

INSPECTION REPORT

PINFOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Scarisbrick, Ormskirk

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119209

Headteacher: Mrs S Harrison

Reporting inspector: A C Davies
3639

Dates of inspection: 17-19th September 2001

Inspection number: 196261

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pinfold Lane Scarisbrick Ormskirk
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. W Cropper
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3639	A C Davies	Registered inspector	English Art and Design Design and Technology Music Physical Education Religious Education The Foundation Stage of Learning	How high are standards? The school's results and children's achievements. How well are children taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19431	J Holmes	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Children's attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17833	K Ardley	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and Communication Technology Geography History Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the children? How well does the school care for its children?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pinfold is a very small primary school with 32 children (26 boys and 6 girls) on roll. It is situated between Ormskirk and Southport in Lancashire. There is no nursery but approximately half of the children have experienced some form of pre-school education before they start in the Autumn term, before they are 5. There are two classes with fewer than 20 in each. The school has a growing number of children with special educational needs with the overall total matching the national average. The school is situated in a relatively affluent area although the intake to the school is of children from a mixed background. Over the past few years very few children have qualified for school meals free of charge. The indications, according to the initial assessments made with the youngest children, are that most have academic and social skills that are in line with those expected for their age when they start school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. The teaching is always at least satisfactory and has many good features. Pupils who have learning difficulties make good progress and achieve well. The headteacher effectively manages the task of having a large teaching commitment and giving the school clear leadership. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in many subjects, especially religious education, geography and history.
- There is effective use made of the specialist skills that teachers and support staff have to help class teachers provide for different aged children in each class.
- The teachers plan and prepare thoroughly so ensuring that each subject of the National Curriculum, as well as religious education, is given appropriate time and coverage.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and make good progress.
- The school has taken appropriate action to ensure that all pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) to support their work in different subjects.

What could be improved

- The use made of information from analysing test results to help set individual targets for pupils.
- Making more of the last part of literacy lessons to check what it is pupils have learnt.
- Use marking more productively to help pupils focus on areas that can be improved.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997 and it has made good progress since that time. The teaching is better with no unsatisfactory teaching now evident compared with one lesson in eight at that time. Standards have remained largely the same but pupils with special educational needs are now making better progress. The governors are in a better position to check on the way the school is working and there is greater emphasis on improving standards.

The issues raised at the time of the previous inspection have been dealt with appropriately with some of them now being strong points in the school. For example, the school now has

extensive plans in place to ensure that each subject is covered fully. Pupils' skills in English and ICT have improved and the governors are more active in their strategic planning role.

STANDARDS

The number of children who take the national test for 7 and 11-year-olds each year rarely reaches more than 10. It is therefore inappropriate only to use national and comparative data to check on the school's performance. Standards in English are good with many 11-year-old pupils attaining beyond the level expected for their age in the national tests. There is also good use of literacy skills in other subjects. Standards in mathematics are appropriate, with younger pupils generally doing well in the national tests for 7-year-olds. Standards in science are good, with many 7 and 11-year-olds attaining the higher levels in the national tests.

By the time pupils are 11 they have attained appropriate standards in most subjects. Standards are better than this for geography and religious education mainly because of the way pupils use their literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to help them gain better understanding about the topics being looked at. Standards in ICT are appropriate, although the recent initiatives to improve provision have resulted in pupils making good progress in this area.

Children start school with personal and academic skills that match those expected for their age. The majority meet the learning goals in each of the six areas of learning by the time they finish in the reception class, with strengths noted in communication, mathematics and creative development. The vast majority make sound progress as they move through the school, with pupils who have learning difficulties achieving well. All pupils are encouraged to make the most of their good communication skills and this is having a positive impact on the quality of writing of older pupils. The majority of pupils are proficient readers although some lack the comprehension skills required for the books they can cope with mechanically.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	In most lessons the pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. However, on too many occasions, some older pupils do not settle quickly enough after break times.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave appropriately in most lessons, on the playground and at lunchtime. They have been involved in writing class rules and, in the main, are polite and well mannered.
Personal development and relationships	Older pupils show mature and responsible attitudes towards younger ones. Pupils take on appropriate tasks to help with the smooth running of the school.
Attendance	The overall attendance is above the national averages but too many parents take their children on holiday during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good and always at least satisfactory. There is very effective use made of classroom assistants and other adults who work in classrooms to ensure that all pupils in the two mixed-aged classes are provided with appropriate work and attention. All teachers work very hard, are well prepared and their planning takes full account of pupils' ability. The planning seeks to maximise opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and ICT skills in other lessons.

The teaching of English is good with most teachers presenting pupils with challenging tasks that helps to move their learning forwards. However, there are times when pupils are not always as attentive as they could be and this detracts from the progress they are able to make. However, most staff manage this situation appropriately and do get the most from the pupils. In mathematics, the teaching is helping pupils to improve their basic skills but there are times when pupils' work rate is not as productive as it could be.

Although teachers are very aware of pupils' levels of attainment in different subjects, they do not consistently set individual targets for the pupils. They do not always use the last part of the lesson to check what it is pupils have learnt in each lesson. Teachers' marking does not always focus attention on areas for improvement. However, they know the pupils well and this helps them to assess how much they can expect them to achieve in any lesson. Homework arrangements are good with the work set being directly related to tasks on-going in classrooms or to improving reading, spelling or numeracy skills.

The adults working with the youngest children have worked hard to embrace the new national guidance for this age group. There is an appropriate balance struck between practical activities and direct teaching. There is also very effective use made of stimulating and interesting books to help gain these children's attention. Their individual needs are recognised from very early on and effective measures taken to support those needing extra help.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school uses staff strengths to its full to ensure that pupils are provided with a full curriculum with appropriate time being allocated to all subjects. There is also good use of pupils' literacy and ICT skills to support other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There are effective arrangements in place to help children with learning difficulties to have good support. The school works very well with outside agencies to ensure that all children benefit from the additional attention that they receive.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social	The older pupils show good levels of responsibility in the way that they keep a special eye out for younger pupils. This is a feature in much of the school's work.

and cultural development	
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pupils are well known to all staff and this helps to create a special 'family atmosphere' in the school. The school pays good attention to tracking the progress the pupils are making but do not use this information well enough to set appropriate targets for individuals.

Most parents are pleased with the school. They are very involved in the homework arrangements and support the school by raising funds. Information provided to them about the progress that their children make is well-received and gives a clear picture about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher balances her teaching and management roles well. She makes full use of advice and support from other sources to help in this respect and this is helping her to gain a clear picture about the school's future needs.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very involved in the work of the school and know it well. They have a range of systems in place to help them understand the school's successes and are very active in managing the budget and involved in prioritising future developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school uses the information available to it from the Local Education Authority appropriately to help assess future needs. Teaching and learning are checked on a regular basis with effective use made of outside people to help.
The strategic use of resources	There is very effective use made of adults to help pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The money allocated to this part of the budget is used well.

The school is fortunate enough to have many adults working in the school. There is good use made of the additional support available in classrooms and this results in most pupils being taught in small groups. The school has a good number of computers in each room and that means that pupils have regular access to them.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The communication between school and home is good. The staff have time for them and really care for the children. Being a small school there is a strong feeling of a 'family' atmosphere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are not enough sporting activities provided for the children The playground is too small and restricts opportunities for children at playtimes. There are too few girls in the school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of homework is just about right. • The school is helping the children to be more mature 	<p>and this can make it difficult for girls to feel settled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better working relationships between school and home.
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On the whole, the inspection team agrees with all the positive comments made. The staff are very aware of the limited amount of additional activities provided for pupils and have done much to link with other schools to help in this respect. The playground is adequate considering the number of pupils in school. Parents with girls in the school are naturally concerned that their children are able to form as full a range of friendship groups as they would wish. However, the school is very conscious of this and has already prioritised action to increase the number of girls attending. The school does everything that can be reasonably expected of it to form good relationships with its parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The number of pupils who sit the national tests each year rarely reaches 10. It is therefore not appropriate to put too much weight on national and comparative results because the result of one pupil changes the percentage score quite considerably. Similarly, boys far outweigh girls in numbers and comparing the results of boys and girls also needs to be done with much caution.

