about the need for regular and punctual attendance of their children.

56.Procedures for monitoring behaviour are very good and the school takes every opportunity to reinforce the need for high standards in school. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour and bullying are recorded efficiently, dealt with fairly and effectively and parents are informed sooner rather than later if their child's behaviour is causing concern. Discussion with pupils about inappropriate behaviour takes place in the School Council and assembly.

57.The procedures to monitor both academic progress and personal development of pupils are good and useful information is contained in personal profiles in each classroom. The procedures are effective in providing information to set accurate individual targets for pupils and as a consequence standards are being raised.

58.The support and advice provided to pupils about to transfer from the Infant school or into the secondary stage of their education are effective.

65. Partnership with parents and the community

59.The school has consolidated and improved on this aspect since the last inspection. It now has a good relationship with its parents and a very good partnership with the local community.

60.The school makes a good effort to communicate to its parents and carers through noticeboards and newsletters. At their meeting and in the large number of questionnaire responses, parents expressed satisfaction at what they received from the school.

61.A number of parents have been encouraged to undertake a Parents as Educators course and their support in classrooms and the library is valued by the school. Other parents are very supportive on visits and many attend school sporting events. The hard working Parent Support Group runs a number of fundraising events to provide additional resources for the school. Parents are effectively involved in their children's learning at home.

62.The school contacts parents as soon as there is any concern about learning or behaviour. They keep the parents informed about any action taken. If pupils are put on the special needs register, the parents are invited to reviews of educational plans. Pupils reports and the quality of information provided about pupils' progress are good.

63.The school makes very good use of the local community. Pupils have the opportunity to visit a number of interesting places, such as: the Blackburn town trail, Ribchester Roman Museum, Astley Tudor Hall and Helmshore cotton mill. A highlight of the year is when Year 6 pupils visit Blackburn Rovers Football Club, where they undergo a day of Learning through Football. All these visits are carefully linked into curriculum studies and, in particular, the latter visit has a very clear impact on literacy and numeracy skills as pupils complete their individual workbooks at the club.

64.Additionally, a number of visitors are welcomed to school. They include: representatives of the police and road safety organisations, an African author, and a number of theatre groups. These visits have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

65. The school and its pupils derive a major benefit through participation in the Education Action Zone initiative. From a resource aspect, the provision of the large information technology 'whiteboard' gives staff and pupils a unique opportunity to teach and learn using the latest technology available. The initiative also provides support staff for information technology and numeracy, and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Additionally, under the scheme, some pupils have received further support in numeracy and literacy by attending the information technology suite at Blackburn Rovers Football Club. Careful evaluation of the initiative demonstrates the clear added value that it provides.

66. Pupils are also involved in collecting money for a number of local and national charities, including the Queens Park Hospital Baby unit, Blue Peter and the Poppy Day Appeal.

67. Strong and effective links continue to exist with the local Infant school. Links with secondary feeders are less effective, mainly because of the number of schools that pupils may attend. However, this situation does not have a negative impact on transition arrangements.

74. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

74. Leadership and management

68. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He has been instrumental in developing the very good relationships between staff, pupils, parents and governors. Action to address all but one point for action of the last inspection has been very effectively carried out. For example, good procedures for assessment have been established and curriculum planning is now effective and consistent. Only on the key issue of improving reading and writing has action fallen short of its aims, despite much effort. The leadership, particularly in the development of monitoring roles, is judged to have improved from the already high standards previously noted. The headteacher has put in place very good management systems that ensure that every child and member of staff in the school is helped to develop and improve.

69. The school has broad aims that rest on a clear set of appropriate values. Very good policies address these aims and enable the school to build a strong community. Staff, pupils, parents and governors are given a sense of self-worth and pride in their own and the school's achievements. The ethos of the school is very good, and it successfully promotes high attainment and equality of opportunity. The success of the school is shown in the good progress of pupils throughout the school; in their very good attitudes and behaviour and good personal development, and in the very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The vast majority of parents support the school and all it stands for.

70. The school development plan very effectively provides for curriculum development, and also encompasses other aspects of school management, for example a programme for monitoring and evaluating school developments. In addition, it addresses developments beyond the current year. Therefore, staff and governors are very clear about future developments and these are systematically planned for and prioritised. The school effectively monitors the progress of its development plan in order to ensure that initiatives are successfully implemented. Expenditure on resources is evaluated in terms of the standards achieved.

71. The curriculum co-ordinators have ensured that planning and curriculum developments are effective, and have developed a very good sense of teamwork among all staff. The headteacher, effective deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators are very successful in monitoring pupils' attainment in their subject areas and identifying strengths and shortcomings. The current subject co-ordinators have a good deal of experience and expertise in monitoring and supporting colleagues. However, the headteacher and senior management team support them well in their tasks. This contributes significantly to the high quality of teaching and the depth and breadth in the curriculum, and has led to a deeper understanding of the standards being attained throughout the school, and to a recognition of what is working well.

72. Issues relating to special educational needs are managed well by the SENCO, who has half of each week to fulfil her many responsibilities. The regular release time she gives to subject co-ordinators enables her to work with pupils with special educational needs in whole class situations. She teaches pupils both in withdrawal groups and in class; maintains and monitors records conscientiously; oversees early identification; ensures regular communication with staff and responsible governor; communicates with parents; organises review meetings when required, and maintains and updates the Special Needs Register. However, the level of her involvement, for example, she writes all individual education plans, means that systems are not appropriately underpinned to enable them to continue to be successfully implemented in her absence. There are satisfactory issues relating to pupils who speak English as an additional language. These issues are initially managed by class teachers, individual targets are set and support is allocated when necessary.

73. Very good developments have been made in monitoring outcomes of national tests and in monitoring pupils' progress within classes and year groups. This ensures that all groups are sufficiently challenged and make good progress.

74. The governors play a very effective role in leading the school, and all statutory requirements are fulfilled with the exception of the drugs and sex education policy. Whilst fulfilling statutory requirements, the practice differs from the policy statement that sex education is not formally taught. Governors are fully involved in planning for the school's development and maintain good relationships with staff. There is good liaison with some subject co-ordinators, for example in numeracy and literacy, who tell them about their needs and plans. This enables governors to make well-informed decisions when allocating financial resources. They maintain a clear overall view of the school's work, despite many governors finding it difficult to visit the school to monitor developments. For example, through regular meetings and governor links, such as the one for finance, the governors are well informed about developments in all areas, especially in training for literacy and numeracy.

81. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

75. The school is very well staffed with teachers appropriately qualified to teach pupils of Key Stage 2 age. They have relevant expertise to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education. There is a very good match of teachers' subject expertise to their curriculum responsibilities. There is also a very good match of number, qualifications and expertise of support staff to the demands of the curriculum and the needs of pupils. The

school benefits from a range of additional staffing from the Education Action Zone, to support the teaching of mathematics and information technology, and to support pupils' personal development. A number of part-time teachers and support assistants from the local education authority's various services support pupils with special education needs, and a part-time additional literacy assistant is paid from the Standards Fund. There is no additional staffing support for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

76.All staff have current job descriptions and are clear about their responsibilities. Teachers' responsibilities are clearly outlined in the school's Mini Staff Handbook. This document provides detailed information in a very accessible form on various procedures in the school, and on the specific responsibilities of staff for the day-to-day running of the school.

77.Arrangements for the induction and professional development of staff are good. The newly qualified teacher is supported well. She has had opportunities to observe lessons in the school, and, as part of the local education authority's programme of support, she has also observed lessons in other schools. She has herself been observed by the headteacher. Although there are no formal arrangements for appraisal, there is very good provision to identify the individual professional development needs of teachers through the school's programme of monitoring and evaluation. This programme consists of a classroom observation once a year by the headteacher or the deputy head, and a professional development meeting. This is followed by a programme of support. There is a also good provision for identifying and supporting the professional development needs of staff to carry out the school's priorities as part of the school development plan. Support and non-teaching staff have the same entitlement to professional development as teachers, and they contribute considerably to the life of the school.

78.The special educational needs co-ordinator is well supported by a team of support assistants. Between them, they provide good quality support to pupils with special education needs. Class files contain general details about the nature and range of disability, and specific information about pupils with special educational needs in individual classes, such as, copies of individual education plans. This enables all teachers to monitor carefully and support appropriately pupils with special educational needs.

79.Accommodation is very good overall and allows for the effective delivery of the curriculum. At the time of the previous inspection, a small number of weaknesses were identified in accommodation. Some classrooms, particularly the specialist music room, were cramped, and some rooms and corridors were constantly plagued by dampness. These problems no longer arise. Music is now taught in a bigger room; space in classrooms is better organised, and no dampness was observed in any part of the building. Furthermore, since the previous inspection, the school has implemented a number of other improvements. These include: double glazing of windows with blinds in all classrooms facing the sun; refurbishment of cloakrooms; new security arrangements; better facilities in learning bases; carpeting of classrooms, and starting a rolling programme of redecorating the inside of the school. All this represents major improvement since the previous inspection.

80. There are sufficient rooms for the number of classes, and they are of adequate size. There is very good provision of specialist rooms for music, information technology, special educational needs, and the library. Storage facilities for resources are particularly good, and resources are well organised. The school benefits from a hall which is used for assemblies, physical education, concerts and dinners.

81. The school environment is very attractive and stimulating. The caretaker ensures that the building is clean and free of litter. There is a very good range of displays in all classrooms and around the school. They are carefully mounted and well presented.

82. Resources are good in mathematics, information technology, art, design and technology, music and physical education, and adequate in English, science, religious education, history and geography. The range of resources varies from subject to subject, but it is always either satisfactory or good. In music, there is a high quality recording system in the hall, and a good range of instruments from different cultures. In information technology, an electronic white board allows for multi-media presentations. Although resources in religious education are overall satisfactory, there is a need for a set of Bibles and for more artefacts representing religions other than Christianity. In English, the school has purchased a range of resources to support the literacy hour. However, the school recognises the need to buy more dictionaries and thesauruses.

83. The school library has a sufficient number of mainly non-fiction books which reflect the needs of pupils across the age range. There is a satisfactory range of fiction books which are kept either in the classrooms or in the stock room for English. The library is supervised by parents, and is used effectively. There is sufficient information technology equipment and software to support learning across the curriculum. The computer 'whiteboard' is a very impressive resource which is helping to raise pupils' standards in information technology and improve teachers' skills. The school makes good use of the local community and museums as a resource for learning. Resources to support pupils with special educational need are good.

90. The efficiency of the school

84. The efficiency of the school is very good. All financial arrangements are very carefully considered before new budgets are set to support educational developments. The school checks that it is obtaining good value for money before making purchases. There are good communications between the governors' finance sub-committee, the headteacher and the school bursar. Spending is clearly linked to the priorities in the school development plan, which is a very detailed and accessible document. The priorities in the plan, which are arrived at in consultation with the staff, are time specific, costed, and have success criteria. The current plan is for 1998 - 2000, with financial projections made over this period. There is also a long-term plan covering 2000 - 2003.

85. The school makes good use of teaching and support staff, and very good use of resources and accommodation. The experiences and skills of teachers are used to best advantage in their management responsibilities. The school very effectively deploys a range of additional staffing from the Education Action Zone to support the teaching of mathematics, information technology, and pupil support mentoring. A number of part-time teachers and support

assistants from the local education authority's various services effectively support pupils with special education needs. A part-time additional literacy assistant is used very effectively to achieve a positive effect on pupils' progress. Resources and accommodation are used very effectively.

86. Funding provided to support pupils with special educational needs is put to effective use for the benefit of these pupils. The learning support staff are very well deployed and they have a very positive effect on the progress made by pupils. There is no additional funding for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

87. Financial planning is good, and the school exercises careful and effective financial control. The headteacher and the governors manage and monitor the budget very efficiently. The headteacher has delegated powers to spend up to £1,000, and he is responsible for the day-to-day management of the finance. Expenditure outside this limit has to be authorised by the governing body. He has termly meetings with the finance sub-committee to keep the budget under regular review. According to the audit report in 1997, the financial systems and procedures were of a high standard and provided a high level of internal control. The recommendations of the audit report were minor, and they were implemented with immediate effect.

88. The parents' support group raises about £2,000 a year through sponsored events. Decisions about its spending are made in consultation with the staff. The school received a sum of £35,000 from the New Deal. This money has been prudently used to improve the school building.

89. At the time of the previous inspection, explicit criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of major items of school expenditure were not fully formulated. This is no longer the case, and the school now analyses the use of resources and outcomes of spending carefully in relation to educational standards, which have been rising consistently over the last few years.

90. Taking account of the context of the school, the quality of teaching, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils, their attainment and progress, and the average income received, the school provides good value for money.

97. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

97. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

97. English

91. Judgements made at the time of the last inspection described pupils as having sound standards in speaking and listening in relation to age and ability. Overall standards in reading were below the national expectation in relation to age, although there were a few pupils across the key stage who were achieving good standards. Standards in writing varied, and were often determined by the tasks that were set. Raising standards in both reading and writing, and completing the review of the scheme of work for English were identified as key issues.

92. Since the previous inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in raising standards in reading, and in completing the review of the scheme of work. However, progress in raising standards in writing has been unsatisfactory. In this inspection, standards have been judged to be broadly in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, and also in reading at the end of Key Stage 2. However, they are below the national expectation in writing.

