

# INSPECTION REPORT

**PILLING ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ladies Hill

Pilling

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119555

Headteacher: Mrs. Margaret Stockdale

Reporting inspector: Peter Kerr  
23583

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 January 2000

Inspection number: 191635

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ladies Hill Pilling Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR3 6HA
Telephone number:	01253 790282
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr Edward Moorat
Date of previous inspection:	7-10 October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Peter Kerr	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs Equal Opportunities	What Sort of School is it?  The school's results and pupils' achievements  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?
Judith Telfer	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents.
Mike Duggan	Team inspector	Areas of learning for the under fives English Information Technology History Geography Art	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Office for Standards in Education  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Pilling St John's is a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School, serving a rural farming community. Most of the children come from farming families that have lived in the area for a long time. The school is much smaller than other primary schools, with 80 pupils on roll, aged four to 11, organised into three classes. Six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Children are admitted into the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The attainment of the children entering the Reception class is broadly average, with a wide spread. At the time of the inspection, there were eight pupils under five. They move into the second class when they reach seven and into the third class when they are nine. All the pupils currently on roll are of white English ethnic background, and this is typical of the school's usual intake. There is an overall balance between boys and girls. Twenty-five pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. This is over 30 percent of pupils, which is well above the national average. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs. This is over six per cent of pupils and is very high compared to the national average and three times as high as the average for Lancashire. The number of pupils recognised as having special educational needs is much higher than at the time of the last inspection, and is the only significant change in the school's characteristics since then. The school has very close links with the local church and village community. Its mission statement includes commitments to high standards and the promotion of Christian values. Current aims include raising standards in the key areas of English mathematics and information technology.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Pilling St John's is an improving school. The headteacher provides clear leadership and is well supported by the governing body and senior staff. The standard of teaching is sound, enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress overall and reach standards that broadly reflect their potential by the time they are 11. They reach above average standards in speaking and listening, and the quality of their creative writing is improving. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to their work, with high levels of interest among the younger pupils, and their standard of behaviour is good. The curriculum is good. It provides well for the pupils' personal development and enriches their education with a very good range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits. The school's very fruitful partnership with parents and the local community contributes very positively to the pupils' education. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress relative to their prior attainment. The school manages its resources well and gives sound value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Under the firm leadership of the headteacher, the school maintains a very effective partnership with parents and the community.
- Relationships throughout the school, both between pupils and between pupils and adults, are very good.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress.
- The pupils' education is enriched with a wide range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits.
- All pupils, including those with physical disabilities, enjoy equal access to all the school's provision.
- A good standard of behaviour is expected and achieved.

### What could be improved

- The school does not systematically monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, and as a result, important areas for improvement are not identified.
- Planning and assessment are not consistently linked to the development of skills for each age group and expectations are not always high enough, especially for the older and higher attaining pupils in each class.
- In some lessons, the pace is slow and there is a lack of imagination in the choice of teaching methods.
- Pupils do not have many opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.
- The standard of presentation of pupils' work is not always high enough.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which should be completed within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

### HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1996. Six key issues were identified, and the school addressed them all in its action plan. Good progress has been made on four of the key issues. The new headteacher works closely with the governing body, which is now much more productively involved in the life of the school. Reports to parents are now very good, and tell them what National Curriculum levels their children have reached. Pupils enjoy increasing opportunities to learn and apply information technology skills, to write independently across the curriculum, and to design and evaluate products. Improving standards in these areas reflect the progress that has been made. The school now has a clear and effective child protection policy.

Satisfactory progress has been made in the planning of the curriculum and in providing a consistent approach to planning and assessment across the school. Sound assessment procedures are in place for English, mathematics and science, but are not yet formalised in information technology. In other subjects, teachers keep good records of the work the pupils have covered. However, the assessments are not yet fully effective because they do not always relate to progressively challenging learning targets. The standard of teaching has improved and is now consistently satisfactory, with a small amount of good teaching. The provision for special educational needs has improved and is now good, with good direct teaching of individuals and groups based on clear, relevant individual learning targets.

### STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A*	C	D
Mathematics	A*	A*	C	D
Science	A*	A*	C	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The grades in the above table have to be treated with caution as the number of pupils taking the national tests at the school is often below the minimum required for comparisons to be made with other schools. This was true in 1997 and 1998, when six and five pupils respectively took the tests. Therefore, although it appears from the table that the school's results are falling, this is not necessarily the case.

The inspection evidence confirms standards are in fact broadly in line with national expectations. However, higher attaining pupils do not always fulfil their potential at each stage. This is reflected, for example, in the 1999 tests for seven-year olds, when none of the pupils taking the tests reached Level 3 in writing or mathematics.

Fifteen pupils sat the tests in 1999, so comparisons have to be made. However, the unusually large number of pupils with special educational needs makes these comparisons unreliable. For example, in English, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was the same as the national average, and more pupils than average gained Level 5. However, because a number of pupils scored below Level 3, the school's average points score is greatly reduced and its results are judged below average compared to similar schools. The fact that a good proportion of pupils reached Level 5 indicates that the school does enable higher attaining pupils to achieve their potential on some occasions.

Some of the school's future targets for the national tests are lower than this year's results. This is appropriate to take account of the relatively high number of pupils with statements of special educational needs in the relevant year groups.

In English, standards are average overall. They are above average in speaking and listening and average in reading and writing. However, standards of presentation of writing are in need of improvement throughout the school and especially in Key Stage 2. The school recognises and is addressing this problem. In mathematics, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of number, shape and measure are in line with expectations for their age. They can apply their skills in practical situations, such as shopping, and have an appropriate understanding of how data is represented and interpreted. In all other subjects, pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with expectations for their age throughout the school, but higher attaining pupils do not always reach appropriately high standards at both key stages.

#### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Younger pupils are enthusiastic about their learning, but there is some lack of interest and enthusiasm among older pupils in lessons. Pupils appreciate and enjoy the extra-curricular activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils' courtesy and good behaviour help to create a pleasant, orderly atmosphere. There are no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are friendly and supportive towards one another and enjoy very good relationships with the adults in the school community. Older pupils are self-confident and mature and set a good example to younger pupils. Pupils select resources sensibly when given opportunities, but these do not often arise.
Attendance	Attendance is good and there are very few unauthorised absences. Pupils are almost always punctual.

#### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>Aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory in English and mathematics. Teachers have successfully implemented the government's literacy and numeracy strategies. Their direct teaching of the basic skills is effective in both subjects through carefully planned introductions with clear learning targets. They use the pupils' own interests effectively to develop spoken and written language and introduce the pupils to a wide range of writing. In the most effective lessons, teachers set high expectations and build on previous learning. However, in some lessons the introductions are too long and the expectations too low for some of the pupils. The pupils develop confidence in speaking and listening, especially through the programme of public speaking, but do not have many opportunities to engage in formal discussions and debates beyond this. They enjoy books, and benefit from reading aloud regularly in the literacy lessons, putting expression into their voices and gaining fluency. The quality of their writing is improving, and they write for a range of purposes and audiences. The teachers include opportunities for the pupils to do this in lessons in other subjects, for example, writing a brochure for a local heritage trail in history. The standard of presentation of their written work is below average, however, especially in Key Stage 2. The pupils respond positively to the mental challenges set for them in the numeracy lessons, and commit basic number facts to memory well. From an early age they learn the patterns in the number system, such as counting in tens in Reception, and by the end of Key Stage 2, they can apply their knowledge in a range of practical situations.

Overall, teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons and good in just over one in ten lessons. This is a low proportion of good teaching compared to many schools. The teachers know the pupils well and enjoy good relationships with them. They plan lessons thoroughly for all subjects, teaching main points clearly and demonstrating sound subject knowledge. However, the pace often drops as the lessons proceed, and teachers do not employ imaginative strategies to motivate the pupils and keep their interest. In the least effective lessons, the introduction and the activities offer too little challenge to the higher attainers and the older pupils in each class, sometimes leading to inattention among the pupils. The teachers include the individual learning targets for pupils with special educational needs in their planning, and these pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils learn the basic skills well, especially during introductions to lessons, and they settle down quickly once they have been given their tasks. The standard of presentation of some of the work of the older pupils reflects room for improvement in their attitude to learning.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. It includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and there is an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. The curriculum offers equal learning opportunities to all pupils and is enhanced by a very good range of good quality extra-curricular activities and educational visits. However, planning does not always build on existing skills and does not always offer enough challenge to higher attaining pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. They are identified and assessed early and effectively supported through well-structured individual educational programmes.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Prayer plays a meaningful part in the daily life of the school; moral values are clearly established; the pupils are encouraged to become mature and responsible; the curriculum gives them a strong sense of their cultural heritage and helps them to appreciate other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development and promoting full attendance are good. The school deals effectively with any incidents of bullying that may arise and has a clear child protection policy. There are areas for improvement in the formal monitoring of health and safety risks, including fire drills and in procedures for administering first aid.

The school maintains a very good and fruitful partnership with parents and the community and constructive links with local secondary schools.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound overall. The headteacher works closely with the staff, parents and governors, providing firm, clear leadership in establishing educational priorities. All members of staff contribute to development planning, but there are areas for improvement in the implementation of initiatives across the whole school. The work of the school clearly reflects its aims and values, particularly its role as a caring, Christian community.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They play an active role in development planning and in monitoring the work of the school. All but a few minor statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school analyses national test results to identify areas for improvement, but does not have a formal policy or procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning ensures that spending is closely linked to educational priorities.

There are sufficient teachers and classroom assistants to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the areas of learning for children under five. The accommodation is sound, and adequate resources are available to support teaching in all areas.

In the absence of formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, the school is not fully aware of strengths and weaknesses in provision, and how these may be linked to standards.

