

INSPECTION REPORT

Sharples County Primary School Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique Reference Number: 105162

Headteacher: Mrs G Gerrard

Reporting inspector: Mr P T Hill

Dates of inspection: 1.11.99

Under OFSTED contract number: 706749

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hugh Lupus Street Ashworth Lane Bolton BL1 8RX
Telephone number:	01204 303306
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Buckley
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Peter Hill, RgI	Science Information technology Design and technology Art Special Needs Equal opportunities Provision for visual impairment	Teaching Leadership and management Efficiency
Jennifer Farmer, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing accommodation and learning resources
Margaret Hadfield	Under fives Mathematics Music Religious education	
Clive Whittington	English History Geography	Attainment and progress The curriculum and assessment
Ian Hocking	Physical education and swimming	

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REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

- What the school does well
- Where the school has weaknesses
- How the school has improved since the last inspection
- Standards in subjects
- Quality of teaching
- Other aspects of the school
- The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

- Characteristics of the school 1 - 9
- Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

- Attainment and progress 10 - 26
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 27 - 31
- Attendance 32

Quality of education provided

- Teaching 33 - 45
- The curriculum and assessment 46 - 53
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 54 - 57
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 58 - 64
- Partnership with parents and the community 65 - 67

The management and efficiency of the school

- Leadership and management 68 - 76
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 77 - 81
- The efficiency of the school 82 - 89
- Resourced provision for visually impaired pupils 90 - 101

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

- Areas of learning for children under five 102 - 115
- English, mathematics and science 116 - 147
- Other subjects or courses 148 - 199

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

200

Data and indicators

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed.
- Teaching is good overall and leads to pupils making good progress.
 - Provision for pupils with special needs is very good.
 - Pupils with visual impairment are very well provided for and make excellent progress.
- Teamwork is very good throughout the school.
 - The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good.
 - Support guidance and pupils' welfare are very good and strengths of the school.
 - The partnership with parents and the community is very good.
- The school's provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good and a strength.

Where the school has weaknesses

- The school library provision allows only limited development of pupils' library skills.

The school has many areas of strength and has clearly recognised the area with some weakness. Where the school has areas for development, they will form the basis of the Governors' Action Plan. This will be sent to the parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made considerable improvements in all the areas that were judged to be Key Issues for Action in the last inspection report. Teaching has improved greatly from a position where teaching in a third of lessons was unsatisfactory to the current position where 53% of teaching was good or very good and 98% of teaching was satisfactory or better. There has been a year on year improvement in pupils' standards of attainment in mathematics, science, religious education and geography, subjects identified as in need of improvement in the last report. The school has developed comprehensive systems for assessing pupils' attainment and standards and this is now a strength of the work of the school. The Key Issue, to 'improve the provision for speaking, listening and writing across the curriculum' has been fully addressed. The provision for pupils aged under five now has a very good curriculum base and teaching is good. The School Development Plan is a comprehensive management tool which is clearly focused and carefully costed. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is now very good and a strength of the school. The school is well placed to continue to develop in the future.

Standards in subjects

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

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

Standards in the core subjects of maths and English are in line with the national average and in science are just below. They are above average when compared with similar schools. Pupils' attainment in religious education and information technology meets the standards expected of 11 year olds. **There has been a marked improvement in standards of attainment since the last inspection.**

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other areas for Under fives	Good		
Other subjects		Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Teaching is good overall. During the inspection 12% of lessons were judged to be very good, 41% good, 45% satisfactory and only a small percentage, 2% was unsatisfactory. This is a high percentage (53%) of good and very good teaching.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. Pupils behave well in their lessons, and in and around the school.
Attendance	Good. Pupils enjoy attending school and the vast majority are punctual for the start of the school day.
Ethos*	Very Good. There is a high commitment to raising and maintaining standards. Very good relationships and teamwork considerably enhance pupils' learning.
Leadership and management	Very good. The headteacher provides very good and supportive leadership and there is good monitoring of the curriculum.
Curriculum	Very good. It is very well planned and managed.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are very well provided for throughout the school.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good. This area makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school, to the levels of attainment and progress and to the learning environment.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. The school is well staffed with an above average level of support staff. Resources are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and the accommodation is bright and well used.
Provision for visually impaired pupils.	Very good. Pupils with visual impairment make very good progress and play a very active part in the life of the school.
Value for money	Good.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- They feel that they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school
- They would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with their child(ren)
- The school gives them a clear understanding of what is taught
- The school enables their child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work
- The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their child(ren)
- Their child(ren) like school

What some parents are not happy about

No issues

Only a small number of questionnaires were returned and only 7 parents attended the Parents' Meeting. No issues which were a significant area for concern were raised by parents. The inspection confirms parents' views.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise educational standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- I. increase opportunities for pupils to develop and improve library skills; and (Paragraph 20, 31, 45, 123)
- II. provide library access for pupils in Key Stage 1. (Paragraph 20, 45, 123, 129)

In planning to meet this Key Issue the school should take into consideration the development of pupils independent learning and research skills and the links between the library provision and information technology.

Other area for development

In addition to the Key Issue for the school to address, the following area should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

Continue to raise standards in the core subjects of mathematics and English at Key Stage 1. (Paragraph 130, 118)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1 Sharples Primary School is situated in the heart of the old village of Bank Top in the Astley Bridge ward of Bolton. The surrounding area includes Victorian stone terraced cottages, pre-war brick terraced and semi-detached properties. There are also modern semi-detached and detached houses and bungalows.

2 The present school building replaced the Victorian schoolhouse 30 years ago. The school was originally built as a junior school and was subsequently extended into a primary school with a nursery. The building is light and airy and is set in extensive and interesting grounds that include playing fields. Within sight, across the fields is Sharples Secondary School.

3 The school is a resource school for 16 visually impaired pupils and there have been many adaptations to the building to fit it for the purpose.

4 Most of the pupils are drawn from the surrounding area, although a significant number travel some distance to attend, with children coming from outside the obvious catchment area. The visually impaired pupils are transported from many parts of Bolton.

5 There are 186 pupils aged 4 to 11 on roll. In addition 52 children attend the nursery on a half-time basis. Approximately a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language and a quarter of pupils are entitled to school meals free of charge.

6 The number of pupils, 26%, identified as having special needs, is above the national average for a school of this type. There are 48 pupils on the schools register of special educational needs with 15 of these having statements of special educational need.

7 Childrens' levels of attainment when they enter the school are slightly below average. There are 70 pupils aged under five at the time of the inspection.

8 The school's stated aims are:

- III. 'All that we do at Sharples School is intended to be for the ultimate benefit of the children in our care.
- IV. We seek to provide an environment in which each child will be happy and secure.
- V. We aim for the highest level of achievement for each pupil by setting targets for continuous improvement and providing the highest quality of teaching.
- VI. We aim to ensure that all staff are appropriately trained to enable us all to make maximum contribution to the success of our school.
- VII. We value parents as partners and we aim to work closely with parents.'

9 The school's main priorities for the coming year are:

- VIII. Numeracy, Literacy and Information and Communication Technology, in line with Government priorities;
- IX. raising standards in basic skills;
- X. staff development and training;
- XI. monitoring and evaluation, and;
- XII. continued development of the buildings and environment.

• **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	22	9	31

• National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	17	17	19
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	25	25	27
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81(78)	81(81)	87(74)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	88(84)

• Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	17	21	20
	Girls	8	8	6
	Total	25	29	26
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81(81)	94(81)	84(82)
	National	82(81)	80(85)	86(86)

.....
1

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

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	17	18	35

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	12	17
	Girls	10	13	13
	Total	22	25	30
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	63(61)	71(61)	86(79)
	National	68(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	25	25	27
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71(58)	71(55)	77(81)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	5.2
	Absence	National comparative data	5.6
	Unauthorised	School	0.3
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	12
	Satisfactory or better	98
	Less than satisfactory	2

²

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

- **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**
- **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**
- **Attainment and progress**

10 When they start school the attainment of most children is slightly below average, with a full range of ability. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and when they transfer to Key Stage 1 their attainment is still slightly below that expected nationally but shows significant improvement from that on entry.

11 The national tests for 7-year-olds in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils in the school reaching the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 was average in reading and writing, and slightly below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was average in reading and writing, and close to the average in mathematics. In comparison with other schools with pupils from a similar background pupils' performance was above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The test results for 1999 show that the school has been successful in continuing the upward trend seen over the last few years and shows considerable improvement from the previous year. Inspection findings show that attainment in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 is average.

12 In information technology the proportion of pupils in both key stages reaching the standard expected for their age is average. All areas of the National Curriculum Program of Study are sufficiently covered.

13 In religious education the attainment of the majority of pupils in both key stages is in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus.

14 During Key Stage 1, the progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science is good. Progress is satisfactory in information technology and religious education. In the non-core subjects there is satisfactory progress in all areas. The best progress is seen at the earlier end of the key stage.

15 The national tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils in the school reaching the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 was in line with the national average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was average in English and mathematics and slightly below average in science. In comparison with schools with pupils from a similar background pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science was average.

16 Over the last few years trends have been upward and the 1999 test results confirm that the school is continuing to improve standards. Inspection findings show the attainment in English is above the national average, and is average in mathematics and science.

17 During Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Progress is satisfactory in information technology and religious education. In the non-core subjects there is sound progress in all subjects, with good progress made in physical education.

18 The good progress that is made throughout both key stages is a direct result of the significant amount of good and some very good teaching that they receive from class teachers and other adult

helpers.

19 In the non-core subjects in both key stages, the pupils are good communicators and have satisfactory presentational skills. Pupils demonstrate initiative and independence when given opportunities to be engaged in investigative work. Pupils are willing to take full part in group and class discussions and show good collaboration skills when required to do so.

