

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**St Paul's Roman Catholic Primary School  
Blackburn**

**LEA area: Blackburn**

**Unique Reference Number: 119649**

**Inspection Number: 188061**

**Headteacher: Mrs R M Morris**

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**Reporting inspector: Mr A V Calderbank  
7979**

**Dates of inspection: 20 - 24 September 1999**

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

Type of control: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Preston Old Road  
Feniscowles  
Blackburn  
BB2 5HZ

Telephone number: 01254 201495

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of Chair of Governors: Mr Matthew Noblett

Date of previous inspection: March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
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Mrs S Scull, Lay Inspector	Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs J Watkins	English Geography	Curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr M Bowers	Music Mathematics Design and technology Information technology Art	Teaching Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Leadership and management

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is high by the age of 11.
- The quality of teaching is good. Eighty per cent of lessons are good or better.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher who sets high standards of care and support for pupils and adults.
- All teachers display a high level of commitment, very good discipline and management skills.
- Planning is thorough and gives a clear structure to pupils' learning.
- Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are very effective.
- Levels of attendance are very good and pupils arrive on time.
- Provision for pupils' health, safety and personal development and for their spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Two elements of information technology, control and data handling, are underdeveloped.

**This is a very good school with many strengths. Measures to address the weaknesses in information technology will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues in the 1996 inspection report. Standards have risen significantly in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. More pupils are achieving the level expected for their age or a higher level. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. Newly appointed teachers to the school follow an induction period and all members of staff have benefited from the good professional development which has been made available. Provision in information technology has improved and the subject is now meeting National Curriculum requirements. However, standards in the control and data handling strands are below national expectations and these aspects remain a concern. The co-ordinator has produced an action plan to address these issues. The management system has been reviewed. There is now in place an effective senior management team and all members of staff have clearly defined job descriptions. Subject co-ordinators are provided with opportunities to monitor their curriculum areas and are also involved in the school's development planning by identifying how things can be improved. Communications within the school are good. This is one of the reasons for the school being accredited as an Investor in People.

A new discipline policy has been successfully introduced and the pupils' behaviour observed during the week of the inspection was very good throughout the school at all times. A thorough review of staffing in relation to special educational needs has been undertaken. The governing body has employed extra non-teaching assistants, and provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good. Very good assessment procedures have been developed in English, mathematics and science. Great strides have been made in ensuring that pupils are aware of their own progress and achievement. Pupils are involved in setting their own individual targets which are regularly reviewed by their teachers.

The commitment of all staff to raising standards places the school in a good position to continue to develop.

**Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

This shows, for example, that standards achieved in English in 1998 were well above the national average and average in relation to similar schools. The results in mathematics were also well above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. In science pupils' achievements were in line with the national average but were below those found in similar schools.

The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds show a significant improvement in all three subjects with nearly all pupils achieving Level 4 and just over half Level 5. These high standards are due mainly to better planning which identifies clear objectives and the school's involvement in an improvement programme which focuses particularly on the targeting of progress for individuals and groups. In addition, good professional development has increased staff confidence in the teaching of science especially in experimental and investigative work.

Inspection evidence shows that teacher expectations remain high and that standards have been maintained. However, the proportion of pupils on track to reach the expected standard is not as great because there is a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the current small Year 6. Standards of attainment in information technology are in line with national expectations, except in the elements of control and data handling, where standards are below expectations. Standards are above expectations in history and aspects of physical education and art. Pupils attain appropriate standards for their abilities in all other subjects. Religious education was inspected separately.

At Key Stage 1 standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. For example, in the 1999 national tests in mathematics all pupils achieved in line with the national expectation and one in four reached a high standard for their age.

Children start school with a wide range of previous experiences. They make good progress in the reception class and the majority are on line to exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in most areas of their learning.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good	Good
Information technology	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Religious education	n/a	n/a	n/a
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

All the teaching seen was at least satisfactory. Eight out of every ten lessons were good or better and two out of five were very good or excellent. This is a high proportion of good quality teaching. The literacy and numeracy hours are taught well. The standard of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.

*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 respond well to the school's policy at all times. They are courteous and willing to help others. This aspect is a strength of the school.
Attendance	Very good; very high in comparison with other schools. Pupils arrive at school on time.
Ethos*	Very good; the school provides a caring and supportive environment for pupils to learn in. Each individual is valued and encouraged to succeed. Relationships are very good. There is a strong commitment to the raising of standards and to improve the quality of education. Parents respond very well to the opportunities to be involved in their children's education.
Leadership and management	The school is very well managed. It benefits from the highly effective leadership of the headteacher who has a very good sense of purpose with a clear direction for development shared with governors and staff. Curriculum co-ordinators carry out their duties well.
Curriculum	Broad, balanced and relevant. Very thorough planning gives a clear structure to the work. Assessment procedures are very comprehensive and effective in informing pupils' individual targets. The range of activities provided after-school is good.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision. Pupils experiencing difficulties are identified at an early stage. They receive very good support from outside agencies and non-teaching assistants. Pupils make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Provision for cultural development is good. Staff are very good role models. They treat each pupil with sensitivity and

Staffing, resources and accommodation	courtesy. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their actions and to think of others. The number of teachers is average but class sizes are high. Non-teaching staff support pupils very well. The interior of the school is very clean and well maintained but inadequate for the number of pupils on roll. Whilst resources are good for literacy, there are deficiencies in provision for information technology. Resources are satisfactory in all other subjects.
Value for money	The school gives very good value for money.

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

### **The parents' views of the school**

#### **What most parents like about the school**

- II. It enables pupils to achieve a good standard of work.
- III. Their children like to come to school and behaviour is of a very high standard.
- IV. It is easy to approach the school if there are questions to be asked or problems to be solved concerning their children.
- V. They are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school.
- VI. The values and attitudes it encourages have a positive effect upon pupils' personal and social development.

#### **What some parents are not happy about**

- VII. A minority of parents feel that their
- VIII. There are insufficient classrooms

The inspectors found a very positive working atmosphere in the school which helps pupils to achieve a good standard of work. Children enjoy their days in school and parents are encouraged to play an active part in its life. Inspectors agree that behaviour is very good and that teachers work very hard as a team to encourage pupils to act responsibly. The school has a homework policy which has been communicated to parents. The homework schedule is appropriate and the work pupils are asked to do plays a valuable part in the good progress that they are making. Some classrooms are too small for the number of pupils they are expected to accommodate.

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## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve the standards of attainment and quality of education, the school should:

- (a) raise standards in the control and data handling strands of information technology by:
    - IX. implementing the action plan;
    - X. providing appropriate in-service training to develop staff confidence and competence in teaching the above strands and in using them across the curriculum;
    - XI. ensuring that all subject co-ordinators monitor the inclusion of information technology in the teaching of their subject;
    - XII. increasing pupils' use of resources.
- [see paragraphs 22, 52, 95, 145-152]

In addition to the key issue above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. After each issue a reference is given to the main paragraph in the report where it is indicated:

XIII. continue to press for further improvements in the school building; [see paragraphs 91, 102, 156 & 157]

XIV. ensure that the skills of 'designing' and 'evaluating' in design and technology are systematically developed; [see paragraphs 24 & 159-165]

XV. develop better links with all pre-school agencies. [see paragraph 68]

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## INTRODUCTION

### · **Characteristics of the school**

1. St Paul's is a one-form entry Roman Catholic (Voluntary Aided) Primary School catering for boys and girls in the four to 11 age group. The school is situated in Feniscowles on the outskirts of Blackburn. The percentage of adults in the area near to the school with higher educational qualifications and the percentage of children from high social class households are in line with the national average. The proportion of children in overcrowded homes is well below the average. No pupils are currently entitled to free school meals. However, the overall attainment on entry of the intake is average, although a minority of children have better skills in language and literacy than those expected for the age group. This judgement is supported by the results of the school's own baseline assessments.
2. The school is smaller than average. Local housing developments over the last few years have led to an increase in school numbers. Since the last inspection in 1996, the number of pupils has grown from 162 to 191. There are 98 boys and 93 girls on roll. To cope with the varying number of pupils in the year groups, there are three classes of mixed ages in Key Stage 2. Sixty per cent of pupils entering the reception class have had some form of pre-school education. There are currently 24 children under the age of five attending the school. Thirty two pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is a broadly average proportion. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs (2.6 per cent) is well above the national average. There are no pupils from the ethnic minorities.

3. The school serves the Catholic communities in the parish of Pleasington Priory, (St Mary and St John) with the parishes of St Paul's Feniscowles and the Livesey area of St John Vianney, Blackburn. The admissions policy indicates that priority is given to families of the Roman Catholic faith who live in these parishes.
4. The school is committed to the moral, social, spiritual and educational development of its pupils in a Catholic atmosphere through the full participation and co-operation of teachers, parents, members of the parish and others connected with the school.
5. The school's current key priorities include:
  - .to continue to develop the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies;
  - .to implement the action plan for information technology;
  - .to develop the role of the co-ordinator with regard to monitoring;
  - .to continue to promote the values of Investors In People;
  - .to build an additional classroom.

· **Key indicators**

1. **Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	8	13	21

6. <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	7 (18)	7 (18)	7 (18)
	Girls	12 (11)	13 (11)	12 (11)
	Total	19 (29)	20 (29)	19 (29)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	90 (91)	95 (91)	90 (91)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (84)

6. <b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6 (18)	7 (18)	8 (19)
	Girls	12 (11)	13 (11)	12 (11)
	Total	18 (29)	20 (29)	20 (30)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (91)	95 (91)	95 (97)
	National	81 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parenthesis refer to the year before the latest reporting year

7. **Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
for latest reporting year:	1998	10	9	19

<b>7. National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	7 (9)	7 (9)	8 (9)
	Girls	8 (11)	9 (11)	8 (11)
	Total	15 (20)	16 (20)	16 (20)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (100)	84 (100)	84 (100)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

<b>7. Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6 (7)	6 (8)	7 (8)
	Girls	8 (11)	8 (10)	8 (11)
	Total	14 (18)	14 (18)	15 (19)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	74 (90)	74 (90)	79 (95)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

7.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parenthesis refer to the year before the latest reporting year

8. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	3.29
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.28
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

8.

9. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

10. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	41
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

10. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

10. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

10. **Attainment and progress**

2. Children enter the school with average ability, although a minority has better skills in language and literacy than those expected for the age group. This judgement is based upon the school's own baseline assessments and on inspection evidence. The good progress that children make in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world enables the majority to exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in these areas of learning by the age of five. They make satisfactory progress in physical and creative development and achieve levels in line with those expected for five-year-olds.
3. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English during Key Stage 1 and by the age of seven the proportion attaining the expected standard are above the national average. In the 1998 National Curriculum teacher assessments in English the overall results achieved by pupils were above the national average but were below those found in similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 3 rose to over a third in the 1999 assessments.
4. Good progress is made throughout Key Stage 2 in English and standards are well above average. In the 1998 National Curriculum English tests for eleven-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 2 the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was above the national average and those achieving the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. Both these results were broadly in line with similar schools.
5. Speaking and listening skills are above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils make satisfactory progress. By the age of seven they listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They respond appropriately to questions and speak clearly. In Key Stage 2 pupils are provided with good opportunities during lessons for speaking and listening. They can articulate their thoughts clearly and use technical vocabulary correctly. Pupils make good progress and attain well for their abilities.
6. Standards in reading are above average. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests in reading held at the end of Key Stage 1 the proportion of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was above the national average. The proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. However, these results were below average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 fell very slightly in the 1999 reading tests. Pupils make satisfactory progress and by the age of seven most have become enthusiastic readers and attain well for their abilities. They can use picture and phonic clues to attack new words. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above expectation. Pupils are confident readers and can locate information using reference books from the library.
7. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing during Key Stage 1 and standards are above average. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests in writing held at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of seven-year-olds achieving Level 2 and above was well above the national average. No pupil achieved the higher Level 3 and, overall, these results were below average when compared with similar schools. The results of the 1999 tests were broadly the same with a very slight improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3. By the age of seven

most pupils can write independently. They apply their skills to a range of writing but there is scope to develop writing for a real audience. During Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress and, by the age of 11, pupils are achieving above average standards. They write for a good range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum. This aspect of writing has improved considerably since the last inspection.

8. Good progress is made in mathematics during Key Stage 1 and standards of attainment are above average. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests in mathematics held at the end of Key Stage 1 the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above was above the national average but below the results obtained in similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. Across the full range of performance the school's results in mathematics are well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. In the 1999 tests all pupils attained the expected Level 2 and a quarter attained Level 3. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know the sequence of numbers up to a 100 and recognise simple fractions. They understand how to collect data and draw bar charts. Occasionally, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
9. Pupils continue to make good progress in mathematics during Key Stage 2 and by the age of 11 attainment is well above average. The proportion achieving the expected Level 4 in the National Curriculum tests in mathematics for 11-year-olds in 1998 was well above the national average and well above average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was above the national average and broadly in line with the average for similar schools. By the age of 11 pupils' numeracy skills are good when applied to solving mathematical problems. They expertly change decimals to percentages and have a good understanding of probability. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects such as geography and science.
10. Standards of attainment in science are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils make satisfactory progress. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level for seven-year-olds in the 1998 National Curriculum tests held in science at the end of Key Stage 1 was above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 increased significantly in 1999. By the age of seven pupils have a good understanding of the topics covered. They can record the findings well, constructing their own sentences. Pupils use simple apparatus confidently.
11. Progress in science is good during Key Stage 2 and standards are well above average. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in science the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was above the national average. The percentage reaching Level 5 was below average. When compared to similar schools, these results were below average. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to carry out detailed investigations and make sensible predictions in the light of what they know. They record their work meticulously in the form of written reports, graphs, diagrams and tables.
12. Since the 1996 inspection standards have risen in English, mathematics and science. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in all three subjects show a significant improvement with nearly all pupils achieving Level 4 and just over half achieving Level 5 in each subject. These high standards are due mainly to better planning which identifies clear objectives and to the school's involvement in an improvement programme which focuses particularly on setting clear targets for individuals and groups and monitoring closely their subsequent progress. In addition, good professional development has increased staff

confidence in the teaching of science especially in experimental and investigative work. These very good results also reflect the ability of that particular Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that although teacher expectations remain high and standards have been maintained, the proportion of pupils on track to reach the expected standard is not as great because there is a higher percentage of pupils with special needs in the current small Year 6.

13. Information technology was judged to be an area of weakness in the school at the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved since the 1996 inspection and the subject now meets National Curriculum requirements. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages and attainment levels by age seven and 11 are in line with the national expectations in the application of word processing, problem solving and graphics. However, standards are below what is expected in the applications of control technology and data handling. Information technology is used effectively to support learning in most other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use the computer mouse to control the cursor as they draw illustrations for their reading book. They can operate a graphics program and print their work. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils can enter text with confidence and change letter fonts and sizes. They can activate CD-ROMs to retrieve information. However, they do not extend their data handling skills to use simple spreadsheets.
14. Pupils make good progress in developing skills and techniques in art during both key stages. Standards of attainment are overall similar to that expected for their age. Some of the work, especially observational drawing, clay work, abstract art and colour mixing have very good features. This represents an improvement on the standards observed in the previous inspection report. The subject makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' cultural development and the quality of the learning environment.
15. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology in both key stages and the standards achieved are in line with those found in the majority of schools. Since the last inspection the scheme of work has been supported by the introduction of QCA guidelines. Pupils work through a satisfactory range of projects linked effectively to other subjects. However, the process of 'designing' and 'evaluating' is not systematically developed.
16. Standards have improved in geography since the last inspection. Satisfactory progress is made during both key stages and pupils are attaining standards similar to those found in most schools. In Key Stage 1 pupils successfully label a plan of the school and observe features of the immediate locality. In Key Stage 2 their mapping skills are appropriately developed as pupils are introduced to map symbols, keys and co-ordinates.
17. Pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1 in history and achieve standards similar to those found nationally. Their skills in historical enquiry are appropriately developed through the examination of artefacts. Good progress is made during Key Stage 2 and standards are higher than those found in most schools. By the age of 11 pupils have acquired sharp insights into what life was like for different kinds of people within the various societies.
18. The school offers a broad and balanced physical educational programme. In all aspects inspected progress was good and standards of achievement were above those found in most schools at the end of both key stages. Records show that standards in swimming are good.
19. Attainment in music for most pupils by the age of seven and 11 is in line with that expected for each age group and progress is satisfactory. By the age of seven pupils can create their own music and record it using symbols. By the age of 11 they show confidence in articulating their

observations of contrasting mood and tone.

20. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual needs are identified early and their Individual Educational Plans identify appropriate learning and behavioural targets. Pupils with special needs are fully included in all classroom activities. They are very well supported by experienced classroom assistants who work closely with teachers. Some have benefited from initiatives such as the " Better Reading Partnership".

29. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

21. Standards of pupils' behaviour, attitudes and personal development are very good. A particular strength is the very good quality of relationships which has a positive effect on pupils' personal and academic progress. Pupils' behaviour has improved since the last inspection especially at lunchtimes.
22. Pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are very good. They settle quickly at the beginning of lessons and apply themselves diligently to their work. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and concentrate well. They maintain interest in their work and are keen to take part in question-and-answer sessions. Pupils enjoy their work in history and they bring books and artefacts from home to share with other members of the class. They are involved in setting their own targets for improvement, a practice which encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning. They take pride in the presentation of their work. Older pupils acknowledge teachers' marking comments and try hard to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs work hard and respond well to the very good support which they receive. These very positive attitudes are reflected in the good progress and high standards which pupils achieve.
23. The personal and social development of children under five is very good. They have settled into school very well and are already beginning to form friendships. Children work together co-operatively and they put equipment away sensibly. They are quickly developing their independence and are adapting confidently to school routines. Children listen carefully to their teacher and behave very well. They are very enthusiastic and are enjoying the start of their new school life.
24. Standards of behaviour throughout the school are very good as confirmed by parents in questionnaire responses. Pupils are very polite and greet visitors cheerfully. They hold doors open for one another and move about the building in an orderly manner. At the time of the last inspection lunchtime behaviour was a concern. Pupils now respond very well to welfare staff and all behaviour observed was of a high standard. In the dining hall there is a friendly and relaxed atmosphere and pupils of all ages play together amicably at break and lunchtimes. In lessons pupils work together very effectively and co-operate well in group work. They are keen to earn recognition for their achievements through the award of house points which are celebrated in weekly house assemblies. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are uncommon and the school works closely with parents to resolve any concerns. There have been no recent exclusions from the school.
25. The quality of relationships within the school is very good. Staff and pupils show mutual respect, a factor which contributes very positively to the caring, Catholic ethos of the school community. Pupils are aware of the needs of others and are quick to support one another when individuals experience problems. Children were very concerned when a classmate became unwell and they were keen to help and support her. Pupils are proud of the house system which engenders a sense of belonging to a family. They congratulate their peers spontaneously when they receive awards.
26. Pupils' personal development is very good and all children enjoy taking an active part in the smooth running of the school. In Year 6, pupils act as prefects and house captains and carry out their duties sensibly and maturely. They help to look after younger children and escort them back to classes after assemblies. In all classes pupils willingly tidy away books and equipment and collect registers. Pupils look after property and there is no evidence of litter on

the site. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and the strong parish and church links contribute very positively to pupils' personal development. Pupils take part in music and sporting activities and there is very good support for charity fund raising.

35. **Attendance**

27. Attendance rates are very good and are well above the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and there is a low rate of unauthorised absence. They are punctual arriving at school and a prompt start is made to sessions. Pupils enter the building quickly from the playground and no time is lost in lessons. This regular and punctual pattern of attendance has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Registration is carried out quickly and efficiently in accordance with legal requirements.

36. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

36. **Teaching**

28. The quality of teaching is good and contributes highly to pupils' positive learning attitudes and to the good progress that they make, especially in Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement on the findings of the 1996 inspection. The shortcomings identified in the previous inspection report have been rectified. During this inspection there were no lessons where the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers' skills in managing pupils and organising their learning is a strength. Teachers work hard to create tasks which pupils find exciting, challenging and fun to carry out. Lesson planning often includes the use of information technology as part of the planned learning experience.
29. Across the school, teaching was good or better in eight out of every ten lessons and very good or excellent in two out of five lessons. One lesson in six was satisfactory and one lesson in 25 was excellent. There are strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science and in most other subjects.
30. For children under five the quality of teaching is good with some very good features in English, mathematics and in the knowledge and understanding of the world. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good or better in seven lessons out of ten and very good in one out of four. In Key Stage 2 the teaching is good or better in just over eight out of ten lessons with almost half being very good or excellent. Examples of very good teaching were observed in English, mathematics, science and art in both key stages and also in history, geography and physical education in Key Stage 2. It was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in information technology. The teaching of the older pupils is occasionally outstanding. Good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress during their time in school. Even though the inspection took place in the early part of the school year, pupils were keen and interested in their work and were comfortably settled into established routines.
31. Teaching in the reception class is supported effectively by good team work. Both staff record accurately precise observations of children's achievement and provide suitably stepped tasks. Planning is very thorough, particularly in literacy and mathematics. The classroom is well organised and planning provides for a smooth transition from desired learning objectives to the National Curriculum. There are attractive displays and the outdoor play area is used well.

