

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MARSDEN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Nelson

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119176

Headteacher: Mrs J A Taylor

Lead inspector: Mr Rod Spinks

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2003

Inspection number: 256859

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	386
School address:	Percy Street Nelson
Postcode:	BB9 0BE
Telephone number:	01282 612769
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Husband
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school situated in the town of Nelson, Lancashire. There are 386 pupils on roll, which represents a reduction since the last inspection. The school serves pupils from the local community. Over 90 per cent of pupils are from Asian British backgrounds, with strong links to Pakistan. This is a much higher proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds than found nationally. The main home languages are Punjabi and Urdu. Eighteen per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is close to the national average. Three per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, which is above the national average. The main forms of special educational need are moderate learning difficulties, hearing impairment, speech and communication, and social and emotional difficulties. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. A large proportion of pupils enter the school at the early stages of learning English, and so standards in English on entry are well below average. The school has strong links with the local community, and at the time of this inspection, a sports hall was being built at one side of the school site for joint school and community use.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2783	Rod Spinks	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science Physical education
11358	Vicky Lamb	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
11685	Joy Bristow	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Geography History Religious education
12815	Andrew McDowall	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage Art and design
22644	Barbara Hill	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music
20368	Sue Macintosh	<i>Team inspector</i>	English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Marsden Community Primary School is an effective school.** Standards have risen since the last inspection in almost all subject areas, as a result of improved teaching. Current standards are now similar to those found nationally. The management of the school is more effective and, despite high levels of additional funding, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of additional support provided by support staff is good, especially that of Ethnic Minority Achievement teachers and bilingual teaching assistants.
- Teaching is good in the Infants and the Juniors.
- The governors are effective and support the school well.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and they behave very well.
- There are very good relationships throughout the school.
- This is a fully inclusive school in which all pupils have access to learning.
- The school has very good links with the community.
- Teachers do not use assessment, particularly marking, sufficiently well to direct their planning for learning.
- The monitoring of the work of the school is not sufficiently consistent or rigorous to promote improvement.

There have been significant improvements since the last inspection and most of the issues identified then have been fully addressed. Standards are higher in most subjects by the end of the Juniors. Management and leadership are better, providing the school with clearer direction and more effective management. Governors are better informed and are fully involved in decision making. They challenge the school to continue to improve. Although results at the end of the Juniors are lower than national averages, inspectors judge that the majority of current pupils are reaching standards that are at least similar to those found nationally. These standards represent good achievement as pupils enter the school with well below average attainment in language and communication and many are at an early stage of learning English.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	C	E	E
mathematics	E	E	E*	E
science	E	E	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - very low. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they attain broadly average standards.** They enter the school with a limited grasp of English and, by the time they are 11, they gain sufficient expertise to be able to follow the curriculum in their secondary schools.

By the end of their Reception Year, pupils are attaining average standards in mathematical learning, social, emotional and physical development. However, standards in language and communication, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development remain below average. At the end of the Infants, pupils are attaining below average standards in reading, and remain well below average in national assessments in writing and mathematics. At the age of eleven, standards in the

most recent national assessments remained well below average in English and science, and very low in mathematics. However, high numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school in this year group significantly affected these results. Higher attaining pupils struggle to attain the higher levels in national assessments as their English language development, although good, still limits their understanding.

Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, and physical education are above average, whilst attainment in all other subjects is close to the average. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and achieve well against the targets set for them. The achievement of a significant number of pupils is adversely affected by periods of absence when they make visits to Pakistan for extended periods of time.

**The development of pupils' personal qualities is good.** They have very positive attitudes to school and to learning, and their behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good overall. However, opportunities for pupils' spiritual reflection are limited. Attendance levels are unsatisfactory.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**Overall, the quality of education is good. Overall, teaching is good** and this is now ensuring that pupils learn well. Teachers rightly concentrate on the learning of English language and this enables pupils to gain from the wider curriculum.