93. The 1999 test results at the age of 11 show that the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above is well below the national average. However, it is in line with the average for similar schools. Girls outperformed boys significantly in the tests. This was expected considering the prior attainment of boys and girls. The vast majority of pupils attained or exceeded the levels expected from their individually set targets. Test results continued to rise consistently from 1996 to 1998, when results were close to the national average, and well above the average for similar schools. The reason for the lower test results in 1999 is that, although the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 was greater than that in 1998, there was a considerable drop in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5. However, the pupils expected to achieve the higher level did so. Most pupils achieved and some pupils exceeded the targets set for them. This affected the school's position adversely in comparison with both the national average and the average for similar schools.

94. Taking into account levels of attainment in English at the age of seven, which are below the national average in both reading and writing, pupils' progress in English across Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school. The provision for teachers planning in year group teams, and the emphasis on focused and explicit teaching during the Literacy Hour is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

95. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations. Most pupils speak with confidence and their responses to questions are generally well thought out. In discussion, they listen attentively and ask questions to seek out the ideas and views of others. For example, in an excellent history session, all the Year 6 pupils were divided into groups, and each group interviewed a number of senior citizens individually about their experiences during the Second World War. Most pupils are able to talk about their work clearly, using generally standard vocabulary and grammar.

96. In speaking and listening, pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2. They show

growing confidence as speakers. They have regular opportunities to contribute their ideas to class discussions, particularly during the introductory part of lessons. Teachers are aware of the linguistic needs of pupils, and they use every opportunity to focus on Standard English, and the understanding of new words and expressions. This approach is helping all pupils. Teachers also provide good role models to pupils in speaking and listening throughout the school.

97. Standards in reading are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, most pupils read competently, with the higher and average attaining pupils reading fluently and with expression. They have developed preferences in their personal reading, although many pupils lack confidence in justifying their preferences. They talk in detail about the plot and characters in stories which they have read, or about topics they have studied in other subjects. However, they are less secure in justifying their opinions when they make comparisons between books they have read. Although pupils' dictionary skills are satisfactory, in practice many pupils do not make sufficient use of the dictionary or thesauruses. For research work, some evidence of note taking was seen, but most pupils make insufficient use of skimming and scanning to locate information quickly. Pupils' comprehension skills, particularly at the level of inference and deduction, are less developed.

98. Pupils make good progress in reading as they move through Key Stage 2. At the start of the key stage, although pupils' phonic skills are satisfactory, overall they have insufficient confidence in reading texts with understanding and expression. By Year 4, most pupils begin to read fluently and accurately. They talk about plots of stories and their favourite characters in them with growing confidence. In Years 5 and 6, most pupils read and begin to respond to a range of texts with increasing skill. For example, they study a dramatic adaptation of 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens in Year 5, and a collection of school poems by Allan Ahlberg in Year 6. The teaching of reading during the Literacy Hour is regularly used well as an opportunity for extension of vocabulary, and teaching of grammar, and, to a certain extent, of strategies for extended writing.

99. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is below national expectations. Fewer pupils than expected in Year 6 are able to develop and sustain ideas in an interesting and imaginative way to produce extended pieces of writing. Although pupils write for a variety of purposes, including book reviews, narratives, descriptions, poems, reports and arguments, there are limited opportunities for writing across the curriculum. A number of pupils are able to write complex stories showing a description of a setting and feelings for characters. However, a significant number of pupils are unable to present their thoughts coherently in extended writing. Pupils' control of the basic grammatical structure of sentences is satisfactory, but they use a limited range of connectives. Standards of presentation and handwriting are usually satisfactory, although many pupils frequently produce untidy work. Spelling, punctuation and handwriting, whilst practised regularly, remain inconsistent even with higher attaining pupils.

100. Progress in writing is broadly satisfactory, although the amount of independent and extended writing produced both in English and across the curriculum is overall limited. Grammar, punctuation and syntax are being addressed systematically in the literacy hour but are not yet having an effect on pupils' independent writing. There are more

opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing in Years 5 and 6 than Years 3 and 4. However, where opportunities for extended writing are available, most Years 3 and 4 pupils are often able to generate ideas for writing and choose words for effect. In Year 5, pupils begin to make vocabulary choices in order to make their writing more meaningful and lively. For example, this was evident when they were asked to rewrite a section of the play 'A Christmas Carol' into a dialogue, using more descriptive words in place of 'said', for example, 'wailed, whispered, screamed and growled'. However, there is very little evidence of such descriptive words being used independently. Pupils are regularly taught to use punctuation marks correctly but progress is not as good as it should be because most writing is done in English lessons and pupils have too few chances to develop independent writing in other subjects such as history, geography or religious education. Writing in these subjects is often limited to writing brief responses to questions. This limits the opportunities for all pupils to convey their understanding of what they have learned and to gain skill in writing. Pupils' progress in handwriting and spelling is overall satisfactory.

101. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are supported well within class and through being withdrawn from class for small group lessons. They make good progress because teachers and support staff focus on helping pupils to understand what words mean and to use them. Teachers encourage pupils to extend their speech but there is no 'mother tongue' teaching for pupils who speak English as an additional language. All pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them.

102. Pupils' attitudes to learning English are generally good, and sometimes very good. They are very well behaved and show interest in their work. They listen to their teachers with attention and are able to sustain concentration. Pupils are very courteous and they work well together. Their relationships with each other and their teachers are very good.

103. The quality of teaching is overall good. Of the 12 lessons observed, teaching in three lessons were very good, in seven lessons it was good and in two lessons it was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. There are a number of positive features in teaching. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and they identify objectives clearly in their planning. Lessons are well structured and activities are well managed. Instructions and explanations are always clear, and teachers use questions effectively to assess pupils and move them on. Technical vocabulary is taught with great skill and confidence. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and they manage pupils well. In very good lessons, expectations are particularly high, pace is very brisk throughout the lesson, and during independent work, there is very good use of time, resources and support staff.