The finances of the school are well managed, and the governors have sound procedures for getting the best value they can from the money they spend.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and to achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed, works closely with parents and is approachable.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents think their children have too much homework. A smaller number think the opposite.</li> <li>• Some parents are not happy with the information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>• A few parents are concerned that the introduction of the literacy hour has reduced the amount of time the teachers spend hearing individual children read.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with all the positive views expressed by the parents except that they judged teaching and progress to be satisfactory rather than good overall. They found no evidence that the pupils are given too much homework, and were happy with the quality of reports on pupils' progress. The parents' concerns about the changes in the methods of hearing pupils read are understandable, but during the inspection, it was evident that teachers pay particular attention to individual pupils during group and whole class shared reading sessions. Some of this work is very effective in promoting reading skills and interest in books.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Children enter the school during their fifth year with a wide spread of attainment but broadly average overall. They make sound progress in all the areas of learning for the under-fives and begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 with average attainment in all subjects. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the school, and reach standards that are broadly in line with expectations for their age at both key stages. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in design and information technology, in extended writing and in using mathematics to solve problems. In all other curriculum areas, standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level except in music, where composing and performing skills are below average compared to above average last time and in speaking and listening where above average standards have been maintained.

2. The school's results in the national tests for 11-year olds in English, mathematics and science are very variable. However, only a very small number of pupils take the tests in some years. For example, in 1998, only five pupils took the tests, and only six took them in 1997. With such low numbers of pupils, care has to be taken when interpreting the results. Therefore, although it looks from the tables as if standards were very high in 1997 and 1998 and are now falling, this is not necessarily the case. The inspection evidence in fact confirms that attainment is broadly average in all three subjects.

3. Comparisons have to be made with similar school for the 1999 results because more than ten pupils took the tests. The table on page 7 shows that the school's results were in fact below those of similar schools, although they were in line with all schools nationally. However, the school has a far larger proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs on its register than would normally be expected, and this has a negative impact on the test results. For example, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English in 1999 was close to the national average, and the proportion reaching level 5 was well above it, indicating above average standards. However, a substantial number of pupils (20per cent) failed to reach even level 3. As the grades in the tables are based on average points, this number of low scores considerably depresses the overall grade. A similar effect contributed to the mathematics grade at Key Stage 2. In science, however, the relatively low comparative grade is due to the low number of pupils achieving level 5, despite an above average proportion achieving level 4. None of the pupils were below level 3 in science.

4. At Key Stage 1, the results of the tests indicate an improving trend in reading and writing, and a declining trend in mathematics. However, the numbers taking the tests were low in 1997 and 1998 so the test results are unreliable indicators of standards. However, the results were considerably better in reading than they were in writing. The proportion reaching at least level 2B, which is the average level, was much lower in writing than in reading. Nearly a third of pupils reached level 3 in reading, which is in line with all schools nationally, whereas none did so in writing or mathematics.

5. The differences in the proportion of pupils reaching above average standards between subjects within the school suggests a lack of consistency in the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils to perform to their potential. The inspection findings confirm that this is an area for development. Although there are differences in the test results for girls and boys from year to year, the small numbers taking the tests make the figures unreliable. For example, in 1998, all five of the pupils taking the Key Stage 2 tests were boys. The inspection found no evidence of significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.

6. The inspection evidence, gathered from lesson observations, talking with pupils and examining their work, indicates that standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science at both key stages. In other subjects, pupils' achievements are broadly in line with expectations for their age at each stage.

7. In English, standards of speaking and listening are good throughout the school. The pupils benefit from the public speaking programme and circle times, but have limited opportunities to engage in formal discussion and debate in Key Stage 2. Standards in reading are sound. At Key Stage 1, the pupils enjoy reading the big books together in the literacy hour and read with fluency and expression. In Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils are able to read challenging authors such as Charles Dickens for pleasure and locate information confidently in a library. Standards in writing are average. The content of the pupils' writing is good, and they write for a variety of purposes in different subjects, sometimes at length. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, standards of presentation are below average, and the school recognises this as a priority area for development. Overall, the pupils' literacy skills are in line with expectations at both key stages.

8. The pupils' numeracy skills are sound throughout the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils use their knowledge of number within one hundred to work out change from amounts less than one pound when shopping, and are on target for reaching average levels of attainment by the end of the year. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a secure understanding of number, including decimals and fractions, and can apply their knowledge to practical situations such as shopping. They know the important properties of shapes and use their knowledge of angles to solve geometric problems. They can use graphs and charts to show data and can explain what they mean, but do not always include clear details and explanations in their books. They have a secure knowledge of the times-tables and use these and other learned number facts to solve mental problems quickly.

9. Standards in science are satisfactory. They are good in some areas of knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 can explain that things are made to move, speed up or slow down by different forces. At Key Stage 2, pupils have a good vocabulary for describing parts of plants and the human body and can explain some functions of the human organs. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of materials and forces. From an early age, pupils are introduced to the idea of a fair test, and understand what it means. Other aspects of their experimental and investigative skills are under-developed, however, including checking and repeating measurements and representing and explaining the results of experiments clearly, using scientific language. The presentation of their work is often untidy and not clearly labelled.

10. The pupils acquire appropriate information technology skills at each stage and use them effectively in other subjects. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. They learn basic skills with the keyboard and mouse in Reception. In Key Stage 1 they can write text on a screen and save and retrieve their work. By the time they are 11, their skills in all areas of the subject are in line with national expectations. For example, they combine text, pictures and charts in documents, format text and use simple spreadsheets. They explore imaginary worlds on screen and use CD ROM to access information. Their learning benefits from their willingness to share their expertise with one another as well as from the increasing skills of the teachers.

11. The pupils' achievements in all the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum are in line with expectations throughout the school. Pupils include design, evaluation and suggestions for modifications in their design and technology work, reflecting improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection. In history, pupils gain an understanding of how things change over time in Key Stage 1 by comparing familiar objects, such as bicycles, from different eras. In Key Stage 2, pupils use a much wider range of sources to compare life in times over a much longer time-span, from the Romans to the present day. Pupils develop appropriate mapping skills at each stage in geography. Younger pupils describe their route to school and the features they see while older pupils learn to describe familiar and distant places using technical terms such as estuary and settlement. In art, younger pupils use a variety of media to create pictures of familiar things and by the time they are 11, pupils have worked in the style of a range of artists. The clay models they produce under the guidance of the local potter are of good quality. Pupils sing well throughout the school and learn a range of songs and hymns, including examples from other cultures. They listen to a range of different styles of music and compose and perform their own pieces, but their skills in this area are below expectations for their age at both key stages. Pupils develop appropriate skills in all areas of physical education. They learn simple balances and movements in Key Stage 1 and progress to fluent, elaborate sequences in Key Stage 2, including

gymnastic moves such as hand-stands and rolls. No games lessons were observed, but the pupils taking part in the after-school netball practice demonstrated sound ball skills. No swimming was observed, but each year most, if not all, of the pupils learn to swim at least 25 metres and acquire the minimum level of water-safety awareness and skills.

12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual educational programmes and achieve well.

13. The school sets realistic targets for the pupils to achieve in English and mathematics in the national tests for 11-year olds, taking into account fully the number of pupils in each year group with special educational needs.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. The pupils display satisfactory attitudes to school. Their behaviour and personal development are good and contribute to the pleasant, well-ordered atmosphere. Relationships established by the pupils with one another and with the adults in the school community are very good. Most parents state that their children are happy at school. They value the way in which the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.

15. Children under five are enthusiastic about school, join in all the activities and make good gains in confidence and independence. They behave well, learning the school rules quickly and establishing very positive relationships. Most pupils show interest in the themes presented by teachers and other pupils in lessons and assemblies and listen attentively. Some of the youngest pupils in particular are enthusiastic about their work and show pride in their writing on display. However, enthusiasm is less evident in the older classes, especially when the tasks set are not appropriately matched to the age and ability of all the pupils. The standard of presentation in their books is also variable, with examples of untidy work. At times a significant minority are inattentive, for example talking when the teacher is taking the register or presenting a topic to the whole class. The occasional lack of motivation of a few pupils has a negative effect on their learning and their behaviour. Most pupils appreciate rewards, such as team points and Worker of the Week awards, which they receive for good attitudes as well as for achievements. Many pupils participate with enjoyment in the clubs and other activities arranged by the school.

16. The pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and polite. Although they can be noisy at times, for example during lunch or in the playground, they usually display positive, friendly attitudes to one another. There is little oppressive behaviour or bullying. When pupils are rebuked for minor incidents, they usually respond well. They are beginning to be aware of the impact of their actions on others and show respect for other people's feelings. There are no exclusions. By reciting daily the school prayer and considering such topics as faith in assemblies, the pupils are learning to appreciate the values and beliefs of others and to feel themselves part of the Christian community.

17. The pupils become increasingly self-confident and mature as they get older. They help one another and collaborate very well. They make sure that the pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and supported in all activities. When asked, the pupils are able to select appropriate resources, but they are given too few opportunities to show initiative and independence in their work. The responsible behaviour of some of the Year 5 and 6 pupils sets a good example to the younger pupils and contributes well to the orderly nature of the school. School captains, team captains and other pupils given particular tasks perform their duties conscientiously. The school participates in local events, such as the Britain in Bloom scheme, further developing the pupils' awareness of citizenship. The youngest pupils learn to care for animals, for example by looking after the small tortoise in their classroom.

18. The level of the pupils' attendance is good and compares well with national figures. Unauthorised absence is very low and the pupils almost always arrive punctually.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The standard of teaching is satisfactory, and has improved significantly since the last inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory in about one in four lessons. During this inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and teaching was good in about one in ten lessons. The main strengths in teaching lie in the very good relationships that the teachers have with the pupils; thorough lesson plans; good use of resources; clear, direct teaching and well-focused questions. The main areas for development are in the pace of lessons, the range of teaching methods used and in linking planning and assessment to the systematic development of skills so that all pupils are challenged sufficiently. The problem of providing sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils that was identified by the last inspection has not been fully resolved. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets because the teachers incorporate them into their planning. Pupils with higher than average attainment sometimes make less than satisfactory progress because lessons and activities lack challenge for them.

20. Lesson plans clearly fit into longer-term schemes to cover the National Curriculum programmes of study and show that teachers have secure knowledge of all the subjects. They ask appropriate questions, and target individuals at different levels of attainment. Generally, the introductions are taken at a brisk pace, with good direct teaching. On occasions, the teacher talks to the whole class for too long, causing loss of concentration among the pupils. Sometimes, the very good content of the introduction to a lesson fails to make the impact it should because the delivery lacks energy and enthusiasm to capture and keep the pupils' interest.