32. At Key Stage 1 there are many strengths in the teaching. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievement. Teachers manage their pupils very effectively and use positive encouragement and rewards. Lessons are very well prepared and subject knowledge is good. There is strong classroom organisation and lessons are effectively resourced. However, the fact that in mathematics pupils spend too long working on printed worksheets prevents them from devising their own methods to record their calculations. In mathematics pupils spend too long working on printed worksheets which prevents them from devising their own methods to record their calculations. Non-teaching assistants are used very effectively. Very good teaching is in evidence when the youngest pupils benefit from the enthusiasm of the adults and work at a challenging pace. In English pupils are challenged to write independently and to research their spellings before they ask for help. In science the Year 1 class teacher has provided a full range of sensory experiences to ensure that her class is presented with a very good repertoire of practical experiences.
33. In Key Stage 2 there is a positive, warm, relaxed atmosphere between pupils and teachers which promotes high levels of confidence and a keenness in pupils to investigate and share their thinking with the class even if, subsequently, their conclusions are found to be wrong. Teacher knowledge is very strong and the level of challenge in many lessons indicates very high expectations. Planning is accurate and takes into account the ability and progress of pupils. A good variety of teaching strategies are used although occasionally their effectiveness is adversely affected by large class sizes, particularly when whole-class question and answer sessions are taking place. Very good use is made of skilled classroom assistants and parent volunteers. In mathematics, there are good examples of teachers making assessments during lessons and modifying lesson content in response to their findings. In English lessons, the teachers' excellent knowledge of the plot of the story being studied and the quality of the chosen narrative results in the pupils making very good progress and producing writing of high quality. In an outstanding art lesson, older pupils produced clay work of a high standard and gained invaluable insights into the expertise and style of Picasso. Key Stage 2 staff make effective use of praise and rewards; maintain very good discipline and set high expectations for behaviour and classroom conduct.
34. In both key stages teachers follow the recommended format for the literacy and numeracy hour. Lessons are planned carefully and time is given appropriately to preparation of materials to support class and group work. The originality and good quality in the presentation of much of this material gives very good support to learning. Staff share ideas and spend much time developing them. They have selected and compiled a wide variety of texts for class reading. Very good use is made of skilled classroom assistants and the many parent volunteers, all of whom have an excellent working relationship with class teachers. They are invaluable in supporting learning and group activities, particularly where there are large classes. Throughout the school, adults are particularly skilled in the use of questioning techniques both to help pupils organise their knowledge, and to gain information about the level of pupils' understanding. Teaching in the literacy hour is particularly effective when clear links are established between each section of the lesson. The occasional tendency towards an over-long 'shared text' section is a minor weakness which has the effect of slowing down the pace of the lesson. The school's involvement in the National Numeracy Strategy as a pilot school has helped to improve standards, especially in pupils' mental work.
35. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is an effective balance between provision by the class teacher and support from specialist teachers. Work is appropriate to the targets within individual educational plans. The adults who work alongside pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are very effective in sustaining pupils'

concentration and in talking through work queries. Their presence is unobtrusive but highly significant in supporting pupils, especially those who have behavioural and emotional difficulties. In class lessons teachers provide support and talk the pupils through what they have to do. They set realistic targets and re-group pupils when necessary to ensure that they can support each other through discussion. This structured and systematic approach to support is helping to foster the good progress that pupils are making.

36. Good use is made of available resources to stimulate pupils' interest. All teachers give homework to extend the content of lessons and to maintain pupils' interest in reading and number work. Homework is set more frequently as part of the preparation for end of key stage National Curriculum tests and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' progress.
37. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously and is supportive. Marking is most effective when written comments give the pupils a clear idea of how they might improve their work.
38. The school has improved the levels of achievement highlighted in the previous report by improving the quality of teaching. Lessons now build on previous learning and planning is informed by clear whole-school policies. Teachers clearly identify the purpose of each lesson and share it with pupils.
47. **The curriculum and assessment**
39. The curriculum provided by the school is broad, balanced and relevant. It includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Learning for the under-fives centres on the six areas of learning and on the nationally recommended Desired Learning Outcomes for the age group. Good provision is made when planning work for these children to enable them to make a natural progression to the early stages of the National Curriculum.
40. The previous inspection report recorded that National Curriculum requirements were not being met in information technology. Improvements have been made in provision and the school now complies with the current requirements for all the National Curriculum subjects. Religious education is taught through a programme approved by the diocese and was inspected separately. Swimming lessons are provided for all pupils in Key Stage 2.
41. The key issue from the previous inspection, of providing time for co-ordinators to manage the curriculum, has been addressed. All staff have regular non-contact time to monitor their subject areas and in-service arrangements have provided some opportunities to observe colleagues at work. Co-ordinators complete curriculum reports and produce action plans so that priorities can be agreed for inclusion in the school development plan. The school has recently been accredited as an 'Investor in People'.
42. Long-term planning gives a good overview of the curriculum. Medium-term planning, which forms the basis for schemes of work, is very thorough and gives a clear structure to pupils' learning as they progress through the school. Assessment opportunities are clearly identified. Learning objectives are also very clear. Teachers' planning for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are particularly detailed.
43. The literacy hour has been introduced very successfully. The school's involvement in the numeracy project has led to the numeracy strategy becoming well established. The principles informing it have cascaded profitably to other subjects. For example, teachers often begin their

lessons by informing the children of the objectives of the lesson and end by reviewing them. Information technology has improved since the previous inspection when it was a key issue. It is now used well to support learning in other curriculum areas such as history. However, the applications of control technology and data handling are below national expectations.

44. There is no formal sex education programme. The school nurse talks to pupils towards the end of Year 6 about puberty. Opportunities are created to raise drug awareness. For example, an ex-pupil who is a student international swimmer answered pupils' questions about the dangers of drug taking in her sport. The religious education syllabus encompasses education for personal relationships and science topics include the subjects of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.
45. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and complies fully with the Code of Practice. The school's strong emphasis on the early identification of learning difficulties enables support to be provided quickly. In addition to their Individual Educational Plans pupils are also involved in the school's target-setting arrangements further to boost their progress. Non-teaching assistants are very well deployed and sensible use is made of the external support service to support younger children and to help with the assessment of older pupils.
46. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum in line with the school's equal opportunities policy. There is a universal commitment to provide for pupils' individual needs. When they are withdrawn from lessons for additional support in targeted reading, attempts are made to minimise the amount of time spent away from any particular subject area.
47. Pupils are placed in mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2 based on their prior attainment. Within each class they are grouped by attainment within their year group. Though these arrangements are very effective overall, the pace of lessons is sometimes affected by the large size of the classes.
48. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. It includes competitive sport, chess, musical opportunities, safer cycling and an after school study support initiative run by the local football club. There is a school production at Christmas which involves all pupils. Educational visits and visitors to the school are used regularly as a valuable resource to support pupils' learning. They enrich pupils' experiences by extending their knowledge and understanding of the past and present world and make a positive contribution to the curriculum, particularly in history and geography. Other visits include an adventure day at Whitehough where older pupils experience character building activities. Year 2 pupils spend a day at Hothersall Lodge. Private arrangements are in place for pupils to learn a musical instrument. The strong links with the church add to the quality of education provided.
49. The previous inspection report recorded some weaknesses in the school's systems for assessment. Since then, the school has worked hard to establish a well-structured set of assessment procedures. These arrangements are very comprehensive in English, mathematics and science and inform teachers' planning well.
50. Great strides have been made in ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are aware of their own progress and achievements. Individual targets are set and regularly reviewed by staff and pupils. Targets include behaviour and attitudes as well as performance in English and mathematics. An individual class data sheet is maintained for all pupils in these subjects. The marking policy has been considered and reviewed since the

previous inspection. The best marking includes detailed comments to help pupils improve their work.

51. A variety of internal test results, as well as those for statutory and non-statutory national tests, are analysed and used to observe trends in attainment and progress. This information is used for a variety of purposes. It is used to group pupils; to set targets for individual and whole-school improvements; to monitor the curriculum; and allocate resources. A wide range of records is maintained. For example, reading records are used as a means of communication between home and school; individual and school portfolios in writing demonstrate levels of achievement; class tick lists for key objectives show progress in numeracy; and records of achievement with inclusions made by the pupils themselves show a pattern of progress and achievement over time.
52. Assessment in the foundation subjects is carried out successfully through observation, questioning, marking pupils' work, making constructive comments and involving pupils in assessing their own work. A new baseline assessment, approved by the local authority is in place for pupils entering the reception class. The reception class teacher maintains very good observational records of children's progress, often using the skills of the nursery nurse for this purpose. The school meets statutory requirements in assessing pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages and in reporting the results to parents.
61. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
53. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. School assemblies are of good quality and take a variety of styles and forms. Pupils take part in a daily act of worship and the parish priest actively supports pupils' spiritual development through his contributions to assemblies and his work in classes. The school teaches pupils about the practices and beliefs of other world religions through, for example, the input of Islamic students who gave insights into their form of prayers. Non-Christian festivals are introduced. However, this aspect of spiritual development is not fully extended. All aspects of the school's provision for spiritual development are underpinned by the mission statement which sets the tone and ethos within the philosophy and doctrine of the Roman Catholic church and which permeates the whole life of the school. There is very good provision for spiritual awareness through the curriculum and other aspects of school life and not merely through some class assemblies as was the case during the last inspection. There are planned opportunities for pupils to reflect on the wonder of life when they observe butterflies opening their wings, or when chicks hatch from eggs or when they listen to their own pulse beating faster after exercise. They are aware of the rich variety of life within the beauty of the school surroundings. This appreciation is extended through visits to places of interest. Pupils have time to reflect on the beauty of art and on their own response to the skills of great artists. They are regularly given valuable opportunities to develop a sense of personal worth both through celebration assemblies and the house system which reward both endeavour and achievement.
54. The provision for promoting pupils' moral development is very good. The whole ethos of the school is focused on developing pupils' awareness of self and on how to behave towards others in a Christian way. There is a school Code of Conduct which is regularly discussed by pupils and which is displayed prominently around the school. This Code of Conduct is fully understood and respected by all. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive and fair and staff continually reinforce pupils' ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Annual charity initiatives are encouraged to make pupils aware of wider moral and social issues in the locality and the wider world. Moral and ethical

issues are addressed appropriately in history. For example, pupils have made a careful consideration of the causes of poverty in Victorian times.