104. The English curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements. With the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the English schemes of work which were reviewed following the previous inspection are not currently used. The school now uses the 'Framework for Teaching' which, alongside medium term planning and very good planning arrangements for parallel classes, provides for continuity and progression. The arrangements for assessment are good. Marking is regular, and generally includes good quality comments to support pupils' learning. There is a portfolio of assessed and levelled written work covering the National Curriculum Levels 1 to 5. In addition to the statutory tests at the age of seven and eleven, the school uses the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) group reading tests, and tests prepared by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for pupils in

Years 3, 4 and 5. The assessment information is carefully analysed and used to very good effect to establish targets for the school as well as for pupils. The school has appropriately identified the need to improve standards in writing and this is a current priority of the school development plan. Resources are adequate for English, and are used very effectively. However, the school is aware of the need to stock more dictionaries and thesauruses. The co-ordinator supports the teaching of English effectively. She has given model lessons to staff, and monitored the teaching of English across the school. Consequently, she has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

111. Mathematics

105. National test results for 1999 improved significantly on the results of the previous year. They indicate that pupils are now performing broadly in line with national levels, with more pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 than the previous year. Girls outperform boys significantly but a detailed analysis shows of the test scores show that most pupils of both sexes achieved their individual targets which were based on reliable information from a range of assessments. Pupils are performing well above average in comparison with similar schools, which again illustrates the degree of improvement, as, in 1998, their performance was broadly in line with schools from similar backgrounds. The school has attributed this improvement to the increasingly high profile now given to mathematics. Developments include: the very good recent support provided through the Education Action Zone; the introduction of setting in Year 6, and the emphasis given to staff training. The increased emphasis on analysis and evaluation of test results in all years, and the individual target setting and tracking of pupils resulting from this, are also helping to raise standards. Evidence from the inspection also indicates that pupils are performing close to national levels, with good levels of challenge provided in all years, especially for the lower and average attaining pupils.

106. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most areas of mathematics throughout Key Stage 2. However, in some lessons the higher attaining pupils make sound rather than good progress across the key stage. This is because work is occasionally set at the appropriate level for most pupils in the class and within the 'set' groups, higher attaining pupils need more demanding work.

107. In work on number, and in their developing ability to use and apply mathematics with confidence and accuracy, Year 3 pupils solve simple money problems, using appropriate coins. They understand halves and quarters, and alter analogue clock times to the equivalent digital times. Year 4 pupils start to use different approaches when adding numbers; confidently convert pounds to pence, and begin to consider simple rules when interpreting number problems. Year 5 pupils multiply numbers by 10 and 100 accurately; begin to employ mathematical diagrams when interpreting number patterns, and use percentages and fractions in number problems. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand place value to 1000; use a variety of mental and written computations when solving number problems, and use recognition of approximate proportions by using fractions and percentages to describe them.

108. In work on shape, space and measures and handling data, Year 3 pupils solve a simple problem by collecting, sorting and organising information using a Carroll diagram. They begin

to use everyday standard units of length, and classify three dimensional shapes according to their properties. Year 4 pupils learn to interpret bar charts and transport timetables, extracting relevant information. The higher attaining pupils begin to group data in class intervals. Year 5 pupils investigate and classify the properties of rectangles; use appropriate standard units when measuring different objects; find the perimeters and areas of different two dimensional shapes, and communicate a range of collected data in pictograms. By the end of Year 6, pupils identify all lines of symmetry in two dimensional shapes; construct and interpret simple line graphs; identify, draw and measure accurately obtuse, acute and right angles, and identify congruent shapes and orders of rotational symmetry.

109. Teaching is good overall across the key stage in mathematics, with examples of good teaching observed in all years and no lessons judged unsatisfactory. Two-thirds of all lessons seen in Years 5 and 6 were judged good, and one Year 3 lesson was judged very good. All teachers have good subject knowledge and levels of confidence to enable pupils to make effective progress. Their lesson objectives are precise and are shared and evaluated with pupils. This helps to ensure that pupils are fully aware of the focus of each lesson to aid learning, and effectively more accurately enables teachers to build on what has gone before. Teachers have familiarised themselves well with the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been successfully and consistently planned and introduced throughout the school to ensure that pupils within each year group have very similar mathematical experiences. Particular features of good or better teaching include: secure relationships, which value pupils' contributions; high quality questions, which develop understanding, and effective methods, organisation and pace, which ensure that no time is wasted. The grouping of pupils by ability in Year 6 has been beneficial in helping to ensure that work is more closely matched to pupils' needs. Weaker features include insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils; unnecessary repetition for some pupils of clearly understood number work, and insufficient teaching of information technology in mathematics throughout the school.

110. Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good throughout the school. Most pupils communicate their developing mental processes, and ask and answer questions confidently, demonstrating both enthusiasm and enjoyment for the subject. They work well on set tasks, showing good concentration. They listen carefully to instructions and important information to ensure that they know what is required of them.

111. Mathematics is well led, with clear plans for its continued development. All components of the subject are well represented in all years. Displays place significant emphasis on the acquisition of mathematical vocabulary; show consistency across each year group, and help to motivate, interest, involve and instruct pupils. There is a variety of systems for assessing attainment in the subject, and assessment is used well to inform future planning, as through the use of the 'key objectives' record throughout the school. Links with other subjects, as were, for example, such as observed in science and geography, are of good quality and continuing to develop pupils numeracy skills and help to raise standards. Resources are well organised, tidily stored, have been recently audited, and are kept in locations known to all. They are sufficient to deliver the requirements of the curriculum. The extra resources and finance provided through the Education Action Zone have been used effectively to meet the school's needs and to help raise standards.

118. Science

112. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds, 81 per cent of pupils reached the level expected for their age. This was slightly above the national average. Thirty per cent of pupils achieved the higher level, which was also above the national average. Compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well above average. The percentage of pupils exceeding the expected level was average. Results of the 1999 tests show a significant improvement on 1998. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils' attainment is average at the end of Key Stage 2. This judgement represents an improvement in standards since the previous inspection judged standards to be below average. The difference between last year's national tests and inspection findings is due to the difference in cohorts. Many more pupils than last year are on the register of special educational needs.

113. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have secure scientific investigation skills. They predict what will happen; observe closely; use a range of measuring instruments such as electronic scales, and record their findings in words, tables and graphs. Pupils understand what is meant by the term 'fair test', and they identify ways by which tests can be made fair. For example, when investigating sound produced by blowing over bottles of water, they use bottles of the same size and only vary the volume of water. Pupils have a good understanding of light and use scientific vocabulary well. For example, they are clear about the difference between transparent, translucent and opaque. They know how and why shadows are formed and have a secure understanding of reflection. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of life and living processes. They understand photosynthesis and of how plants make their food, and know how the flowers, fruits and seeds of a tree are transported to begin a new cycle of life. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties are satisfactory and they often apply their knowledge in other aspects of science. For example, they know that water is found in living things, and test this by using electronic scales to measure the differences in weight as water evaporates from a leaf over time.

114. The significant majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties. When investigating materials, they predict whether they are waterproof and test them for absorbency. They make good progress in demonstrating their knowledge of physical processes. For example, they know about light sources and explain that sounds are heard when vibrations reach the ear. Pupils further develop their scientific knowledge in Year 4. Through their topic on water, pupils learn that without water we would die. They have good knowledge of water's properties; for example, they know the three states of matter, and that water freezes at zero degrees centigrade and boils at 100 degrees. Pupils show a good sense of citizenship as they consider the effects of pollution and why everyone should care for the environment. Year 5 pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of electricity. They know that an electrolyte conducts electricity and can explain the difference between static and current electricity. In their growing knowledge and understanding of the human body, they name and locate major internal organs of humans and identify their purpose. For example, they know that the heart is a muscle which pumps blood containing oxygen around the body, and they use advanced scientific vocabulary such as 'plasma, veins and arteries'.

115. Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted well through the science curriculum. There is much

use of tables and graphs for pupils to record their findings, and there are good opportunities for pupils to read measuring instruments and carry out calculations. For example, pupils in Year 4 plot graphs showing the use of water, and pupils in Year 6 calculate angles of reflection and draw tree diagrams to classify leaves. Many science lessons are used to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, teachers plan activities such as the development of a wide scientific vocabulary, cloze procedure exercises and word searches, but especially the report writing of experiments.

116. Pupils' attitudes to science lessons are good. They tackle investigations and experiments with enthusiasm and they display a keen interest in developing their scientific knowledge, joining in question and answer sessions sensibly. When using simple scientific equipment, they handle it with care and respect. Pupils are attentive in lessons, listening well to their teachers, following instructions willingly, and concentrating hard on their tasks. They work well together in pairs and small groups, showing good levels of respect as they share equipment and ideas. Behaviour is very good.

117. The quality of science teaching is good. Eight of the nine lessons seen were good and one was very good. Lessons are well planned. Teachers clearly identify what scientific knowledge and understanding pupils are expected to develop, and pupils are informed of this at the start of the lesson and are consequently focused on the task in hand. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to give clear explanations and instructions and they provide very good opportunities for all pupils to be involved. Time is used very well and pupils are given sufficient time to experiment and think. They are unrushed yet actively encouraged to try various ways to prove their hypothesis and test their predictions. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils receive high levels of support. All teachers ask probing questions which assess pupils' knowledge and understanding, and which challenge them to think carefully about their work; for example when teachers in Year 4 discuss and show how water is filtered and cleaned. Particularly good marking has a positive impact on pupils' progress. For example, one teacher wrote 'Your diagrams are very clear and help you to understand'. Such comments encourage pupils and show that their efforts are valued whilst others also set targets for further progress.

118. The science curriculum is broad and balanced. It is heavily influenced by the Lancashire Scheme of Work and covers all areas of the National Curriculum. Planning provides a clear structure which ensures that pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils and both formal and informal assessment procedures are good. Ongoing records of individual pupils' progress are good, and the system of recording pupils' scientific knowledge, skills and understanding ensures that there is a consistent approach throughout the school. The deputy headteacher carries out a very detailed analysis of test results. This information is used effectively to assess curriculum provision. The co-ordinator and senior management team also monitor standards by ensuring there is a clear overview of planning for science throughout the school. They also monitor the delivery of lessons to identify strengths and weaknesses in delivery of the curriculum. Where weaknesses are identified, appropriate changes are made. For example, when it was considered that experimental and investigative work was under-represented, the school increased the number of practical sessions. Currently it ensures that a minimum of six experiments are completed

annually. The science curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils reflect on what they see, and consider wider environmental issues; and the level of collaboration when they carry out investigations is good. Awe and wonder were evident when pupils in Year 5 suddenly realised their home-made burglar alarm really worked! The leadership and management of science are good.

125. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

125. Information technology

119. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national expectation overall but is above average in the aspect of communicating information. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. The significant developments in the provision for information technology since the previous inspection include: a broader curriculum, an improved range of computer equipment and software, greater staff confidence and knowledge, and higher standards of attainment. A major and positive influence on pupils' attainment has resulted from the staffing and additional resources gained through the school's involvement in the Educational Action Zone. These extra resources have effectively by the information technology co-ordinator.

120. Pupils in Year 3 make very good progress as they develop basic keyboard skills and use a word processing package. They demonstrate effective mouse control and keyboard skills as they enter text, change its position on the page and alter its size and style. They save and print their work with increasing independence. Year 4 pupils continue the very good progress and use a program which enables them to combine text, graphics and sound. In mathematics and science, they use databases effectively, recognising that collecting and storing information in an organised way helps them to answer questions. For example, they produce a variety of graphs and charts on their topic about 'ourselves'. Pupils' information technology skills are developed further in Year 5 when pupils search for information about St Lucia. They write letters to pen-pals and frame questions carefully to retrieve specific information. Not only do pupils' develop their information technology skills, but they also apply them to develop their geographical, literate and cultural understandings. Year 6 pupils continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding as they confidently utilise their skills to create a presentation, with text, sound and photographs, about the Second World War. Pupils of all ages experiment with different layouts as they consider the audience and purpose of the presentation. For example, pupils in Year 3 consider their class rules and make headlines stand out by using bold, italic, different colours and underlining functions. In Years 5 and 6 pupils access pictures from a clipart collection and import them into their documents. During the inspection the pupils were concentrating on the aspect of handling and communicating information. However, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of teachers planning support the judgement that pupils have satisfactory skills in control and modelling.

121. Pupils use their skills effectively to support their learning in other subjects. For example, they produce bar, line and pie graphs to support work in mathematics and science, and use CD-ROM to access information in music, history and geography. A variety of computers and programs support literacy work. Although word processing skills are secure overall, there are missed opportunities for pupils' extended writing, redrafting and editing processes. A good example of pupils' research skills was observed in Year 6 work on Shakespeare.

122. Pupils' response in information technology lessons is very good. They are very well behaved and listen carefully to their teachers. Through their high levels of concentration and perseverance, pupils display a determination to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. This was particularly evident in classes in Year 6 as pupils were determined to improve their presentations for a forthcoming visit by senior citizens, and showed great delight as they managed to instruct the computer to make a square flash on and off on a screen. Pupils appreciate the support they are given and they are sufficiently confident to ask questions when unsure about the task. Pupils show respect for the information technology resources, treating all equipment, including computers, with great care and enthusiasm.

123. The quality of teaching is good overall, and occasionally very good when the teacher has very good subject knowledge. All teachers have developed their own knowledge skills and understanding considerably over the past year and they are generally much more confident in their own knowledge than they were previously. Teachers' subject knowledge is mainly secure in the areas covered by their own classes and it is constantly developing. Lessons are very well planned, with a clear identification of what skills pupils are expected to learn. Lessons are well organised with pupils being given good opportunities to work individually on computers. Teachers and pupils benefit greatly from the skills, enthusiasm and commitment of the teacher employed by the Education Action Zone. His contribution has had a significant impact on the information technology curriculum, on staff development and on pupils' standards of attainment.