Teachers' marking and assessments of pupils' progress in the subjects of the curriculum do not identify the longer-term learning needs of pupils sufficiently well, and so do not lead to improved achievement. The school develops good links with parents, who are very supportive of the school, although their contribution to their children's progress is frequently limited. Very good links with the community contribute to improved learning opportunities and enhance pupils' learning.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher provides good leadership. **Governance is good**, with the governing body providing good support and challenge. Improved leadership has contributed to the rise in standards since the last inspection. Managers at all levels monitor the work of the school, but this is not carried out consistently or rigorously enough in all subjects, to promote further improvements in either standards or the quality of education. The headteacher and governors have developed very strong links with the community, so that the school is establishing an important role in its locality.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school. Parents recognise the improvements in pupils' achievement and are very supportive. Inspectors agree with parents that pupils with SEN are well supported and that the learning of the English language is good. The school also provides good learning opportunities for parents. Pupils like school and positively enjoy the experiences they have there.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

**The most important things the school should do to improve are:**

- Ensure that teachers use assessment of pupils' progress and attainment more effectively in planning for future learning.
- Ensure that the monitoring of the school's work is more consistent and that findings are used to bring about further improvement.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they attain broadly average standards. Their learning of the English language is very good by the age of seven and eleven. Although standards in National Assessments in 2003 in English, mathematics and science were well below average, inspectors judge that current standards in all subjects are close to those normally found. This represents a marked improvement since the last inspection.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils with English as an additional language, the majority of the school, achieve good standards in spoken English.
- Standards by age eleven have improved in all subjects and are now above average in ICT, art and design, and physical education.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Standards in national assessments at the end of the Juniors remain well below national averages and those for similar schools.

#### Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average in language and communication, with the majority of pupils speaking very little English. It is below average in all other aspects of early learning. Attainment at the end of the Reception Year is close to national averages in mathematical, social and physical development, but is below average in language and communication, creative learning, and knowledge and understanding of the world. This represents good achievement in the Reception Year.

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14 (15.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.2 (14.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards that are below average in reading, and well below average in writing and mathematics. However, as pupils' knowledge and understanding of English is well below average on entry to the school, achievement is good in reading, and is satisfactory in writing and mathematics. In the other subjects of the curriculum, achievement is satisfactory, as inspection evidence indicates that pupils are attaining average standards in all subjects except music, in which standards are lower than normally found.

3. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is at least satisfactory and is improving. During the inspection, evidence indicated that a significant proportion of pupils work well above expected levels in ICT, art and design, and physical education.

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.8 (26.7)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	23.4 (25.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	25.8 (26.2)	28.6 (28.3)

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*There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. In 2003, standards at age eleven in national assessments were well below average in English and science, and very low in mathematics. These results were affected by a significant number of pupils who joined the school in 2002 and 2003. An evaluation of the attainment of pupils in this year group, who did join the school in the Reception Year, indicates that these pupils achieved satisfactorily.
5. By the age of eleven, all pupils have developed near average skills in speaking English, and higher attaining pupils are able to communicate very well. This represents significant achievement and progress, as a result of teachers' consistent attention to language development.
6. Pupils learn well in groups targeted for support in language development from specialist Ethnic Minority Achievement teachers. High expectations and high levels of challenge are features of the teaching in these groups, and contribute well to pupils' learning. This additional support enhances the good provision, and as a result these pupils make good progress.
7. Pupils achieve well in literacy and numeracy, even though they attain below average standards in national assessments. Inspection evidence indicates that most current pupils are attaining close to average standards, but higher attaining pupils still encounter difficulties in understanding the language associated with difficult concepts in mathematics and science.
8. There have been significant improvements in standards and achievement in ICT. The computer suite and training for teachers in its use have had a positive impact on this achievement.
9. Standards in religious education are in line with those identified in the local Agreed Syllabus and the parents were pleased that pupils learned about a number of different religions.
10. Pupils with SEN are supported effectively, and they mostly meet the well-founded targets set for them in their individual education plans (IEPs). Those with specific difficulties, such as sight or hearing impairment, achieve well as they are well supported by teachers and support assistants to enable them to engage in all aspects of the curriculum.
11. The most significant features of pupils' attainment and achievement are that they are at least satisfactory when pupils' levels of understanding of English on entry is taken into account. Those pupils whose attainment in English is average on entry achieve at least satisfactorily when their ability is taken into account.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

12. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, and they behave very well in lessons and around the school. Overall the provision for personnel development is good. The provision for the moral and social development of pupils is very good. The provision for their cultural development is good, and that for their spiritual development is satisfactory. Attendance levels are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pupils display very positive attitudes to school and to their learning.
- Relationships throughout school are very good.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school.
- The school places strong emphasis on issues of right and wrong.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

13. The annual attendance rate for the school as a whole is well below the average for schools nationally. However, the school analyses attendance data to show the impact of extended holidays taken by a significant number of pupils each year. This shows that the attendance of the vast majority of pupils is very good. The school supports parents' need to take their children to visit relatives abroad, but discourages them from taking their children out of school either for long

periods or when national tests are to be taken. However, several children each year are absent for several weeks, some of them at about the time of external tests. This means that these children do not make good progress; for a few who do not return by the agreed date, the school has been obliged to give their place to another child.

14. Pupils are keen to come to school and take part in all the activities provided for them. Many are involved in the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered. They behave very well in lessons, at playtimes and as they move about the school. There have been no exclusions recently.

15. Pupils' social development is very good, mainly because relationships are very good and because most teachers provide very good role models for pupils. In particular, the school actively encourages good relationships amongst all groups of pupils. Pupils of all ages are given responsibilities and carry out their duties conscientiously. The school provides many opportunities to help children to take part in local and national events, and to provide activities that are not easily available to pupils outside school.

16. Pupils' moral development is supported very well. The school has developed a clear code of conduct and children know what is expected of them. They are taught to distinguish right from wrong in assemblies, and in lessons that raise social and moral issues. They are keen to receive rewards for their efforts and are pleased when they do. They demonstrate their concern for others through a range of fund raising activities.

17. The school promotes pupils' cultural development very well through helping them to appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of others. It provides many opportunities for pupils to develop and celebrate their talents, especially through the wide range of clubs on offer before, during and after school. There are many opportunities for pupils to visit places outside school and to gain from meeting visitors from a variety of backgrounds.

18. However, pupils' spiritual development is not so well developed, as many opportunities are missed in lessons and assemblies to give pupils space for their own thoughts and to encourage them to express ideas. Activities in clubs encourage pupils to explore and develop what interests and animates them. However, planned and impromptu opportunities for pupils to be inspired and excited by the unusual and remarkable, are not well used by staff. Collective worship meets statutory requirements.

## Attendance

### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.8%	School data	0.5%
National data	5.4%	National data	0.4%

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

### Teaching and learning

**Overall the quality of teaching is good.** It is good in the Infants and Juniors and satisfactory in the Reception Year. All pupils are interested in their work and always try to do their best. Pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language make particularly good progress and achieve well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers encourage pupils to work hard.
- Teachers provide good learning opportunities for pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language.
- Teachers expect pupils to behave in school and they do.
- Teaching assistants and other support staff are well used in lessons to help pupils to improve their work.
- The pupils get on well with each other and work well together.
- Sometimes the work planned for some groups of pupils is too easy for them.
- Marking does not always provide sufficient guidance to pupils about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils are not involved enough in assessing their own work and are unsure about their targets for improvement.
- Insufficient attention is given to National Curriculum levels when assessing the work of pupils as they pass through the school.