- 2 Standards in English are good, with the pupils communicating effectively using Standard English and a wide-ranging vocabulary. This largely mirrors the position at the time of the previous inspection. Their good speaking skills hold them in good stead when it comes to writing, with many pupils using a wide and varied vocabulary. There is good use made of pupils' literacy skills in many other subjects, especially in history, geography and religious education. Over the past few years many 11-year-old pupils have attained the higher level (Level 5) in the national tests for English. The national tests for 11-year-olds confirm that standards have been good in most years. The only exception was 2000, when standards dipped. However, with so few pupils sitting the tests each year, this is to be expected. In 2001, nearly half of the group attained the higher levels with others attaining the expected level for their age. Standards in English have not been as good for younger pupils, with the test results for 7-year-olds indicating that attainment in reading and writing have varied slightly over the past four years but have been mainly around the level expected for their age. The 2001 test results for reading for 7-year-olds are very good but the writing results are again in line with that expected for their age. The present Year 2 is attaining approximately in line with that expected for its age in both reading and writing. Girls are performing better than boys at the age of 7 but there is little difference by the age of 11.

- 3 Standards in mathematics are appropriate, with younger pupils generally doing well in the national tests for 7-year-olds. Only a few 11-year-old pupils over the past few years have not attained the expected level for their age. A growing number are attaining the higher level. This is again similar to the position reported at the time of the previous inspection. The mathematics results for 7-year-olds have been good for the past three years with nearly half of each cohort attaining the higher level. The present Year 2 group is attaining at the level expected for its age. Interestingly, girls are performing better than boys at the age of 7 but the trend is reversed by the time pupils are 11. The small numbers involved in each cohort explains the variations between boys and girls.

- 4 Standards in science are generally good with many 7 and 11-year-olds attaining the higher levels in the teacher assessments and national tests. The present Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining standards that are to be expected for their age in science. They are stronger in areas of scientific knowledge that involves life and living things. Their investigative skills are appropriate and they are able to set up their own experiments to find things out for themselves. The previous inspection indicated similar findings.

- 5 By the time pupils are 11 pupils have attained appropriate standards in most other subjects. Standards are better than this for geography and religious education mainly because of the way pupils use their literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to help them gain better understanding about the topics being studied. Standards in ICT are appropriate, although the recent initiatives to improve provision have resulted in pupils making good progress in this area. At the time of the previous inspection standards were good for

geography and religious education but only satisfactory for history. Pupils now make better progress in information and communication technology.

- 6 Children start school with personal and academic skills that match those expected for their age. The majority meet the learning goals in each of the six areas of learning by the time they finish in the reception class. In the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and creative development children are doing slightly better with more exceeding the learning goals in these areas. In these areas children make good progress throughout their reception year.
- 7 The vast majority make sound progress as they move through the school, with pupils who have learning difficulties achieving well. All pupils are encouraged to make the most of their good communication skills and this is having a positive impact on the quality of writing of older pupils. This results in older pupils using good description in their writing and being willing to explore by using new words. The majority of pupils are proficient readers and very few have problems with reading. They make good use of information books and the Internet when researching. They have acquired skills which help them to make the most of information from a range of reading sources. A few pupils do lack the comprehension skills required for the books they can cope with mechanically and this sometimes hinders their progress in reading. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mental and oral number knowledge when tackling mathematical problems. In science, pupils' scientific knowledge tends to be stronger than their investigation skills but they make good progress none-the-less.
- 8 Pupils make good progress in geography, history and religious education because their good writing skills are used effectively to help them with their topics. In information and communication technology pupils are now making good progress because of the recent improvements to the number of computers available and to the confidence levels of staff being much higher after attending professional training sessions.
- 9 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, which is an improved position compared to the previous inspection when satisfactory progress was being made. Their needs are identified early and they are provided with appropriate levels of support to help them improve. This good support that is provided helps them achieve well. The effective deployment of support staff to work with these pupils is a key feature of the good progress being made. As a result of the effective support, almost all pupils learn to read quite early although their comprehension skills are not always as proficient. They cope well with mental and oral work in mathematics and use their written skills appropriately in other subjects. Only a relatively few pupils are not attaining the levels expected for their age in the national tests for 7 or 11-year-olds.
- 10 There is satisfactory progress being made by more able pupils and this ensures that almost each year a good percentage are attaining beyond the level expected for their age in the national tests for English, mathematics and science at the age of 11.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Pupils enjoy school and have a positive attitude to learning. Pupils work well together and respond enthusiastically to questions. Questions are answered sensibly and pupils contribute

confidently when involved in discussions. They mostly listen appropriately to teachers and show a respectful interest when others are talking. There are times when pupils take a long time to settle appropriately at the beginnings of lessons. This is mainly after the lunch break. Pupils state this is because they would prefer to get on with their own work rather than have to wait for others to be given instructions first. Pupils respond very positively during the weekly celebration assembly when good work and behaviour is rewarded.

- 12 Pupils mostly behave well. They have a clear understanding as to what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. This is the case both inside and outside the classrooms. Pupils display a good level of self-discipline and maturity. The pupils did not feel that bullying was an issue and that boys and girls got on well together. Parents also feel that bullying is not an issue at the school. The small numbers of girls in the school mention that they have a good number of friends and that they play well with boys as well as girls. Pupils are aware of the impact of their actions on others and nearly always respect each other's point of view. There have been no exclusions for many years.
- 13 Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. They take responsibility for their actions and are able to take on tasks about the school. Older pupils have specific responsibilities for younger ones and this works well in giving the school a strong feeling of care and working together. All pupils are involved in drafting the class rules; a task they approach very seriously. There is a good level of trust between staff and pupils. Pupils are confident, independent and interested in learning. The adults in the school make it easy for them to communicate with each other and with the staff. The pupils have good involvement in the school's life and tend the school garden and act as monitors for registers, recycling issues and for looking after the playground toys.
- 14 Attendance is above the national average and is good. This is despite the fact that too many parents still take their children on holidays during the school term. Pupils are awarded certificates for full attendance and this gives an appropriate message about how important it is that they attend regularly and on time. The level of unauthorised absence is 'nil' with parents being very good at notifying school of absence. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time at the beginning of the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 15 The teaching is good and is always at least satisfactory. This is a much-improved position to the one reported at the time of the previous inspection when approximately one in eight lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching is good for English and satisfactory for mathematics and science.
- 16 The main strengths surround the teachers' ability to make effective use of support staff so as to ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met. Despite each class having a mixed aged group with as much as four years difference in age, the planning copes with it effectively. Good use of additional adults in each class also helps the class teacher provide appropriate support for each age and ability group. Weaker areas surround the teachers' use of assessment information to set appropriate future targets for individual pupils and the quality of marking. Teachers mark work conscientiously but the remarks made do not always help pupils focus on what they need to do next in order to improve.
- 17 In Class 1, which includes the children in the foundation stage of learning (reception aged), the teacher is able to help children develop good learning habits by the way

she sets challenging tasks for them. She encourages children to speak out in front of others and therefore helps them to use their good communication skills. The teacher has already taken account of the new national guidance provided for teachers working with young children and is confident in the way she plans for the needs of this age group. There is an appropriate balance struck between practical activities and direct teaching. This together with her good teaching of basic skills, such as reading and writing is helping to move the children's learning forward. One of the main strengths of the reception class is the way the teacher has set up her room, therefore enabling children to make the most of the resources. For example, the supermarket play environment is well stocked with products so that children are able to move into a 'make-believe' world with little difficulty. The children have written their own labels for the goods on display. One of the key features of the play is the quality of the teacher's intervention. She is quick to recognise when the play needs moving forward and uses questioning or a suggestion to help the children refocus.

- 18 The pupils in Years 1 and 2, also from Class 1, benefit from the same teacher's good organisation and management. There is very effective use made of books to help the pupils in this age group gain the most from their reading. For example, the use of the series of books about 'Elmer' has captured the pupils' interest and gets them to work with enthusiasm and additional interest. In this lesson the teacher has ensured that the pupils know the story well before setting them an exercise focusing on direct speech. As a result of the pupils' added interest, they come up with interesting and quite advanced phrases that the main characters from the book might have used. In a mathematics lesson, the same teacher is able to refer back to the work covered in the previous week as she seeks to develop pupils' numeracy skills. This shows that the planning is very secure and that the teacher is working hard to build on the previous learning of the pupils. In all lessons in Class 1 one of the main features is the way the teacher makes the most of pupils' good communication skills. Her questioning demands that the pupils think carefully before answering and that they do not confine their answers to one or two words or short phrases.
- 19 In Class 2, the good quality of the teacher's questioning is also evident. This is helping all pupils who have good communication skills already to further develop the range of their vocabulary. The good use of the additional support available is again a key feature of the way the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities are dealt with. The pupils seldom work in groups of more than 10 for literacy and numeracy and, as a result, there is challenging work being set for them. In the main, most pupils respond well to this. However, there are occasions, especially after a break, when pupils are not as attentive as they could be. This wastes time that could be better used in other ways rather than the teacher having to bring some pupils back to order. The teaching of English is good and this is illustrated well in one lesson where the teacher very effectively uses a challenging text with Year 5 and 6 pupils. During this lesson the teacher aims to get pupils to summarise the extract that they have read. The pupils are able to recognise the author's clever play on words and this helps them in their overall task. The teacher uses a chart to help the pupils with the task and the understanding that their précis will mainly be written in the past tense further helps them. The weaker element of the teaching in this age group is the limited use made of the end part of lessons (plenary) to help pupils consolidate the learning that has happened. This results in lost opportunities to help focus on what needs to happen next to check on future learning needs. However, teachers

know the pupils well and this helps them to assess how much they can expect them to achieve in any lesson.