124. The information technology curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is appropriate curriculum development to ensure that the curriculum is constantly improved. Teachers monitor pupils' skill development during lessons and samples of pupils' work on individual disks are kept as a record of attainment and progress. Resources are satisfactory overall, although the whiteboard and the new computer equipment provided by the Educational Action Zone initiative are of high quality. The school has given much thought to developing the resources for information technology, and the decision to create a suite of modern computers to allow more direct teaching of skills has met with significant success. Overall, the combination of a challenging and interesting curriculum, high quality direct teaching and the well-equipped computer suite promotes very positive attitudes and very good progress.

131. Religious education

125. Since the last inspection the school has made progress in developing a scheme of work in line with the agreed local syllabus, although all elements of this are yet to be completed in detail.

126. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is in line with the levels expected for 11 year olds in the locally Agreed Syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. A strong feature throughout all classes is the empathy which pupils show towards other people's feelings. Consideration for others underpins all work carried out in religious education lessons. In Year 3, pupils consider the people in their own lives who are good leaders, and the characteristics of good and bad characters. They explore their feelings and thoughts by considering the importance of their friends and families, many pupils focusing on grandparents or other people in their families. In Year 5, through a study of sacred books and literature, they consider their own beliefs and those of others. Through sharing experiences, they consider the beliefs of Islam and those of Christianity. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a knowledge and some understanding the beliefs of the major religions of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism. They identify common values and consider the contributions that well known leaders have made. At the time of the inspection, all pupils were studying different aspects of the Christmas Story and recognising Christmas as a major celebration in the Christian church. Younger pupils acted out the events of the story and thought about the characters involved, while older pupils considered Advent as preparation for Christmas, linking this to Ramadan as a preparation for the Islamic festival of Eid.

127. Pupils become increasingly confident about exploring and expressing their own feelings and respecting the views of others. Pupils develop their skills in speaking and listening and to a lesser extent writing, through their work in this subject. However, some teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' writing about their understanding and developing views and the recording of what pupils have learned is restricted by worksheets.

128. Pupils' response to religious education is good. The youngest pupils listen carefully and are willing to contribute their ideas. Older enjoy discussion and contribute ideas and opinions readily. In a Year 6 class, pupils suggested a period of quiet reflection after lighting the Advent candles because Ramadan is a period of preparation and meditation. They then went on to discuss the qualities that Mary, as mother of Jesus, would possess.

129. Overall the teaching of religious education is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they are sensitive towards the teaching of this subject. They set a tone that encourages thought and reflection, and create an atmosphere where pupils feel confident that their feelings will be respected and their contributions valued. Teachers are supported by a scheme of work which is detailed and easy to follow. However, not all aspects of this scheme are yet complete. Joint planning and the sharing of resources further support teachers. In one of the best lessons, very good questions provoked opinions about the character of Mary, all contributions being accepted and only facts recorded on the board. Pupils then considered the qualities that such a person would need to possess; the responsibilities that she would have, and the rewards that she might receive. The whole task was set imaginatively in the context of a memo from God to Angel Gabriel.

130.The school meets the statutory requirements for the teaching of religious education. It has adopted the locally Agreed Syllabus for Lancashire and is effectively developing a scheme of work. A shortage of Bibles and artefacts for some religions is impeding pupils' progress in some areas. Religious education lessons have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and support the aims of the school.

137. Art

131.All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and achieve standards that are appropriate for 11 year olds. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made in the assessment of art. Pupils regularly assess their own progress and teachers assess pupils' progress in relation to expectations for the age group.

132.In Year 3, pupils explore colour shades through mixing colours with white. They create backgrounds using shades of a single colour and then use this to create a landscape by adding simple silhouettes of trees. After studying the work of Mondrian, they use primary colours, and horizontal and vertical lines to create abstract studies in a similar style. In Year 6, pupils use a combination of techniques to create pictures of air raids. They choose and mix tones to create night skies and develop more advanced cutting skills to create skylines of cities. Finally pastels are added to represent explosions. In Year 4, collage skills are effective in making Greek masks to support the understanding of Greek life and culture. After watching a video showing Greek pottery, pupils were inspired to design and make their own clay pots, using both 'thumb' and 'coil' techniques. Pots were then decorated using typical designs from the period. In Year 5, pupils study the designs and patterns of William Morris before making their own clay tiles with designs in a similar style. Tiles are then attractively painted using watercolour paints and glue effectively to create a glazed effect. During an outside visit to a Victorian house, pupils learnt the Victorian craft of felt making. Pupils through the school study the work of famous artists. They gain knowledge of their lives and work and begin to form opinions about the styles and subjects, which they use. In the one lesson observed, Year 6 pupils studied pictures of interiors painted in the period from 1930 to 1980. They confidently gave their preferences about what they liked and disliked and gave reasons for their choices. For example some pupils did not like paintings that were cluttered, while others liked the colours used. Some pupils found the subject matter boring, while other pupils selected sections of a picture that appealed. Year 4 pupils have the opportunity to develop their drawing skills through the art club. After looking at still life paintings by famous artists, they practise drawing skills using different shading techniques and working in both pencil and pastel.

133.Pupil's response to art is good. They are keen to talk about their work and answer questions. It is a subject that they enjoy and are keen to talk about. The art club is always full and a waiting list is kept so that as many pupils as possible have the opportunity to join.

134.Only one lesson was seen; therefore there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on teaching. Teachers have a sound art policy and a new scheme of work is in the early stages of development. The new scheme ensures that skills are developed systematically through school, and that the work of famous artists is used effectively to support the learning of these

skills. The new co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject and sees the need to extend work in the three dimensional field.

141. Design and technology

135.All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and, by the age of 11, their level of knowledge, skills and understanding is appropriate for their age. Standards that were identified at the last inspection have been maintained.

136.Year 3 pupils make good progress in developing design and make skills. Prior to designing their own photograph frames, they study and evaluate a selection of commercially made frames. They consider their preference for design and decoration and its suitability for the person that might receive it. Before drawing their own plans, they examine methods of construction. Their designs show methods of joining and strengthening. At the construction stage, pupils use scissors and glue accurately, ensuring that a gap is left to insert a photograph. In the final stages, pupils modify designs if their frames will not stand up. In one lesson, a pupil explained that the support on his frame needed to be stronger than that of his friend because the decoration that he had used was heavier. They understand the terms, 'portrait' and 'landscape', and fix their supports accordingly. Finished frames are evaluated against their original design and any modifications and improvements recorded. In Year 5, pupils design slippers in the form of either mules or full slippers. They understand the processes involved in planning and design, pattern making, manufacturing and decorating. Their design and decoration are matched to the materials available, and pupils evaluate their work as it progresses, using a variety of techniques and showing an increasing attention to detail. By Year 6, pupils design air raid shelters and solve problems concerning the strength of structures and how to build a construction that is adequately stable, and strong and camouflaged.