55. Very good provision is made for pupils' social development and includes support and encouragement for the very good relationships that exist throughout the school. Since the previous inspection there has been a marked improvement in behaviour particularly during the lunch time period. The school promotes a welcoming and caring ethos and parents are happy that the school's values have a positive effect on their children. Pupils are expected and encouraged to think of others and to be considerate. All Year 6 pupils have a duty to undertake various responsibilities which are recorded on prominently displayed class lists. This initiative extends through the school. The oldest pupils help in the smooth running of the school by carrying out tasks and duties. For example, they look after younger pupils at play times, lunchtimes and when they leave the school hall. Pupils are encouraged to use their initiatives in raising money for national and church charities. Members of staff are very good role models and treat pupils with sensitivity and courtesy. There are very good social links with other schools through shared physical education activities. The choir performs regularly at religious and social events. The recently introduced course at Blackburn Rovers Study Support Centre is an excellent opportunity for Year 6 pupils to meet pupils from other schools and to form positive relationships with adults who support their learning after school time.
56. Provision for pupils' cultural awareness is good. This includes using the neighbourhood to develop their awareness of aspects of geographical and historical development. Pupils study the work of artists from European and other cultures. They learn American line dancing and English country dancing. Pupils study the lives of people who belong to other times or who live in other countries, as shown in their topics on The Egyptians and a village life in India. The school raises pupils' awareness of the customs and dress of other cultures including Islam and Judaism. However, this work is not supported adequately by the provision of artefacts representing those cultures. Artists and actors visit the school to give pupils added insights into the heritage of English drama and European art.
65. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
57. Provision for support, guidance and pupils' welfare is a strength. There is a strong, caring ethos within the school and pupils' welfare remains a high priority, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Staff know the children well and relationships are very positive. Pupils are confident to approach adults with their concerns and they receive sensitive and effective guidance. Children within the reception class receive a very high level of care. Parents report that their children are happy and enjoy coming to school.
58. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development are very good. Detailed records are kept by each class teacher and staff regularly discuss any pupils who may be experiencing difficulties. Pupils are involved in setting targets for improvement and these are discussed and reviewed. Older pupils receive good guidance from the constructive comments included in marking. In lessons there is regular dialogue between staff and pupils about ways to improve work. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and they make good progress.
59. Arrangements for children entering the reception class are very good. Parents and children are invited to visit the school on several occasions before formal entry. Children are gradually and sensitively integrated into school life and quickly feel secure in their new surroundings. There are very close links with the local high school and pupils in Year 6 attend curriculum and

experience days. There is a good exchange of information between the schools and this ensures a smooth transition for pupils to the next stage of their education. However, there is scope to develop the links with pre-school agencies.

60. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and procedures to promote discipline are very good. At the time of the last inspection the behaviour policy had not been adopted and formally implemented. The school now has a very detailed behaviour policy which emphasises the importance of self-discipline. The policy is reviewed regularly and is being implemented very successfully by all staff. There is an appropriate system of sanctions and rewards and pupils are rightly proud when they receive house points and stickers to celebrate their achievements. Staff are always alert to pupils' concerns and the school has effective procedures to handle any cases of bullying which might arise.
61. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' attendance are very good. There are seldom problems with attendance but registers are scrutinised regularly and the education welfare officer provides support when needed. Child protection procedures are very good and there is effective liaison with specialist agencies. All staff are aware of the need to report any concerns and have received appropriate training.
62. Systems are in place to promote pupils' health and safety and are very good. Professional safety checks of equipment are arranged and regular fire drills carried out. The school nurse visits to conduct medical checks and also assists with the health education programme for pupils. First-aid arrangements are very thorough and parents are notified promptly if their child becomes unwell during the school day. Pupils are well supervised at lunchtimes and there are appropriate procedures for visits away from school. Safety is constantly re-inforced in physical education lessons and pupils have taken part in a safer cycling scheme.
71. **Partnership with parents and the community**
63. Parental support was reported to be a positive feature at the time of the last inspection. It is still an important strength of the school.
64. Parents are very supportive and make a significant contribution to the life of the school. Several parents help in school by listening to children read, by assisting in the library and by organising extra-curricular activities. A small number of parents have successfully completed a 'Parents as Educators' course and regularly help in classrooms. The Parent Teacher and Friends Association is very active and raises considerable sums to benefit the school. Parents report that they are made to feel welcome and that they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school.
65. Information for parents is good. Regular newsletters provide details of activities and events and parents receive a curriculum plan which outlines the topic areas children are to study. The prospectus is well presented. The annual governors' report to parents is detailed and informative. A very good induction pack provided for new parents gives helpful details about literacy and numeracy. The previous inspection report identified weaknesses in end-of-year reports. These have improved and now give parents a clear understanding about work completed and the progress their children have made. The school also provides parents with details of more frequent test results for pupils in Key Stage 2. The amount of information provided for parents about the curriculum has improved since the last inspection.
66. Parents are fully and effectively involved in their children's education and the large majority

have signed the new Home-School Agreement. Parents' evenings are very well attended and there was good support for curriculum meetings about numeracy and literacy. Information evenings are also held when presentations are made about specific curriculum areas. Regular reviews of progress are held for parents of pupils with special educational needs and meetings are arranged for new parents. Although a small number of parents were concerned about the amount of homework set, the work pupils are asked to do plays a valuable part in the good progress they are making.

67. Community links are very good and are used well to enhance the curriculum and pupils' personal development. There are very close links with the church and parish and there is very good support for charity fund raising. Pupils entertain residents at a local senior citizens' home and distribute Harvest gifts within the community. They take part in area sports events with nearby schools and benefit from coaching by local professional footballers.
68. Several educational visits are made to local businesses and companies linked to curriculum studies. Pupils in Year 6 take part in a study support project at Blackburn Football Club and pupils have visited a local bakery as part of their studies in design and technology. Two teachers have completed a placement at a local newspaper to study their computer operations and are using the experience to develop pupils' information technology skills in school.

77. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

77. **Leadership and management**

69. The quality of leadership and management is very good. Much has been done to address the key issues in the previous inspection report and this has been carefully planned and well managed. There has been a marked improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science due to the consistent development of teaching and learning in these subjects. Standards have also improved in information technology, although more work still needs to be done to improve provision in this area. These improvements owe much to the provision of good quality staff development. Effective innovations such as target setting have also been introduced.
70. The headteacher works closely with the governing body and together they provide strong clear educational direction for the school. The headteacher receives good support from the deputy. Since the previous inspection the headteacher, assisted by parents and governors, has implemented a Code of Conduct which has helped to improve behaviour. Pupils are taught to respect God and to care for one another. They also learn to respect property. In doing these things they develop self-discipline and a strong set of moral values.
71. Communications have improved since the 1996 inspection. Very effective day-to-day communication systems are in place and good procedures enable co-ordinators to receive non-contact time to monitor their curricular areas effectively. There is very good provision for special educational needs. Steps have been made to improve the quality of provision for information technology by responding to QCA guidance, developing better planning for progression and successfully bidding for National Grid for Learning Resources for information technology. The school has been accredited as an 'Investor in People'.
72. In achieving her objectives, the headteacher has responded positively and effectively to the key issues of the previous report. The quality of the management of the school has been strengthened. Staff and governors share and promote an open commitment to raising standards. This places the school in a good position to continue to develop and improve.
73. The headteacher takes the lead role in maintaining discipline and promoting pupils' good behaviour. Parents and pupils alike value the firm discipline matched with praise and acknowledgement of achievement which are key features in the school's work and see them as essential to the school's success in promoting pupils' willingness to learn. The school has a very positive ethos.
74. The headteacher undertakes much of the day-to-day management of the school. She is supported by the senior management team which meets on a regular basis to evaluate school-based initiatives and to respond to the issues and areas for development identified at staff meetings or formulated by the local education authority or the Department for Education & Employment. This practice has resulted in the effective implementation of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
75. All staff and governors are involved in deciding the school's priorities and in establishing ways to achieve them. Co-ordinators' action plans and written evaluations form an integral part of the school development plan which in turn provides a very good framework for action. The quality of the school development plan is much improved since the last inspection. The plan runs for a period of three years and, appropriately, focuses on raising standards. The national

requirement to set numerical targets for literacy and numeracy for the next few years has added a new dimension to the school's planning and the staff are now developing ways to evaluate critically the effectiveness of the school's outcomes in meeting these targets.

76. The headteacher has supported the governing body in developing very good working procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. Through the committee structure the governors meet their statutory responsibilities and keep a close eye on school development issues. The literacy governor, special needs governor and numeracy governor have a good understanding of their roles.
77. The management of the provision for pupils under five years of age is good. A baseline is in place to establish children's attainment when they begin the reception class. Information is used to provide for future learning, and appropriate records are made of subsequent progress. There are very good links with parents; they are welcomed into the classroom at the start of the school day and some act as volunteer classroom helpers. The induction arrangements for children starting school are good and the information packs given to parents to help them understand the curriculum are clear and helpful. Although there are links with pre-school agencies there is scope further to develop this aspect of provision.
78. The management and administration of provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. The head shares the special educational needs co-ordinator responsibility with the deputy. All records are up-to-date and the policy and procedures for special educational needs follow the Code of Practice guidance. Carefully constructed Individual Educational Plans are in place which identify appropriate learning and behavioural targets. They are reviewed at regular intervals. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all classroom activities and are supported by experienced classroom assistants who work to the direction of class teachers.
79. The school is very successful in following its mission statement:- "The children are encouraged to grow in faith and moral responsibility and to develop as whole persons, striving to reach their full potential through hard work, academic standards and service to others in response to the values of the Gospel". The school meets statutory requirements, fulfils its aims and is continually working to raise standards and to provide individuals with equality of opportunity.
88. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
80. Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver the curriculum. The number of teaching staff is average for the size of the school but the ratio of pupils to teachers is high. The three classes in Key Stage 2 are large and each one caters for two age groups. The number of non-teaching staff is above average for the size of the school. They support pupils very well and make a valuable contribution to their learning. There is an appropriate number of lunchtime welfare assistants, all of whom ensure the well-being of the pupils. The school secretary makes a positive contribution to the school, although the number of hours of clerical assistance available is below average for the size of the school.
81. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are very well organised using a variety of outside agencies to supplement internal expertise. Provision has recently taken account of school's priorities in implementing the literacy and numeracy hours and the move towards target setting. Two teachers are trained as leading mathematics teachers. In-service training for teachers includes attendance on courses, the relaying of information verbally or in written form, and the sharing of expertise. The school has been very effective in ensuring that those staff who attend courses share the benefits and insights obtained with the rest of the staff.

Staff development interviews are conducted on a regular basis. The appraisal system is currently under review. A comprehensive booklet has been produced to assist the induction of newly qualified teachers and another to assist students on teaching practice. One teacher is a trained mentor. Working for Investors in People accreditation has successfully encouraged the development of training for non-teaching staff.