20 By the time they reach the upper end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have good skills of literacy. The majority of pupils can read a wide range of texts accurately and can recount stories and express preferences. Pupils talk knowledgeably about books. However, although library skills are taught effectively in one class, where pupils locate books using the coded system in the Key Stage 2 library, this skill is under-developed in most classes, and there is no central reference library for Key Stage 1. Pupils are generally good at finding information using contents and index pages in non-fiction and reference texts. Pupils can write in a wide variety of forms across the curriculum and this is developing particularly well in Key Stage 2. Standards in handwriting and spelling are satisfactory. Most pupils take pride in their work and achieve satisfactory standard of presentation. Pupils have a suitably developed vocabulary and punctuate their work correctly. Oracy standards are average throughout the school and pupils are confident communicators. They express their ideas clearly in class discussions and listen attentively to teachers and to each other. Pupils show a suitable knowledge and understanding of subject-related vocabulary. The school is implementing the Literacy Strategy well. All teachers show confidence in delivering the literacy hour activities, which are having a positive effect on the standards achieved by pupils in English. These literacy skills are also being effectively used in other curriculum areas such as history and religious education.

21 Throughout the school pupils' levels of numeracy are average. They have suitable skills in most areas of written computation. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have a sound recall of multiplication facts. They are able to mentally manipulate number and are becoming adept at explaining their strategies as a result of the emphasis placed on this by teachers in numeracy lessons. Pupils make suitable use of their mathematical knowledge and skills particularly in religious education and geography.

22 In science, there is suitable emphasis given to ensuring practical tasks are used to help develop their knowledge and understanding. As pupils pass through Key Stage 1 they learn how to handle simple scientific equipment carefully and safely and how to make simple predictions. They also develop their skills of recording their findings in a variety of ways. As they pass through Key Stage 2 pupils learn how to use a wider range of scientific equipment. The skills of carrying out investigations are appropriately developed. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to carry out a fair test in a satisfactory manner and have an appropriate range of scientific vocabulary to be able to explain their work.

23 In information technology, when pupils start Key Stage 1, there is suitable attention given to developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. At the end of the key stage most pupils show confidence when using computers and show suitable ability to talk about what they have done, using appropriate technological language. As they pass through Key Stage 2, pupils further their understanding of the uses of word processing programmes and data handling. By the end of the key stage pupils can use information technology to organise and present their ideas in other subject areas. There are more limited opportunities for pupils to research information using CD ROMs.

24 The attainment of the majority of pupils with special educational needs is below average but is commensurate with their abilities. Standards in speaking and listening are average, with pupils making effective contributions to class discussions. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their

individual educational plans. This is a result of the very well structured teaching that pupils with special educational needs receive. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress through the school as a result of the good quality teaching that they are given. Pupils with visual impairment are very well supported both by adults and other pupils, and make excellent progress, being very successfully integrated into lessons.

25 There is some variation in the 1998 tests in the attainment of pupils of different gender in terms of boys performing better than girls in English at both key stages and girls performing better than boys in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. There are no significant variations in the attainment of pupils of different ethnicity or background. All groups of pupils' progress as well as others of similar attainment. The school analyses results, not only by gender, but also by looking at the results of those pupils with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and those identified as underachieving. Group education plans are formulated to improve standards of all pupils so identified. Inspection findings and national test results show that the school is continuing to improve standards.

26 The last inspection indicated three Key Issues for action regarding attainment and progress. These were to 'improve pupils' attainment in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2; raise standards in religious education at both key stages and geography at Key Stage 2; and improve the provision for speaking, listening and writing across the curriculum'. All these Key Issues have been addressed fully, and inspection findings show that the school is maintaining this steady improvement.

· **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

27 Overall pupils' good attitude to their work has been maintained since the last inspection. The majority of pupils are motivated, and on the occasions when some pupils lack concentration, it is usually the result of unchallenging tasks being presented to them.

28 Children under five are beginning to adopt good attitudes to their learning and show they are familiar with the daily routines. They relate well to staff, other adults and each other. In the other key stages most pupils demonstrate a good attitude to their learning and on several occasions during the inspection demonstrate very good attitudes. An example of this was seen in a Year 5 circle time when pupils observed the rules of the session well and made sensible contributions to the discussion. Where attitudes in lessons are good, or very good, pupils listen attentively, are keen to answer questions, show an interest in their work and are willing to apply themselves to the task in hand. This was well demonstrated in a Reception maths lesson where all children were totally absorbed in the tasks.

29 Behaviour is good. In the majority of lessons observed there were only a few occasions when behaviour was less than satisfactory. The majority of pupils behave well in their lessons, and in and around the school. They mix and play well together in the playground, they act sensibly in the dining hall, and move around the school showing consideration to other people and property. The majority are polite and courteous. When working in groups most pupils share resources sensibly and help other group members. A particularly good example of this was seen in Year 6 when pupils helped a visually impaired pupil during group exercises, ensuring that he was able to make a good contribution to the lesson.

30 Relationships are very good. The mutual respect shown between staff and pupils is evident and makes a significant contribution to the orderly community. Relationships between pupils are also very

good. Pupils with different ethnic backgrounds work and play well together and increasingly understand and appreciate the diversity of each others' beliefs and cultural traditions. All pupils show a great deal of consideration and care to those pupils with a visual or physical impairment and demonstrate this by involving them in all aspects of school life, giving them the assistance they need to move around the school or to participate in various class activities.

31 Pupils' personal development is good. However, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' capacity for personal study and for them to actively contribute to their own learning. For example, not all classes are encouraged to develop research skills through accessing a library or CD-ROM information. Pupils work well in groups and pairs, often supporting each other in activities and by sharing knowledge. For example more fluent readers often help others with the decoding of words. Pupils willingly take on responsibility and make a significant contribution to the day-to-day running of the school by acting as monitors; older pupils help look after and support younger ones and they often take the initiative in tidying away apparatus and equipment after activities.

- **Attendance**

32 Attendance is good and has improved since the last inspection. At 95.5% the attendance rate is slightly above the national average. Unauthorised absence, at 0.3%, is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils enjoy attending school and the vast majority are punctual for the start of the school day. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection. Registers, which are well kept and comply with statutory requirements, are taken promptly at the start of each sessions. Lessons run to the published timetable.

- **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

- **Teaching**

33 Teaching is good overall. This is a considerable and significant improvement over the situation reported in the last inspection report where a third of teaching was judged to be less than satisfactory. It is now satisfactory or better in 98% of lessons. Teaching is good in 40% of lessons and very good in 12%. Teaching is good or very good in over half of lessons.

34 Teaching of pupils under five is good overall with almost a third of teaching being very good, almost a further third being good and the remainder satisfactory. Teachers' planning and recording of childrens' attainment are very good, and are in line with the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Children are well managed, and the teachers and support staff work very well in teams. Day-to-day assessment is very effective and is very well used to plan the next steps in childrens' learning.

35 In Key Stage 1 teaching is good in a third of lessons and satisfactory in the majority of the rest of lessons. In only 2% of lessons is teaching less than satisfactory. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is characterised by a lack of clear teaching points and direction to the class and ineffective class control leading to some unsatisfactory behaviour. Teaching is good in English and is satisfactory in mathematics, science, religious education, information technology, history geography and music. Insufficient teaching was seen in design and technology, physical education and art to make secure judgements.

36 In Key Stage 2, teaching is good or better in 61% of lessons, and satisfactory in the remaining 39%. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is good in the core subjects of English,

mathematics and science, which formed the majority of the lessons observed, and good in physical education. It is satisfactory in information technology, religious education, history, geography, and music. There were not enough observations of teaching in design and technology and art to allow secure judgements to be made for these subjects.

37 Good and very good teaching is characterised by very good lesson planning and preparation, good subject knowledge and expertise and good management of pupils. There is very good teamwork and relationships throughout the school and this considerably enhances pupils' learning. This was seen in all lessons where support teachers and staff were working with pupils. Teachers plan very well for supporting pupils identified as having special educational needs and ensure that they have as much access as possible to the curriculum and all areas of school life. This is a very strong feature of planning and all lessons.

38 Teachers have a secure subject knowledge enabling them to confidently deliver the subjects of the national curriculum. This area has been strengthened since the last inspection through a carefully planned and effective in-service training programme.

39 Lessons are well structured, start on time and proceed at a brisk pace. Pupils are appropriately challenged throughout and teachers have high expectations about what pupils can and are expected to do. This area was found to be less than satisfactory during the last inspection and it has moved from that situation to one of the areas where teaching is strong.

40 Pupils with special educational needs are very well catered for, both in classes and on the occasions where they are given individual support outside the classroom. Teachers from the Visually Impaired unit, housed in the school, work very well with class teachers and support staff and there is a strong and purposeful sense of teamwork between all. As a result of this very professional and supportive environment, pupils with special needs make at least good progress overall and a considerable number make very good and exceptional progress.

41 There are very warm and supportive relationships between all staff and pupils. This is a strength of the school. As a result of this and good classroom organisation and management pupils are well behaved and very caring, supporting others in classes and in all areas of the school, including the play areas.

42 Pupils' work is conscientiously marked and, through the teachers written comments, pupils are often given clear direction as to how to improve.

43 The school has firmly established the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) within their provision for English and a good start has been made in meeting the demands of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS). Teachers are gaining in confidence and delivering their lessons enthusiastically.

44 School is appropriately setting homework for several subjects notably in English and mathematics. The frequent practice of younger pupils taking reading books home contributes to the very good quality home/school partnership.

45 Limited use is made of the library provision and there is no Key Stage 1 library. The reference library for Key Stage 2 was only occasionally used during the inspection week.

• The curriculum and assessment

46 The school provides a curriculum which is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. It includes sex and drugs education and the Locally Agreed syllabus for religious education. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when there were three relevant Key Issues for action. These were to 'establish an appropriate curriculum [for the early years] which is clearly specified and understood; improve pupils' attainment in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2; and raise standards of achievement in religious education at both key stages and geography at Key Stage 2'. The school has addressed these issues fully, and the planned developments in curriculum and assessment provide a firm basis for these improvements to continue.

47 This good breadth and balance is achieved in part by strong cross-curricular links which help to ensure good coverage of all subjects. This happens, for example, within literacy, when pupils may be given writing tasks linked to a history topic. Curriculum planning generally takes account of other subject areas to ensure that all relevant links are made.

48 The curriculum for the under fives in the nursery and reception class is very good. It is based on the desirable outcomes of learning expected for children of this age group. Links with the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum are made clear and the children are very well prepared for Key Stage 1. The policy and scheme of work provide very good guidelines for continuity, progression and planning in all areas of learning. All children have equal access to all activities. Baseline assessments are taken when children start in both nursery and reception class. These are used very well to plan suitable programmes of work. Very detailed records are kept for each individual child in all areas of learning. These identify targets for development and achievements in each area.