21. The teachers use a good range of well-prepared resources to support learning, including information technology and make good use of classroom assistants when they are available. This can greatly facilitate learning in the mixed age classes. For example, in a science lesson in class 1, the younger children play with large wheeled toys in the hall supervised by the nursery nurse while the teacher guides the rest of the class learning through play with a wide variety of games and toys, including a programmable robot.

22. The effectiveness of the teachers' interactions with the pupils as they work is variable. Sometimes, searching questions are asked, and pupils are given the opportunity to extend and elaborate their answers, bringing in new, useful ideas. When the teacher is open to this possibility, the pupils' learning and personal development are enriched. For example, in a literacy lesson for lower juniors, the teacher picks up on a pupil's comment about the layout of the page in the big book, and uses it to elicit further analysis and comment from the class. However, it is also possible that the teacher will over-direct the pupil to give a pre-determined answer when this is not necessarily the best thing to do. Opportunities are sometimes missed to let pupils explore different avenues and think for themselves.

23. Generally the teachers provide adequately for the wide range of age and attainment in each class. They set interesting tasks at the right level for each group. When this is so, the pupils respond positively by concentrating on their work. They collaborate effectively and learn well. On other occasions, the tasks are suitable for only one age group in the class and some of the pupils fail to make progress because the tasks are either too easy or too difficult for them. Older and higher attaining pupils in particular fail to learn as quickly as they should in these circumstances. The teachers mark the pupils work conscientiously and sometimes include helpful comments. However, assessments are not yet effectively used to identify suitably challenging targets, and this too has more effect on higher attaining pupils.

24. The good relationships that the teachers enjoy with the pupils ensure that there are usually no problems with discipline. The pupils behave well in response to the clear expectations and relaxed good humour of the teachers. However, teachers do not always deal effectively with pupils when they become noisy or fail to concentrate on their work. They rely too much on raising their own voices and sometimes fail to appreciate that the pupils' response is linked to the level of interest and challenge in the work.

25. Major improvements have been made to the teaching of English, and standards are beginning to improve as a result. Teachers know the subject well, have a good grasp of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy, and teach the literacy hour effectively. The introductions are generally strong, but the group activities sometimes lack pace and appropriate challenge. In the other English lessons that the school has decided to devote to improving the pupils' writing, results are encouraging. Teachers use the pupils' own experiences well to stimulate their interest and extend their writing skills. The range and quality of the pupils' writing are consequently improving, along with their interest and enthusiasm.

26. Teaching in mathematics is sound. Teachers have gradually amended their teaching methods to suit the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy since its introduction in September 1999. They give good clear direct teaching and are beginning to be successful in getting pupils to explain their thinking and try different strategies for solving problems. The pupils' understanding of the number system is improving as a result, and they are becoming more confident and capable. For example, even in the Reception class, pupils count in tens to one hundred, whereas at the time of the last inspection they were working with much smaller numbers. The teachers do not, however, always manage to pitch group and individual tasks at the right level, or give the pupils opportunity and encouragement to express and explore their own ideas and strategies. As a result, although the pupils' basic numeracy skills are improving, some of them are not progressing as well as they might with problem solving strategies.

27. Teaching is sound in science overall, with good teaching in half the lessons seen. Teachers plan their lessons well, linking them to prior learning and including opportunities for experiments and investigations. However, because the planning is not based on the progressive acquisition of science skills, the pupils' do make less progress in this area than in their knowledge and understanding. The work in the pupils' books and on display reflects good coverage of the subject, but expectations for presentation and for clear explanations are not high enough.

28. In information technology, teaching is improving and some good teaching was seen, reflecting the teachers' increasing confidence and competence with the new technology. They teach specific computer skills effectively and give the pupils opportunities to apply them across the curriculum.

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

29. The curriculum, which is balanced and broadly-based, contains all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The majority of the curriculum time is allocated to the core subjects of English, science and mathematics at both key stages, with the remaining time being divided almost equally between other subjects, with the exception of information technology, which has 10 per cent. Statutory requirements are met. In all classes the literacy and numeracy hours are used satisfactorily to develop the skills outlined in the national strategies. The school has developed and implemented successful policies for pupils with special educational needs, early years, assessment, record-keeping and marking. Health and sex education and the dangers of drug misuse are included appropriately in the overall personal, social and health education provision. The areas of learning for the youngest pupils are organised imaginatively to a consistently sound standard in the Reception/Year 1 class. Occasionally planning tends to focus more on the older pupils, usually during introductions to lessons.

30. The school provides very good equality of access for all pupils to make appropriate progress in the curriculum. Work is usually planned for the different abilities and year groups in each class, although the higher attaining pupils are not challenged fully on some occasions. The school has useful links with local secondary schools, enabling it, for example, to supplement its science equipment and gain information technology expertise. There are also strong links with a teacher training college from which the school benefits by the introduction of new ideas into the curriculum.

31. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and complies fully with the Code of Practice. The special educational needs register is detailed and kept up to date. Appropriate individual education plans are prepared, containing realistic targets for the pupils concerned. Resources are well matched to meet their needs, and classroom assistants, together with the special educational needs co-ordinator, are effectively supportive. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative learning skills are now included in the planning. This is an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in design and technology, extended writing and information technology. However, this aspect of the planning is not consistently implemented across all subjects.

32. The quality of the long and medium term plans is sound and still improving. All subjects have appropriate schemes of work linked to the National Curriculum. History and geography are organised over three and four year cycles in Key Stages 1 and 2 respectively, avoiding repetitions. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The literacy and numeracy hours follow the recommended national strategies closely. The whole school plans together, incorporating good links between subjects, and this planning is supported and evaluated by the subject co-ordinators and the headteacher. An area for development in planning is to link it more closely to the development of specific skills in each subject, for example, science.

33. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities that enhance pupils' attainment, especially in music, sport and conservation. Musical activities make a positive contribution to school life. There is a regular hand-bell club, and the school provides a choir for special occasions. Sport includes netball, football and athletic clubs. Pupils play inter-school matches in all these areas. Other clubs include board games, gardening and film club. Many parents help to supervise and coach at these after-school sessions. The school makes effective use of residential trips and off-site visits to such places as Heysham, Lancaster and London where excursions to art galleries and museums all enrich the curriculum. Regular visitors to the school, for example members of the local Historical Society, senior citizens and artisans, also make a valuable contribution to all curriculum areas.

34. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the pupils' development are successfully promoted. The school's aims reflect its commitment to emphasising Christian values and beliefs within a framework of respect for the beliefs of others. Contributions by all pupils including those with special educational needs are clearly valued and welcomed.

35. The school's ethos in which all pupils are viewed as unique and positively valued is good. Assembly themes, which incorporate pupils' contributions through singing, reading, music and dancing, provide good spiritual awareness. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their experiences through spoken and silent prayers during assemblies. A meaningful example was noted during an assembly on faith that centred on Nelson Mandela and Mother Theresa. There was some indication of awe and wonder when a 'special' candle was lit, symbolising Jesus as 'Light of the World'. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers value pupils' own contributions and ideas expressed in works of art and creativity in dance, and provide regular opportunities to recite The Lord's Prayer, The Creed and Grace before meals.

36. All adults and pupils work hard to achieve the good behaviour seen throughout the school. Christian moral principles are central to school life. Class and school rules to which pupils have contributed are clearly displayed. The school actively promotes self-respect and regard for other people and their property, and has worked hard and successfully to raise pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are rewarded with praise and commendations from all staff including the headteacher. They fully understand acceptable behaviour and with few exceptions behave in an honest, fair and respectful manner. They know right from wrong and have some opportunities to explore moral issues in organised discussions such as the care of the sick in the Leprosy Mission of Utole in Malawi.

37. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are good. All pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other both in the playground and through shared activities in the classroom, especially in mathematics, science, physical education and art lessons, and in discussion

during the literacy hour. Teams of older pupils have responsibilities for others around the school, for example during corridor duty, monitoring during dinners, and taking care of resources. Increasing opportunities are being provided for pupils to exercise independence in their own learning, for instance in research skills both at school and at home. However, this is not a consistent feature of lessons. Pupils are made aware of and help those less fortunate than themselves both at home and abroad. For example, they organise Red Nose Day for Children in Need, and donate proceeds of the Harvest Festival to rural villages in India. Good opportunities are further provided for social development through a variety of visits to churches, museums, the seaside and residential trips for older pupils.

38. Many opportunities exist within the curriculum for the study of other cultures. For example, in literacy lessons a variety of stories, fables, myths and legends are used as a basis for much of the work. Art, music, history and geography also contribute to pupils' cultural development, especially European and African. Celebrating the festivals of other faiths, such as Diwali, and the performance of Indian dances within assemblies further extend pupils' awareness of the diverse cultures within their own and the wider society. First-hand presentations by a member of the Muslim faith also alert pupils to similarities between varying cultures. Regular visits to museums, churches and art galleries, and comparative studies between Pilling and African villages enhance pupils' awareness of the wider world of human activity.

39. The school's curriculum prepares the pupils well for the next stage of their education.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

40. The school's procedures for ensuring the pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory overall. Very good attention is paid to the security of the premises and the building has been adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with physical disabilities. There is a good response to hazards reported by the adults using the school, but formal monitoring of health and safety, including risk assessment, is not carried out systematically. Fire drills are not held termly as stated in the staff handbook. The school responded well to the need for improvement in its child protection procedures identified in the last inspection report, and provision is now good. Arrangements for meeting the medical needs of the pupils are generally sound but have areas of weakness. For example, the administration of medicines is not recorded accurately, gloves are not always used for treating open wounds and there are too few first aid signs.

41. The school has effective measures to monitor and promote the pupils' attendance, supported appropriately by the education welfare officer. All members of staff, including lunchtime supervisors, consistently apply the school's behaviour policy around the school, for example by praising and rewarding good conduct. However, there is a lack of clear guidance for behaviour management in lessons. Consequently, teachers sometimes raise their voices to gain and keep the pupils' attention when other strategies would be more effective. Bullying is clearly not tolerated. Incidents between pupils are successfully handled, giving those involved an awareness of the impact of their actions. The house system encourages a sense of corporate responsibility, and gives pupils opportunities to exercise social responsibility.