82. The accommodation is well maintained and improvement work has been carried out in classrooms since the previous inspection. However there are still some unsatisfactory features. One classroom is a thoroughfare and another has a pillar which restricts the teacher's view of children and their view of the whiteboard. Key Stage 2 classroom areas are not large enough for the size of the classes, and this causes concern to some parents.
83. Playgrounds are adequate and well marked out for activities at play time. The creation of an inner-courtyard play area for the under-fives is a useful addition to the reception class. There is a large playing field and the grounds are sometimes used as a learning resource.
84. In every part of the school large display boards are effectively deployed to celebrate and promote children's work. This practice dignifies pupils' best efforts and contributes well to the provision of a stimulating learning environment.
85. The building is clean and the site litter free with no sign of graffiti. The caretaker has worked hard to decorate the library and to improve additional storage space in various parts of the school. The school suffers from occasional vandalism and has taken steps to prevent damage to its flat roof. A programme for future improvement to the grounds and building is contained in the school development plan.
86. The school is well resourced for literacy. For most other subjects resources are adequate, well stored and readily accessible. There are minor deficiencies in physical education. For example, there is no large outdoor play equipment to meet the needs of the under-fives and some of the large apparatus is too heavy to be suitable for Key Stage 1 children. There are some deficiencies in the resources for information technology. However, the school has successfully bid for the National Grid for Learning which should substantially increase provision. The well-established Parent Teacher and Friends Association makes generous contributions for the purchase of equipment and books.
87. The library is well organised and parents help in its administration by carrying out clerical tasks. Older pupils use the library productively to carry out their own research. Some are appointed as librarians to help look after this resource. Project loans from the Schools' Library Service supplement the number of books available throughout the school and are used effectively in science and the foundation subjects.

96.

#### **The efficiency of the school**

88. The efficiency of the school is very good.
89. Financial planning and management are very good. There are clear financial procedures, which include defined responsibilities and delegated spending powers. They are followed conscientiously by the headteacher, secretary and governors. The previous inspection report found that the school development plan was a carefully considered document with proposals costed but not necessarily listed in order of priority. The current plan is detailed and focuses appropriately on raising standards. All spending decisions take due account of the priorities

identified in the plan. The latest auditor's report found that procedures in place within the school's financial systems are of a high standard and provide a high level of internal control. The few minor points raised have been implemented.

90. The governors show a good understanding of the implications of the budget. The finance committee of the governing body meets regularly and monitors carefully spending patterns. However, governors are over reliant upon information from the headteacher in determining the effectiveness and value for money of their decisions.
91. The governing body earmarks a significant amount of money annually to support pupils with special educational needs. The previous inspection report questioned the efficiency of employing a part-time special needs teacher and using her at times for general classroom support. The school has carefully reviewed this aspect and now employs a number of non-teaching assistants instead of the part-time teacher support. The effectiveness of the very good quality provision for pupils with special educational needs is reflected in the good progress made by these pupils, not only in academic work, but also in personal and social development. Similarly, the investment in training one of the non-teaching assistants in the 'Reading Partnership' has been successful in raising reading standards.
92. Very efficient use is made of all available staff. Many teachers give generously of their time and expertise to provide extra activities for the pupils which enrich the life of the school. The deployment of staff and the allocation of responsibilities reflect the school's priorities. Some parents expressed concerns about the large numbers of pupils in some of the mixed-age classes. Teachers have responded well to the additional demands made on them by having to teach pupils in mixed-age group classes. The good quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the non-teaching staff who are very efficiently deployed in providing individual and group support ensures that all pupils make good progress. Funding for staff development has been used very well to support teachers in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Attendance at courses is in line with priorities in the school development plan and the individual needs of teachers. The high quality and effectiveness of the staff development programme and the opportunities for all to contribute to school development have led to improvements in pupils' standards of achievements and to the Investors in People award.
93. The management of resources and the accommodation are good. The school is clean and well maintained. It has been subject to carefully considered internal development in recent years. However, though the accommodation is used effectively, some classrooms are too small for the number of pupils. Another class has to use a main thoroughfare as its base. This sometimes causes lessons to be interrupted. Spending on books, materials and equipment takes due account of the school's priorities for curriculum development. Whilst resources are good for literacy, there are deficiencies in provision for information technology. However, the school has successfully bid the National Grid for Learning resources which should improve the quality and quantity of information technology resources. Resources are satisfactory in all other subjects. Money raised by the Parent Teachers and Friends Association makes a significant contribution to the school.
94. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Well-established routines and procedures help to maintain the very orderly atmosphere that exists throughout the school and good use is made of the time available. The school secretary provides good support but is only employed for 25 hours a week. This means that the headteacher has to undertake some routine administrative duties.

95. The school provides very good value for money. Although attainment on entry is average, with a minority of children having better skills than those expected for the age group, pupils' attainment at the age of 11 is high in English, mathematics and science. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. The ethos of the school is very positive and the school is highly successful in meeting its aims. The quality of teaching is good or better in eight out of ten lessons. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to their work.

104.

## **PART B:**

### **CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

#### **104. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

96. The overall ability of the intake is average, although a minority of children has better skills than those expected for the age group in language and literacy. This judgement is supported by the school's own 'baseline assessments' and inspection findings.

97. The good progress that children make in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world enables the majority to exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in these areas of learning by the age of five. Children make satisfactory progress in physical and creative development and achieve levels in line with those expected for five-year-olds.

106.

#### **106. Personal and social development**

98. Personal and social education is very successfully nurtured. At the time of the inspection, very early in the school year, the children had all settled very well into the routines expected of them and confidently undertook responsibilities such as taking the register to the office. They all related well to the several adults who help in the classroom and had begun to establish friendship groups. Children are given opportunities to work on shared tasks; they learn to take turns and quickly begin to distinguish between good and bad behaviour. During the inspection they were eager to learn about the rules necessary for safety in physical education in the hall and were very considerate of the neighbouring class when going to their lesson.

#### **107. Language and literacy**

99. The provision for language and literacy receives a very high priority and children make good progress. Many opportunities are given to them to speak and to listen to others. Role-play such as the 'hospital' is well organised to develop their vocabulary. Children enjoy learning the sounds made by letters and the rhymes which help them to remember. Already many recognise familiar words and are on target to be following the National Curriculum Programmes of Study by the age of five. They handle books carefully and they are encouraged to choose them to take home to look at with their parents. There are opportunities to share in story time as a whole class and in small groups using the listening centre. Activities are very well structured to promote the skills necessary for writing and by the age of five the higher attaining children are able to write sentences independently.

108.

#### **Mathematics**

100. Good progress is made in the development of mathematical skills. By the age of five most children use mathematical language such as bigger, smaller, longer and shorter with good understanding. They handle numbers to ten, for example, in subtraction machines and in stories. They order numbers, can count back and construct patterns involving shapes and numbers.

#### **109. Knowledge and understanding of the world**

101. Knowledge and understanding of the world are well promoted and links closely with children's

language development. Pupils make satisfactory progress. During the previous reception year children made investigations about toys their parents played with as children. They recorded findings about waterproof materials, labelled pictures of parts of the body, observed caterpillars turning into butterflies and planted sunflower seeds. Children enjoyed visits from representatives of the police, fire brigade and nursing services. They acquire appropriate technological skills by using the computer and by playing with toys such as the telephone. The computer is also used effectively to reinforce literary and mathematical skills.

110.

### **Physical development**

102. Progress in physical education is satisfactory. Children are taught to use tools and utensils such as rollers, brushes, scissors and magnifying glasses. In the role-play area they use realistic toys to learn about medical equipment such as a stethoscope. Physical education sessions are time-tabled regularly in the hall, but the apparatus available is unsuitably heavy. A lack of large play equipment limits the opportunity to provide adequately for the development of their gross motor skills such as those required in pushing, pulling, swinging and climbing.

111.

### **111. Creative development**

103. Creative development is satisfactory. Children use paint, make collages and use malleable materials such as plasticine, dough and clay. They make music and acquire an appreciation of sound. There are opportunities for them to dress up in imaginative play. However, there is scope to develop still further the ways in which they explore sound, colour, texture, shape and form as a means of expressing their ideas and communicating their feelings.

104. The quality of teaching is good with some very good features. There is good team work. Both members of staff are appropriately trained and make good observations of children's achievements, which help them to provide suitably stepped tasks. These meet the children's needs very well. Planning is very thorough, especially for literacy and mathematics, and there is a very smooth transition from the Desired Learning Outcomes to the National Curriculum. The spacious reception classroom is very well organised and attractive displays contribute to a stimulating learning environment. A useful outdoor play area has been created and is well used for a variety of purposes.

105. A baseline assessment is in place to establish children's attainment when they start. The information is used to provide for future learning and appropriate records are made of children's subsequent progress. There are good links with parents who are welcomed into the classroom at the start of the school day and as volunteer classroom helpers. The induction arrangements for children starting school are good and the information packs given to parents to help them understand the curriculum, are clear and helpful. Although links exist with pre-school agencies, such as the several nurseries and playgroups, there is scope to develop this liaison further.

114.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **114. English**

106. Standards have improved in English throughout the school since the last inspection. Pupils

make satisfactory progress in English during Key Stage 1 and by the age of seven the proportions attaining the expected standard are above the national average. In the 1998 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests the percentage of children reaching the expected Level 2 was above the national average in reading and well above in writing. The proportion achieving the higher Level 3 in reading was close to the national average but no pupil attained the higher level in writing. These results were below average for similar schools. Teacher assessments in speaking and listening showed the percentage achieving Level 2 to be above the national average and the proportion achieving Level 3 broadly in line with the national figure. Overall results in English in 1998 showed the percentage of pupils achieving Levels 2 and 3 was above the national average. In 1999 the overall result at Level 2 fell slightly but the proportion achieving Level 3 rose. The results confirm that girls are out performing boys at this age.