### Commentary

19. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The introduction of schemes of work and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, have improved continuity and progression.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 73 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (1%)	8 (11%)	29 (40%)	33 (45%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

20. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, which they use to plan effective lessons. They manage pupils well and have high expectations of behaviour. However, occasionally the work is not challenging enough for higher attaining pupils. Lessons generally proceed briskly and are delivered in a lively and interesting way. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the work is not well planned or organised to meet the needs of pupils.

21. The pupils really enjoy their school and almost always work hard in lessons. They are very keen to talk about their work and get on very well together. For example, in a Year 6 music lesson they were observed talking and sharing ideas about how different musical instruments could be used to create the right atmosphere for their composition.

22. In all lessons, pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language are well catered for. Learning support assistants and other support staff, are carefully deployed to ensure that pupils receive the support they need to make progress. The partnerships between the class teachers and the support staff are very good, and this has a positive impact on the progress these pupils make.

23. The pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. When asked to work together they almost always do so without any difficulty: they are mature and sensible in the way they organise themselves. There is scope for the school to develop these opportunities further, in order to provide more speaking and listening opportunities across the curriculum.

24. Ongoing assessment of pupil performance against National Curriculum levels is weak. For example, pupils regularly produce work for their 'tracking books', but this is not assessed against National Curriculum levels and is not used consistently to set targets for classes, groups and, where appropriate, individual pupils. This lack of clarity about the next steps in learning is inhibiting progress, and on occasions, results in some pupils being offered work that is too easy for them.

25. The quality of marking in the school is variable. At present, much of it fails to provide the pupils with sufficient guidance as to what they need to do to improve their work. Class targets are in place but these are not made clear to the pupils, and are sometimes too general to be meaningful. When asked about their targets, pupils in the Juniors were unable to tell the inspectors what they were. The teachers are not providing the pupils with enough opportunities to assess their own work and to evaluate for themselves how well they are doing.

### **The curriculum**

26. Overall, curriculum provision is good. The planned curriculum meets all statutory requirements, and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are implemented well. The pupils' curriculum experiences are significantly enhanced both by visits outside the school and by visitors from the community. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered outside the school day.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of activities outside the normal school day.
- The curriculum is enhanced both by educational visits outside the school and by visitors to the school.
- The school has good accommodation and resources.
- Teachers and support staff are well qualified and experienced.

27. **The curriculum opportunities for Reception pupils are satisfactory**, having improved since the last inspection. However, the provision for creative development and opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for themselves is limited. The range of activities provided for the pupils enables them to make good progress, but often teaching groups are too large and this diminishes the impact of the activities.

28. **The curriculum for Infant and Junior pupils is good.** The school prides itself on its success in providing experiences which are shared by all, regardless of gender or background. However, in religious education, history and geography, there is a lack of challenge in lessons for the more able pupils, to enable them to achieve as much as they can.

29. Statutory requirements are met, and national guidelines are followed or adapted to plan for all subjects, including religious education. The school makes provision for collective worship on a daily basis, although the pupils do not always have time for reflection. The national strategies for numeracy and literacy have added consistency to the teaching in these areas.

30. The school meets a variety of needs in a range of ways: the school has learning mentors who support specific pupils; a list is kept of named pupils who are gifted and talented in some subjects; and groups of more able pupils in Years 3 and 6 are provided with additional support for literacy and mathematics.