42. The teachers monitor the pupils' personal development well. They know the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and target their support accordingly. Records include brief notes on the changing attitudes and effort of the pupils from year to year. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs include relevant targets for behaviour modification and personal development as well as for learning. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive high quality support from visiting teachers who monitor their progress very effectively. The school also provides extra support for them to have equal access to the literacy hour.

43. The co-ordinator keeps meticulous records that reflect the school's full compliance with the Code of Practice for all pupils with special educational needs. They are identified and assessed early, and their parents are kept fully informed. Their progress is reviewed termly, with the involvement of outside agencies as needed, and guidance for parents on how to help them.

44. Arrangements for monitoring the pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Schemes of work, especially in the core subjects, contain sound assessment procedures, but these are not always reflected in lesson plans. Assessment, especially moderation and the linkage of attainment to the National Curriculum programmes of study, was an issue at the last inspection. This has improved, and is now sound, with areas for further improvement in linking assessment to skills in science and information technology. Formal assessment includes baseline in the early years, the National Curriculum tests at the ends of Key Stages 1 and 2, annual reading and mathematics tests, and termly spelling and mathematics tests and science evaluations. English story tests are administered annually and a portfolio of pupils' levelled work assists teachers well in the assessment process. Assessment of the foundation subjects is less structured and more informal. Record sheets are used for recording attainment at the end of each year for inclusion in pupils' Records of Evidence, and each teacher keeps folders of work to track the progress of a sample of pupils.

45. The oral assessment in the classrooms is generally sound and in some lessons pupils receive clear information as to how they are progressing. Marking, although consistent, is not always sufficiently evaluative to ensure progress in learning. Reports to parents are detailed, emphasising achievement and work covered. The main area for improvement in assessment is to link it more closely with the skills required in each subject so that sufficiently demanding targets can be set for all the pupils.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

46. The school successfully meets its stated aim of creating an effective partnership with parents that makes a powerful contribution to the quality and breadth of the children's education. The partnership is even more effective than it was at the time of the last inspection. Parents appreciate these close links, and are very pleased with the school's provision for their children's personal development. They state that the school is approachable, expects to work closely with them and provides them with good quality information. A few parents would like to be better informed about their children's progress. A similar number was not happy with the amount of homework set: some wanted more and others less. The inspectors found that the information provided for parents is good, and the levels of homework satisfactory.

47. The school provides parents with information of very high quality, enabling them to play a full part in their children's learning. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are well written and clearly convey the school's aims, routines and developments. They do not, however, report absence data fully, as required by law. Newsletters are friendly and interesting, giving thorough coverage of the school's events and concerns. The school consults parents on proposed changes and responds to their wishes, for example in the development of the home-school agreement and the timing of parents' evenings.

48. Informal relationships between parents and teachers are very good, and lead to an open dialogue about the pupils' progress. Parents find it easy to approach the school with a query or concern about their children. Teachers are accessible and readily consult parents if they are worried about a pupil's progress or well-being. Reports to parents on their children's progress have improved in response to the last inspection, as they now clearly show the levels attained in the National Curriculum tests. They also suggest areas and strategies for further improvement. Parents are given opportunities to discuss their children's reports, but their views are not systematically recorded or incorporated into the pupils' records.

49. Parental support and involvement have a strong impact on the pupils' learning and on their personal development. Parents are well-informed about the work to be covered and the routines to be followed in each class, enabling them to support their children's learning out of school. They have had opportunities to understand the literacy and numeracy strategies, although only in the Year 2,3 class are they fully informed on their important role in supporting reading. As a consequence, many parents do not regularly share books with their children. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the arrangements for provision for their children, including assessments and reviews.

50. Many parents support the school by contributing their individual expertise, such as coaching netball and football, running the library or guiding the work of the environment club. Parents help in lessons, especially with art, technology and the use of the computers. There is an active Friends Association which organises events and raises substantial sums for the school.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

51. The leadership and management of the school have been considerably strengthened since the last inspection. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is a key area for further improvement.

52. The recently appointed headteacher gives the school a firm sense of educational and pastoral direction, working closely with the staff, governors, parents and the wider community. The school's mission statement is clearly displayed and constantly referred to as a guide to good practice. It includes a commitment to fulfilling the pupils' potential as well as to the Christian values that underpin the work of the school. Good relationships are a feature of the school. The headteacher gives a good lead in the development of close links between parents and teachers for the obvious benefit of the pupils. The good practice in equal opportunities reported by the last inspection has been firmly embedded in a policy statement and provision is now very good. All pupils, including those with physical disabilities and special educational needs, have equal access to all activities, and pupils who need support to do so receive it.

53. Since the last inspection, the governors have taken an increasingly active role in the life of the school. They discuss and approve all policy documents and play a full part in monitoring the school's development planning. Each subject has a link governor and subject co-ordinators are regularly invited to make presentations to the full governing body. The governors' annual report to parents contains very informative curriculum sections.

54. The school's action plan following the last inspection addressed all the key issues, and progress towards implementing it has been carefully monitored. Good improvements have been made in two thirds of the areas specified. Reports to parents now contain National Curriculum levels and are of a very high standard; pupils enjoy more extensive opportunities to use information technology, write independently and incorporate designing into their model-making; there is a clear child protection policy and the governors' role has been substantially increased.

55. Satisfactory progress has been made with the remaining key issues. Planning and assessment have been improved, but do not yet provide a framework for accurately tracking the pupils' progress and offering the optimum level of challenge to all pupils. The governors play a more active role in the school, but there is no formal policy for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. These have emerged as areas for further development in this inspection.

56. The school has a shared commitment to succeed and to offer all its pupils the opportunity to fulfil their full potential, which underpins all its development priorities. However, because teaching and learning are not formally monitored and evaluated, significant strengths and weaknesses are not clearly identified. This limits the capacity of the school to select appropriate areas for development, especially to improve the quality of teaching.

57. Current educational priorities are well managed. The headteacher has devised systems for including all members of staff in discussion about the school development plan at appropriate stages, but gives a firm lead in establishing the final order of priorities. The governors have ample time to discuss the document. They take their responsibilities in this respect seriously, acting as a critical friend of the school to whom the headteacher is clearly accountable.

58. The headteacher and governors ensure that spending is closely related to educational developments and improving standards, and take what steps they can to evaluate its effectiveness. They monitor spending very closely and ensure that any grants received are used for their intended purpose.

They set realistic performance targets for the pupils to achieve, relative to the school's particular circumstances.

59. The day-to-day running of the school's finances is very smooth. The two school clerks run the daily administration efficiently, with clear separation of duties, leaving the headteacher free to concentrate on the wider picture. The school makes good use of the available local authority expertise to monitor and improve its systems.

60. Within the school, there is effective delegation in some areas of management. For example, individual teachers guide and monitor specific aspects of the school's work successfully, such as provision for the under fives and information technology. However, on occasions the lines of communication and delegation are not as smooth as they should be. This can have a negative effect on issues that are vital for the school's development, such as the general implementation of useful assessment procedures in particular subjects.

61. The school has made good improvements in the provision of information technology and is doing all it can to increase staff expertise so that the fullest possible use can be made of it.

62. There are sufficient teachers and classroom assistants for the demands of the curriculum, and they are sensibly deployed. However, in some literacy lessons, there are insufficient adults available to meet the needs of all the groups. Regular appraisal meetings ensure that the needs of individual members of staff as well as the school as a whole are taken into account in planning and spending decisions. All members of staff are suitably qualified and experienced for the jobs they are doing, and carry them out efficiently. The headteacher's policy of including all the staff in discussions encourages positive attitudes and relationships. All the adults working in the school relate well to each other and the children and help to promote a caring community ethos.

63. The accommodation is sound. Classrooms are adequate in size and are attractively displayed. The hall is spacious and is put to good use for assemblies, physical education and dining. The whole building is kept very clean and tidy by the site supervisor, providing a good environment for learning. The administrative offices and the headteacher's room are very cramped, but this reflects the way the school puts the children first. There is ample playing space outside. It is currently relatively bare and uninteresting, but the school has begun to add attractive features to it and has further plans for improvement. The children under five have access to a secure outdoor play area, but have only a limited range of large outdoor equipment and toys to develop their physical skills. Resources for teaching and learning in all the National Curriculum subjects are at least adequate. Suitable resources have been purchased to support the literacy and numeracy strategies and the recent improvements to the information technology resources make a big difference to the pupils' learning opportunities

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

64. In order to further improve the quality of teaching and raise standards, the headteacher and governing body should:

- (1) Introduce formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in order to identify what is effective in where improvements need to be made. (Paragraphs 51, 55, 56, 83, 94, 101).
- (2) Ensure that planning and assessment are linked to progressively more challenging targets so that all pupils continually build on their existing skills at a pace commensurate with their capacity to learn. (Paragraphs 19, 23, 25, 26, 30,44, 45, 55, 82, 83, 90, 91, 93, 100, 101, 112, 117, 132).
- (3) Improve the pace at which lessons are taught and the variety of teaching strategies used in order to gain and keep the pupils' interest and improve their learning. (Paragraphs 15,19, 20, 24, 25, 41, 82, 90, 93, 97, 100, 137, 142).

- (4) Find ways of giving pupils increasing opportunities to show initiative and take some responsibility for their own learning. (Paragraphs 17, 22, 26, 31, 37, 89, 96, 97, 100, 111, 137, 142).
- (5) Improve the standard of presentation of pupils' work throughout the school, and especially in Key Stage 2. (Paragraphs 7, 8, 9, 15, 27, 79, 91, 96)

In addition to the key issues listed above, the governors should consider including the following matters in their action plan.