107. Inspection evidence shows that speaking and listening skills are well developed. By the age of seven pupils listen attentively to stories and adults' instructions. They respond appropriately to questions and speak clearly. The majority of children are on course to achieve the national target of Level 2 in reading and writing. Most pupils make satisfactory progress. Children with special educational needs are well supported. Individual children who have difficulty in learning to read are identified at an early stage and additional support and resources are targeted very effectively to help them make good progress. The successful introduction of the literacy hour has helped to focus the development of reading skills as well as the promotion of speaking and listening.
108. Most children by the age of seven have become enthusiastic readers and standards are above average. They are able to use picture and phonic clues to attack new words. They read aloud with confidence, sometimes taking parts in a story. They are able to use contents and index to find information in non-fiction books. They write, usually with letters correctly formed and some awareness of spelling and punctuation. Most successfully apply these skills to a range of writing such as recipes, instructions, poems, stories and communicating their own feelings. However, there is scope to develop writing for a real audience.
109. Standards of attainment in English are well above average by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils make good progress. In the 1998 National Curriculum English tests held at the end of Key Stage 2 for 11-year-olds the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was above the national average and those achieving the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. In both cases these results are broadly in line with 'similar' schools. The 1999 test results show that a very high proportion of pupils achieved Level 5. The results reflect the calibre of the particular age group in question, with girls continuing to outperform boys in this subject. Inspection evidence shows that teachers' expectations remain high and standards are being maintained. However, the current level of work suggests that the proportion of pupils on line to reach the expected standard is not as great because there is a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the current small Year 6 class.
110. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good and sometimes very good progress through Key Stage 2. Some have benefited from initiatives such as 'The Catch up Programme', the 'Better Reading Partnership' and the 'Booster Class', which was designed to develop comprehension skills. All have been involved in target setting, and all Year 6 pupils take part in the 'After School Study Support Unit'. This is an initiative supported by the local football club and includes the development of information technology skills in English.
111. Key Stage 2 pupils have good opportunities during lessons for speaking and listening. During

the inspection younger pupils showed proficiency in the use of technical and descriptive vocabulary and older pupils were able to articulate their thoughts clearly when analysing 'Call First' a ghost story by Ramsey Campbell. Opportunities for pupils to take an active part in class masses gives them the chance to practice their speaking skills in more formal situations.

112. Attainment in reading is above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils are confident if not always expressive readers. They use a range of strategies to make sense of what they read, sometimes including inference and deduction. The majority of pupils are able to locate information using reference books from the library and many can scan and skim text.
113. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in writing is above expectation. This aspect has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection when there was some over use of a commercial scheme which resulted in too few opportunities for creative writing. Work from the previous year included a wide range of opportunities to write for a comprehensive range of purpose and audience. Some examples, across a range of curricular areas included personal responses to Shakespeare and the re-writing of portions of Macbeth, poems of many kinds including limericks, Haiku and epitaphs, formal letters of complaint, persuasion and explanation, book reviews, biographies and an autobiography. There is a comprehensive system for marking pupils' books. The very detailed comments written by the class teachers of older pupils are very effective in helping pupils to progress. Standards of spelling and handwriting are satisfactory. The school has identified these areas for further development.
114. Throughout the school pupils' attitude to English is very good. They listen carefully and carry out instructions well. Behaviour is very good at all times. Levels of concentration are usually very high. However, there is occasional restiveness, for example, during some lengthy shared text sessions of the literacy hour. Older pupils take on responsibility for helping to run the library and some use it to carry out their own research. Throughout the school the range of literature available in, for example, the newly provided reading boxes, makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development.
115. The quality of teaching is good and there are some very good features in both key stages. There was no evidence of any over-reliance on a commercial scheme as found in the previous inspection. The high quality of the planning and assessment arrangements is a particular strength. The literacy hour has been implemented very well and all teachers use the literacy strategies with confidence. Teaching is particularly effective when there are tangible links between each section of the lesson. The occasional tendency towards an over-long 'shared text' section is a weakness which results in loss of pace to the lesson. Teachers use good questioning techniques to extend pupils' thinking. All deploy non-teaching assistants very effectively, for example, to assist with guided reading. In Key Stage 1 the use of puppets and the practice of allowing children to read aloud a part in the story are effective means of fostering their interest. In one Key Stage 2 lesson the teacher took great care to select an appropriately interesting piece of text for the difficult task of analysing the structure of a paragraph and investigating key vocabulary. The range of writing tasks is imaginative, and gives pupils reasons to write for an audience which is very real to them. The very good practice of making detailed comments on the written work of older pupils' has a very positive effect both on their attitude to work and on the standards achieved. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend pupils' learning.
116. National Curriculum requirements are met. Boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum. Curriculum monitoring which was a key issue in the previous inspection report has been addressed successfully and the subject is well managed. Lesson observations have

been carried out as part of the introduction of the literacy hour. Key initiatives such as target indicators for each year group have helped teachers to formulate individual targets for pupils. Analysis of assessment information is used very effectively as the basis for a curriculum action plan. The school's involvement in an effective School Improvement Project with a focus on writing is having a beneficial effect upon standards. The school's portfolio of pupils' written work is updated when necessary. Samples of each pupil's work are appropriately retained as another means to monitor progress.

117. The school is well resourced for literacy. Materials are well stored and easily accessible. Literacy awareness is heightened by a range of events and activities. Some examples include a Shakespeare workshop for Key Stage 2 pupils, actors and a children's author visiting school for a 'Book Week', and parental information meetings to explain the literacy strategy. The library accommodation has improved since the last inspection and is now good. This resource is well organised, with a good balance in the choice of subject matter. However, the number of volumes is relatively small for the size of the school.
126. **Mathematics**
118. Attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average and pupils make good progress. Standards have varied over the last three years reflecting variations in the abilities of Year 6 pupils, but have always been above the national average standard. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in the 1998 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds was well above the national average and above average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was above the national average and broadly in line with the average for similar schools. There was further improvement in the 1999 tests with over nine out of ten pupils attaining Level 4 and half of the class attaining Level 5. Inspection evidence shows that although teacher expectations remain high and standards have been maintained, the proportion of pupils on line to achieve the nationally expected standard in mathematics is not as great because of the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the current small Year 6.
119. Standards of attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. In 1998 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 in the national tests was above the national average but below the results obtained in similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national average and well above the results in similar schools. The continuing improvement over the last three years was carried into the 1999 national tests where every pupil attained Level 2 and a quarter achieved Level 3. In both key stages girls slightly out perform the boys.
120. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know the sequence of numbers to 100 and mentally calculate numbers added and subtracted to 20, with higher attainers working with more complex numbers. Pupils hold a number in their head and count forward and backwards accurately to identify the correct answer. Higher attainers correctly calculate three or more numbers in horizontal sums; they accurately recognise number patterns to identify missing numbers and understand that  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$ , are parts of a whole shape. Attainment in shape, space and measures is satisfactory. Pupils recognise right angles and most understand how to collect data and draw simple bar charts to identify favourite foods.
121. By the end of Key Stage 2 numeracy skills are good in problem-solving contexts. Pupils accurately add, subtract, multiply and divide, showing very good understanding of place position and confidently work with numbers to one million. They expertly change decimal to

percentages and demonstrate very good understanding of probability, the attributes of three-dimensional shape, and rotational symmetry. Many pupils are working at high levels for their age in data-handling and know how to compile tables and graphs about their food preferences. In their geography studies younger pupils use data-handling techniques to examine rainfall in Delhi and London in order to compare the two climates.

122. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Year 1 pupils quickly show firm understanding of the value of number digits to ten. Higher attainers begin to develop early awareness of the fact that the value of one ten is the same as ten ones. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They recognise the number value of digits and order them accurately. Year 2 pupils make sound progress in their ability to look for patterns within a range of numbers, developing the skill to collect whole tens. They can hold the value in their head and count on.
123. In Key Stage 2 progress is good. Older pupils quickly apply the knowledge and skills learned from the teacher to their own investigations. For example, they apply place position to their mathematical reasoning when they calculate the cost of 100 items when the cost of each is £1.67. The oldest pupils quickly learn how to write out long-multiplication calculations. They develop accurate techniques for rounding up and down to obtain precise answers. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are developing a very good ability to talk accurately about their mathematical investigations. The youngest pupils in the key stage make good progress as they consolidate and revise their learning.
124. The school's involvement in the National Numeracy Strategy as one of the pilot schools has helped to improve standards in mathematics throughout the school, especially with regard to pupils' mental agility.
125. Pupils enjoy their mathematics; they are confident and persevere in lessons. They are keen and eager to please and are anxious to complete tasks. Year 2 pupils showed obvious pleasure and satisfaction to find that they can calculate number values without using counters. Older pupils confidently enter into complex discussions with the teachers, carefully explaining to the class the mathematical procedures used. They are keen to contribute to lessons. Levels of concentration are high and working relationships are very positive. Behaviour is very good.
126. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages with some very good practice observed throughout the school. A strength of the teaching in both key stages is the careful planning of activities which are challenging and appropriate to pupils' attainment. Only occasionally, where lessons are satisfactory, is there an over-reliance on printed worksheets which restricts pupils' ability to experiment with calculations. Many worksheets devised by teachers provide a high degree of challenge and interest. Pupils with special needs are supported well and appropriate practical apparatus is used to focus their thinking. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' ability to cope with number. The opening phase in many lessons is devoted to mental mathematics. This activity is conducted at a challenging pace and helps to strengthen pupils' ability and dexterity in the handling of number. It also prompts them to make clear links with the main teaching points in the lesson. Occasionally, the large class size prevents the teacher from running the mental mathematics session at a sufficiently challenging pace. Most teachers organise their time effectively to visit each working group to check their work and very good use is made of skilled and enthusiastic classroom assistants to support learning. Adults ask searching questions to determine pupils' understanding and teachers analyse pupils' work carefully, using the information derived from learning outcomes to prepare the next activity. All teachers have a good knowledge of the National Numeracy

Strategy and use accurate mathematical language in their explanations and discussions with pupils.

127. Mathematics provision meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator has established an effective procedure for monitoring mathematics lessons and the evaluation of progress. Very good assessment systems are in place. These factors have contributed to the rise in standards in the subject since the last inspection. The subject is well resourced.

136. **Science**

128. Standards of attainment in science are well above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and have improved considerably since the previous inspection in 1996. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in the National Curriculum tests in science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1998 was above the national average but below average when compared to similar schools. The results of the 1999 tests show a marked improvement with nearly all pupils achieving Level 4 and just over half Level 5. The improvements in standards are due mainly to good professional development which has increased staff confidence in the teaching of science particularly in experimental and investigative work. Inspection evidence shows that although teacher expectations remain high and standards are being maintained, the proportion of pupils on track to reach the expected standard is not as great because there is a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the current small Year 6.

129. Overall standards of attainment in science are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. The 1998 teacher assessments in science for seven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils attaining the level appropriate for their age is above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level increased significantly in 1999. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are on line to attain the expected level in science with a significant minority achieving the higher level.

130. Pupils build appropriately on their good early grounding and make sound progress overall during Key Stage 1. By the age of seven they have a good knowledge of the topics covered. For example, in a lesson on healthy living pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the effect of exercise on the body. They used stethoscopes to listen to their pulse rate and were fascinated to hear it beating faster after they had been involved in exercise. They write about their work in simple sentences and are able to produce graphs of their favourite foods. Year 1 pupils can use their senses to investigate objects and identify everyday smells and tastes. They use simple apparatus accurately and confidently.