49 The headteacher and staff work hard to promote the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. This includes those pupils with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs, high and low attainers, and those who are visually impaired. Group education plans are formulated and a booster class set up to improve the standards of those identified as underachieving. This is successful in raising standards.

50 At both key stages all subjects are covered well and the time given to these is appropriate. There are effective policies and schemes of work and the curriculum is planned very effectively for continuity and progression. This long, medium and short-term planning is very good and is a direct result of the way all adults in the school work well together towards commonly agreed objectives. Subject co-ordinators are given time to plan and monitor classroom practice in their areas of the curriculum and play a crucial role in curriculum development. Literacy and numeracy are used effectively across the curriculum, with writing and mathematical skills developed well through a variety of cross-curricular topics.

51 The curriculum is enhanced by a satisfactory level of extra-curricular provision. This includes a variety of sports, a chess and board games club and instrumental tuition. A reasonable number of pupils and staff are involved.

52 Baseline assessments to determine what children understand and can do are carried out when children enter both nursery and reception class. These provide an indication of early attainment and help teachers to plan so that all pupils make the best possible progress. Very effective systems are in place throughout the school for assessing pupils' attainment. All test results are analysed very thoroughly. There is a thorough and specific policy for assessment, which covers marking, teacher

assessment, designing an assessment task, testing, recording and reporting. Pupils' questionnaires are used for self-assessment and each year contains a 'control' group whose progress is more closely monitored through their time in school. Samples of their work are saved for future reference.

53 This assessment information is used well to inform curriculum planning. Co-ordinators use the results of assessment tasks to ensure that every area of the curriculum is covered effectively within the planning cycle. Teachers keep thorough records, which they then use when setting appropriate work for different ability groups within their class. Pupils are involved in setting appropriate targets, giving them a shared sense of commitment to improve.

• **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

54 Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and a strength of the school. This provision makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school, to pupils' levels of attainment and progress and to the learning environment. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Daily acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements. They contribute positively to spiritual awareness, reinforce the values and aims of the community and include time for prayer and reflection about pupils' own lives and the lives of others. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to spiritual awareness. Pupils are given opportunities to consider and reflect on the wonders of the natural world, their own feelings and beliefs and the things that affect their families and friends. On a visit to a temple pupils experienced a deep sense of awe and wonder when being shown the holy area. Again when visiting a church, pupils were inspired when they saw sun shining onto the altar cross. Poetry, literature, music and to a lesser extent art, all make a contribution to spiritual development and teachers respect and value pupils' ideas in all areas of school life. The school makes great efforts to ensure that the different faiths of all the pupils are given equal prominence and there are ample opportunities for pupils to understand and appreciate the similarities and differences between the religious traditions.

55 The provision for moral development is good. All staff set good examples for pupils and consistently teach moral principles. They successfully create a calm, orderly atmosphere which effectively supports the high expectations of behaviour and moral conduct in the school. Much work has been done on assertive discipline and it is clear that pupils are taught the principles which help them to distinguish wrong from right. Each class has a clear set of simple rules and guidelines for pupils to follow. Even the youngest children are aware of their class rules and conventions. Pupils are given opportunities to consider and discuss moral issues in lessons, assemblies and circle time. For example, in assemblies when hearing about messages from God and Allah, the point is made that knowledge and responsibility are interdependent.

56 Provision for social development is good. The quality of relationships in the school is very good. Pupils learn to relate to each other and take responsibility for their own actions. Most pupils are confident and demonstrate good social skills. For example holding doors open for each other and for adults, saying please and thank you at appropriate times and listening attentively and showing appreciation for the efforts of fellow pupils. A sense of citizenship is developed by pupils collecting for charity, often the pupils themselves initiating the fund raising ideas and by entertaining others, for example pupils entertain the elderly and have sung at the local library. The role of the monitor is well established in the school and provides many opportunities for social development. For example pupils operate the music for assemblies and they take an active role in helping to support and guide younger ones throughout the school day. They are seen playing with them in the playground, assisting them in the dining hall, escorting them back into classes and even sitting with them in assemblies. Pupils were given the opportunity to plan the design of the playground. The residential experience also provides good social development for pupils when they attend an outward bound adventure camp.

57 Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Cultural aspects permeate all areas of the curriculum and school life. Pupils are provided with many opportunities throughout the curriculum to develop a good understanding of a wide range of cultural traditions. For example puppeteers have worked with pupils on a numeracy project which was also linked to music. A variety of music is played in assemblies and musicians have entertained pupils. Theatre groups have visited the school to support projects such as the study of the Victorians and Romans. Pupils visit theatres, museums, places of worship, places of historic interest and have made a delightful well-dressing display. Multi-cultural development is good and pupils are given many opportunities to study and appreciate the customs and traditions of other faiths which prepares them well for the diversity and richness of society. For example pupils demonstrate Indian dancing in assemblies, members of different faiths talk to pupils and demonstrate cultural traditions, such as showing how to wear the traditional sari. A West Indian minister talked to pupils about her faith and experiences. Pupils are also encouraged to share their own cultural traditions and celebrations, either in assemblies or in class discussion when they bring in cultural artefacts and talk about their own experiences. Pupils and parents expressed their satisfaction and appreciation with way these opportunities promote understanding and acceptance of each others' cultures and traditions.

• **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

58 The support, welfare and guidance that pupils receive is very good and a strength of the school. The caring ethos created by the committed staff makes a significant contribution to the school community. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported to enable them to participate in most school activities. Pupils with physical or visual impairment are also very well supported.

59 There are good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' academic achievements and personal development. The pupils' annual reports give good detail about personal and social development as well as academic achievement. In addition there are good quality target sheets that involve parents, pupils and staff in setting targets for future development. The home/school agreements have been welcomed by parents. Assessment of pupils' work, which has improved since the last inspection, is also good. Staff liaise well with parents, outside agencies, support staff and each other about the needs, progress and aspirations of individual pupils. The school values all pupils within its care.

60 There are good procedures for promoting and monitoring discipline and good behaviour. The school has done much to promote assertive discipline, for example, they have introduced the Bully Free Zone initiative, sad books and behaviour reports. In addition behaviour specialists have trained staff including the mid-day supervisors, resulting in behaviour medals being given and supervisors work with individual pupils to encourage self-esteem. The result is good behaviour by the majority of pupils and in the main there is a consistent approach to behaviour management. Although there are isolated incidences of inappropriate behaviour by a minority of pupils, behaviour in classrooms and in and around the school is good. Bullying is a rare occurrence but when there is an incidence it is dealt with quickly and appropriately by the school.

61 Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are good. Since the last inspection procedures have become more vigilant, for example the school has introduced a late book which has had positive effect on punctuality. The school works well with the Educational Welfare Officer although there is rarely any need to follow through on absences as most parents support the school procedures by keeping them informed about any unavoidable absences. Good attendance is encouraged and rewarded by certificates and prizes.

62 Child protection procedures are good. The headteacher is the designated member of staff, has received appropriate training, liaises with outside agencies and attends case conferences as and when necessary. All staff, including the mid-day supervisors have received training for child protection and Care & Protection legislation.

63 There is a good programme of personal and social education which is delivered through science, RE and Personal Health and Social Education lessons. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy and safe life style for example pupils were made aware of water danger when a representative of a water company visited the school. Pupils are also given guidance on electricity, railway, fireworks, buildings and stranger danger. Pupils have the opportunity to attend the Crucial Crews project. The school uses a good range of visiting experts to support pupils' health, safety and well-being including: fire officers, dental hygienist, school nurse, road safety officer and the police, who do a workshop for pupils on drug awareness. In addition, pupils have taken part in a sponsored aqua-aerobics event and healthy eating initiatives. Sex education is taught sensitively in a developmental way.

64 Accident and emergency procedures are good and there is an adequate number of staff trained in first aid, including one for the after-school Kids Club. Risk assessment and fire drills are carried out periodically and the school has the benefit of the expertise of a member of the governing body who has some previous experience in health and safety procedures. Mid-day supervision is good. The lunch time supervisors, who regularly receive appropriate training are caring and vigilant and interact well with pupils. Pupils have access to a balanced meal at lunch times.

· **Partnership with parents and the community**

65 Partnership with parents and the community is very good and a strength of the school. The school actively encourages parental involvement in the life of the school and is very appreciative of the good quality help and support they give. Grandparents, members of the community and retired teachers are also encouraged to support the school. Their help is put to very effective use by working in classrooms, accompanying school visits, and with extra-curricular activities as well as providing their expertise in many ways to support topics studied in the classrooms. Parents are very supportive of assemblies, special events such as concerts and the Harvest celebrations, and are very effective fund raisers through the PTA. The school offers adult helpers training and they are able to go on to do training for the qualification of NVQ. The school is currently offering a fourteen week Family Numeracy course. The ICT evening and book making project were very well supported by parents and members of the community.

66 Information to parents is very good. The letters and newsletters are timely, informative and generally well presented. In addition to the parent/teacher evenings which are well attended, the parent/pupil/teacher target setting evenings are also very well attended. Curriculum and topic information is given to parents when they attend a meeting to introduce them to the next year's teacher. The school evaluates the effectiveness of these meetings by giving parents the opportunity to complete a questionnaire. The school provides dual language leaflets that are put out by the DfEE or LEA and there are dual language speakers on the staff and governing body who are prepared to translate any information to those parents who do not have English as their first language.

67 Enrichment of the curriculum through community links is very good. Well-planned visits and

visitors enrich many aspects of the curriculum and life of the school. Pupils visit museums, theatre and make good use of the local environment to support geography and history topics. Other links include sponsorship from a variety of companies and businesses in the area and the school has good links with a Premier League football club. The school has been featured several times in the local press and radio. Other business links have provided sports kit and will help pupils work with an artist at a future date. The school has good links with the local high school and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education by induction days and meetings with staff.

- **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

- **Leadership and management**

68 The school is very well led by an experienced and respected head teacher. She is fully supported by the governing body, senior management, and staff. The school management has clear aims and a very strong educational philosophy. The head teacher has a clear vision of where the school is going, how to maintain the current high standards, and how to bring about school improvement. The school aims are shared by all.