- 20 The pupils with special education needs, throughout the school, learn well. This is a result of their needs being recognised from very early on. Children in the reception class who have specific needs are picked up early and are helped to improve by the good quality of support provided. This is repeated as they get older and the fact that the staff know all their pupils well helps in this respect.
- 21 The meticulous planning and careful preparation helps the teachers in both classes to provide appropriately for the needs of more able pupils. Despite the fact that they are in classes with a full age range, the teachers are quick to indicate how these more able pupils are to be catered for. The planning for the needs of all pupils is seen at its best in the way that the school has been able to ensure that teachers are coping with the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In addition, the teachers feel confident in using information and communication technology to support work in all areas of the curriculum. This has helped pupils make improvements in the progress they make in this subject.
- 22 Teachers have to work hard to keep all pupils focused. Many are easily distracted and this detracts from the progress they are able to make. However, staff manage this situation appropriately and do get the most from the pupils. The teaching is helping pupils to improve their basic skills but there are times when pupils work rate is not as productive as it could be.
- 23 Homework arrangements are good with the work set being directly related to tasks on-going in classrooms or to improving reading, spelling or numeracy skills.

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

- 24 The curriculum for pupils aged 5 to 11 years is broad and well-balanced and provides a good range of learning opportunities. All the statutory requirements are being met. The school fully uses staff strengths, expertise, experiences and interests to ensure that the curriculum has good breadth. The National Literacy Strategy is being effectively implemented and provides good opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to develop their literacy skills, especially their writing skills in religious education, history and geography. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented throughout the school. Opportunities for investigative mathematics, together with the encouragement for pupils to explain their methods, are resulting in work of an improving standard. The planning in all subjects is good and supported by clear schemes of work. Learning activities are well organised to meet the needs of pupils of differing ages and based on teachers' good knowledge of individual pupils. However, what pupils are expected to learn in each lesson is not always clearly communicated to all pupils in all subjects. In addition, assessment information is not fully used to guide curriculum planning. The learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs are good in all subjects throughout the school. The school works well with external agencies to fully support pupils with special educational needs.
- 25 The children in the reception class are appropriately provided for with the school using the national guidance for the foundation stage of learning as the basis for

planning work for this age group. These young children are in the same class as Year 1 and Year 2 pupils but every effort is made to ensure that they have an appropriate curriculum which has a balance of practical as well as teacher-directed activities. Indeed the way the school copes for the range of pupils in Class 1 is a strength. The teacher in charge has developed good procedures to help track children's progress towards the goals in each area of learning.

- 26 Since the last inspection the school has developed and implemented new schemes of work in all subjects. These new schemes are being reviewed and adapted as they are used to meet the needs of each cohort of pupils in this small school. The planning and delivery of information and communication technology (ICT) is particularly good and there is effective use of ICT in almost all subjects. There is good planning in science with many opportunities for pupils to use their investigative skills. The planning for the delivery of literacy skills, especially writing, has a positive impact on the standards being attained in that subject.
- 27 The more able pupils are appropriately challenged, especially in literacy. There are opportunities for them to work together with pupils of similar ability on more advanced learning activities and programmes of study. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported within classes. This carefully deployed support ensures that pupils with special educational needs receive their full National Curriculum entitlement and make good progress with their learning. The school is very aware of issues of gender. The curriculum is planned to be relevant to both girls' and boys' interests and abilities. There are appropriate links with other schools, especially small schools in the immediate area. The school shares training and after-school activities with these schools. The school makes appropriate arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary schools after they finish their time at Pinfold.
- 28 The range and quality of extra-curricular experiences and opportunities is impressive for a small school community. Clubs and activities are usually offered at lunchtimes. These include football, recorders, computers, gardening, French, physical education and crafts clubs. The school is involved in the 'small-schools' football and chess leagues and enters tournaments regularly. Parents were recently invited to respond to a questionnaire about the type and range of clubs offered by the school and this information has been interesting and useful in making decisions about the provision of clubs and out-of-school activities. Each school year, the whole school is involved in a major dramatic production such as Noah's Ark or Cinderella. The pupils speak enthusiastically about their involvement and experiences in these activities.
- 29 Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and form strong friendships with other pupils. There are opportunities for older pupils to take responsibilities throughout the school and for helping practically with the younger children. However, more opportunities could be provided for pupils of all ages to develop additional responsibilities and thereby a stronger sense of school community, for example, by organising contributions to assemblies and having more responsibilities during lunchtimes.
- 30 Provision for moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Time is given for pupils to reflect on their experiences. During class discussions and assemblies they are encouraged to explore their feelings and to develop a sense of self-

knowledge, for example, in an assembly pupils were asked to reflect on times when they felt particularly happy and examine the reasons for such feelings. In art lessons pupils are given opportunities to examine and reflect on the work of different artists. There are opportunities for quiet reflection and prayer in both whole-school and class assemblies. Music and songs are well used in assemblies and all pupils join in and sing with enjoyment. Attempts are made to include art and music from other cultures to enrich curriculum provision and raise pupils' awareness and understanding of different cultural backgrounds. However, more opportunities should be planned into a wider range of subjects in order to further promote pupils' cultural understanding.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 31 Pupils receive a satisfactory level of care, support and guidance from the adults around them. The procedures for assessing pupils' learning and for targeting and tracking pupils' progress are in need of further development and are currently unsatisfactory. Attendance monitoring is satisfactory. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. Child protection procedures meet the requirements and are satisfactory.
- 32 The system for targeting and tracking individual pupils' progress is in need of further development to ensure that expected progress is challenging and realistic for each individual. In addition, individual pupils do not know exactly what they should do in order to make appropriate progress. Progress cannot therefore be consistently monitored on a termly or annual basis to ensure that each pupil is on track to meet his or her targets at the end of the key stage. These targets for English and mathematics need to be available to individual pupils so they can be consistently worked at. Pupils are not always very clear about their next step in learning.
- 33 The attention and support given to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to make good progress in learning. Parents are well informed of developments and are provided with enough time to attend any relevant meetings that take place.
- 34 The monitoring of behaviour and personal development is satisfactory. The school behaviour policy is based on positive principles and strategies. Pupils are encouraged to be involved with writing classroom rules. In the main pupils are well behaved, polite and well mannered in lessons and around the school. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. Levels of attendance are above the national average. Punctuality is good. However, some parents take their children away on holidays during term time.
- 35 Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The school has up-to-date guidance from the Local Education Authority and uses this appropriately. The headteacher is the designated person and she has recently undertaken training for this role. There is good advice and support from external agencies.
- 36 Overall health and safety awareness is satisfactory. Teachers are aware of the need to make their classroom and the hall as safe as possible. Fire extinguishers, alarms and electrical equipment are regularly tested and fire drills are held appropriately.