131. During Key Stage 2 progress in science is good. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to carry out detailed investigations, predict and draw conclusions. They record their work meticulously in the form of written reports, graphs, diagrams and tables. Much of the work they explore is pitched at a high level of challenge. For example, in a study investigating how objects of different masses are affected by gravity, the pupils demonstrated a firm grasp of the need for fair testing and of the importance of comparing like with like. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 understand that the differences in types of soil depends on the kind of rock from which they originate. Older pupils can set up an investigation to find the most efficient thermal insulator. Throughout the school the use of writing frames is proving very successful in helping pupils to predict and record processes and their observations. This is preferable to pupils merely completing a worksheet. In the last inspection report this was recorded as a weakness in a minority of lessons. The school has now remedied it effectively.

132. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by non-teaching assistants and make good progress.
133. Pupils' attitudes to science are very positive. They are enthusiastic about investigations and sensible in their approach to work. They share and use equipment carefully and discuss their findings productively with one another. Behaviour is of a high standard and pupils take a pride in their written work. All pupils are keen to answer questions and take part in discussions. The practical aspects of the subject make a valuable contribution to pupils' social development and some of the topics they study, such as healthy living, play an important part in their moral development.
134. Teaching is good in both key stages and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have a very strong knowledge and understanding of science and make good use of the school's scheme of work to devise interesting investigations. Lessons are prepared conscientiously and planned thoroughly and classroom management is very good. Teachers use a good range of methods to challenge their pupils. For example, the Year 1 teacher has provided a range of sensory experiences to ensure that pupils benefit from appropriate practical experiences. Interesting introductory explanations are usually followed by relevant group activities including practical investigations and personal study. Where teaching is very good pupils are encouraged to pose questions and make predictions. Teachers use support staff very well to reduce the size of larger classes. This practice makes for an efficient use of time and resources. Pupils are taught to use mathematical processes to collect and analyse the data obtained during their scientific investigations. However, the use of information technology for data-handling purposes is underdeveloped. Staff mark pupils' work appropriately and sometimes include constructive comments to extend pupils' thinking.
135. The co-ordination of the subject has improved since the last inspection. There is now a well-planned scheme of work that gives a very good structure to the science curriculum. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and ensures progression of knowledge and skills as the pupils move through the school. Assessment procedures are very good and the information gathered is used well to inform future planning in the subject. The co-ordinator is allocated time to monitor the subject throughout the school but this practice does not include monitoring the quality of teaching. Resources in both key stages are now adequate to support the teaching of all aspects of science.

144.

#### **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

144.

#### **144. Information technology**

136. At the end of both key stages pupils' attainment is in line with the national expectations in the applications of word processing, problem solving and graphics. It is below the expected standard in the applications of control technology and data handling. Information technology is used effectively to support learning in almost all National Curriculum subjects.
137. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use the computer mouse to control the cursor as they draw illustrations for their reading books. They use the control buttons on the mouse to click on the icons to change colours and to block in colours; successfully operating a graphics program. They type individual sentences, edit their work, check for capital letters and full stops and print

their work. Younger pupils print their names, using both capital letters and lower case letters.

138. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use word processing regularly to support their work in other subjects. Pupils enter text with confidence and many use the keyboard effectively. They use appropriate strategies and functions such as spelling checks and are confident in selecting and changing letter fonts and sizes. Pupils are able to activate CD-ROMs to retrieve information and use a graphics program to construct an historical scene from Ancient Egyptian times as part of their historical investigations. The applications of control are less well developed, Year 4 pupils have the basic skills to activate a programmable toy to travel in a square pattern. The oldest pupils enter information into a database and manipulate the software to organise this information and present it in graphical form.
139. In both key stages all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils' skills and awareness of programs are systematically and effectively acquired in the context of the other curriculum subjects. Pupils develop competence in word processing using CD-ROM. Progress in the applications of control and data handling is less systematic; pupils do not extend their skills to enable them to activate programmable toys to follow a complex pattern of instructions. They do not extend their data handling skills to use simple spreadsheets. The oldest pupils are beginning to extend their word processing skills to be able to change the location of script. The youngest pupils confidently operate their listening stations gaining greater confidence in switching and controlling tapes.
140. Pupils' attitudes are good and they welcome the opportunity to use computers and tape recorders. They are confident, receptive to learning new skills and pick up procedures quickly. They work well in pairs. More skilled pupils act as willing support 'tutors' to their classmates. Most pupils enjoy the challenge of using their newly acquired skills and will 'have a go' before seeking help. These positive attitudes contribute greatly to pupils' progress.
141. No lessons in information technology were observed. However, evidence from teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils indicates that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. In all classes teachers include computers as tools to aid learning. It is clear from the records kept in every class that teachers plan for every pupil to have time on the computer to develop appropriate skills. New skills are being introduced to the whole class before they are practised on the computer. Classroom assistants have appropriate knowledge to enable them to support pupils. The school effectively pairs pupils with different levels of competence to promote peer tutoring.
142. Since the previous inspection the school has greatly improved the quality of curricular guidance in information technology and its use across the curriculum. Long-term planning and a scheme of work supported by QCA guidance clearly identifies the skills and levels of difficulty for each year group. The school has successfully bid for the National Grid for Learning resources which will substantially increase the current basic resources.
143. The co-ordinator has made appropriate plans to increase the range of software. Teachers' planning is monitored and good provision is being made for staff development including the use of Blackburn Rovers Study Centre. Management of development in the subject is very effective. The new initiative for Year 6 pupils to attend at the Blackburn Rovers Study Centre is already improving pupils' information technology skills. It is an excellent example of the school's level of planning to maximise teaching and learning opportunities for its pupils.
152. **Art**

144. At the end of both key stages pupils are attaining appropriately for their abilities in art. Some of the work, especially observational drawing, clay work, abstract art and colour mixing have good or very good features. This represents an improvement on the standards observed in the previous inspection report. Art makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development and they experience a broad range of interesting activities. Pupils learn about and practise the artistic styles of world famous artists. The subject also makes a good contribution to their cultural development.
145. In both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the development of their skills and techniques. Older pupils make very good progress.
146. Year 1 pupils paint with confidence and are able to apply a background colour wash to a cardboard plate before they sketch and shade animals' heads in the style of Picasso. Year 2 pupils continue their study of Picasso and carefully decorate the border of a frame which they are preparing as a mount for pencil sketches of heads and faces. Pupils in Key Stage 2 carry on their research into Picasso and create sketches of three-dimensional objects, paying good attention to light, shade and texture. Older pupils very effectively investigate the qualities of clay when they follow their original pencil design sketch to produce a face in 'cubism' style. All pupils demonstrate very good use and control of modelling tools. Other older pupils create designs to represent a candle flame on a background of geometric shapes. They add black and white to blue to create a full range of colour shades. This work and the clay work is of high quality and all pupils make very good progress.
147. Pupils enjoy art and are enthusiastic when new challenges are presented. Year 1 pupils were eager to paint in the style of Picasso and the display of observation drawing by Year 2 pupils indicates a high level of concentration as they produce detailed drawings. In Key Stage 2 there is a high level of interest and attentiveness. There are very good relationships between pupils. Levels of co-operation are also good despite the somewhat cramped conditions. Concentration is very well sustained and pupils take pride in their work. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social development. Pupils take responsibility for the equipment and tidy away once the lesson is complete. Behaviour is very good.
148. The quality of teaching is good overall in both key stages with some lessons being very good or better. Teachers' knowledge is good and is reflected in the systematic way in which they carry out their planning. Teachers' planning is effective in developing pupils' skills in observational drawing, sketching, paint-mixing and printing. Pupils are also helped to make the right choice of tools for working clay. They strengthen their knowledge of world famous artists. Through good teaching and planning, pupils develop first-hand experience of each artist's unique style. This has a positive effect on standards. Good use is made of sketch books to give pupils opportunities to practice new techniques. Lessons are effectively organised and well resourced, although the lack of space and a water source in some teaching areas restricts some pupils' progress. Experienced and skilled classroom assistants make very effective contributions to lessons and informed enthusiastic parent volunteers also provide good levels of support.
149. The scheme of work for art provides a useful framework to guide teachers' planning. The practice of the whole school studying a particular artist ensures that all pupils across the seven years benefit from challenging and developmental lessons. The art work on display, together with photographs of recent displays, enhances the learning environment and indicates that the pupils benefit from work with paint, fabric, Modroc and computer-generated work.

158. **Design and technology**

150. In both key stages progress is satisfactory. No direct teaching was seen, but the examination of pupils' past and present work, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning show that standards are similar to those expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.

151. Since the previous inspection the scheme of work has been supported by the introduction of QCA guidelines. Pupils work through a satisfactory range of projects which are often effectively linked to other subjects. There are some good working links with art craft and design. However, the process of designing and evaluating is not systematically developed.

152. In Key Stage 1 the younger pupils manipulate the components of construction kits confidently to assemble an exciting range of buildings including towers, houses and futuristic buildings. They move confidently between the processes of 'design', 'make' and 'evaluate', acquiring a good working knowledge of the potential of the components. Older pupils accurately cut, fold and glue card to produce greeting cards with pop-up messages to celebrate Mother's Day and other festivals. They design and make puppets using a good range of fabrics which they join using glueing and stitching techniques. Other projects include the construction of houses and homes made from recyclable materials and which are assembled using paste and sticking tape. They are finished to a good standard. Much of the work develops the necessary skills required to produce high quality models, but most pupils are not challenged frequently enough to create and draw their designs and to use them in the making process.

153. In Key Stage 2 pupils successfully link design and technology with their history projects where they construct models of Viking boats, taking their designs from illustrations. They cut and bend card over a wooden framework to produce the shape of the hull and the superstructure for the sail. However, there are no records of pupils' own sketches containing details of measurements, amounts of materials required or the necessary tools. Older pupils construct accurate models of a local church. They make wheeled vehicles but do not design propulsion systems using battery powered electric motors. The oldest pupils design and make working clocks using plastic and metal. They incorporate the battery-driven clock mechanisms and use more advanced equipment to cut the materials to shape and assemble the finished product. This is a good example of the design and make process.

154. The study of the photographs and finished models indicates that pupils' levels of attention, concentration and interest are well sustained. Work is completed to a good standard and pupils show pride and joy in creating it.

155. Although no direct teaching was observed, the evidence displayed in photographs and teachers' planning indicates that teaching is generally sound. Teachers have secure knowledge in the teaching of basic skills but the process of systematically teaching pupils to design with increasing accuracy and detail is not consistently developed throughout the school.

156. There has been some improvement in the subject since the last inspection and the implementation of the QCA materials will support teachers' planning and ensure that the full range of skills are being identified and taught.

165. **Geography**

157. Standards in geography have improved since the previous inspection. The 1996 report

highlighted weaknesses in the policy document and in the organisation of resources. Since the previous inspection more has been done to monitor the quality of provision and to ensure that pupils' attainment is appropriate for their age.