- (1) The inclusion of rates of authorised and unauthorised absences in the annual report to parents in the specified form to meet legal requirements. (Paragraph 47)
- (2) Formalising risk assessment procedures. (Paragraph 40)
- (3) Ensuring that current best practice guides the administration of medicines and first aid. (Paragraph 40)
- (4) Ensuring that fire drills are regularly carried out and recorded. (Paragraph 40)
- (5) Find ways of improving marking to make it more useful. (Paragraphs 45, 82, 91, 100).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
		13	86			

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		80
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		25

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	per cent
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

### Unauthorised absence

	per cent
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

## Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	9	6	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	5
	Girls	6	6	4
	Total	12	13	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80	87	60
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	8	9
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	12	13	15
Per centime of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80	87	100
	National	82	86	87

Per centavos in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

*Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	5	10	15

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	11	12	13
Per centime of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73	80	87
	National	70	69	78

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	3	4
	Girls	7	8	9
	Total	9	11	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60	73	87
	National	68	69	75

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	72
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	24

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	140,655
Total expenditure	138,924
Expenditure per pupil	1,903
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,538
Balance carried forward to next year	24,314

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

65

Number of questionnaires returned

40

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	50	5	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	50	40	8	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	50	13	8	0
The teaching is good.	50	48	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	43	15	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	28	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	28	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	35	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	40	8	0	0

### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

The parents express an overwhelmingly supportive view of the school

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents feel that the children's transition from the good local pre-school provision into the school is very smooth, giving them an excellent introduction to school-life. Some parents whose pupils have special educational needs speak very highly of the school's care and support. Parents appreciate the contribution made to the pupils' education by visiting specialists from the community, such as the local potter, drama groups and countryside rangers.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

65. The sound provision for children under five reported by the last inspection has been maintained. Children are admitted to the Reception/Year 1 class in the autumn term following their fourth birthday. The induction arrangements are good. Positive links are established with parents, who fully support the work in the Reception/Year 1 class. Children's levels of attainment on entry are varied, but are average overall. Baseline assessment is carried out within the first few weeks of entry. Children make satisfactory progress and by the time they are five most of them have achieved all the desirable learning outcomes for children of their age and are ready to begin the National Curriculum programmes of study. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and with effective support make sound progress.

66. The school has worked hard to provide a stimulating and well-organised environment for the children, including a secure outdoor area. The broad and relevant curriculum is based on the recommended areas of learning for children of this age and supports their intellectual, physical and social development. This prepares them well for the requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1. Assessment of attainment and progress is regularly undertaken and the information ensuing is used to set appropriate work for the children. Very good links exist between the local playgroup and Reception/Year 1 class. Good exchange of information ensures that the Reception/Year 1 teacher is fully aware of children's achievements. Parents very much appreciate the smooth transition arrangements.

67. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in each area of learning. The teacher provides sufficient opportunities for the pupils to develop socially through play, learning routines and making choices. Very good relationships exist between the class teacher and nursery nurse and the many parents who come in to help. This has a positive impact on children's achievement and progress in this area. The work is planned well to give opportunities for the pupils to develop their language and literacy and mathematics skills through a good balance of teacher-directed and child-centred initiatives, all of which are worthwhile and soundly organised. Sometimes, however, the content of lessons is more focused on the Year 1 pupils within the class. All members of staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and the manner in which they approach all their activities. The adults listen to what children have to say, and through careful questioning attempt to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They include scientific and technological activities to stimulate curiosity and guide the children effectively with their comments and questions. They manage these young children well, making sure that they settle quickly and happily into the daily routines, and ensure that there are sufficient attractive activities available through which the pupils can develop their creative expression.

68. Children's personal and social development is given a high priority to good effect and they make good progress. Children are encouraged to be independent and make choices about their activities, such as role-playing in the 'play house corner'. Children know what is expected of them and behave well. Nearly all children are interested and responsive, taking part with enjoyment in all activities provided for them. All members of staff act as good role models for the children, helping them to form positive relationships and care about others. They all reach the expected outcomes by the time they are five.

69. In language and literacy, all the children, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. They are provided with a wide range of activities to encourage speaking and listening and an interest in books and the written word. They listen attentively and many are becoming confident speakers, use good vocabulary and construct sentences well. They know that print carries meaning and a few are able to read simple words. During lessons they enjoy listening to stories and sharing and handling books. Many are beginning to tell the story from pictures, for example 'Mr Bear's Picnic'. Children are beginning to learn letters and sounds in a variety of purposeful activities. Most are aware of the purpose of writing and many write their names and attempt to form letters

correctly. By the time they are five, they have achieved all the learning outcomes and their attainment is in line with expectations for their age.

70. Overall attainment in mathematics is in line with what children of this age are expected to achieve nationally. Suitable activities are provided for the development of their mathematical skills and they make satisfactory progress. They recognise colours, compare and sort objects, and some identify shapes, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. For example, in a lesson dealing with shape, children use the words 'round', 'circle' and 'square'. Children are using numbers to ten, with some knowing the number symbols as well. A good foundation is gained for future mathematics work through organised play activities and games with apparatus involving sorting and matching.

71. Children make satisfactory progress in learning about the world in which they live and have reached the desired learning outcomes by the time they are five. In the scientific area they have good opportunities to observe and predict when observing foliage colour changes in autumn, habitats of mini beasts and the emergence of lambs in the spring. They can talk about what they are doing using appropriate scientific language, as for instance pupils did while examining the 'budding' process of primulas on the nature table. Following a tour of Pilling last term they constructed a map of some pupils' route to school, identifying the main buildings, physical features, lights and street furniture. They learn about weather conditions as they explain regularly what the weather is like – during the inspection it was foggy – as well as learning the days of the week. These are important concepts which will continue to be developed during later work in science, geography and technology.

72. Progress is satisfactory in all aspects of the creative areas of learning and the children, including those with special educational needs, achieve the expected outcomes by the time they are five and are soundly prepared to start the National Curriculum. The teacher provides interesting creative activities each day, and a good balance exists between free activity and teacher-directed work. Children have good opportunities to use different media and are developing their skills in handling paints, threads and collage materials. They can paint pictures of themselves and their homes in some detail. In music they follow instructions well, maintain a beat and control simple percussion instruments. They enjoy these lessons and join in with simple action songs which they sing in tune, for example 'Three Little Speckled Frogs'.

73. The children's physical development is in line with that expected for children of this age. They have good opportunities to use a satisfactory range of indoor and outdoor equipment to climb and balance. In the hall they respond well to instructions and are developing an awareness of space and consideration for others. They have only a limited range of large wheeled vehicles to develop their spatial awareness and gross motor control during outside activities. They are able to use small equipment with increasing accuracy and develop their co-ordination through throwing and catching activities. Through play with table-top games, modelling materials, pencils and brushes they are beginning to display greater control in developing fine motor skills. All children, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in movement and co-ordination skills throughout their time in Reception/Year 1 class.

## **ENGLISH**

74. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above for writing in the 1999 Key Stage 1 national tests was close to the national average, and for reading it was just below. In comparison with similar schools it was just below in writing and well below in reading. On the basis of teacher assessment speaking and listening was well above the national average. More than one in three pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading, which was above the national average, but none of the pupils achieved Level 3 in writing. Over the past four years despite fluctuations in results, primarily due to small cohorts, the trend has remained close to the national average in reading and writing. At Key Stage 2, 73per cent of pupils reached Level 4 or above in the 1999 tests, which is in line with the national average, with 40per cent gaining the higher Level 5, which is well above. Compared to similar schools, the percentage of pupils gaining Level 4 or above is well below average but above for those reaching the higher Level 5. In the 1998 national tests, all Year 6 pupils achieved Level 4 or

above, but only a very small number of pupils took the tests. Little significance should be attached to the variations in results from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils taking the tests and the relatively high number of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups.

75. Overall standards of attainment seen in lessons and pupils' books during the inspection are in line with national expectations near the end of both key stages. Evidence also includes concentrated observation of the current Years 2 and 6 pupils and discussions with them. This judgement is similar to that of the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above average, partially due to the impact of the school's sharp focus on public speaking. The school recognises that writing at both key stages is an area for further development. As a result, one session a week is specifically allocated to creative and extended writing. Standards, especially in Key Stage 2, are beginning to rise. This is an area of improvement since the last inspection.

76. Pupils enter the school with a varied range of language skills and experiences. The majority makes sound progress throughout both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This follows from a well-organised programme of specifically designed Individual Education Programmes which are reviewed regularly to inform future planning. Speaking and listening skills are good with pupils' sustaining concentration for lengthy periods, especially during lesson introductions. In Key Stage 1 they explain their work, give reasons for the school rules and describe a favourite character. They can re-tell stories and take part in imaginative play. For example, pupils in Year 1 could recall accurately the events and main characters in 'Mr Bear's Picnic'. They also make good progress in speaking and listening through the regular plenary times and 'Circle Time' sessions. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress. They read aloud and confidently explain characterisation and plot, as Years 5 and 6 pupils did while analysing 'The Hunter' by Paul Geraghty. There are few opportunities for independent group discussion and formal debate, however.

77. Reading is strongly promoted by the school and pupils make satisfactory progress while those with special educational needs make good progress. The pupils are well supported by a sound home-school liaison reading system. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils read a selection of literature during the literacy hour, express their opinions about stories which they have read and use a range of strategies when reading independently, such as phonics prediction and context cues. By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils read competently both for pleasure and to obtain information. They read a wide range of books with their teachers, which includes modern poets, for example Ogden Nash, and classical works, for instance Shakespeare's 'As You Like It'. The higher attaining pupils select challenging books such as Charles Dickens' 'Oliver Twist' for independent reading. Pupils are competent in using the library. They can access a book on a given subject, use an index and contents page appropriately, and skim the text to locate specific information. They benefit from group reading sessions and many discuss themes and plots fluently. In Year 5 some higher attaining pupils understand the use of figurative language, recognising for instance that 'a paper white face with pallid lips' is a reference to illness. Reading is further promoted by pupil and teacher participation in the annual Book Week.

78. During Key Stage 1 pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress with their writing skills. By the end of Key Stage 1 they are beginning to write in different forms, such as recipes for menus and accounts of books they have read, for example, 'Mr Bear's Picnic'. They use some imaginative vocabulary when writing a story about 'bonfire night' and many are beginning to set out sentences correctly. The focused and systematic teaching of the literacy programme has a positive impact on extended writing, particularly in history and religious education. Although pupils' handwriting is usually neat and well-formed, few pupils use joined script in their everyday writing. By the end of the key stage punctuation is becoming more accurate and words are often chosen carefully, especially by higher attaining pupils.

79. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. They write for a range of purposes and readers, for example invitation letters to senior citizens for a Christmas party, 'thank you' letters to the local potter, play scripts, newspaper reports, poems and biographies. The majority of pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand the use of tenses, adjectives and synonyms. The skills of dialogue and

paragraphing are steadily developed in Years 5 and 6, where pupils have opportunities to improve their work by drafting, editing, and proof-reading, and then present the final form. The quality and quantity of creative writing are frequently high, especially for some higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6, and reflects the depth of reading experiences, for example in the reports on the working life of urchins in Victorian times. Their own interpretation and impersonation of these events in biography form reinforce the importance of language as a means of communication. Pupils learn banks of words to spell correctly and are now developing legible handwriting in a cursive, flowing style using ink. Many pupils, however, especially in Year 6, present untidy work. The school recognises this and plans to address the issue.

80. Literacy is developed satisfactorily through the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Throughout the school, pupils' literacy skills are being constantly improved through other subjects. Examples include listening to and carrying out instructions in physical education, writing up science investigations correctly, and dramatising 'Jason and the Argonauts' for a history topic.

81. Pupils are generally well motivated, enthusiastic and eager to learn. They enjoy literacy hour activities. They are interested in what they are doing and with few exceptions they sustain concentration well. Pupils handle resources carefully and whenever opportunities arise, they develop their capacity for personal study appropriately. In lessons they are well behaved and courteous, relating very well to their peers and adults, working well collaboratively and individually when required.

82. Teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in the quantity and quality of the opportunities offered for creative writing. Teachers generally make the most of spontaneous opportunities to develop language from pupils' interests. Such an example was noted in a Year 3 creative story lesson on 'travelling abroad', where pupils had the opportunity to identify and attribute 'powerful' verbs to a variety of their own experiences. Information technology is used frequently as in a Year 2 class where pupils typed up their own sentences. Teachers introduce pupils systematically to a wide range of writing, promoting appropriate strategies for reading, like the use of phonics, context cues and word recognition. They choose suitable texts to emphasise aspects of literacy as in Year 4, when 'The Hunter' was used to illustrate descriptive narrative. In the best lessons teachers' expectations are good with clear instructions given and questions effectively used to revise pupils' previous learning and to challenge their thinking about the new topic. The teachers' close liaison with educational support assistants, especially in relation to pupils with special educational needs, has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Where teaching is less effective, teachers' expectations are low, pace is slow, usually due to lengthy introductions, and higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Assessment opportunities are not always identified in the short-term planning, but opportunities are sometimes taken during plenary sessions to reinforce learning objectives. The quality of marking varies. At its best it is positive, constructive and helps pupils to improve.

83. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic advocate of the subject. She ensures that the curriculum is well-planned to ensure good coverage, balance and continuity. The policy and scheme of work have been drawn up by the co-ordinator in conjunction with other staff and they reflect the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Medium-term planning is thorough. Assessment includes annual reading tests, moderation and levelling of pupils' work, as well as half-termly spelling tests. The portfolio of pupils' assignments is reviewed regularly. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, short-term assessment procedures omit the sharper focus which ensures that they inform specific strategies to promote the pupils' next stages of learning. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of the pupils' attainment and progress over time, and monitors teachers' planning. However, there is no provision for the monitoring of teaching and learning to identify strengths to build on and specific areas for development.

84. There are sufficient resources for all aspects of the subject to be taught. All classes have a good selection of dictionaries and thesauruses. Pupils have access to a good range of books within each class, and the library houses a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction material, which is an improvement since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. The school has maintained the sound provision and average standards reported at the time of the last inspection.

86. The trend in the school's results in the Key Stage 2 national tests over the past four years has been broadly in line with the national trend. The results were much lower in 1999 than in 1997 and 1998, but the small numbers taking the test in those years invalidate comparisons between the year groups. Compared to similar schools, the pupils' attainment was below average, but the school has many more pupils with special educational than most similar schools. This factor is evident when the different levels achieved are considered. In 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving level 4 or above (the expected level for 11-year-olds) was 80 per cent, which is above the national average. The number of pupils reaching Level 5 was average. However, because thirteen per cent of the group (only two pupils) scored below Level 3, the school's performance in terms of average points is brought down to the national average, and below that for similar schools.

87. At Key Stage 1, test results have gone down over the past three years from average to below average then well below average compared to all schools. Too much cannot be read into this trend, as the groups taking the test were too small for the results to be statistically significant in some years. However, the declining trend in mathematics results is against the trends in reading and writing, which have seen improvements, and may indicate that too few pupils achieve level 3 each year.

88. The inspection evidence confirms that attainment is average at both key stages. By the time they are 11, average attaining pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the decimal number system. They know their tables and apply their skills to practical problems, such as shopping within a budget. The higher attaining pupils in the current Year 6 have above average knowledge and skills. They use decimals and fractions confidently and have a good understanding of the metric system and angular measure. They use their knowledge well to solve new problems. At Key Stage 1, average attaining pupils add and subtract numbers within one hundred, know the value of coins and can work out simple money problems. However, there are few pupils with above average skills for their age in Years 2 and 3. This is consistent with the absence of Level 3 scores in the 1999 Key Stage 1 tests.

89. Pupils make steady progress as they move through the school, but do not always learn as quickly or as much as they could. The introductions to lessons are often brisk and challenging. The teachers target questions at individuals to enable pupils of all abilities to participate. The pupils respond well to this. They are alert, interested and keen to answer and explain their thinking. All the pupils benefit from the direct teaching of basic skills in these whole class sessions. For example, they learn how to count in tens to one hundred in Reception and to recognise and use coins for shopping in years two and three. However, teachers do not always give the pupils enough time and encouragement to explain their thinking and to develop their own ways of solving problems.

90. The pace of learning slows in some lessons when the pupils move on to group or individual work. This is because the tasks are not always at the right level for them and they sometimes do not receive enough support and guidance to get the most out of the activities. Opportunities are also lost to include specific examples in the group tasks to reinforce and extend what was taught during the introduction. In some lessons, the pupils are left to work without supervision at tasks that are too difficult or not clearly explained, and this leads to some inattention and lack of progress, especially towards the end of Key Stage 1.

91. When the teachers draw the class together at the end of the lessons to discuss what each group has learned, the pupils make good gains in their understanding. However, this does not always happen, and this opportunity to re-inforce learning and provide pointers for the next stage is lost. The work in the pupils' books shows that they cover number, shape and measure and data handling over the year, and apply their mathematics to practical problems. However, their learning sometimes seems to be driven more by the need to move on to the next task than to build on existing knowledge and skills. The teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, but do not often use their marking well to stimulate further interest and effort. For example, they do not suggest avenues for further investigation to make the pupils' learning more individual and stimulating. The pupils are conscientious and hard working, but they do not always take care over their presentation, especially in Key Stage 2. They generally behave well in lessons, and they respond well to any opportunities they are given to take responsibility and show initiative. Relationships between pupils are good, and they work together very effectively in pairs and groups.

92. Pupils with special educational needs, especially those with statements, are well provided for. Their individual learning programmes include numeracy targets if appropriate, and they are well supported to make good progress towards them. The standard of teaching of individuals and groups withdrawn for support is good.

93. The standard of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly around the National Numeracy Strategy. They have sufficient knowledge of the strategy, gained through appropriate training, and they keep fairly closely to the advised programme of studies. They support their lessons with well-prepared resources and keep adequate records of what the pupils have done, including the National Curriculum level they have reached. However, because assessments do not accurately indicate what pupils in each age and attainment group are capable of, the planning does not always allow for sufficient variety of challenge for all pupils within a lesson or over time. All the teachers and members of the support staff enjoy good relationships with the pupils, and generally manage them well, maintaining good discipline. However, the teachers use a limited range of strategies to gain and keep the pupils' attention when they become inattentive, relying too much on raising their own voices above the background noise.

94. The National Numeracy Strategy is being introduced gradually to good effect as planning is now beginning to focus on developing skills systematically. The co-ordinator oversees planning so that there is an overall picture of what has been covered throughout the school, but there is no formal system for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning on a continuous basis in order to identify what works well and what could be improved. Other subjects help the pupils to develop and use their numeracy skills. They construct charts and graphs in science and time lines in history, for example. However, these natural links are not as effectively used as they could be because they are not planned specifically for this purpose.

## **SCIENCE**

95. Standards and provision remain at much the same level as they were at the time of the last inspection, with similar areas for development. The school's results in the national tests for 11-year olds were average in 1999 following a dramatic rise from average in 1996 to well above average in 1997 and 1998. However, taking into account the very small number of pupils taking the tests in 1997 and 1998, the standards achieved by the school have followed national trends since the last inspection, and are broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching level 4, the expected level, was above the national average in 1999, but fewer pupils reached Level 5 than would normally be expected. At Key Stage 1, the teacher assessments indicate the pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and forces is stronger than their relatively weak experimental and investigative skills.

96. The inspection evidence confirms the test results. At both key stages, the pupils' attainment is average, but their knowledge and understanding are stronger than their investigative and experimental skills. By the age of 11, average and above average attaining pupils have a good grasp

of the concept of fair testing, and can apply this to investigations across the programmes of studies. Their knowledge and understanding of life processes and materials are broadly in line with expectations for their age. They describe and classify plants and animals, know that materials can be grouped according to their properties and accurately describe the effects of forces such as friction, gravity and air resistance. Above average pupils know the functions of the major organs of the human body and explain the differences between liquids, solids and gases. Their knowledge and understanding of forces are very secure and they confidently suggest ways of measuring them. Some of the pupils' written work reflects this understanding, for example by explaining how friction can be an advantage and a disadvantage in different real-life situations. However, the work in the pupils' books and folders is not often clearly presented to show exactly what has been measured and why, and what has been discovered. This limits the scope for further questions and investigations. Very little extra would be required to make this work much more useful, both as an indicator of scientific understanding, and as a pointer for further study. For example, a piece of pupil's work on display describes how a parachute is made and used, but does not explain what happens in terms of gravity and air resistance. Another pupil predicts and tests how translucent some materials are, but does not describe what is measured and how. There are few examples of pupils repeating and checking measurements and refining their ideas for further testing.