The playground, despite being small, provides adequate space for the children to play.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 37 The parents have a positive view of the school. This is confirmed by the positive remarks made by all the parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting, the responses to the questionnaires received before the inspection and by the remarks made by parents during the inspection. From the parents point of view there are strengths in the teaching, pupils' behaviour and the way their children are well known to all the staff. The areas that some parents would like to see improved include extending the amount of additional activities available to their children, especially sporting activities. The other areas raised by a few parents related to the size of the playground, the small number of girls in the school and the quality of the relationship that the school has with its parents.
- 38 The inspection team would agree with the positive points raised by parents. It believes that the school has worked hard at forming good relationships with parents and disagrees with the point made by a few parents about the school's negative relationships with parents. The few comments are in contrast to the point made by nearly all parents who feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. The playground is small but adequate for the number of pupils in the school. The school works with other small school in the immediate area to try and extend the amount of sporting activities available to the pupils and in this respect it is doing all it can.
- 39 The issue relating to the small number of girls in the school is difficult. The school is acutely aware of this issue. The governors have worked at marketing ploys to help deal with this situation but it is a case that the area has far more boys than girls with other local schools having something of a similar problem. However, it is understandable that the parents of the few girls in the school have concerns. This issue remains very high on the governors' agenda and they will continue to seek ways of attracting girls to the school.
- 40 The school sends out regular information to parents in the form of newsletters plus a very informative prospectus. Parents receive an annual report about their children's progress, which is satisfactory and informative. There are two opportunities each year for parents to formally see the teachers to discuss progress. Apart from this, teachers are available to discuss issues with parents as, and when, the need arises. The governors' annual report to parents is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements.
- 41 The parents make a good impact on the life of the school and have been particularly supportive of the homework arrangements. Parents are welcomed into school and the parents' association raises a good deal of money each year which is used to improve the amount of learning resources available. The school operates an 'open door' policy with reasonable access for parents to see teachers and other staff at any time.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 42 The headteacher balances the task of classroom teacher and leader of the school effectively. She is able to get across her vision, and demonstrate how she wants pupils to learn, using a balance of teacher directed activities and more open ended problem-solving work. The headteacher takes full advantage of the support provided by the Local Education Authority's advice and support service to help with the wider issues of monitoring. This is sensible in view of the very large teaching commitment that she has. The management and leadership show improvements compared with the position reported at the time of the previous inspection.
- 43 The headteacher and the full time teacher are the mainstay of the school and they work exceptionally well together. This is best illustrated by the way subjects are managed, the school development plan is created and in the way data is analysed. One of the key features of the good leadership is the way the school is able to work to the strengths of the individual teachers. Both teachers use their expertise in subject areas to teach both classes. For example, one teaches art and design and design and technology to all pupils and the other teaches religious education throughout the school. The same applies to any additional adults who work in the school. The small amount of additional teaching support is deployed in such a way as to ensure that the teaching strengths of the individuals are maximised. The classroom support assistants' strengths are also assessed and this results in the deployment of individuals to work with the youngest or the oldest groups of pupils accordingly.
- 44 The school uses the support of the Local Education Authority to analyse national and other standardised tests. This helps in recognising areas of weaknesses in the teaching programme and, to an extent, having appropriate expectations in relation to the progress that individuals are expected to make. However, not enough use is currently made of this information to set appropriate targets for the future. This is an area that the school has planned to develop in the near future. The monitoring of teaching and learning also benefits from the support provided from outside. There is a regular pattern of monitoring of the teaching with appropriate feedback provided for individuals, including points for development. This is a secure system which is additionally supported by the inevitable informal monitoring that happens within a small school with only two classes. This results in the monitoring being very supportive but not too cosy. The school was in a good position to implement the guidance for performance management and it is happy that it has been able to make use of this new system to further enhance its own monitoring. The school also benefits from the support it gains from its membership of a 'cluster' group made up of small schools in the West of Lancashire. The headteacher, in particular, feels that this has helped the school keep up-to-date with the many national initiatives that have been introduced recently. Indeed, this is one of the main strengths of the management for, despite being small and with so few pupils, the school has successfully implemented all the new legislation recently introduced.
- 45 The school development plan is created after much discussion and careful consideration given to the points that arise from the monitoring that is taking place. As a result the school has been accurate in recognising most of the issues that have been raised by the inspection team. This underlines that the system they use is effective and working well. The current school development plan identifies an appropriate inter-mix of national initiatives and school-based issues. Governors and parents have a role in the development of the plan before it is accepted. The plan is used appropriately to identify professional development needs and issues of finance are carefully considered. The school aims are also given appropriate consideration

when developing the plan. However, the aims as they stand do not give enough emphasis on the attainment and achievement of pupils. The standards attained by pupils do form a major consideration for the school's development, a weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection, but they are not explicitly mentioned in the aims.

- 46 The headteacher is also able to maintain a demanding class-teaching role because of the effective administration support she gets from the clerical administrator. The administrator has a great deal of expertise and experience and is able to deal with many issues that would otherwise have to be dealt with directly by the headteacher. There is a good working relationship established between the two and each is aware of what can, and cannot, be dealt with directly by the administrator. This is an efficient partnership that helps to enable the headteacher to concentrate on important issues without being overburdened with minor matters that can be handled in other ways.
- 47 The governors are effective. They are a knowledgeable group who know the school well. There are many new governors in the group and these are mainly made up of people who have direct interest in the school. They have recognised the problems associated with a school of this size and have been very proactive in issues relating to marketing. This is particularly the case in respect of the falling number of girls that attend the school. They have looked at the issue and have done everything that can be reasonably expected of them to portray the correct image to potential new parents. In other respects, they get involved in the school development planning and know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They were very involved in helping the school to deal with the key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection. They have worked particularly hard at the criticism aimed at the way the governors operated. In this respect there has been much improvement with meetings being more efficient now and much more monitoring happening. They are very involved in the financial planning that is taking place and have appropriate ambitions for the school. This includes making improvements to the internal accommodation. They have appropriate plans in place to make better use of the area that was previously used as a kitchen.
- 48 The school uses its budget effectively to help improve standards. Money allocated to professional development for information and communication technology has, for example, being used effectively to raise staff confidence and thereby enabling pupils to make good progress. Similarly, money directly allocated for helping pupils with special educational needs is helping these pupils make good progress. There is very good use made of additional adults who work in the school. This is a key area in helping the school to be successful. In this respect, money allocated to pay for this resource is proving to be money well spent and is helping the school give satisfactory value for money. The school is carrying a small, but appropriate, surplus to its budget from year to year.
- 49 The school is well resourced, especially in respect of the number of computers available per pupil and in the way the needs of the youngest pupils in the school have been recognised and appropriate resources bought to support them. The accommodation is spacious although, as with any small school, there are certain limitations. The hall is relatively small for physical education but allows for the flexibility in grouping of pupils that the school seeks. The outside area is appropriate for the number of pupils in the school, despite some parents having concern about this. The school is able to take advantage of the field situated behind the village hall

which is within walking distance from the school. This is not ideal but does provide the school with a valued resource.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50 The governors and staff have worked hard to put in place all the national and local initiatives that have taken place since the last inspection. For a school of its size with relatively few members of staff it needs to take pride in this achievement and now concentrate on the following issues.

- **Making greater use of individual target-setting to complement the work that is already taking place to analyse data. (Paragraphs 16, 24, 31, 32, 44, 87, 94 and 97)**
- **Using the plenary in literacy lessons more effectively to check on what pupils have understood and learnt from each lesson. (Paragraphs 19 and 84)**
- **Ensuring that remarks made on pupils' work are helping them to work out what they need to do next in order to improve. (Paragraphs 16, 87 and 94)**

51 The governors also need to review their school aims so that improving standards are more explicitly mentioned. **(Paragraph 45)**

• PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number			8	8			
Percentage			50	50			

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		32
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		8

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	2	3	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	1	1	2
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	4	4	5
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (100)	80 (100)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	1	2	1
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	4	5	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (100)	100 (100)	80 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	5	5	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	4	3	5
	Total	8	7	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (100)	70 (100)	90 (100)
	National	75 (82)	72 (83)	85 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	4	3	5
	Total	8	7	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (100)	70 (80)	90 (100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	32
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.7
Average class size	16

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	56

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	148,819
Total expenditure	150,728
Expenditure per pupil	
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,893
Balance carried forward to next year	14,984

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
<hr/>	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	41
Number of questionnaires returned	12

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	25		8	
My child is making good progress in school.	75	8	8	8	
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	50			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	42			
The teaching is good.	75	25			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	25	8		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	25	8		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	25	8		
The school works closely with parents.	75	8	17		
The school is well led and managed.	83	8		8	
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	83	17			
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	50	25	8	

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR PUPILS IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 52 During the inspection there were 4 children of reception age. The judgements and overview of the work of the foundation stage of learning therefore looks at the work of last year's group in addition to the present group. The reception-aged children are in Class 1 and work alongside older Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. There is an additional adult in the classroom each morning and for some parts of the afternoons. This is helping the teacher plan for the needs of the youngest group and to provide appropriate support for them.
- 53 The children starting the reception have a mixed range of ability with this year's group not being as strong as the previous one. There are some very articulate children who have already familiarised themselves with computers and others who struggle to settle to the routines within the classroom. The children's personal, social and emotional development is the most wide ranging and this is something that the teacher is very aware of. The initial assessments undertaken with the reception-aged children over the past two years show that there is a wide variation in attainment but, on the whole, it approximately matches the level expected for their age. The school also uses a system to help it predict where each child should be by the time each finishes in the reception year and also by the time they finish Year 2. This system works well for helping set appropriate expectations for these young children but it needs further development to help form effective individual target setting systems for older pupils.
- 54 The reception-aged children do have an appropriate curriculum based on the national guidance for the foundation stage of learning. The teacher has ensured that there is a balance between teacher directed and more practical tasks that enables children to explore and find things out for themselves. Parents are very involved in the work that is going on. Meetings are held with parents before and after children have started and parents feel well informed about the way their children have settled as well as how they are making progress.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 55 In this area of learning approximately eighty per cent of children meet the learning goal by the time they leave reception. They make satisfactory progress in this area but it remains an area that causes greatest concern. The school has recognised that some children who start school find it difficult to settle appropriately to classroom routines. For example, many are not used to sharing or taking turns. Good teaching ensures that these young children are provided with good opportunities to play co-operatively and to wait until resources become available rather than expecting everything to be available to them whenever they want.
- 56 It is interesting that many children who are more able academically may find aspects of personal development demanding. One of the advantages that many children have is their good communication skills. This helps staff to explain to them what is, and what is not, acceptable. By and large children respond positively to this. During the inspection week children were seen to play effectively in the supermarket with some taking lead roles and directing others to do certain tasks. This has only

happened because of the careful planning and preparation that has gone into the organisation of the play environment.