137.Pupils enjoy their design and technology lessons and talk enthusiastically about their work. They work hard and are proud of their achievements and recognise the achievements of others. Their work is well focused and they handle a range of tools and materials safely. They co-operate well, sharing materials and tools. Behaviour is good and conversation is work related.

138.Teaching is good. Teachers' joint planning is effective and their subject knowledge is good. Resources are well prepared. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and praise is liberally given. Questioning poses problems and challenges pupils' thinking. For example, in a lesson where pupils were fixing supports on to their photograph frame, the teacher asked, ' If your frame doesn't stand up, what will you do?' The importance of ongoing evaluation is stressed. Questions such as, 'Are you pleased with it? Do you want to make any changes? Do you think the person you are giving it to will like it?' All make positives contributions to pupils' progress and to their self-esteem. Very good relationships promote good behaviour.

139.The subject is lead by an enthusiastic co-ordinator and supports pupils' social development well. In Year 6, the making of air raid shelters supports work in history on life during the Second World War.

146. **Geography**

140. Progress in geography is satisfactory for most pupils, including those with special educational needs, as they move through the school. The subject is soundly represented within the school's broad curriculum. The geographical themes of weather and rivers are studied appropriately, and work about the Caribbean island of St. Lucia, completed by Year 5 pupils, has a clear geographical focus. However, there is insufficient use of the locality to develop geographical skills, and little work about a contrasting locality within the United Kingdom.

141. The development of mapping skills is appropriately represented, although they are not always taught in logical sequence. For example, Year 4 study climatic zones of the world at too early a stage for them to fully benefit from their learning. Year 3 pupils draw plans of different rooms; learn to use a simple grid reference and key, and briefly consider ways in which their local environment may be improved. Year 4 pupils are introduced to work on scale; study plans of town centres, and become familiar with weather symbols, such as those of the Beaufort wind scale. Year 5 pupils study street maps of Castries and develop understanding of the physical geography of St. Lucia from maps. For example, they learn that the towering Pitons soar majestically over a dramatic tropical landscape. Year 6 pupils use four figure grid references to locate features on maps of the locality; complete plans of the classroom to scale, and consider distances from Longshaw School to other nearby locations. They study world maps to find out about the world's longest rivers, and to acquire understanding of drainage basins, and knowledge of associated vocabulary, such as, meander, tributary, and erosion.

142. Teaching is sound across the key stage, and teachers use displays appropriately to extend learning. Strengths in teaching include: secure subject knowledge, good organisation, precise questioning to develop geographical understanding, and good choice of resources, which contribute to learning. Weaknesses in otherwise sound lessons include slightly overlong introductions for maximum impact and missed opportunities to ask geographical questions.

143. Pupils' response in geography lessons is satisfactory. Most pupils listen carefully; respond positively to work set when appropriately challenged; ask and answer questions enthusiastically, and are interested in improving their geographical understanding.

144. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who has recently revised the scheme of work. Links with other subjects, such as information technology, English and mathematics, are evident, but still developing. However, there is still an over-reliance on worksheets in some years to teach geographical and literacy skills, a weakness evident during the last inspection of the school. Approaches to assessment in geography lack consistency.

151. **History**

145. Pupils make good progress in history across the school. In Year 3, most pupils demonstrate good factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of the past they have studied. For example, they are able to talk with confidence about Roman buildings in a town, and why Romans built straight roads. They begin to understand why people acted in the way

they did, and can identify some of the ways in which the past is represented. In Year 4, most pupils show growing understanding of chronology. They can recall some of the main events from their study unit on Ancient Greece, for example when they talk about some of the differences and similarities between schools then and now.

146. By Year 5, most pupils know that the past can be divided into periods of time, such as Roman, Tudor and Victorian, and they begin to use historical terms, for example AD, BC, century and decade. Pupils identify with confidence some of the ways in which the past is represented. In their study of Victorian Britain, pupils are able to describe inventions from that period and compare them to those used today for the same purpose. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils can discuss in great detail the study units they have covered, for example the Romans, Tudors and Victorians. The higher and average attainers demonstrate factual knowledge and understanding of main events in these study units, making appropriate use of dates and historical terms. They can talk about similarities and differences between different periods and give reasons for historical changes. Pupils offer views on the effects of these changes on the lives of people, for example as they talk about the Second World War. They use a range of relevant sources, including the local community. During the inspection week, there was an excellent example of the school using the local community as a resource for learning about Britain since 1930. This gave the pupils a very good opportunity to formulate and ask historical questions, and to learn about the past from different points of view. Across the school, pupils are generally better at communicating their understanding of the past orally than in well-structured writing. Very often pupils are given worksheets that help to develop their knowledge and understanding but fail to develop and extend their writing skills. For example, some worksheets require only one word answers and this restricts pupils' application of punctuation skills.

147. Pupils are very well motivated and show a keen interest in history. They are very courteous and well behaved. Their relationships with each other and their teachers are very good. They listen and respond to their teachers' questions well, and are able to sustain concentration for long periods of time.

148. The quality of teaching is nearly always very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge of history, and their lessons are always well planned. Their instructions and explanations are very clear, and they make good use of questions to elicit responses from pupils and build on them. Expectations are high, and the pace of work in lessons is very good. Pupils are very well managed, and time and resources, including support staff, are well used.

149. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and the arrangements for assessment are sound. There is a good history policy and scheme of work. Very good arrangements for planning enables teachers to collaborate well and provides for continuity and progression. The school is sufficiently resourced to deliver the Programmes of Study in history. It also makes good use of the local community and museums. However, the school recognises that there is a need for more artefacts. There are high quality displays in the classrooms and around the school which, alongside timelines, enhance the history curriculum. The co-ordinator for history has a clear understanding of her role, and supports the teaching of history effectively.

156. Music

150. On the evidence from this inspection, the standards in music achieved by most pupils at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The evidence gained by the observation of two lessons and an instrumental ensemble practice, school hymn practice and attendance at the Christmas Concert, indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons in performing, composing, listening and appraising.

151. Pupils' progress over time is good. Pupils develop their performing skills and the skills of musical composition. Year 5 pupils make very good progress as the result of very good teaching. In listening to a variety of recordings of Christmas music, pupils accurately identified the contrasts in tone, pitch and volume and the range of sounds used by the composers for a variety of effects. Pupils showed maturity and some depth of feeling as they described changes in mood and character, and explained how the music made them feel and why they preferred one type to another. Pupils in Year 6 make good progress in their knowledge of instruments and how they can be played for effect. They correctly identified a number of instruments used to play Calypso rhythms and made valiant attempts to count the number of beats and keep a steady beat when playing the instruments. Pupils throughout the key stage sing well-known songs with enthusiasm. They also experience music of other times and cultures. For example, during their morning assembly pupils listen to a selection of music by the 'composer of the month', and have shared the favourite music of their grandparents as well as profiling Michael Jackson.