97. Pupils make sound progress in each year group. In the Reception and infant class, they benefit from a good range of teaching strategies that includes opportunities for them to experiment and share their ideas. For example, they learn how forces can be grouped as pushing, pulling and twisting by examining a wide range of household utensils. Younger pupils handle larger equipment and toys that keep their interest and give them good first-hand experience of the forces they are learning to describe. Older pupils experiment with battery-powered toys and equipment to widen their understanding of the range of forces available. The pupils enjoy these opportunities to learn through practical activity and by talking about what they are doing. In the junior classes, the pupils also respond very positively to any opportunities to work collaboratively. They organise themselves well, concentrate on the task in hand and handle equipment and materials sensibly. Younger juniors learn that forces can slow things down or speed things up, while older juniors discover that the force exerted by a magnet does not necessarily depend on its size. In some lessons, however, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to expand their explanations and to put forward and test their own ideas.

98. The pupils generally behave well, and relate positively to each other and the adults working with them. They sometimes become inattentive, but this is often due to over-long introductions. Pupils with special educational needs are well-integrated into lessons, and make good progress relative to their prior attainment with good support from the staff. Higher attaining pupils sometimes have the opportunity to take their studies a stage further, but this is not a strong feature of provision, continuing a trend identified by the last inspection.

99. The standard of teaching is sound in both key stages, and was good in half of the lessons observed. None of it was unsatisfactory. Features of the good teaching include a brisk introduction informed by good subject knowledge on the part of the teacher followed by purposeful activities well matched to the pupils' needs. The teacher then monitors the groups and intervenes selectively to guide some pupils while leaving others to learn through activity and discussion among themselves. In the Reception and infant class, the teacher provides a good range of activities for the wide range of age and attainment so that all the pupils learn at an appropriate level. The classroom assistant is well briefed and makes a valuable contribution to the younger pupils' progress.

100. All the lessons are well planned, and clearly based on previous learning. Teachers have a good supply of the necessary equipment and materials to hand and manage the pupils effectively, with good humour. Occasionally, teachers raise their voices unnecessarily and cut across the concentration of pupils who do not benefit from the intervention. During their introductions, they give clear explanations and instructions, and ask good questions that make the pupils think. However, they do not always give pupils sufficient opportunities to formulate and develop their own ideas. They mark the pupils' work, but do not use this as an opportunity to ask challenging questions or to suggest ideas for further

exploration. Their expectations for standards of presentation are not always high enough, for example for clear labels, measurements and explanations. This limits the usefulness of the pupils' work both for increasing their scientific understanding and as a vehicle for developing literacy and numeracy. In all classes, teachers include information technology in their planning. For example, Year 2 pupils programme a battery-operated robot and in the juniors, pupils use computers to access information from an electronic encyclopaedia.

101. The curriculum is organised around whole-school topics. Planning is supported by a number of published schemes and relates to the National Curriculum programmes of study so that, over time, all the pupils visit each area of knowledge. However, the development of scientific skills does not drive the planning to ensure that pupils continually build on their existing learning. This is reflected in the relative weakness in pupils' experimental and investigative skills compared to their knowledge and understanding found. Assessment is in place. Pupils are tested regularly to determine which National Curriculum level they are at. However, the assessments are not closely linked to the systematic development of skills, and are therefore of limited use for identifying the next step. Resources are good and are well-used. Good use is also made of strong links with a local secondary school to provide boxes of equipment and materials for specific topics. The co-ordinator organises the subject effectively. She monitors planning, but does not yet have an overall view of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school. Standards and provision remain at much the same level as they were at the time of the last inspection.

## **ART**

102. Although lessons were not observed during the week of the inspection, evidence from past work, displays and discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator indicate that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at both key stages. And reach standards that are in line with expectations for their age. This judgement is similar to that of the last inspection. Pupils use a range of materials to represent their ideas, for example pastels, paint, pencil, charcoal and textiles. They learn about artists such as Van Gogh, Lowry, Monet and Mondrian, and copy their styles effectively.

103. At Key Stage 1 pupils are given beginnings in observational drawing and painting at an appropriate level, and are encouraged to have confidence in their own vision. As a result, they confidently paint pictures of themselves, their families and outside scenes. Artwork in a variety of media including collage and paint was seen illustrating stories read and topics covered. Examples included 'Mr Bear's Picnic' and snowmen in relation to weather discussions. Pupils also have opportunities to represent fruit, leaves and seeds in paint, pastel, water colour and textiles.

104. Using examples of Van Gogh's style pupils in lower Key Stage 2 develop pattern and texture techniques while painting African scenes from the story of Omutugwa. Other paintings on display include scenes of repeating patterns inspired by William Morris and executed by Year 5 and 6 pupils. Pupils' sketching skills develop as they move through the school. For example, in Key Stage 2 they respond imaginatively to recreating portraits of historical characters such as Henry VIII and Shakespeare, and use their sketching skills well, including smudges and cross-hatching to effect light and shadow and folds in clothing. Pupils also have opportunities to work in clay and with the help of a local potter have successfully moulded a range of nativity figures.

105. Pupils enjoy art and have positive attitudes towards the subject. They take pride in their work and are willing to discuss what they have done.

106. The standard of pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge and expertise. Sketch books are used effectively to help develop pupils' techniques and allow them to see progression, thus increasing their confidence.

107. There is an appropriate policy and the subject is soundly planned. The co-ordinator who is keen to promote the subject further has plans to revise the scheme of work when the Qualifications and

Curriculum Authority's document is published. Resources are adequate, well-maintained and easily accessible to teachers and pupils.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

108. The standard of provision has improved since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are now satisfactory, and pupils reach standards in line with those expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs are well-integrated and make sound progress. One of the key issues at the last inspection was to incorporate design into technology, and this has been achieved. Models of toys using cams to produce movement of a figure show that pupils design their products before beginning to make them, and evaluate them when they are finished, suggesting ways in which they might be improved.

109. Only a small amount of teaching seen during the inspection, but it is evident from the work on display and the samples seen in pupils' folders, that teaching is satisfactory, with sufficient attention paid to the design process to differentiate the subject from art and craft. From informal discussions with pupils and their written comments accompanying their work on display, it is evident that they enjoy designing and making and give of their best.

110. In the lesson that was seen, Year 2 and three pupils marked areas of fabric to achieve a desired pattern by spray dyeing. The pupils make sound gains in their learning on all the different aspects of the subject. They begin to realise the importance of selecting the correct tools for a particular job, such as cutting a piece of fabric, and learn to handle them safely. They respond to the consistent expectations set for them by treating the tools and materials they use with care.

111. They work collaboratively, and show appreciation of each other's ideas and skills. They consolidate and extend their cutting skills, and gain some experience of designing patterns to decorate fabrics. However, they have limited opportunities to experiment with and refine their own design ideas, and most of the finished designs are similar. Good subject knowledge guides the lesson and the teacher's interactions add to the pupils' enjoyment of the activity as well as to their learning. The lessons are further enhanced by parents supporting the pupils as they work.

112. The policy is very good. It outlines the purpose of design and technology, sets out clear aims and objectives and makes an appropriate commitment to follow the National Curriculum programmes of study. The scheme of work, produced by the co-ordinator, provides a clear framework for teaching skills in each age group. There is a very useful assessment sheet available, that would give a clear indication of how each pupil is acquiring skills, but this is not in consistent use throughout the school. There is a good range of tools and materials, and the co-ordinator effectively spreads the benefits of her expertise by direct teaching in other classes on occasions.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. It was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons during the inspection. However, it was clear from these, from scrutiny of pupils' work, photographic evidence and discussions with pupils and teachers that progress throughout both key stages is sound, including that of pupils with special educational needs, and that pupils reach standards in line with expectations for their age. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection.

114. Key Stage 1 pupils have sound recall of subject knowledge. Year 1 and Reception pupils are learning to carry out simple mapping and can describe their route to and from school. They know the effects that weather and temperature variation have on the type of clothes which people wear. In Year 2 pupils understand the differences between human and physical features such as shops, houses, rivers and hills. They also begin to distinguish between inland village and coastal landscapes when they visit the seaside, and they have compared farming in an Austrian village to that in Pilling. They can sketch a map of the school grounds and identify the school's location from photographs. Many can discuss features which they find attractive and unattractive in their own locality and give reasons for it.

115. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their mapping skills and by Year 6 many can use co-ordinates and four and six grid references. In Years 5 and 6 pupils successfully combine their work with history. This is particularly apparent during educational, residential trips, especially to London, where the locations of historical sites and buildings are closely linked. Pupils in Year 4 have a good understanding of other places in the United Kingdom that contrast with the local area of Pilling. This understanding is reinforced during their visit to Heysham where they compare coastal habitats. They locate accurately the major cities such as Birmingham, Glasgow and Manchester on a map of the British Isles. During their study of rivers, pupils in Year 5 understand terms such as estuary, meander and deposition. In Year 6 pupils' knowledge of other parts of the world is soundly developed, for example the different continents and some of their main physical features. Comparing the village of Kabare in Kenya with their own locality further develops their knowledge of how climatic conditions influence ways of life.

116. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work. Most listen carefully and respond well to questions. They work well together in partner or group activities, for example when making deductions about the types of fruit for sale in British supermarkets which might be Kenyan, while studying photographs of shopping streets in Nairobi.

117. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Lessons are soundly planned. Teachers use appropriate questions to develop ideas, then effective use of 'why' and 'how' to extend further pupils' answers. Resources are used well, including computer programs which help to improve information technology skills. In some lessons which lack demand and pace pupils, especially higher attainers, are insufficiently challenged.

118. The subject co-ordinators work hard to maintain a sound range and quality of resources. The scheme of work outlines the skills and knowledge to be acquired. Planning, which ensures progression, is carried out in three and four year cycles for Key Stages 1 and 2 respectively. The school plans to revise the scheme of work, giving greater attention to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's document with a view to improving assessment procedures as well as planning.

## **HISTORY**

119. Owing to timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe history being taught during the inspection week. Evidence therefore included scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and teachers and with the subject co-ordinator. Photographs showing previous topics and off-site visits were also made available.

120. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in the development of their historical skills, understanding and knowledge and reach standards in line with expectations for their age. These judgements are similar to those of the last inspection.

121. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a sound understanding of time passing and ways of life in the past. Pupils in Year 1 understand that the principle of old and modern toys is similar but that some materials and technology have changed. In Year 2 pupils experience stories, pictures and adults talking about their early years to find differences between the past and now. For example, during a study on wheels, pupils had an opportunity to compare old and new bicycles, such as a mountain bike and a penny farthing. A number of grandparents have been involved in this topic. The standard of pupils' work, including that of pupils with special educational needs, improves satisfactorily when they are encouraged to compare their answers with a time-line. A number of pupils could relate the basic facts about Grace Darling.

122. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 5 and 6 could recall some facts about life in Britain from 1930 to 2000. In their written work they record the living and working conditions of children their own age in Victorian times as well as studying copies of newspapers from 1906, demanding votes for women. Pupils in Year 4 have studied the importance of the Magna Carta and how St Augustine of Canterbury was sent by Pope Gregory to expand the church in England. Pupils' historical understanding is also

developed through local fieldwork. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 compiled a brochure outlining a heritage trail around the village of Pilling, in association with the local Historical Society. Historical interest is further generated through the study of artefacts such as Victorian irons, bellows, cream skimmers, juicers and children's playing hoops, and during the Heritage weekend when pupils can observe locals performing old cottage crafts. In their study of the Second World War they acquire a sense of how children lived in unfamiliar locations. Lower key stage pupils know why the Romans built forts and constructed straight roads, and that the Vikings and Saxons were seafaring people.

123. Judging by pupils' completed work, teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge and expertise. There are planned links with other subjects, namely design technology, information technology, art and English. Two prime examples are the exhibition of English and artwork depicting Victorian life, and a past musical performance of 'Jason and the Argonauts'. Organised trips to Barwick Hall and to London during which art galleries, museums and the Houses of Parliament are visited further enhance the meaning and understanding of the subject.

124. Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and particularly enjoy the visits. This was evident during discussions with pupils in the corridor about their work.

125. The enthusiastic co-ordinators give the subject a high profile. It is primarily topic-based in Key Stage 1 and runs on a three year cycle. At Key Stage 2 the scheme of work which assumes a four year cycle ensures progression, especially in chronology. Resources are satisfactory, well-maintained and easily accessible to pupils, staff and the subject governor, who is a keen advocate of history.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

126. During the inspection it was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons. Judgements therefore also include discussions with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of school documentation and pupils' past and current work.

127. Standards of attainment are satisfactory at the end of both key stages and are in line with what pupils of this age are expected to achieve nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection which reported attainment as mostly unsatisfactory. Pupils begin to use a computer as soon as they start school. In Reception/Year 1 they commence learning mouse control and recognising letters on the keyboard. Many know how to use the space bar and delete key, and some can effectively use arrow keys. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can use a simple word-processor and some can save, retrieve and print their work. Overall pupils' progress, including for those with special educational needs, is satisfactory.

128. By the end of Key Stage 2 they combine text and picture, working independently, using help sheets as necessary. They use word-processing programs to write stories, labels and in many cases to do their homework. They highlight, change text and import pictures. Many can use database programmes to handle information and to display it graphically. They use CD-ROMs to research topics, to select and print extracts from the text. A good example was noted in a Year 6 lesson during a comparative study of London and Nairobi. Scrutiny of past work shows that pupils in the later year groups combine drawing and writing, using different fonts and colours as well as placing emphasis on the layout of text. They have learned control and modelling techniques, and are beginning to use spreadsheets. All programmes of study are attempted and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress from year to year,

129. The school benefits from the strategic layout of the eight computers (ratio one PC to 10 pupils approximately), which ensures availability for use during other lessons. This facility, together with specific lessons on information technology, is beginning to have a positive effect on standards. Although the system includes a visual conference camera and scanner, problems regarding effective connection have yet to be overcome. Further, the school is awaiting the imminent installation of an Integrated Service Digital Network to enable access to the Internet.

130. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work in information and communications technology. They explain procedures and some of the more experienced pupils help others. Such an example was noted in a Year 3/4 science lesson where pupils were engaged in studying gravity. Some of these computer-based activities offer pupils good opportunities to work with minimal supervision, to use their initiative and to take responsibility for their own learning. Equipment is treated well and the routines of saving work and recording the session's achievements are carried out smoothly and efficiently.

131. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was good. Each lesson has a clear focus on a specific skill to be taught, and there are close links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 use drag, click, enter, shift and star techniques to generate currency converter spreadsheets. And, in a Year 1 class pupils use an English program to test spellings to construct sentences. Teachers are gaining in confidence about teaching the subject, and make good use of all available in-service courses. Classes are managed effectively and good use is made of the up-to-date equipment.

132. The curriculum is well planned to enable the pupils to gain experience and confidence in each area of the subject as they move through the school. All pupils experience handling information, modelling, controlling and communicating information regularly and at appropriate levels. The very committed co-ordinator provides effective support for her colleagues and helps to raise professional competence through extensive in-service training. As a result a further 40 hours training has been organised to build on the previous significant amount of courses already completed. Although assessment procedures are built into the scheme of work, they have yet to be formalised. The School Improvement Plan identifies a detailed focus on developing information technology as one of the next major priorities.

## **MUSIC**

133. The level of provision for music is sound, and pupils reach standards broadly in line with expectations for their age. They have maintained the good quality of singing reported by the last inspection. They can sing in tune, with expression, and they know a variety of songs and hymns by heart. Their singing enhances assemblies and acts of collective worship, and their regular participation in school productions broadens their appreciation of the musical possibilities open to them through music.

134. The lessons that were seen centred round African music to fit in with the whole-school topic. This encourages the pupils to appreciate and respect music and dance from other cultures, making a positive contribution to their personal development and representing an improvement since the last inspection.

135. The pupils enjoy singing, listening to and making music. In Key Stage 1, they develop confidence in their ability to remember patterns of notes, as was demonstrated by a year 2 pupil who sang a short sequence that he had composed earlier, including rests. The class as a whole could listen to and copy correctly a sequence of four notes, describing the pattern they made. They have a good awareness of pitch and rhythm. The pupils are less secure with the skills of composing and performing music using musical instruments. Their attainment in this area of music is below expectations for their age at both key stages.

136. In Key stage 2, the pupils use the instruments very sensibly and can be trusted to behave well when working unsupervised away from the classroom. This greatly enhances the possibilities for learning, as the different groups can concentrate on the sounds they are making without distraction. The teacher's interventions help them to make progress, but their lack of experience limits their learning as they work independently. They understand how music is divided up into bars that are used as the basis for developing patterns in melodies and they show real pleasure in discovering patterns in the music they make.

137. The standard of teaching is sound overall. Teachers plan their lessons well, allowing for some direct teaching and some learning through activity. However, introductions tend to be too long, leaving the pupils with insufficient time to compose, practise, perform, evaluate and refine their music. The teachers prepare the resources well for the lessons, but to such an extent sometimes that the pupils do not learn to select instruments for themselves. When the teacher circulates round the groups as they work, the pupils' learning is enhanced. When the pupils are left to their own devices for too long without clear guidance, the pace of learning slows down.

138. The subject is well organised and there are plenty of good quality resources. The teachers provide opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities, including a choir and a hand-bell club. The hand-bell club gives some pupils the opportunity to practice reading and performing music as part of an ensemble, and they reach a good standard. For example, they play a short extract from Hyden's Surprise Symphony, including some chords. The performances they give outside school strengthen their awareness of the community and of the pleasure to be given and gained through music making. A small number of pupils also benefit from private instrumental tuition held at the school, but none of these lessons were observed.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. The quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably since the last inspection. Teaching is always satisfactory, and the pupils make sound progress in all aspects of the subject.

140. Teachers dress appropriately for lessons and ensure that the pupils warm up before exercising and cool down afterwards. They find imaginative ways to do this, sometimes using music, so that the pupils enjoy the experience. The pupils warm-up enthusiastically, keeping time to the music when it is used. The positive attitudes towards exercise that they gain enhance their personal development.

141. Gymnastics was the focus of the lessons seen. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to select parts of their body to take their weight and push or pull them along a surface. They improve the variety of their movements, showing good concentrations and determination to succeed. In lower Key Stage 2, pupils learn to make and refine a series of shapes linked together by increasingly controlled movements in response to a piece of music. They show good powers of concentration, becoming totally absorbed in their movements from time to time, and deriving great enjoyment from the activity. Older junior pupils refine their movements, become more adventurous and show increasing poise and balance. Higher attaining pupils incorporate gymnastic movements such as rolls and handstands, and reach a good standard of performance. The standards achieved in gymnastics are in line with expectations at both key stages.

142. Lessons are well planned on the basis of previous learning, with activities matched to the pupils' needs. The teachers give clear instructions, making the purpose of the lesson clear to the pupils. They supervise the lessons adequately, drawing the pupils' attention to health and safety issues, such as correct ways of moving large pieces of equipment. They monitor the pupils as they work, using praise and encouragement well and sometimes allowing pupils to demonstrate good movements. However, they do not always give the pupils sufficient opportunities to be creative in using their own ideas. Imaginative use is sometimes made of resources. For example, a teacher inflates and deflates a balloon to make an introduction to round and floppy shapes more interesting. The teachers have good relationships with the pupils and generally expect and get good behaviour. However, they do not always use effective techniques to organise and manage the pupils, sometimes relying on a raised voice when this should not be necessary.

143. Observation of extra-curricular netball practice indicates a sound level of ball and team-games skills at Key Stage 2. Pupils have good awareness of the space around them and the movements of their opponents and team-mates, and pass and catch the ball effectively. The school makes use of a variety of outside expertise to enhance the level of provision in dance and games. A local drama choreographer comes into school to assist with the teaching of dance and is currently helping the pupils develop African dance routines. A parent coaches netball, and the school occasionally uses expert coaching

available through one of the local authorities for sports and games. The range of extra-curricular activities has increased substantially since the school joined the local Sports Association, and the pupils gain valuable experience playing competitive team games with other small schools.

144. No swimming was seen during the inspection, but discussion with the co-ordinator reveals that generally all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and physical disabilities, have the opportunity to learn to swim. As a rule, all the pupils swim at least 25 metres before they leave their school and acquire at least the minimum standard of water-safety awareness. The subject is well managed throughout the school and the co-ordinator harvests resources wisely to purchase equipment as and when it is needed to suit development needs. Current priorities include providing more varied athletics and outdoor pursuits programmes and obtaining storage facilities for new sports equipment.