69 The major strength of the school is the school ethos. The climate for learning is very strong and pupils are supported throughout the school, in a way which enables them to achieve high standards in a climate of equal opportunity and care. The management of the school is very committed to school improvement and to raising standards of pupils' attainment. Relationships throughout the school, between teachers, support staff, and pupils and parents and school are very good.

70 The school, which includes provision for visually impaired pupils, is very successful in providing an environment which is supportive, caring, and meets the needs of all its pupils. There are a high number of pupils identified as having special educational needs within the school. Visitors cannot fail to be impressed at the support, encouragement, and help that these pupils received from staff and from other pupils and at the progress that they make.

71 The school has a very comprehensive plan for improvement. This has been in place since the time of the last inspection and, as a result of considerable effort, much improvement has been made. Priorities and targets for future development have been set out clearly in all school documents, and are evaluated carefully and regularly by subject co-ordinators, the head teacher and the governing body.

72 Subject co-ordinators have clear and carefully identified roles. There are curriculum teams for many subject areas which ensures that areas for development are clearly identified and progress is made. Co-ordinators have some time to regularly monitor standards and development in their subject area. Overall the system works very well and monitoring of the curriculum and its development is very good.

73 The school has made an appropriate and successful response to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Good and effective strategies have been established and a realistic targets have been set.

74 The issues identified in the last inspection report have been fully addressed and the school has continued to move forward. There has been a very successful implementation of the school's action plan.

75 As a result of very good leadership and team work, and some very hard work between all concerned, the school continues to develop and is well-placed to sustain improvements in the future.

76 The school is successful in meeting all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.

· **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

77 The school has a good number of teachers and support staff who are suitably qualified and experienced, enabling the curriculum to be taught effectively to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and children who are under five. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well supported, representing an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers and support staff work very well together and very good teamwork is evident throughout the school. Early years support for the teaching of children who are under five in the nursery and reception classes is very good.

78 Induction arrangements for newly qualified teachers, teachers new to school and teachers assuming new responsibilities are very good. Appraisal procedures for all staff are in line with requirements. They are carried out annually, and are very effective in helping staff to evaluate and improve their practice. A Key Issue in the last inspection was to improve teaching by continuing to focus on staff development needs. Staff development arrangements are very good and impact very positively on the quality of teaching, a significant improvement. They meet individual and corporate needs, link very effectively to identified priorities in the school development plan, to personal and professional needs and to appraisal targets. All support staff, classroom assistants, school meals supervisors, school secretary and caretaker have received very effective, relevant training.

79 Accommodation is appropriate, enabling the curriculum to be taught effectively. Lack of space has been improved by a classroom extension. Staff work hard to enhance the learning environment with effective displays of work and artefacts. The lack of finger guards on doors and frames is a potential hazard, especially for visually impaired pupils. Hall accommodation for acts of worship and for physical education is good. Good quality play equipment, very good safety surfaces and line markings enhance the playground. The hall lacks similar line markings to promote indoor games in physical education. The school does not have wheelchair access or disabled toilet facilities.

80 External accommodation is spacious and attractive. The recently added strong fence around the school has decreased the regular vandalism, previously a significant source of demand on the school budget. The grounds are used effectively for play and as a learning resource, for example, for science investigative activities. School is aware that an important chain is missing on the wooden climbing frame in the playground, rendering part of it ineffective for pupils' use. The cracked top step down to the lower playground is a potential hazard. A separate, safe outside area provides ample space for nursery children to experience free play. Its use in fostering their physical development, has improved since the previous inspection. However there is no such separate area for children under five in the reception class. The field is well maintained and is suitable for games, athletics, school events and play. It is also used by 'Kids' Club'.

81 Learning resources are adequate, overall and are good in English, mathematics, science, history and music. They are appropriate and are accessible to staff and pupils. Science and Early Years resources have been considerably improved since the last inspection. Provision of information technology resources is appropriate and effectively supports learning in all areas across the school. Library provision at Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection. The curriculum is enriched by visits to Liverpool Art Gallery and Ellesmere Boat Museum and of visiting musicians and artists.

· **The efficiency of the school**

82 The school's financial and other resources are well-managed. Efficient and high-quality financial management ensures that all the funds are carefully targeted to meet the school's aims and identified priority areas.

83 The school development plan is a very thorough document providing a clear direction for the work of the school. There has been a very thorough identification of the school's future needs, based on a review of standards and the current provision. The staff, governors, and Local Education Authority (LEA) advice and support, have been involved in its production. All developments have been very carefully costed and efficiently and clearly linked to the school budget. The plan has clear success criteria and has proved to be a very good tool for school improvement.

84 There is a very efficient system of financial and budgetary control through the head teacher and school administrator working closely together. The school has received good financial advice and support from the LEA and has recently received a revised spending plan indicating that the school has a sound base for further future developments.

85 There has recently been a change from a subject allowance for resources, to a demand led resourcing policy in which needs are met in line with the priorities of the school development plan. This has increased the efficiency of spending and ensured that funds are targeted appropriately at areas of need.

86 Governors are regularly kept informed about financial progress. They routinely receive financial information prior to Finance Committee meetings and full governors meetings. This enables them to have a clear picture of the financial situation.

87 Staff are deployed effectively throughout all areas of the school. There is very good teamwork and liaison between all staff, including those employed to work specifically with pupils with visual impairment.

88 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a very important part of the work of the school and has a high profile. Available funding is carefully targeted at meeting their needs and as a result pupils make good progress. Pupils with special needs have access to all areas of the school and, in particular, much emphasis is placed on ensuring the mobility of pupils with visual impairment.

89 When taking into account the average cost per pupil, the good quality of education provided and the good progress made by pupils, the school provides good value for money.

Resourced provision for visually impaired pupils

90 The school houses the Local Education Authorities resourced provision for visually impaired pupils. This provision is a part of Bolton's Service for Sensory Impaired pupils. There are currently 10 visually impaired pupils attending the school, many of whom have to travel some distance to come to attend. There have been a number of adaptations to the building to meet the needs of these pupils. The

service has a room in the school which serves as an office, houses some of the specialist equipment and as a teaching area for individuals and small groups of pupils. Pupils spend most of their time when they are in school in classes with their peers. The service is staffed by two teachers and four full time learning support assistants, a Mobility Officer and a keyboard skills teacher.

91 All visually impaired pupils have a statement of special educational need or are in the process of being assessed for statements. Pupils' visual impairment ranges from partially sighted to those with no sight.

92 The service aims to provide visually impaired pupils with access to the mainstream curriculum, ensuring pupils are integrated and have equality of opportunity to be involved in as many aspects of school life and work as is appropriate. In its close joint working with the school, the service strives to ensure that pupils develop independence. Each pupil has a mobility programme.

93 The progress of visually impaired pupils is very good overall and some pupils make excellent progress. Pupils learning braille do so from an early age and quickly become competent as a result of some very good teaching and support. For a number of these pupils, besides developing skills as brailers, attainment in spelling and sentence construction is well above average for their age and, as a result of very careful listening skills, they are able to write sentences dictated to them and read them back. Many older pupils are competent users of ICT, being able to use keyboard shortcuts to move about the screen and to edit text. For a significant number of pupils attainment in reading and understanding is above average. Pupils with some vision use a range of aids efficiently and take part in lessons confidently.

94 Pupils make good progress in mobility and independence skills. The school and service place considerable emphasis on this aspect of pupils' education and as a result pupils move confidently and independently around the school and the playground and play games with other children at playtime.

95 Pupils are confident and happy in the school. Levels of concentration and application to tasks are very good. The relationship between pupils and teaching and support staff is excellent. Pupils listen very well, quickly and accurately responding to instructions and advice. Most are able to engage in conversation with adults and have good social skills. Even very young children, after a long and full day, maintain enthusiasm for their work and continue to be responsive. Behaviour is very good.

96 Teaching and support are very good. There are excellent relationships between all adults and pupils. This, together with high levels of teacher expertise and knowledge and understanding are prominent features of teaching. There is detailed planning to meet individual needs and each new topic builds on previous lessons and sessions. Individual teaching of pupils, for example when teaching braille or keyboard skills, is at a very high level and as a result pupils make very good progress. In classes, all teachers take into account the needs of visually impaired pupils and reflect these in their planning, thus ensuring pupils access to the national curriculum. Teamwork between all adults is very good and considerably enhances pupils learning. Support assistants are clear about the needs of their individual charges and are included in the provision and detailed planning. The staff of the support service and the school staff work very well together, to the considerable benefit of pupils.

97 The teachers of the Service for Sensory Impaired are very well prepared and put considerable effort into developing and adapting resources to meet the needs of pupils with visual impairment, for example in enlarging text and in the production of large copies of the books that sighted pupils use. Resources are carefully assembled to meet the developing needs of individual visually impaired pupils and allow the same access to the curriculum and areas of experiences as other pupils.

98 The management of the provision works well with regular contact between the head of service, the service staff and the headteacher. There are weekly meetings in the school between the head of service and the service team.

99 Resources are adequate and are of good quality. The latest ICT equipment is up to date and uses powerful and effective software which includes voice recognition and will read back the text that pupils have typed in. Staff have the equipment to provide pupils with tactile maps and surfaces, giving access to areas of the curriculum including art and geography.

100 The service is based in a classroom in the school. This is only just adequate space for individual and small group teaching and housing the more specialist resources. Access to the room is through another classroom and the doors to the room are a folding partition. These factors present difficulties for pupils and staff, although all cope well with the situation and visually impaired pupils manage very well, being completely confident when coming and going.

101 The school has been adapted to meet the needs of visually impaired pupils as they move around the buildings. A detailed building audit has recently been carried out and this has identified possible hazards and indicated solutions. The need to keep walkways and other areas clear and free of clutter and to highlight possible hazards, through the use of contrasting colour or coloured tape is acknowledged by the school.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

102 Provision for children under five in the nursery and reception class is very good, and has improved since the previous inspection. Fifty-one children attend the nursery class part-time. Nineteen reception class children were under five, out of twenty children attending full-time at the time of the inspection. A full time qualified teacher, each well supported by a full-time nursery nurse, is in charge of each class. The deputy head is the Early Years co-ordinator and is, at present, on maternity leave. The classrooms provide an effective learning environment and are appropriately organised, with attractive displays. The nursery has easy access to a good, safe outside area, providing ample space for free play. The very good use of this area has improved since the last inspection. There is no such separate area for reception class children to experience free play. Children with special needs are well supported. Support for children for whom English is an additional language has improved since the last inspection.