Communication, Language and Literacy

- 57 Most of the children meet the learning goal in this area before they finish the reception class. Approximately half will exceed this. This represents good progress in this area of learning with children making the most of their good vocabulary to communicate well in lessons. Children work with Year 1 and 2 pupils during shared reading sessions but the teacher always directs questions at the youngest or oldest groups as appropriate. She uses different books to help children gain the most from the reading according to their age. When the shared reading is finished with the whole group, there are specific activities set out for different groups with support available from either the teacher or the classroom assistant. The activities are usually related to developing reading skills and this is helping the children learn to familiarise themselves with key words or phonic combinations. All the new reception-aged children recognise their names and can write them. A combination of this type of activity, as well as much reinforcement when working as a bigger group with the rest of the class, is helping children make good progress in their reading.
- 58 Children are able to write in several different contexts. They have written their own labels to help them organise items in the supermarket. The range of the quality of the writing underlines the full range of ability present in the class. For example, over time some children can write in sentences and their own writing is of a uniform size, while others are still at the stage of using only the letters in their own name alongside other marks to represent what they want to say. The children are helped to move from their original starting points to more mature levels of writing by some very carefully organised planning that combines opportunities for children to write freely with more formal handwriting and spelling. This helps progress to be good in this area.
- 59 There is a great emphasis placed on helping children to develop their communication. There is a structured approach to listening with tapes and games used effectively to help improve listening skills. The use of puppets is effective in helping pupils with their speaking. Children are encouraged to develop short plays and they learn to communicate with each other as a result. The class contains many resources associated with the main characters in the book they are reading. During the inspection week stories relating to Elmer were very high profile and there were a whole series of puppets and soft toys available to enable children to develop stories or make up short plays for themselves. This range of activities is helpful in getting children to use a wider vocabulary, especially that associated with new words which they have come across in their reading books.
- 60 The teaching is good for this area of learning with very effective use made of additional adults to help develop specific skills. The teacher knows the children well and this helps her to provide appropriate tasks for them according to their ability.

Mathematics

- 61 Overall, more children are reaching the learning goal for this area than for communication, language and literacy with about the same number exceeding the goal. Progress is again good for this area of learning with children being secure in

their counting to 20+ and recognising of numbers to 10 by the time they finish in the reception class.

- 62 Children have already some grasp of number rhymes when they start school and, during their first year, they are encouraged through practical activities to develop a greater understanding about the value of numbers to 10. There are good links with language and literacy with the teacher taking every opportunity to integrate number work with reading by counting various objects in the stories that are read. All reception-aged children participate at some level in the mental and oral session that takes place at the beginning of numeracy lessons for all Class 1 children. There is a real sense of enthusiasm at these sessions which have a good inter-mix of songs and direct questions related to order of number. More able children of reception age are quick to contribute answers to questions aimed at older pupils.
- 63 Children recognise all the main two-dimensional shapes and are quick to recognise them in different contexts, such as in windows, doors, books and equipment about the room. There is good teaching for this area of learning. The teacher's own subject knowledge, as well as her knowledge of the children in her care, contributes to this situation.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 64 Nearly all the children meet the learning goal for this area of learning with a few moving on to exceed the goal. They make satisfactory progress as they experience learning about the world about them. The children bring in a wealth of general knowledge from home when they start school. Many have already experienced going abroad and have visited many places of interest, both locally and further afield. Most children have a garden at home and many have grown things for themselves. During their time in school they look more carefully at what is happening as things grow. They have this opportunity by growing many items from seed. During the inspection week the reception-aged children were participating in a project about minibeasts. They showed that they had learnt to name many and could begin to explain what these needed to eat in order to live.
- 65 There is good use made of the local environment to help the children have a better understanding of the way people used to live. They are good at bringing in items from home if they are looking at things like old toys. They also learn about how a community works by visiting local shops and other facilities that are about in the immediate area. Children visited a local supermarket to help them be in better position to play more effectively in the supermarket set up in the classroom. These activities are helping children gain a better understanding about the facilities that they will already have visited before they start school.
- 66 Most reception-aged children have already familiarised themselves with the computers in the classroom. They are confident when using them and most now work independently on programs that have been set up for them. They have learnt how a photograph they take using a digital camera can be transferred to the screen. The teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning with good use made of a range of resources to support children's learning.

Physical Development

- 67 The majority of children meet the learning goal for this area having made satisfactory progress in their reception year. Children come into school showing a range of physical skills anticipated for their age. All reception-aged children join in with other Class 1 pupils during physical education lessons and cope well with the demands made on them. However, additional support is provided for them. During these lessons children learn to control their bodies more effectively with many showing good balance and an ability to link two or three movements together.
- 68 The amount of outdoor activities available to the children is limited by the geographical position of the classroom. There is no natural opportunity for children to move in and out but there are times dedicated for these younger children to have a chance to use a range of play equipment outside. This is timetabled and does happen regularly.
- 69 The children have many opportunities to improve their finer physical skills. These opportunities include using the keyboard of a computer and writing with a range of tools. They are involved in many table-top type activities including making models. During these sessions the children gradually become more efficient at controlling their movements and this can be seen by the improvements noticed in their handwriting and the amount of glue they use to stick items together.
- 70 The teaching is satisfactory with the teacher maximising opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play and in using as many opportunities as possible to help develop the finer physical skills.

Creative Development

- 71 All children are meeting the goal anticipated in this area with a good number exceeding it. There is very good attention given to this aspect of the children's learning with puppets, drama and play being the main vehicles used to help children move into a make-believe world.
- 72 Children make good progress in this area. This is as a result of the teacher being quick to move on the learning of children in different contexts. For example, during the time the group was working in the supermarket the teacher was quick to recognise when the play needed moving forward and used the idea of sorting by colour to help children to think about the way the shelves could be stacked. In another situation she encouraged the children to write their own labels aimed at helping them to consider different messages to the customers about the goods for sale. The example of the supermarket is a good one for linking the child's known world to their imagined world with enough information available to the child to help them make the link more effective. There is a high priority given to spontaneous play.
- 73 There is good consideration and time devoted to painting and music-making. Children's art work progresses from drawings that contain very little detail to pieces of work that are rich in colour, texture and tone. This good progress is possible because the teacher has a good level of expertise in this subject area and is able to enthuse and excite children.

Teaching and Learning

- 74 The teaching is good overall with particular strengths in communication, language, literacy, mathematics and creative development. The teacher makes very effective use of additional adult support to provide focused attention for reception aged children in this mixed aged class. She also puts much emphasis on using resources effectively to help stimulate children's interest. The use of various artefacts related to the Elmer stories are typical examples. There is also a good balance between practical tasks and teacher-directed activities. The staff work exceptionally hard to ensure that children are able to benefit from learning through play. The play environment is carefully organised and resourced to enable this to happen. One of the main strengths of the teaching is the way the needs of children with special educational needs are recognised early and appropriate support provided from very early on after they start school.

Curriculum

- 75 The new guidance for the foundation stage of learning has been implemented in full. Planning for the needs of these young children is good. There is very good attention given to the needs of children of differing ability with particular strengths associated with the support provided for children with special educational needs. Good use is made of the local area to develop work in history, geography and science (knowledge and understanding of the world).