152. Extra curricular provision in music for all pupils, especially the higher attainers, is good, and pupils make good progress in instrumental playing and singing. For example, higher attainers make good progress in developing their knowledge of conventional musical notation. The musical vocabulary of the higher attaining pupils exceeds that normally expected of 11-year-olds.

153. A positive feature of the school is the good range of extra-curricular musical opportunities made available. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to sing in a choir and play instruments. Eight pupils have violin lessons, twelve play brass instruments, seven pupils play flute or clarinet, and four play keyboard. A group of these pupils form an ensemble and rehearse at lunchtime.

154. Pupils respond well to their music lessons. They have a good time in their lessons and most pupils sing with enjoyment and use the resources well. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of their teachers and make the most of the opportunities to perform and use their instruments. Most pupils are very confident in music and many are willing to demonstrate their talents in solos.

155. The quality of teaching is good overall. Occasionally it is very good. Although some class teachers have limited subject knowledge and confidence, they do have both a helpful scheme of work and a specialist teacher to support them. The scheme enables teachers to plan a suitable range of activities and ensures that the music work is progressively more demanding as pupils move through school. The specialist teacher also keeps very good

records of pupils' progress. Common and positive characteristics of the lessons seen include: a clear purpose, good use of pupils to demonstrate their talents, and the good use of praise to enhance pupils' self-esteem. The good relationships promote a joy in music which pupils experience every day in school. Teaching by the specialist music teacher is very good. Her expert knowledge enables pupils to build very well on their previous learning and improve their performance, knowledge and understanding.

156. Music plays a positive and significant part in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In addition to the opportunities for pupils to perform in many concerts and musical productions (sometimes with other schools), musicians, such as an African percussionist, also visit the school to entertain and inform. Pupils share their music with the community, for example, the Year 6 pupils sang 'old favourites' such as 'Roll out the Barrel' for a group of senior citizens, and they joined around 3000 other pupils to sing at Blackburn Rovers Football Club. Resources for class music are satisfactory in range, organised efficiently and used well. Information technology is used well to support the composition element of music.

163. Physical education

157. Physical education is one of the strengths of the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in the development of games' skills, dance and gymnastics as they move through Key Stage 2. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, high quality teaching places considerable emphasis on the acquisition of important skills. Secondly, the organisation, as in the involvement of the head teacher in games to keep groups as small as possible, effectively enables pupils to receive good support. Thirdly, the broad and balanced curriculum places appropriate emphasis on all the required areas. Finally, the generous time allowance for physical education ensures that the subject has a suitably high profile. Evidence from lessons indicates that attainment will be above national levels by the end of Key Stage 2, although no lessons were seen in Year 6 during the period of inspection.

158. Throughout the key stage, and in all classes, there is emphasis on: physical activity, the development of positive attitudes, the promotion of safe working practices, and the effects of exercise. Considerable emphasis is given to the importance of learning from others in all years, with pupils regularly evaluating their own and others' performance, and applying this learning to improve their own variety, quality and accuracy. For example, Year 3 pupils use large apparatus to explore and develop different ways of travelling, using different parts of the body, making simple judgements and discussing what they and others have done. Year 4 pupils, through developing imaginative responses and routines to a range of modern dance stimuli, increasingly learn to control and compose movements by varying level, direction, speed, shape, size and continuity. Year 5 pupils learn the principles and common skills of attack and defence games, such as, netball and football, and striking games, such as, hockey, to improve skills of sending, striking and receiving, and travelling with a ball.

159. Attitudes to learning are very good. Almost all pupils enjoy all areas of physical education, behave sensibly, co-operate well, and handle resources safely and carefully. They are prepared to persevere to improve their techniques and performance, and co-operate and collaborate very well with others. They are keen to help with equipment, listen attentively to instructions, which are closely followed, and engage in mature discussions when evaluating each other's performances.

160. Teaching is very good throughout the key stage, with lessons ranging from good to excellent. All lessons include brisk pace, contain precise learning targets, and provide clear instructions and high levels of challenge. They demonstrate: effective organisation, strong relationships, secure knowledge of National Curriculum requirements, and a good use of resources. They emphasise very well the development of essential skills and the sharing of good practice to improve performance. Additional features of dance lessons judged excellent include a buzz of excitement from, and the total involvement of, pupils and the great enthusiasm of staff, which is clearly transferred to pupils and has a significant impact on progress.

161. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and able teacher who has clear plans to build on the successes already achieved. The school has strong sporting traditions, with consistently good results, for example, in football matches against other schools. The good range of clubs, including athletics and cross-country, contributes to this. Arrangements for swimming are good, and ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements. Most pupils can swim twenty-five metres by the time they leave the school.

168. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

168. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

162. The inspection was carried out by a team of five inspectors, four for four days each and the lay inspector for three days. One day was spent in school on a preliminary visit and a meeting was held with parents. Eight parents attended the inspection meeting.

163. Approximately 56 hours were spent directly observing 66 lessons or part lessons. Inspectors spent a further 43 hours collecting other evidence. Many children were heard to read, and their work was scrutinised. Much time was taken in speaking to pupils about their work, knowledge and understanding. Inspectors attended assemblies and acts of worship. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils were monitored in class, at play, before and after school, and at lunch-times. Teachers' planning and records were carefully examined and meetings were held with all teaching staff and with some non-teaching staff in the school. Discussions were held with a selection of governors. One inspector visited and discussed transfer arrangements with the feeder infant school. School policies and documents were examined, as were minutes of governors' meetings and staff meetings. The views of parents expressed in the meeting, at school, and in the 175 returned questionnaires were also taken into account.

164.DATA AND INDICATORS

171. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	326	10	102	153

171. Teachers and classes

171. Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

171. Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	132

Average class size:	27
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171. Financial data

Financial year:	1998-1999
	£
Total Income	502895.00
Total Expenditure	496129.00
Expenditure per pupil	1426.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	20661.00
Balance carried forward to next year	27427.00

171. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	326
Number of questionnaires returned:	175

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	46	53	1	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	50	47	2	1	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	28	53	10	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	31	63	5	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	36	58	2	2	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	35	63	1	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	39	47	12	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	37	54	3	5	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	41	53	5	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	41	51	8	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	62	35	1	1	1

171. Other issues raised by parents

A number of parents have chosen to send their children to Longshaw rather than other local schools and some have moved their children from other schools to Longshaw; they are confident that the move was good for their children.

Parents believe that since the last inspection the school has become 'more welcoming', attainment levels have improved and the introduction of homework as the children move through the school is an improvement.