103 Children enter school with very wide ranging levels of attainment which, overall, are slightly below average for their age in all areas of learning. A number of children have under developed speaking skills and are immature for their age. The overall progress made by the children is good but by the time they are five, few achieve the expected outcomes for their age in language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In creative and physical development their attainment is broadly average and their progress is good. Children settle well into school, with the help and encouragement of teaching and support staff. Adults work very well together and very effective teamwork is evident. Nursery and reception staff liaise closely.

104 The overall quality of teaching is good in both classes, varying from satisfactory to very good in each class. Teaching is satisfactory and effective in language and literacy and mathematics. It is good, overall, in personal and social development, in knowledge and understanding of the world, in creative development and physical development. Teachers' knowledge of the Early Years curriculum is very secure and expectations are high. Planning and recording are very good, and are based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Children are managed well, with full use made of adult support. Day-to-day assessment is very effective and is very well used to inform planning. The organisation of too many nursery groups limits the effectiveness of direct teaching so that the use of time is not maximised. Opportunities for reception children to develop independence are limited.

Personal and Social Development

105 Children in both classes behave and respond well, developing very positive attitudes to learning. Some work co-operatively, as when building models from constructional apparatus. They learn to respect others and to take turns, for example, when answering questions in a large group situation. Many share equipment fairly when experiencing sand play. They begin to understand the difference between right and wrong through sensitive handling of everyday classroom incidents by the staff. Nursery children respond positively to an effective display of Hindu artefacts. They learn about the festival of Divali and accept that children and adults of a different culture are part of the community. Reception children learn to respect other cultures through, for example, Chinese food activities and by learning about holy books, such as the Qu'ran. By five, most children make good progress. Some achieve the expected outcomes for their age, but most remain slightly below average.

Language and Literacy

106 Provision for language development is very good. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. Some good teaching is seen in the reception class. Effective use of the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' contributes well to nursery children's language development. Good interaction by staff, and quality of talk impact positively on speaking and listening skills. However, opportunities to develop language skills through adult support of role play in the 'Cafe' are under-developed. In the reception class, the structured use of the Big Book 'Little Red Riding Hood', consolidates children's knowledge of initial sounds and some common words. Planning is effective and ensures careful matching of tasks to children's needs. Appropriate revision of prior learning encourages phonic skills. Some children develop independence but opportunities for this are limited.

107 Children make good progress but by the age of five, attainment remains below average, overall. Nursery children listen well to stories, but many have limited concentration. Some respond willingly to questions about 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', using a growing vocabulary with developing confidence. Children 'make marks' and draw pictures to make their own 'Very Hungry Caterpillar' books. A few handle books carefully, begin to know how books are organised, and understand that words and pictures carry meaning. Some high attainers in the reception class know the initial sounds of some alphabet letters. Some recognise familiar words as their teacher reads the Big Book 'Little Red Riding Hood'. A few higher attainers write words unaided and write their names with a measure of success. They identify and talk about favourite parts of the story with increasing fluency and confidence.

Mathematics

108 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some very good practice observed in the reception class. In the nursery, too many groups are organised at one time, making it difficult for staff to focus on one group for direct teaching for a suitable length of time. Planning is very effective. Good deployment of support staff contributes appropriately to the children's understanding of numbers. In the reception class, good revision of prior learning consolidates children's mathematical skills. Very good questioning and brisk pace contribute positively to the good progress made by most children. Models of 10 green bottles, are used to maximum effect to encourage children to understand numbers and number bonds to 5, and 10. The very good plenary session enables teachers to check children's understanding, and celebrate their achievements.

109 By the age of five, attainment, overall, is below that expected for this age group. Most children make good progress and a few high attainers make very good progress. Nursery children count to 3, some high attainers, to 5, with growing understanding and confidence. Some count money, with limited success. A few recognise 'half full', when experiencing sand play. Some recognise common two-dimensional shapes. Reception children develop sound counting and ordering skills through practical activities, games, and songs, such as '10 Green Bottles'. By the time they are five, most count to five and some high attainers to ten. Some identify coins of different value, to fivepence, with some success. They identify basic shapes and explore capacity through sand play. Some follow simple patterns in bead threading. Some are familiar with, and begin to use basic mathematical language correctly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

110 The quality of teaching is good, with some very good teaching seen in the nursery where very effective practical activities are provided for nursery children to experience first-hand investigations, using their senses. Good deployment of adult helpers and very good intervention by staff promote children's understanding. In the reception class, groups are well organised. Clear explanations and open-ended questions contribute positively to children's understanding. In both classes, resources, including computers, are used effectively. Planning and preparation are very thorough and subject knowledge is very secure.

111 Children's attainment is, overall, below the standards specified in the desirable outcomes of learning by the age of five, although their progress is good. Nursery children respond well to opportunities to use their senses to taste and smell strawberries, matching the menu of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. Displays of houses, with numbers and streets, contribute well to their developing sense of place and distance. Children explore properties of malleable materials, while making 'cakes'. They make models from constructional apparatus. Reception children become aware of change as they observe beaten egg added to rice in a Chinese food activity. They benefit from the well organised class 'Technology Workshop', where materials and tools are available to make models. Children in both classes use computers with adult support, developing basic information technology skills. They create a range of pictures, using various programmes.

Creative Development

112 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some good teaching seen in the nursery where independent, active learning is encouraged. In both classes, staff provide effective opportunities for children to explore the art elements. Good provision of appropriate activities in art, music and role play support children's language and mathematical development well. Resources are used efficiently and children are well managed. Good organisation ensures that all children have equal opportunities to experience all activities. Displays, throughout, although rather crowded, enhance the learning environment and children's self esteem.

113 Overall, the attainment of most children is in line with the desirable learning outcomes, by the age of five. They make good progress. Through art, stories and imaginative play, many show increasing ability to listen, to observe and to use their imagination. Nursery children experiment with colour, form and texture to create effective divas to celebrate Divali as well as a collage 'Fish' display for numbers one to ten, using a variety of materials. Reception children explore the art elements, using a wide range of materials, tools and media to create self portraits and class pictures, such as 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. They respond well to the story and music of 'Peter and the Wolf' and empathise with the characters.

Physical Development

114 The quality of teaching is good in both classes. Subject knowledge is secure and teachers encourage the understanding of positional language, 'up, down, high, low'. Children are well managed. Support staff are effectively deployed. The outdoor play area and apparatus are used well in the nursery for children to experience free play. Teachers' positive interaction, good organisation and high expectations in physical education lessons ensure that children are well supported and suitably challenged. Health and safety is well addressed, with teachers demonstrating, for example, how to land safely when jumping.

115 Most children make good progress and achieve the desirable outcomes by the time they are five. In both classes, in physical education the children move confidently and imaginatively, with improving co-ordination and awareness of space and of others. Most respond appropriately to a tambourine signal to 'stop'. Children use small and large apparatus with developing control and confidence. They handle small tools, such as scissors, gluesticks and paintbrushes carefully and safely, with increasing control.

- **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**
- **English**

116 Overall standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above that expected nationally.

117 The school results in the 1999 national tests for seven year olds show standards in reading and writing to be generally in line with the national average, and above when compared with similar schools. Evidence from this inspection confirms this.

118 The school results in the 1999 tests for eleven year olds show standards in English to be generally in line with the national average, and these standards are above when compared with similar schools. Judgements made during this inspection find standards are now above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards at both key stages have risen over the last few years. The Key Issue from the last inspection, to 'improve the provision for speaking, listening and writing across the curriculum' has been fully addressed.

119 Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Those with special educational needs and those who are visually impaired are supported very well, enabling them to make good progress towards the clear targets identified for them.

120 Attainment in speaking and listening at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with that expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the visually impaired, making good progress within the key stage. This progress continues through Key Stage 2, at the end of which attainment is above the national average. Pupils listen with sustained concentration, share ideas from their own experiences and take part confidently in role-play situations. Drama lessons provide opportunities for pupils to develop these skills, such as developing bonfire and firework sounds in Year 1, a class assembly in Year 2, a drama lesson based on Macbeth in Year 4 and general discussion in all the classes. In Year 5, pupils work in groups to write their own plays. Opportunities are provided at the upper end of Key Stage 2 for pupils to plan, research and deliver class talks on subjects of their own choosing.

121 Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with standards in reading which are slightly below average. They make good progress through both key stages, and leave the school with standards which are above that expected nationally. Pupils talk confidently about what they like in their books, describing the various characters and events. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils recognise their errors and self correct, using a variety of methods from sounding out and splitting the words to looking for clues in the pictures. By the end of Key Stage 2, most are reading confidently with expression, some fluently. Some pupils are very enthusiastic readers. A variety of books are used, including some from reading schemes, depending on the needs of the individual. Many pupils talk about authors and explain why they like a particular type of book. They have experience of poetry and non-fiction and can talk about these.

122 Books are taken home on a regular basis and home school reading records are used, containing the book's title, pages read, dates and comments, usually written by a parent, but sometimes the pupil. Many pupils use public libraries. Library skills within school are less well developed. Although pupils have a good understanding of contents, index and how to retrieve information from non-fiction books, many have less knowledge on how to find a particular book within the library. The lack of a library for those pupils in Key Stage 1 impedes development of their library and retrieval skills.

123 Standards in writing are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are developing skills in narrative and non-narrative writing. In Year 1, they read, sequence and write the day's events. In Year 2, pupils further

develop non-narrative writing. Spelling is generally accurate and handwriting is usually neat and consistent, and sometimes joined. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils undertake various tasks to still further improve their writing skills. These include creative work, a study of word meanings and dictionary work, grammar, poetry and extended writing. Spelling is accurate and handwriting is legible, joined and fluent. Many pupils use paragraphs and speech marks accurately. They plan and redraft pieces of work. Most understand the difference between active and passive verbs and write appropriately for different audiences. Much of their writing is lively and thoughtful, with some pupils writing very expressively. Words are chosen adventurously, and sentences are often complex.