ENGLISH

- 76 Standards in English are good mainly because pupils are able to make the most of their effective communication to widen their vocabulary. In the national tests for 11-year-olds for the past few years the school's results have varied from being very high to being just below the national average. This is not surprising because of the very small numbers taking the tests each year. On the whole, there is a picture of results being better than the national average with more than average numbers attaining the higher levels in the national tests for 11-year-olds. In 2001, nearly half of the group attained the higher levels with others attaining the expected level for their age. There is also good use made of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects.
- 77 Standards in English have not been as good for younger pupils with the test results for 7-year-olds indicating that attainment in reading and writing have varied slightly over the past four years but have been mainly around the level expected for their age. The 2001 test results for reading for 7-year-olds are very good but the writing results are again in line with that expected for their age. The present Year 2 is attaining approximately in line with that expected for its age in both reading and writing. Girls are performing better than boys at the age of 7 but there is little difference by the age of 11.
- 78 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are recognised early on and there is a very good level of support provided for them. Good use is made of additional adults in classrooms to help as well as teachers making up their own resources to support learning in different areas. More able pupils make satisfactory progress with good attention given to challenge them by using texts that are more demanding. This is especially the case in Class 2 (Years 3 to 6).
- 79 Pupils are confident communicators and use a wide-ranging vocabulary. Their speaking skills improve at a good rate as they move through the school. This is seen at its best when they answer questions and when they are involved in discussions. They make good use of their wide vocabulary in their written work, especially in history, geography and religious education. The teacher in Class 1 is very effective in directing questions at individuals with a view to challenge them to think about the way they answer. In this situation pupils are thinking about the phrases they are using and there is good attention to using Standard English. The range of words used is also good, with pupils coming up with descriptions that include words such as, 'clarification', 'justify' and 'premonition'. Pupils' listening skills are not as good. Too many pupils are not attentive enough at the beginning of lessons and this has a tendency for others to be easily distracted.
- 80 Pupils make good progress in their reading. This is as a result of the very good attention given to reading in Class 1 (reception – Year 2). However, many pupils are still not as strong with aspects relating to comprehension as they are with reading the actual words on the page. There is a great effort made to ensure that pupils are enthused by reading. They join in enthusiastically during the part of the literacy lesson when a part of a book is being read to them. The use of artefacts associated with the main books being read to the class helps in this respect. During the inspection the teacher was using the Elmer books to read to pupils and she had a range of artefacts associated with the story available to the pupils for different activities. They ended up writing their own book having taken photographs of Elmer around the classroom. This was a good example of pupils being able to link their

reading and writing. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 are competent and confident readers. The degree of enthusiasm for reading does vary with some being very excited about the books they looked at and others tending to read in a very monotone way. A few pupils talk about the books they have read before and can recall minute detail of the readings. Others do not talk with interest and tend to only refer to the book they are reading at present. Older pupils are very good at articulating the main plots from the books they have read. They are successful in repeating the sequence from books. They meet a wide range of authors during the literacy hour but they tend not to choose books from different authors.

- 81 There is good progress made in pupils' writing. There are again good foundations laid in Class 1. Pupils write in dialogue journals which the teacher responds to with questions and answers. Most younger pupils show that they write in sequence and begin to be more adventurous with their descriptive phrases. They are prepared 'to have a go' with respect to punctuation. However, too frequently, they are inconsistent about using capital letters. They can retell familiar stories with some confidence. They use terminology contained in the original story when retelling their own. There is good evidence of pupils writing for a range of purposes from early on.
- 82 As pupils get older they continue to explore different texts. There are examples of more able pupils using mature phrases such as 'the battle was bloody and screams disturbed the evening air.' The writing also contains interesting descriptive words and phrases, such as, 'feeble voice', 'door creaking open to reveal a huge stone chamber'. The writing of Year 6 pupils shows that they are quick to replicate the structure or format of famous authors. This was evident in pieces of writing produced after studying the work of Arthur Conan Doyle. There are good examples of pupils being able to understand different points of view as is shown in the work associated with Wuthering Heights. In this work pupils have written letters empathising with Heathcliffe. Many average ability pupils have difficulty with spelling and words like 'beautiful' is spelt 'butiful' and 'off' is almost consistently spelt as 'of'.
- 83 The degree of enthusiasm for the subject tends to vary. Once pupils are settled into tasks they work hard. However, there are problems at the beginnings of lessons. This is usually associated with one or two pupils not settling down to work and contributing very little until they become involved. The same applies to reading. There are many pupils who are enthusiastic readers but others state that they do not read for pleasure and are not really interested in reading any books other than those they have to as part of their lessons.
- 84 The teaching is good. The staff work hard to enthuse pupils and to make an impact on their learning. The first part of the lessons is strong with effective learning being promoted because of the teacher's secure subject knowledge and good emphasis on teaching basic skills. The plenary is less strong with missed opportunities to consolidate earlier learning. In Class 1 the teacher had taken photographs of the toy 'Elmer' in different positions in the classroom and school and was working with the pupils to write a book based on the photographs. The use of the digital camera was helpful because it ensured that the end product did have a feel of a real book. In this class there is good attention to using information and communication technology to support much of the written and reading work. There is good attention to using texts to reinforce different reading skills, for example, emphasising the vowel and rhyming words.

- 85 In Class 2 the teachers are careful to use more difficult texts so as to challenge pupils appropriately. This was seen when the teacher used the text, 'Children of Winter' by Berlie Doherty to help pupils with the issue of summarising. The text works well to get pupils to think about the twists and hidden messages contained within the original piece. One pupil notes the author's clever play on words as he reflects on the true meaning within the piece of writing. There is good attention given to grammatical features. In the précis work pupils realise that they need to concentrate on writing in the past tense and that there is unlikely to be any dialogue present. In this way the pupils are being taught grammatical features through the original text rather than in an isolated or separate way.
- 86 In both classes the organisation to allow pupils in mixed-aged classes to be given sufficient attention is a key feature. There is very effective use made of additional adults to help in this respect. This also results in good attention being given to pupils with special educational needs. One of the other strong features of the teaching and learning is the way in which staff ensure that there is a link between the learning that is happening in the literacy lesson and the writing and reading that occurs in other subjects. There are good examples of pupils using their literacy skills in history, geography and religious education.
- 87 The staff have embraced the National Literacy Strategy and are confident in using it to help develop pupils' literacy skills. There is good use made of the guidance so that there is progression in pupils' learning. There is a good range of books available to the pupils and these are set out in an accessible manner. There is good leadership for the subject and all staff are clear about what the tests results are telling them. However, the marking does not help pupils understand exactly what it is they need to do next in order to improve their work. Similarly, there is limited use made of target setting with the pupils in order to help them in this respect.

MATHEMATICS

- 88 The national test results for 11-year-olds in 2000 are slightly below the level expected nationally and well below that of similar schools. However the national test results for 2001 show an improvement in the standards attained by pupils aged 11 years. The results in national tests in 2000 for pupils aged 7 are very high compared to the national expectation and well above similar schools. The attainment of pupils in the national tests in 2001 for 7-year-olds is also very high. The variations in the national comparatives are to be expected because each cohort has only a few pupils.
- 89 Standards attained by 11-year-old pupils over the past four years have ranged from below that expected nationally to well above the national expectations. In 1997 and 2000 pupils aged 11 years attained standards below the national expectation. In 1998 attainment in mathematics for pupils aged 11 years was in line with national expectations. Standards in 1999 were well above the national average for 11-year-olds. When considering the attainment of the 2000 cohort at the age of 7 (the 1996 national test results for 7 year olds), they have made less progress than expected between the ages of 7 and 11. The national test results for 2001 show an improvement in the attainment of pupils aged 11. Over the past four years boys have, on average, performed better than girls.