158. During the week of the inspection only a small number of geography lessons were seen. However, additional evidence from teachers' planning, discussions held with staff and pupils, and work completed earlier shows that attainment is broadly typical of that found in most schools by the end of both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Too few lessons were observed to judge the overall quality of teaching.
159. In Key Stage 1 pupils use the school and surrounding area to develop geographical skills. They successfully label a plan of the school and observe features of the immediate locality. During the previous school year they successfully drew plans to illustrate their ideas for the construction of a quiet area in the school grounds. Their investigation of the area in front of the school as part of a science topic contributed to their environmental awareness. Pupils successfully acquire knowledge of a Scottish island as a contrasting locality. They observe and talk about photographs and posters and become acquainted with the islanders' lifestyle through literature such as the "Katy Morag" books by Maire Hedderwick, and compare it with life in a town.
160. In Key Stage 2 satisfactory progress is sustained. Pupils' mapping skills are appropriately developed as they are introduced to map symbols, keys and co-ordinates. They apply them to the construction of maps of a nearby area. In a topic on India, pupils demonstrate that they can read temperature and rainfall levels. They interpret this information and compare the climates of London and Delhi. Last year, a study of rivers by Year 6 enabled a group of higher attaining pupils to produce some work of high quality. This included the understanding of geographical terms such as source, tributary, estuary and confluence and diagrammatic explanations of the formation of meanders, ox-bow lakes and waterfalls.
161. Pupils responded well in the few lessons observed and behaviour was very good. In Key Stage 1 they were interested in the topic and made sensible observations of photographs and posters. Key Stage 2 pupils worked co-operatively when required, and showed good levels of independence in carrying out their personal studies. Relationships were very good.
162. The subject is well co-ordinated. A scheme of work is in place and is supported by an adequate range of materials although some of the atlas provision needs updating. Resources are clearly labelled, conveniently stored and easily accessible. Additional learning materials are available in the form of a project loan to the school. In addition to informal talks with teachers the co-ordinator monitors progress through teachers' lesson planning, displays and samples of children's work. Assessment procedures are in an early stage of development.
171. **History**
163. Standards of attainment have improved significantly throughout the school since the previous inspection when they were judged to be unsatisfactory in relation to pupils' prior attainment.
164. It was not possible to see any teaching of history in Key Stage 1 during the week of the inspection. Evidence from the work from the previous year and from the pupils who have recently moved up into Year 3 indicates that children make sound progress and achieve standards in line with those found in most schools. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the historical concepts and knowledge expected of seven-year-olds by the end of the key stage.

They have a good awareness of chronology and, by sequencing pictures, identify how cars and trains have changed over the years. Pupils know about people's lives in the past and are able to understand that some things, such as kitchen equipment, have changed since their grandparents were young. Their skills in historical enquiry are appropriately developed through the examination of artefacts and the use of primary sources such as interviews.

165. Good progress is made during Key Stage 2 and standards of attainment are higher than those found in most schools. Achievement is not just limited to the acquisition of knowledge as at the time of the previous inspection but also to the development of skills. By the age of 11 pupils have a good insight into what life was like for different kinds of people within the various societies. For example, pupils investigate the ideas, beliefs and attitudes of the Victorians to the poor. They write letters to the editor of "The Feniscowles Times" about the causes of poverty. Such activities give them a good understanding of why we have to take account of how the personal viewpoints of a writer can affect his version of events. Pupils in the earlier part of Key Stage 2 are gaining a good knowledge of the key features of life in Ancient Egypt, such as the importance of the River Nile to farmers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
166. In both key stages pupils learn about the past by using stories, artefacts, television, visits to places of interest and visitors to school. A visit to Ribchester, as part of a topic on the Romans, and a talk from a grandmother about her time as "Cotton Queen", were informative and highly successful in stimulating interest. History contributes much to pupils' literacy development and to their cultural knowledge.
167. Pupils' response to history is very good. They are excited by making discoveries about people and events in the past. Pupils listen attentively and are keen to respond to questions. They can apply previous learning to help formulate their answers. They are able to engage in personal study and use reference books confidently from an early age to elicit information. Pupils present their work well, taking a pride in the finished product, whether in writing or picture form. Behaviour is very good.
168. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Teachers prepare carefully and are clear about the facts they want pupils to learn. Their subject knowledge is secure. They have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations of behaviour. Teachers make good use of questioning techniques within whole-class situations and while interacting with small groups or individuals. Where teaching is very good, topics are made exciting as well as interesting and pupils react enthusiastically to the opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences. Through the consideration of such issues as poverty in Victorian times the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' moral development.
169. The co-ordination of history is very thorough. There is a clear subject policy and the scheme of work provides for a good coverage of the units of study and the development of skills. The scheme has assessment opportunities written into it. In addition 'Key Questions' are currently being written and trialled as a means of assisting teachers with their assessment of pupils' progress. Resources are adequate. Project loans from the Library Service are used successfully to supplement the school's own reference materials.
178. **Music**
170. At the end of both key stages standards of attainment in music are broadly in line with those expected for the age group. This represents satisfactory progress. Pupils with special

educational needs also make satisfactory progress in listening to, and appreciating, music and also in performing.

171. In Year 1 pupils learn the concept of a steady beat and are beginning to put it into practice. By the end of the key stage they have built up a repertoire of songs which they sing with reasonable attention to pitch. They make good attempts at singing rounds and experience the sound qualities produced by percussion instruments. They also gain experience in creating their own music and record it using their own symbols.
172. In Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate good listening and appraisal skills. Many are able to distinguish between music of a cello and violin. They articulate their observations of contrasting mood and tone well. Pupils' repertoire of songs is extended. Opportunities exist for them to join the choir and participate in 'polished' performances such as Easter productions and church services within the parish. Pupils perform for the residents of a local retirement home and take part in a local music festival. The annual Christmas Nativity involves all pupils and some of the percussion accompaniment by older pupils is of a high standard. In Key Stage 2 pupils are given the opportunity to learn a brass or woodwind instrument through private arrangements with an outside agency.
173. Pupils' attitude to music is good. They usually listen carefully to the teacher's instructions and are eager to participate in practical activities. Those pupils who have particular musical skills in performance are willing to share them with others. The Christmas Concert is an obvious source of pleasure to participants and audience alike. Relationships and behaviour are very good.
174. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Insufficient lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 to form a judgement. Although the weekly hymn practice for the whole school provides opportunities for pupils to sing and extend their repertoire, there are too many pupils involved for teachers to use these occasions to monitor the attainment and progress of individual pupils. The pace of lessons has improved since the last inspection. Teachers are making better use of the time available so that pupils are more involved during music lessons.
175. The co-ordinator has very good subject expertise. Planning for the subject is clear. Assessment and recording systems are included within the commercial scheme of work adopted by the school. Guidelines exist to aid composition and the co-ordinator offers further assistance to teachers. Resources have improved and are now satisfactory. They are stored conveniently and are easily accessible.
- 184.

## Physical education

184.

176. The school offers broad and balanced provision for physical education but only a limited range could be observed during the inspection and so no overall judgement on standards in the subject could be made. The quality of gymnastics in lower Key Stage 1 and the performance levels in games in Key Stage 2 are above average. Standards have improved in these aspect of physical education since the previous inspection. Records show that standards in swimming are good. By the time pupils leave the school all can swim the required 25 metres and some have progressed well beyond this level. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in competitive sport. All activities are open both to boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
177. In Key Stage 1 younger pupils are confident in their movements and demonstrate good control and co-ordination. They show very sound ability to travel in response to the directives of the lesson as for example, when they use two arms, one leg or jump. Pupils are able to balance on the apparatus and demonstrate good landing techniques when jumping off.
178. Pupils in Key Stage 2 know the reasons for a warm-up and cool-down session at the beginning and end of a lesson to maintain a healthy heart and muscles. They are also aware of the need to work safely. The effective programme of games skills enables pupils to make good progress during both key stages. Groups of pupils are able to develop sound generic skills in accurately controlling and passing a ball with the side of the foot. Boys and girls are equally skilful in throwing, catching and fielding.
179. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to the subject. They enjoy all aspects of their physical education lessons, even routine warm-up sessions. When working indoors or outdoors they are careful to avoid others when practising skills individually. Pupils are keen to practise and improve their work. They collaborate fully in group activities. Behaviour is always good and pupils respond immediately to instructions.
180. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. It is never less than satisfactory. Teaching standards have improved since the last inspection. Lessons contain appropriate warm up sessions. Throughout both key stages teachers are effective in managing pupils and organising activities which break down the skills into small manageable steps. Pupils are given precise guidance on what they need to do, such as controlling and passing a ball accurately to their partner. The quality of teaching has a positive impact upon the progress pupils make during lessons. Games lessons are brisk and well planned with a clear focus on particular skills and the improvement of performance. Teachers constantly assess pupils' attainment and use encouraging comments to support development and promote confidence. However, opportunities are missed to give pupils the chance to look at what makes some performances better than others and to use these ideas to raise their own standards.
181. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a strong understanding of the subject. Resources are satisfactory and adequate to deliver the planned curriculum. They are stored efficiently and are accessible. Some members of staff give generously of their time to provide a range of extra-curricular activities such as netball, cricket and short tennis. In addition, there is a good level of inter-schools competitive sport and pupils are given the opportunity to take part in outdoor adventurous activities at Whitehough and Hothersall Lodge.

190. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

190. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

182. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, who were in school for a total of 14 inspector days.

183. During the inspection week:

- 51 lessons or parts of lessons, representing 38 hours, were observed;
- all the work from a significant sample of pupils, including work from the previous year, was monitored;
- the inspectors heard a cross-section of pupils read and held discussions with pupils about their work;
- teachers' planning files and records, attendance registers and pupil records were examined;
- discussions were held with teaching, non-teaching and visiting staff.

1. Prior to the inspection week:

- a meeting to ascertain parents' views was held;
- school policies, other documents and records of meetings were analysed;
- meetings were held with the governing body and with staff.

1. Religious education and collective worship are to be the subject of a separate diocesan inspection.

194. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

195. **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
YR - Y6	191	5	32	0

195. **Teachers and classes**

196. **Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	27.28

196.

197. **Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

	Total number of education support staff:	9
	Total aggregate hours worked each week:	116.5
198.	<b>Average class size</b>	

	Average class size:	31.8
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199. **Financial data**

	Financial year:	1998 - 1999
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		£
	Total income	279,342
	Total expenditure	279,014
	Expenditure per pupil	1,576
	Balance brought forward from previous year	35,678
	Balance carried forward to next year	36,006

200. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 150  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 66

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	65	33	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	64	30	3	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	33	43	22	2	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	38	48	5	9	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	47	41	6	6	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	62	36	2	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	46	43	9	0	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	50	42	3	3	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	67	30	0	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	64	36	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	62	36	0	2	0