124 Displays around the school are used well to stimulate learning and record the high standard of written work produced across the curriculum. These include writing about the Lighthouse-Keeper's Lunch in Year 3, poems based on Blake's 'Tyger', in Year 5 and extended writing about 'The Prisoner' in Year 6. Links are made with history in displays about Saxons in Year 3, the Tudors in Year 4 and the Victorians by the Year 6 'booster class'.

125 Literacy is used very effectively across the curriculum to develop writing and research skills through a variety of cross-curricular topics.

126 Pupils' attitudes to English are good at both key stages. They are attentive, eager to take part and are interested in the contributions of both teacher and other pupils. They are confident and in many lessons their enjoyment is obvious. They work well, whether individually or with others, persevering with tasks set. Relationships and behaviour are good.

127 The quality of teaching is generally good at both key stages, and never less than sound. Teachers are enthusiastic and of the lessons observed, two thirds in Key Stage 1 are good. In Key Stage 2, over half are good or very good. Teachers plan well for pupils of all abilities, so that all succeed. Tasks are challenging but realistic and are explained clearly. There is generally a brisk pace, teachers are relaxed, humour is used well and lessons are enjoyable. In the majority of lessons questions are used very effectively to stimulate and extend learning. Learning points are reinforced and assessment is used well to inform planning. Non-teaching staff are fully involved in lessons and provide good quality support.

128 Test results are analysed thoroughly to ensure that all areas are covered and that all pupils are set work that will ensure good progress. The National Literacy Strategy is used consistently throughout the school and has helped to raise standards. All staff work well together. Whole-school planning is thorough and the co-ordinator works very effectively with a subject team to plan and monitor the subject.

129 Resources are generally good, particularly for implementing the literacy strategy. The number of books is satisfactory, although there is no library specific to Key Stage 1.

• **Mathematics**

130 The 1998 National Curriculum tests results at the end of Key Stage 1, indicate that attainment is well below average, compared to the national average and compared to schools in similar circumstances. However, the 1999 assessment results show attainment is in line with the national average, a significant improvement since 1998, indicating a reversal of the downward trend of the last three years. Key Stage 1 standards have improved and are similar to those at the last inspection. Attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average. School recognises that the

raising of Key Stage 1 attainment is an area for development.

131 The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds are close to the national average, and are above average, compared with schools in similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils achieving higher grades in the tests is close to the national average, but above average, compared with schools in similar circumstances. Since the last inspection, when Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment was below the national average, standards of attainment have improved significantly. Taken over the last three years, attainment has shown an improving trend. The 1999 assessment results are in line with the national average, maintaining the rising trend in attainment. The attainment of most pupils currently at the end of the key stage is in line with the national average.

132 In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils mentally recall addition of doubles mentally, using simple numbers. Year 2 pupils recognise odd and even numbers. Some explain the difference, but many are confused. A few higher attainers know that adding on 9 is the same as adding on ten and taking away 1. They sequence number patterns in threes and fours. Some recognise patterns, some with limited skill. By the end of Key Stage 1, some pupils understand place value to 100 and solve simple problems, using the four rules of number. They solve space and measurement problems, using apparatus and use mathematical names for common three- and two-dimensional shapes. Pupil understand and use mathematical terms, 'add on' and 'share'. Progress is good through Key Stage 1.

133 In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils develop sound understanding of 'near doubles'. High attainers understand 'sum' and 'product'. Year 4 pupils count on and back in tens, including negative numbers. Some understand the value of digits in thousands. Year 5 pupils have quick recall of the 6 and 7 times tables. They recognise and name a variety of triangles. Some high attainers measure angles accurately, using protractors. Many Year 6 pupils recognise, describe and classify a variety of quadrilaterals, and their properties. High attainers calculate angles of parallelograms and of irregular quadrilaterals. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use and apply the four number operations to solve problems, including money. They extend their understanding of the number system to working with decimals to 2 places. Many understand fractions and percentages to estimate and compare proportions of a whole. They are familiar with shape, space and measures. They experience data-handling, using various tables, charts and graphs to record and interpret information. Some have sound understanding of probabilities. Their understanding and use of mathematical terms are satisfactory. Progress is good in Key Stage 2.

134 Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with standards of attainment below expectations. They make satisfactory progress, overall, and at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is broadly average. Overall, skills, knowledge and understanding are consolidated and extended appropriately. Over time, satisfactory progress is made by most pupils in Using and Applying Mathematics, in Number and Algebra and in Shape, Space and Measures. However, in Year 2 numeracy lessons, although many make sound progress, a number make unsatisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, over time, most pupils maintain satisfactory progress in all attainment targets, including Data Handling, a substantial improvement since the last inspection. During lessons, many make good progress, and some, very good progress. Inspection evidence indicates that the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is already having a positive effect on raising standards. Pupils with special needs make good progress throughout. They are very well supported, having equal access to all activities. Work is linked well to prior attainment.

135 Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very positive attitudes towards learning and enjoy the subject, throughout. They contribute well to oral sessions, willingly explaining their strategies. They behave, listen and concentrate well, applying themselves confidently to their work. Many take pride in the presentation of their work.

136 Cross-curricular links are addressed in planning such that the use of numeracy across the curriculum is good. Key Stage 1 pupils use sorting skills to make sets of Christian and secular Christmas activities in a religious education lesson. In music, counting skills are used in rhythm activities. Key Stage 2 pupils use and apply classification skills to find biblical references in religious education. In art, they use shape and patterning to create mosaic patterns and a 'Mathemagic' sewing display. In science, graphs and charts are used to record and interpret findings. Literacy skills are well enhanced by the extension of mathematical language.

137 In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. A third of the teaching is good. In Key Stage 2, it is consistently at least good. A quarter is very good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. At both key stages, teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They use correct mathematical terms, such as 'add on', 'diagonal', 'product'. Detailed planning, with clear learning objectives, provides very effectively for pupils' differing needs. Teaching methods are effective, with an appropriate balance between direct teaching and activities. These have a positive effect on pupils' progress. Key Stage 1 teachers' expectations of pupils are appropriate. Class management is satisfactory, overall. Resources are used efficiently. Features of good teaching are when effective questioning aids understanding and constructive use of praise well motivates pupils. Teaching is less good when levels of challenge do not match prior learning and when pupil management is inconsistent. These have a negative effect on pupils' progress. Key Stage 2 teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and involvement. Sufficient time is given for pupils to think. Mental and plenary sessions provide good opportunities for consolidating skills. Homework provision very effectively supports learning. Good day-to-day assessment informs planning. Very good teaching, characterised by clear expositions and well targeted questions, encourages pupils to explain strategies, and promotes accurate measurements. Teaching is less good where pace is lost.

138 The curriculum is good. It is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. The scheme of work, based on the National Numeracy Strategy, and effective medium-term plans provide good guidance in planning, continuity and progression. Teachers are working hard to implement the Numeracy Strategy appropriately, the highest priority in the school development plan. Assessment and recording procedures are very good. Although assessment is used effectively to inform the planning of new work, there are plans to develop this further. The school, committed to raising standards, is developing strategies for improvement, including regular testing, target setting, the development of the Family Numeracy Project and the provision of Booster classes.

139 The Numeracy Team, consisting of the head teacher and the mathematics and numeracy co-ordinators, is becoming established in strengthening the school's drive to develop mathematics. National Numeracy Strategy in-service training, attended by the Numeracy Team, the chair of the governing body and all staff is impacting positively on the teaching, learning and management of the subject. The subject is very well co-ordinated. Monitoring is developing very positively. However, little whole staff moderation of pupils' work takes place, to standardise judgements about pupils' attainment levels. There is no collection of exemplars of attainment levels to support teachers' judgements of standards. School recognises the need to address these two issues, and to raise standards at Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection, coverage of Using and Applying mathematics, and Number have improved.

140 Resources are good. They are accessible to pupils and teachers and good use is made of them. Displays effectively support the curriculum, enhance the learning environment as well as the development of pupils' mathematical skills and language.

Science

141 Overall the standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are average and in line with those found nationally. The national tests for 11-year-olds in 1999 show that the number of pupils reaching the expected levels in science was slightly below the average when compared with the national average. However, in comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was above average. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding and skills have developed to a level in line with national expectations. However, in a number of lessons, pupils' ability to confidently describe what they have observed and to record and draw conclusions is above average. In both key stages pupils make good use of scientific language and experimental and investigative skills are well established.

142 Pupils in both key stages make good progress in science and have full access to experimental and investigative science. There has been a considerable improvement in pupils' attainment and progress in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection report where both these areas were found to be below average and unsatisfactory. Pupils' levels of attainment, as measured in Standard Attainment Tests, have improved considerably year on year since the last inspection and science is now one of the strong subjects of the school.

143 The progress of pupils identified as having special educational need is good. Through well-targeted teaching and good individual support all pupils have access to the subject content and activities. In one year 6 lesson a pupil with visual impairment played a full part in an investigative session, learning about exercise and its affect on pulse rate. Pupils had to run around the yard for a set length of time and record the resultant increase in heartbeat rate. The visually impaired pupil, with very good help and support from a special needs assistant, ran around with the rest of the class, counted her pulse rate, and recorded the result.

144 Pupils respond well to science lessons and especially to the investigative work. They are enthusiastic and hardworking and enjoy their lessons. Typically, pupils are attentive in lessons, are sensible throughout, making good contributions to discussions and they work well with others in small groups as well as independently.

145 Teaching is satisfactory in key stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This again is a considerable improvement over the last inspection where it was found to be satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in half of the lessons in Key Stage 2. Teaching now is strong in key Stage 2, with well-planned lessons proceeding at an appropriate and brisk pace, subject material carefully matched to pupils' abilities, and pupils of all levels of attainment suitably challenged. Especially in Key Stage 2, ICT is used in science lessons. It is clearly identified in lesson planning and is used for analysing and communicating information, and for measuring and recording data, as when the rate of cooling of water is examined.