- 90 Standards attained by 7-year-olds over the past four years have ranged from being in line with national expectations in 1997, below the national expectations in 1998 and above the national expectations in 1999. The attainment by pupils aged 7 in 2000 was very high compared to national expectations and well above that in similar schools. The national test results for 2001 show an improvement in the attainment of pupils aged 7. Over the past four years girls have, on average, performed better than boys.
- 91 By the time they are 11 pupils have generally made satisfactory progress. The most able pupils are developing the key skills required for the higher levels of the National Curriculum. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 or 100 and to convert pence to pounds. Pupils' work shows their ability to solve number problems by using a range of methods of computation with the four operations. Pupils in Year 5 know the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They are confident in recalling multiplication facts. Year 4 pupils can use mental recall of 2,3,4,5 and 10 multiplication tables and also use these to solve division problems. They show understanding of place value in numbers up to 1000. Pupils show understanding of reflective symmetry for two-dimensional shapes. These competences show that pupils are working at the level expected for their age.
- 92 By the age of 7 pupils have made very good progress in mathematics. The most able pupils can demonstrate confidence in using mental skills to multiply numbers and solve whole number problems. They are beginning to use simple fractions. Almost all pupils are beginning to understand the place value of each digit up to 100 by the time they are 7. They are able to choose the appropriate operation when solving addition and subtraction problems. Pupils in Year 1 are able to count, add and subtract reliably up to 10. They can recognise sequences of numbers which are odd and even.
- 93 The quality of the teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. In Class 1 (Years 1 and 2) the teaching of mathematics observed was good. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. Pupils in Class 2 (Years 3 to 6) are often taught in two separate groups based on the ages of the pupils. This grouping provides an effective strategy to provide appropriate work for each age group and ensure that standards and progress are monitored. All lessons are carefully planned and well prepared. Planning clearly identifies different activities for each age group. Where teaching is particularly effective, learning activities are well matched to the needs of pupils in regard of both their ages and abilities. Support staff are effectively deployed to support teaching and learning in mathematics. Teachers lead the warm-up, introduction and direct teaching parts of the lesson, while support staff work with groups and individual pupils to support their learning and the completion of practical tasks. There are times, however, when pupils' work rate is not as high as it could be. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported through carefully planned learning activities and individual help from teachers, support staff and their peers. Information Communication Technology (ICT) is used to good effect within the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. Year 1 pupils used a computer programme to reinforce the work taught in the lesson on place value and tens and units. Learning resources such as number lines, individual white boards and number equipment are effectively used for practical activities. Questioning is well organised for different ages and abilities especially in Class 1.

- 94 For all pupils, emphasis is placed on practical activities and on developing correct mental strategies to help their calculations. In all lessons the pupils' ability to use correct mathematical vocabulary was good. Pupils' use of mental calculation skills and the ability to find answers to problems is developing well. Marking is regular and thorough in mathematics, although teachers' comments are brief and do not usually identify what needs to be done in order to make improvements in learning. Pupils are sometimes given the opportunity to mark their own work. Learning objectives are not recorded in pupils' books making it difficult to look back and understand the focus of the work and therefore the marking. Presentation in exercise books is generally good. There is no evidence of targets for future learning being set. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of numeracy skills in mathematics lessons. There is also evidence of these skills being used in ICT, science, geography and art and design. Where numeracy skills are used, for example in ICT to produce bar graphs and use a data logging package, they are sufficient to support the activities undertaken. Literacy skills are being used in mathematics as teachers identify and use key vocabulary and expect pupils to do so as well. Opportunities are provided to extend speaking and listening skills when pupils are asked to explain how they arrived at an answer.
- 95 The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) has resulted in a consistent approach to the teaching. Teachers and support staff are secure in their knowledge of the subject and build on the previous work done by the pupils. Where the National Numeracy Framework is used best, pupils are given challenging tasks and questions that require them to explain their methods clearly and use a range of mental and practical strategies that they have been taught in order to give accurate answers. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were adding and subtracting multiples of ten from two digit numbers using individual number lines and white boards. Resources to support the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy are plentiful and used to good effect.
- 96 Pupils generally behave well in lessons. In Class 1 lessons start with counting songs and rhymes which are chosen to involve and engage the children from the foundation stage as well. The teacher uses questioning very effectively to engage and challenge all pupils during the warm up activity. The pupils sing and count with obvious enjoyment. In Class 2 pupils work mostly in two age groups (upper, Years 5 and 6 and lower, Year 3 and 4). They move quietly and sensibly between the hall and the classroom for direct teaching sessions. They settle quickly and quietly to their independent tasks. Pupils relate well to each other and, when asked to work collaboratively, do so very positively. Pupils use resources, such as white boards and number lines, effectively and with a minimum of fuss. They enjoy using 'show me routines' and sharing their learning during the plenary sessions. Information Communication Technology used to support learning about graphs, data logging activities and other mathematical skills provides extra challenge and enjoyment whilst extending pupils' knowledge and understanding. Time is used effectively and plenary sessions are well used to assess understanding and to reinforce and extend pupils' learning.
- 97 The curriculum planning is satisfactory with the pupils being offered a variety of relevant activities. Planning follows the framework for the National Numeracy Strategy and is effective in ensuring continuity and progression of pupils' learning after the age of 5 years. Procedures for assessing progress are satisfactory and teachers keep appropriate records of progress made and National Numeracy Strategy objectives covered. There is a need to look at the individual average

attainment at age 7 and ensure that challenging targets are set for attainment at age 11. This target setting will ensure that teachers, pupils and parents are clear about appropriate and challenging progress and attainment for individuals throughout Class 2.

SCIENCE

- 98 The standards attained by 11 year olds in 2000 in science were above the national expectation but below that of similar schools. Over the past four years standards for 11-year-olds have been consistently high in the school.
- 99 In 1997 attainment was well above the national expectation and in both 1998 and 1999 attainment was very high compared with national expectations. When the results of the national tests for 7 year olds in 1996 are examined these show that the 2000 cohort made progress in line with national expectations between the ages of 7 and 11. Over the past four years boys have on average attained slightly higher than girls.
- 100 The 2000 teacher assessment for 7-year-olds indicate that attainment was below that expected nationally. However, out of five children assessed at 7 years of age, only one child did not achieve the expected level and three of the five children attained the higher level in the tests (Level 3). The percentage of pupils gaining Level 3 was very high compared with the national expectations. This clearly illustrates the statistical difficulties of small cohorts reporting in percentages rather than the average points scored.
- 101 All pupils achieve well between the ages of 5 and 11. This is due to a carefully planned programme of work which takes account of pupils' prior attainment and provides a good range of practical tasks. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. This is due largely to the individual support and encouragement they receive from staff. Teachers structure tasks so that pupils enjoy developing scientific knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in lessons and work productively with other pupils.
- 102 The quality of the teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils make good progress and generally achieve well. The emphasis seen during the inspection was on providing opportunities for pupils to investigate for themselves and learn from direct experience. This was seen in different contexts in both classes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, went into the school environmental area to collect minibeasts, which were carefully taken into the classroom for detailed observations. Pupils completed their collections and observations with delight. This lesson made a useful contribution to both the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 dissected flowers in order to understand the life processes common to plants. Provision of these practical scientific enquiries indicates an improvement since the last inspection when it was reported that pupils needed more opportunities to set-up their own experiments and lines of enquiry. Lessons were carefully planned to provide opportunities for the development of practical scientific skills. Pupils in Class 1 were encouraged to predict (where they might find mini-beasts) and plan before finding, presenting and recording evidence. Support staff are

deployed very effectively to organise and manage learning groups by age and needs.

- 103 Pupils have good, positive attitudes to their work. They are able to work co-operatively, sharing tasks and equipment and are keen to make accurate observations. Behaviour is good. Work is carefully presented. Pupils examining the mini-beasts were careful not to hurt or frighten the living creatures and they took care in returning them to a safe environment. Pupils are positive about helping each other and working collaboratively. They record their science work carefully and work is regularly marked.
- 104 In science the encouragement of appropriate strategies for speaking and listening is a feature of the teaching. Teachers involve pupils in discussion and encourage them to use appropriate scientific vocabulary. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills when recording predictions and observations.
- 105 The curriculum is satisfactory with appropriate opportunities for practical investigations. The scheme of work provides teachers with a clear framework for planning for continuity and progression within science lessons. Resources are adequate and well used.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 106 Only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection and no art and design lessons were seen. From the evidence seen and the work produced standards are broadly in line with that expected for pupils' age in both subjects. This matches the position reported at the time of the previous inspection.
- 107 In art and design, pupils start Year 1 having already explored various media and developed their drawings to quite a mature level for their age. In Years 1 and 2 they are helped to consider different techniques and there are good examples of pupils having created self-portraits using charcoal and chalk. Pupils are confident when mixing paint and have been introduced to a range of artists' work from different cultures and background. Older pupils have opportunities to work with artists and there is much evidence of three-dimensional work having been produced. The previous Year 6 group had produced a water sculpture and there are interesting and mature models produced by all pupils aged 7 to 11 based on Hundertwasser's sculptures.
- 108 In design and technology younger pupils have made musical instruments, built towers and experienced working with a range of construction materials. They have also been involved in food technology and made a salad which they set out on a plate. They have worked individually to produce miniature playground using a variety of media, such as straws, pipe cleaners and card. The end result looked very good. The pupils have followed the principles of planning, designing, making and evaluating as is seen from the examples of work produced. At the age of 7 most are confident in each aspect of the process and enjoy design and technology work.
- 109 As the pupils move through Years 3 to 6 the good work noted earlier in the school is sustained which was observed in the examples of pupils having planned, design and built bridges. The pupils worked effectively in pairs to produce sturdy and efficient bridges capable of withstanding different weights. In a packaging project

they show that they have thought about the outside environment and given thought to the attractiveness of their design as well as to the effective use of the packaging.