146 The co-ordination of science is very good. The science co-ordinator was appointed after the last inspection and has had a considerable influence in the development of the subject and of the increase in levels of attainment and pupils progress since that time. He has a strong recent background of science courses and brings a good level of knowledge and expertise to the subject. The co-ordinator has rewritten the science policy and is in the process of re-evaluation the LEA scheme of work, which the school uses, in the light of guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The co-ordinator sees all colleagues weekly planning and has opportunities to comment and advise. There is a periodic audit of the science curriculum and the co-ordinator carries out classroom observations of all colleagues teaching and of pupils' response once a year. In this way, and together with a review of

pupils' work, collected in as class sets of books, he is able to have a very clear view of teaching overall and of pupils' levels of attainment.

147 The level of resourcing is at least adequate for the delivery of the national curriculum and for many aspects it is good. Resources are well organised, having been centrally stored and organised into topic boxes. There is a resource list available to all staff and resources are checked, and if necessary replaced, on a termly basis. The co-ordinator is now developing a larger base of demonstration models for teachers to use as a part of their lessons.

- **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

- **Religious education**

148 The attainment of the majority of pupils currently at the end of both key stages meets the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. Attainment in religious education at both key stages was a Key Issue in the previous inspection. This has been fully addressed by the school and has now improved.

149 At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know about religious celebrations, such as Easter, Harvest, Christmas, Divali, Eid and Ramadan. They gain an appropriate level of knowledge of Christianity and of the beliefs of other religions, through learning about Islam and Hinduism. They learn about special Holy books, the Bible and the Qu'ran. Year 1 pupils learn about the different ways of celebrating Christmas, both religious and secular. Year 2 pupils become aware of the importance of the birth of Jesus and talk about what Christmas means to them. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils gain sound knowledge of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. This has improved since the previous inspection. Studying these faiths gives pupils a very good insight into other cultures, their festivals and buildings, namely a church, a Mosque, a Synagogue, and a Temple. Year 3 pupils learn about Jewish family life and about the Shabbat festival, comparing it with the Christian Sunday. Pupils in Year 4 study the Old Testament book of Malachi. They demonstrate sound knowledge of Advent as a preparation for Christmas. Year 5 pupils know the traditional story of the birth of Jesus and understand that part of this is rooted in fact, whilst some is legend. They study the Bible and check the Gospels to compare different accounts of the Nativity of Jesus. Year 6 pupils begin to develop a critical approach to stories of the birth of Jesus, using biblical evidence. They focus on biblical accounts and learn to look up biblical references in both the Old and the New Testaments. They begin to understand and respect that other people's beliefs are important to them and that religious beliefs can affect the way people live. This contributes very well to their spiritual development. They discuss the Easter Story with growing confidence and begin to understand its significance for Christianity. Good opportunities are provided for reflection in assemblies and when pupils say prayers at the end of the day and through the curriculum, as seen in a Year 2 music lesson. This has improved since the school was last inspected. Throughout, pupils with special educational needs are well supported. As a result of the good support received, they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They have equal opportunity and equal access to all activities.

150 Throughout the school, pupils' prior learning is built on in a structured way. Their knowledge and understanding are effectively consolidated and extended within, and across the key stages. This contributes effectively to the satisfactory progress that the majority of pupils make at both key stages.

151 Cross-curricular links are effectively planned. Pupils use their literacy skills appropriately in their written recording. Numeracy skills are used, for example, when Year 1 pupils make sets of

Christian and non-Christian activities at Christmas. Year 6 pupils use their classifying skills to find biblical references. A class book, about a Year 2 visit to St Paul's Church, links effectively with geography.

152 At both key stages, pupils develop positive attitudes to the subject. Most listen well, joining in discussions with confidence and enjoyment. They behave well, sustain concentration and are interested in the subject themes that they study.

153 The quality of teaching seen in lessons in both key stages is satisfactory, overall, with some good practice observed in Year 1 and Year 6. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers' class management is sound and they promote constructive relationships. Expectations of their pupils are appropriate and their knowledge of the Agreed Syllabus expectations is secure. Teachers effectively use a range of religious artefacts, many on loan from the Multi-cultural Centre. Lesson planning is effective. Teaching is good where opportunities are provided for children to express their thoughts and feelings and where all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, are involved in, for example, comparing preparations for different religious celebrations. This has a positive effect on the attainment and progress of pupils. Where time is not used effectively and pace is slow, lessons are less successful.

154 Co-ordination of the subject is effective. The scheme of work is based on the reviewed Locally Agreed Syllabus which is currently being finalised. A helpful policy and detailed medium term plans provide useful guidance in planning, continuity and progression. There are few procedures for assessment or for recording pupils' attainment in the subject. School recognises that these are areas for development. Teachers' plans, pupils' work and cross-curricular links are monitored regularly. Some monitoring of subject teaching has taken place. Recent in-service training attended by staff has impacted positively on teaching.

155 Resources are adequate, accessible and used effectively. Effective displays, such as that of religious festivals in the entrance hall and a 'Mosque' display in Year 3, enhance both the curriculum and pupils' cultural development. Good use is made of visits to a variety of churches and to a Hindu temple, and of visiting Clergy, to enrich the curriculum.

• **Information technology**

156 Pupils' levels of attainment, in information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of both key stages are average and in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 6 pupils are competent in most aspects of computer usage and are beginning to use the Internet for finding information and research. Pupils are able to access a range of applications and to move data between applications.

157 In all classes pupils use computers when opportunity allows and, as a result, they make satisfactory progress overall with a significant number of pupils making good progress. Pupils who are identified as having special educational needs make good progress and those with visual impairment make very good progress especially when using ICT as a research and communication tool.

158 Pupils respond well to the lessons in which they use ICT. Pupils working together at a computer co-operate well and help each other. Behaviour is good and they take care of the equipment and use it sensibly.

159 Teachers plan for the use of ICT in all lessons and present work in line with the scheme of work. Teaching is satisfactory overall with a range of strategies, but mainly concentrating on small group and individual work. There has recently been a considerable emphasis on teacher in-service training. The school has identified, through a skills audit, the areas which staff feel the need to further develop.

160 The coverage of the national Curriculum is sound and all areas are experienced by pupils. In science lessons pupils use remote sensing and data logging, especially in Year 6 experimental and investigative lessons. The range of activities covers most areas in depth, and pupils make good use of ICT in many subject areas. There is much use of word processing and the mixing of text and graphics, and the use of spreadsheets and database work to retrieve and process information.

161 Assessment is at an early stage but records of pupils' access to and coverage of their use of ICT have been introduced and these are collected and monitored by the co-ordinator.

162 The coordination of ICT is good and is a major factor in the current and successful development of the area throughout the school. There is an ICT team, consisting of three teachers. The team is responsible for identifying areas for support development, in line with the school development plan, and for the implementation of the ICT policy across the school. The team is led by the ICT co-ordinator, who has revised the policy and ensured that it is in place. The coordinator has collected examples of pupils work from all classes and oversees ICT planning from all colleagues. In this way she has a good and up to date knowledge of pupils' levels of attainment and the coverage of the Programme of Study. The coordinator has had opportunities to observe colleagues' teaching and has release time from lessons to manage this area.

163 There have been considerable recent developments in the hardware provision for ICT throughout the school. There is a developing network, with a hub in place and some machines being linked. The remainder of the school is expected to be fully networked in the near future. The hardware provision is good with modern PCs and a good range of software, ensuring that the requirements of the National Curriculum can be met. The pupil to computer ratio at 17:1 is in line with the national average. Information and communication technology especially for the use of visually impaired pupils is in most areas where they work. This is over and above the resources indicated previously. The school also uses software and resources for remote sensing and for control.

164 There has been good progress since the last inspection, especially in the areas of the quality of the hardware provision, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and of pupils' progress, and in the overall awareness of the importance of ICT across the curriculum.

• **Art**

165 During the week of the inspection it was possible to observe only a small amount of art being taught.

166 However, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and a review of the artwork displayed in classrooms and around the school it is clear that art has a secure place in the school curriculum and that pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are competent in using a range of media, mainly in two dimensions, but with some 3 dimensional work, and know about the work and styles of a number of artists. Three dimensional artwork is a strong feature of the work of younger pupils but is not as well developed for older ones. In Key Stage 2 there is a strong emphasis on design work. Throughout the school pupils have produced some good work derived from pattern and shape, taking their inspiration from a range of multi-cultural sources.

167 In the small number of lessons seen pupils respond well to art. This is supported by the quality of the range of pupils' artwork around the school.

168 There was not enough evidence from observations to make a secure judgement about the teaching of art. However, from the range of work on display in classes in both key stages it is obvious that lessons are carefully planned and that the art attainment targets are clearly covered. Art is planned to fit in with other subject areas, including history, geography and religious education and there are strong cross curricular links between these areas. Teaching is supported by a range of activities and visits linked to art themes, for example canal art is enhanced by a visit to Ellesmere Boat Museum, Viking art through a visit to Croxteth Park and Tudor art and architecture through visiting Smithills Hall. There are also good links with the Artists in Schools Agency.

169 The headteacher is the art co-ordinator. Besides teaching art to one class she regularly collects and views pupils' art work and has a clear perception of pupils levels of attainment in this area. The school uses the Local Education Authority scheme of work and plans to review this in the light of forthcoming national guidance.

170 The school has rightly identified the need for an increased use of information technology in artwork as an issue for future development.

171 Resources are sufficient to meet the needs of the scheme of work and the National Curriculum.

• **Design Technology**

172 Due to timetabling arrangements there was only limited opportunity to observe design technology work during the inspection. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and interviews with staff and pupils, indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards commensurate with their ages as they move through both key stages.

173 When they start Key Stage 1 there is suitable emphasis given to developing making and designing skills. Pupils learn about the properties of different materials and how best to shape, assemble and join them. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to design and make quite intricate models, for example powered vehicles. These use electric motors and batteries. Pupils use the knowledge and understanding gained in science lessons when they consider their design. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 make torches, again strongly linking the work with science.

174 There is not sufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in the school. However discussions with teachers indicate that they have secure subject knowledge and confidence to teach the subject and a review of planning shows that teachers ensure that their classes have design and technology on a regular basis.

175 The subject curriculum is satisfactory, being broad and balanced. The scheme of work has been introduced since the last inspection and resources have been updated to meet the requirements of the scheme. There is a co-ordinator with secure subject knowledge. He has had opportunities to observe colleagues teaching design and technology, thus ensuring he has a clear view of pupils' standards of attainment. This strategy also enables him to support and advise colleagues and he regularly sees other teachers planning.

176 The school recognises that an important area for development is the greater inclusion of

opportunities to use information technology as an integral part of design technology. At present this is under represented.

Geography

177 Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress in developing geographical skills and an interest in the subject. There is evidence of good work on the local environment, mapping, studies of Grasmere and a village in India. Where possible or relevant, good links are made with other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are visually impaired make good progress, due to very high levels of support. A tactile map of the Indian village studied is an example of the resources provided to ensure that all these pupils are fully involved.

178 Although few lessons in geography were observed during the inspection week, sufficient evidence is available to judge that teaching is generally satisfactory. Geography is part of an alternating programme with history. This is planned for and monitored effectively by the co-ordinator. Planning shows that, despite changes to the National Curriculum, geography is covered effectively through the year. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support the subject and others are available from the County's resources library. The school uses the local environment well and pupils have the opportunity to extend their learning through visits out of school.

History

179 During both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their historical skills, knowledge and understanding. They are interested in learning about the past, have a good concept of the value of historical evidence, posing questions and finding answers about the past from books and other sources. There are lively displays which are used effectively to enhance and record pupils, learning: one on World War II, the other on the Tudors. Year 4 pupils, through links with design and technology, have made models of Elizabethan houses. Good links are made with literacy, especially in Year 3 literacy sessions where pupils develop their topic on Romans and in Year 6, where their topic on Ancient Greece is similarly developed.

180 Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. During most lessons they listen attentively, contributing to discussion thoughtfully and valuing the opinions of others. They collaborate well, sharing tasks and appreciating the contribution of others. Behaviour is good.

181 Of the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Lessons are prepared well, they are imaginative and purposeful and the pupils are totally involved. The tasks are matched well to the needs of individual pupils.

182 The co-ordinator is effective in planning and monitoring the subject, and cross-curricular links with other subjects are well developed. The quantity and quality of resources are good and others are borrowed from the county's resources library.

Music

183 Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons seen in both key stages.

184 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop sound understanding of rhythm, tempo, dynamics and

pitch. They sing songs from memory, with confidence and enjoyment. They identify and name a range of musical instruments. They listen carefully to, and make simple appraisals of Handel's 'Fireworks' music, using their imagination to describe what the music represents. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their feelings, when listening to music. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate satisfactory understanding of the musical elements and play untuned instruments confidently to create complicated rhythms. They clap in time to the beat of a metronome. They compose, practise and perform their own pulse cycle. They sing songs, such as 'Every Living Thing' tunefully, with improving control of diction and phrasing. They sing songs in two parts, as observed on their summer concert video. Most follow notation in their song books satisfactorily. They listen attentively to taped music from 'Orpheus' and appraise it, simply. Pupils across the school also have opportunities to listen to, and appraise a range of music in assemblies, including that from other cultures, for example, Chinese music.

185 Planning includes links with other subjects. Music will be linked with mathematics through puppetry activities during Numeracy week. Pupils use numeracy skills effectively in work on tempo and rhythm, when counting beats and in becoming aware of musical patterns. Pupils' literacy skills are used well when discussing activities, extending their vocabulary by learning musical terms, such as 'semi-quaver' 'metronome', 'pulse cycle'. They use their reading skills when following words in their song books. In both key stages pupils listen attentively, develop positive attitudes to learning, behave well and enjoy performing, composing and listening in groups and in class. The overall quality of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory. Some good teaching was seen in Year 5. Throughout, planning is good and the use of a good range of musical instruments is effective. Subject knowledge is secure and teachers' expectations of pupils are appropriate. Where there is good class management and where organisation provides effective opportunities for pupils to participate actively, pupils are well motivated and make good progress.

186 The curriculum is broad and balanced and is well co-ordinated. The policy and scheme of work are helpful, providing useful guidance for staff in continuity, progression and planning. Monitoring of the subject is developing positively. Pupils of all abilities have equal opportunity and access to all activities. Visiting performers, such as an African drummer and a banjo player, as well as pupils' involvement in the Bolton Festival, enrich the curriculum and foster pupils' cultural and multi-cultural development. School events, such as the 'Bulb Show', Christmas and Harvest performances enhance pupils' musical experience. Resources are good and are stored centrally so that they are easily accessible to staff and pupils. The curriculum is well supported by a nursery nurse, a musician, who gives good support when an instrumentalist is needed at concerts, musical events, and to performances by the choir and the school orchestra, neither of which are currently active. Two pupils are taught to play the clarinet and one pupil, the flute by county peripatetic music teachers. A number of pupils also receive weekly tuition in cello and violin.

• **Physical education**

187 Only a small amount of teaching was observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Therefore, no judgements are made about the quality of teaching, pupils' response and their progress.

188 Good progress is made by Key Stage 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs. Rapid gains were made, particularly in the development of ball skills; for example, pupils in a Year 3 lesson improved in the accuracy of their underarm throwing. Similarly, Year 4 pupils, in a lesson in which Tudor music was the stimulus, showed good progress in their ability to interpret musical mood and successfully co-ordinate their actions to form a group dance. Pupils are able to make sensible use of available space and are aware of the need to observe safety rules when using equipment and when working with others.

189 Pupils in Key Stage 2 behaved well in the lessons seen. They listened to teachers' instructions, co-operated well in their work with their peers and showed an interest and supportive attitudes to the performance of others. Pupils with special educational needs were well-integrated into lessons and treated with due levels of consideration by their peers.

190 One unsatisfactory lesson was observed in Key Stage 1. The lesson was marred by the fact that one-third of the available time was wasted by several pupils having to borrow kit from another class. Further, no productive teaching points were given to enable pupils to improve their throwing and catching skills. For much of the lesson the teacher was focussed on the poor behaviour of several pupils.

191 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall and never less than satisfactory in all lessons seen. In the best lessons in this key stage, namely in Years 3 and 4, the teaching was characterised by: good organisation of group-based activities which were augmented by well-delivered and appropriate teaching points from the teacher. This was particularly evident in an outdoor games lesson where the teaching points made by the teacher clearly improved pupils' skills. There was especially good teamwork, in the Year 4 dance lesson, involving the two adults working alongside the teacher, which provided necessary and effective support for those pupils with special educational needs. In all lessons, in this key stage, teachers had planned and prepared suitable tasks and supported these with good quality resources. Teachers set appropriate examples for pupils by dressing suitably for physical activity. Class control based upon good relationships was evident in all lessons.

192 Pupils' receive a broad and balanced programme of physical education activities which has been enhanced by the contributions of the local professional football team and a prominent cricketer. Pupils also benefit from good quality extra curricular provision. After-school opportunities are offered, both to boys and girls, to participate in football, netball and rounders. A significant number of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 take advantage of this extra curricular provision. The school has achieved notable successes in competitive swimming and, at an individual pupil level, in the County football team.

193 Very good quality subject leadership is provided by the two teachers who jointly share this responsibility. Both teachers have enthusiasm and expertise which is used to develop the subject and to support and advise colleagues. Together they provide effective monitoring of teaching and very good organisation and maintenance of adequate, good quality resources.

194 Accommodation is good including adequately sized indoor and outdoor playing areas, the hard surfaced playground is well marked out for games. Similar markings would be helpful to teachers when organising groups within indoor based lessons.

Swimming

195 The inspection of this school included a focussed view of swimming which is reported below:

196 Currently there are arrangements for Year 6 pupils to receive ten lessons of 45 minutes duration, during the summer term. Therefore, during the period of inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons and thus it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching, pupils' response and progress. However, it is evident from records made available and discussions with staff responsible for the teaching of swimming, that approximately 80 per cent of pupils attain or exceed the standards required by the National Curriculum for PE.

197 The fact that a significant minority of pupils are unable to swim 25 metres is justifiably of concern to the school and to those responsible for teaching swimming. Reduced levels of funding, in recent years, has in turn resulted in the provision of fewer swimming lessons.

198 The school has the advantage of a good quality swimming pool on site. Swimming teachers are well qualified, enthusiastic and committed to providing an essential aspect of pupils' education.

199 Very good quality extra curricular provision is made possible by the funding contributed by the Parent Teacher Association. This currently enables the school to participate with high degrees of success in national competition. Imminently, additional provision is planned for pupils aged under five.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

200 The inspection of Sharples County Primary School was undertaken by a team of five inspectors who, over four days, completed a total of fifteen and a half inspector days in the school.

60 lessons or part lessons were observed, as were a number of registration periods and assemblies.

Observations were made of pupils arriving at school, during breaks and lunchtimes and leaving school.

A meeting with the staff was held prior to the inspection.

During the inspection there were discussions with the headteacher, members of the governing body, and with the teaching and non-teaching staff.

There were daily meetings between the reporting inspector and the headteacher.

In addition to the classroom observations, the inspection team examined the written work of many pupils. Examples of written work of a representative sample of three pupils from each year group was inspected.

During lessons, informal discussions were held with pupils from each year group throughout the school.

A representative sample of pupils in the school, across each year group, was heard reading and questioned on their knowledge and understanding of books.

Documentation provided by the school was analysed.

In addition to the normal inspection schedule, a revue and analysis of the school's provision was undertaken. This was as a result of a national survey of swimming provision being carried out for OFSTED.

Attendance registers, the records kept on pupils, teachers' planning documents and minutes of the Governing Body meetings, were inspected.

Before the inspection, the reporting inspector held a meeting with 7 parents.

• **DATA AND INDICATORS**

• **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils taking free school meals
YR – Y6	186	15	48	20
Nursery Unit/School	26	1	3	10

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17.5:1

• **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	11
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	104.5

• **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26

• **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	65
Average class size:	13

• **Financial data**

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	390445
Total Expenditure	390913
Expenditure per pupil	1814
Balance brought forward from previous year	50839
Balance carried forward to next year	50371

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 182
 Number of questionnaires returned: 22

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	41	59	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	41	59	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	14	73	14	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	18	77	5	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32	55	14	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	23	77	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	18	55	18	9	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	9	73	14	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	45	9	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	32	50	18	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	41	59	0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

Only a small number of questionnaires were returned and only 7 parents attended the Parents' Meeting. No issues were raised by parents which were a significant area for concern.