- 110 In both art and design and design and technology pupils show much enthusiasm for the subject. Careful thought has been given to the motivation of girls when choosing design and technology projects. Pupils are often required to work in pairs and the evidence suggests that this is done effectively. There is also appropriate time devoted to evaluating their own and others products. This has resulted in pupils taking on board the critical analysis of others.
- 111 In the one lesson seen the quality of teaching was satisfactory. There is good evidence that the planning for both subjects is now more secure as a result of the developments of appropriate schemes of work. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. One teacher teaches all the pupils both subjects and her subject knowledge is very secure and she has been responsible for the improvements seen in the planning. She also manages both subjects effectively and this has resulted in plentiful amounts of resources to support work throughout the school and there being a clear direction for future development.

GEOGRAPHY

- 112 No geography lessons were observed during the inspection. However, examination of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that standards are above the national expectations for pupils aged 7 and 11 years. This reflects an improvement in the subject since the last inspection.
- 113 By the age of 7 years pupils can describe the physical and human features of places and can compare a town environment to a country environment. They can express their views on a local environment and are beginning to explore issues such as recycling. They can also describe activities such as shopping from both a geographical and historical context. By the age of 11, most pupils are able to name the continents, oceans and main rivers of the world. Pupils can demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the study of themes such as 'settlement'. They understand the importance of location and geographical patterns. Pupils can contrast and compare different settlements and identify the main cities of the United Kingdom on a map. Their work provides evidence of good locational knowledge of significant places and environments in the British Isles and the world. Pupils enjoy their study of their locality and of far away places. Good links are made to the local area to support the study of geography.
- 114 There is a clear and detailed scheme of work for geography which supports teachers' planning for the subject.

HISTORY

- 115 Standards are in line with that expected for pupils aged 7 and 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- 116 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to develop a sense of time and to understand the difference between past and present. They have made their own time-lines and

are able to place some key events in chronological order. Younger pupils have also compiled their own family trees which involved them in first hand historical enquiry. Older pupils in Class 2 have studied a past society, the Ancient Egyptians and are able to identify the key features of that society in relation to our contemporary society and its distinctive contribution to history. Pupils in Class 2 are currently acting as 'history detectives' to discover information about life in Tudor times. They are able to describe the impact of significant individuals such as Henry V111 on events and people in Tudor times.

- 117 During the inspection no teaching of history was observed in Class 1. In Class 2 a lesson for pupils aged from 7 to 11 was observed. The quality of teaching was satisfactory. The lesson was well planned and prepared to provide appropriate learning activities for all ages and for pupils with special educational needs. A range of Tudor artefacts was provided for the 'history detective work'. Literacy skills were used to good effect as pupils in Years 5 and 6 wrote a newspaper article entitled, 'I saw the king' describing the physical appearance of Henry V111. Information and communication technology is used effectively to provide additional information, interest and opportunities for skills development, for example, using a computer programmes about Tudors and a computer simulation set in a Tudor printer's workshop. Support staff are deployed effectively to provide appropriate support activities for younger and older pupils and to support pupils with special educational needs. This support has a positive impact on the learning and progress in the subject.
- 118 Most pupils have a positive attitude to learning. They enjoy the practical activities such as examining artefacts and using computers to retrieve and rehearse further information. All pupils settle to their written tasks quickly and quietly. They are able to sustain interest in, and concentration on, their work. Good use is made of literacy and word processing skills through the generation of an on-going historical glossary of key words connected to the Tudor unit of work.
- 119 When the school was last inspected provision in history was satisfactory, although a lack of challenge for pupils in Years 2 and 6 was identified. There was no scheme of work in place. The current provision shows considerable improvements with a clear scheme of work now in place and being fully implemented. This enables teachers' planning and supports progression and continuity throughout the subject. The level of challenge in the lesson observed was appropriate for all pupils including the most able.
- 120 The school makes effective use of extra-curricular visits and events to enhance the provision of the subject in the school, for example, visits to Speke Hall and the involvement of pupils in burying a time capsule as part of the Parish Council Centenary Celebrations.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 121 By the time that they are 7 and 11 years old, pupils attain standards that are expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This represents a similar situation to the previous inspection. Information and communication technology is well used to support learning in different subjects of the curriculum. The school has developed good resources both hardware and

software to support the provision of information and communication technology and to deliver the National Curriculum 2000.

- 122 The quality of teaching and learning across the school are good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use computers to produce simple bar graphs to show the characteristics of people in our class for example colour of eyes, size of shoes. They are able to use the spray tool from a graphics package to produce designs and pictures in art and design. Pupils can use word processing to present their work in subjects such as religious education and to write e-mail to Father Christmas. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have many opportunities to develop their word processing skills. They are able to manipulate text and use desktop publishing facilities to good effect to produce posters to advertise school productions, for example, Noah's Ark. They have opportunities to use graphics software to generate their own designs and to create work in the style of artists, such as Mondrian. They can use sequences of instructions to control devices and they understand data-logging procedures. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can also use additional hardware such as scanners to create simulations for finding out and solving problems. A support assistant for information and communication technology is well deployed to work with individuals and small groups of pupils to develop their computer skills. This has a positive impact on the learning and skill acquisition of all pupils. Good use of information and communication technology is made in other subjects of the curriculum to support and extend learning, for example, English, mathematics and history.
- 123 The attitudes of pupils to the subject are very good and high standards of behaviour are evident. Learning activities to promote and extend the use information and communication technology are clearly planned and the support provided for individual pupils of all ages and abilities is good. This ensures that learning and progress are good within the subject.
- 124 Pupils with special educational needs have good support in developing computer skills from teachers, support staff and their peers. As a result they are able to demonstrate confidence and competence and make good progress in their learning.
- 125 The subject is well managed in the school. Extra support from an information communication technology technician and a support assistant is purchased by the school. These additional staff contribute very positively to the learning, progress and attainment of all pupils in the school. Teachers in the school will soon undertake the New Opportunities Fund training in using ICT in their teaching. This will have a further positive impact on the standards and attainment in the subject. Good, detailed records are kept of individual pupils' experiences and attainment in the subject. There is a clear plan for the further development of information and communication technology throughout the school.

MUSIC

- 126 It was not possible to see any music being taught during the inspection. It is therefore not possible to make overall judgements about standards and the quality of teaching and learning. However, there is now a good system in place to enable the planning to build on what pupils have been taught previously. This is an improved position compared to the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 127 As with music, the inspection did not allow for any physical education lessons to be seen. It is therefore not possible to make overall judgements about standards or quality of education. There is an issue regarding the appropriateness of the accommodation for physical education. The school takes advantage of the use of a field situated within walking distance behind the village hall. In this respect the school has done everything it can to provide appropriately for the physical education needs of the pupils. The school has also linked with local small schools to help pupils gain additional sporting activities. This is again appropriate when taking account of the school's size and the number of staff available to organise and run sporting activities after school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 128 Standards are good mainly because pupils make good use of their literacy skills in this subject. It was not possible to see religious education lessons being taught, but an analysis of completed work, together with discussions with pupils, indicated that standards were above the level expected for pupils' age.
- 129 Pupils aged 5 to 7 have completed a study about 'What happens inside a Church'. This work shows that they have basic knowledge of the main artefacts associated with the Church. They also have a little knowledge of Jewish faith and have studied aspects of the Hindu faith. They know most of the main artefacts associated with these faiths. As well as studies associated with the religious faiths, pupils have considered issues related to 'feelings'. There are examples of pupils having written about their first day at school and about being polite.
- 130 Older pupils have studied many other faiths including, Sikhism, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. They have a good knowledge of the way different people worship and have a good idea about why the artefacts associated with these faiths are used in ceremonies. An example of pictorial retelling of the story of 'The Widow's Mite' gives a good indication that pupils know about making a story have a clear moral implication. There is good use of information and communication technology to help present work in a more appropriate way.
- 131 The headteacher is the specialist teacher for religious education and it is clear from the evidence submitted that pupils have regular lessons and follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. There are good examples of pupils' literacy skills being interlinked with the work that is presented. This is seen at its best in the retelling of the story of the 'Good Samaritan' from different points of view. Each pupil has chosen a different context with some writing from the point of view of the Levite, the Good Samaritan, the Priest, the Traveller, the Robbers and the Innkeeper. The writing shows elements of good presentation and there is good use made of the word processor to aid the editing and final presentation.
- 132 The school gives a great deal of emphasis to the subject. From the evidence submitted it is well taught and pupils make good gains in their learning. The progress as suggested by the work is good with older pupils building on the good work carried out in Class 1.