31. The provision for pupils with SEN is very good. Individual education plans (IEPs) are detailed and reviewed regularly. The targets for pupils are realistic and relate to their literacy, mathematics, and personal and social development. Ninety per cent of parents attend annual review meetings, which represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The IEPs are clearly understood by the support staff, who make regular assessments of pupils' progress.
32. The curriculum is enriched well by activities in addition to those experienced during the school day. These provide invaluable opportunities for the development of vocabulary, academic, personal and social skills. The school has good procedures in place to improve pupils' citizenship skills. There are opportunities for pupils to accept responsibilities such as being members of the School Council and acting as Bench Buddies (older pupils who support younger pupils during playtimes). Pupils from the local high school are paired with pupils from Year 6 on a weekly basis to hear them read. There are club activities for pupils across a range of interests. All such clubs, including judo, cricket, library, and computer, are well attended. There has been a range of visitors to support learning, including artists in residence. Each year, pupils make well-planned educational visits to enhance their learning, including a residential experience for Year 6 pupils.
33. The 'Excellence Cluster' in which the school participates, sets targets for achievement in all foundation subjects, attendance and behaviour. The Cluster provides funding to support all areas of the curriculum where a need is identified.
34. The provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory. Effective provision is made for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. For example there are well-planned opportunities for younger pupils to understand the differences between medicines and harmful drugs.
35. The 'Building Bridges' initiative has a major impact on the Year 6 curriculum. The aim of this is to promote a greater understanding of people and their beliefs. The programme includes discussion about diversity, conflict resolution, perception, moral actions, personal decisions and personal response.
36. Since the last inspection accommodation has improved and is now good. The building is spacious and well decorated. The only disadvantages are the number of staircases and the lack of wheelchair access. The school does not have a grassed area, which limits games activities in physical education. A new sports hall is being built for school and community use.
37. Resources are satisfactory overall. The timetabled computer suite and additional computers in all classrooms have contributed to the above average standards in ICT.
38. Teaching and support staff are very well matched to the needs of the curriculum. Additional teachers provide cover for co-ordinators in order that they may carry out their management duties, and there is also support for some groups of more able pupils. Support staff provide very good help for pupils who have SEN. The teacher with responsibility for SEN provides excellent support and training for the support staff. She meets with them on a regular basis and monitors their work. This has a major impact on the progress made by pupils with SEN. There is one bilingual assistant in each year group, who is able to assist pupils at the early stage of learning English.

## Care, guidance and support

39. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Achievement and personal development are monitored satisfactorily. The school seeks, values and acts on pupils' views satisfactorily.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Staff take care to promote pupils' health and welfare.
- Individual pupils have good and trusting relationships with one or more adults in the school.
- Some very good procedures are in place to support pupils with specific needs.
- Pupils do not all receive well-targeted guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

40. The school has effective procedures for the protection of children in line with locally agreed arrangements. Those members of staff with a particular responsibility for child protection have been appropriately trained. Members of staff confidently share with a more senior person, any concerns that they may have about the welfare of pupils, and the school actively promotes pupils' welfare by helping them to learn how to keep healthy and safe. Parents are welcomed into school on a daily basis so that they can easily discuss any aspect of their child's welfare.

41. Health and safety risk assessments are undertaken and the school offers a pleasant, clean, healthy and safe environment. Staff provide a variety of well-supervised outdoor and indoor activities during breaks, despite the difficulties posed by the nature of the site and building work taking place. Consequently, pupils feel safe and secure.

42. Relationships between adults and children are mostly very good. Teachers know pupils well and most of them respond in a warm and friendly way to pupils' personal needs. However, very occasionally, a few members of staff respond inappropriately towards children who, in their view, are not behaving correctly.

43. The support, advice and guidance provided for pupils is good and some aspects are very good. The school has developed a very good network of support from individuals and groups outside the school that are brought in, or who provide funding for additional staff, to help pupils with specific identified needs. The school employs learning mentors, for instance, who provide personal support and encouragement to individuals and groups experiencing difficulties in their learning or in their personal lives. The Breakfast Club is a particularly effective feature of school life. It has substantially improved the attendance and punctuality of some pupils, and teachers report that many previously unsettled children apply themselves better to their work having attended the club.

44. The procedures for assessing the work of children with SEN and for helping them to make progress, are good. However, teachers do not assess other pupils' work sufficiently thoroughly or constructively. This means that they do not know precisely enough how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve, either during particular lessons or generally. There are good procedures for staff to get to know children and to help them settle into school, and an appropriate programme is in place to help pupils move confidently to secondary school.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

**The school has established good links with parents to help them become involved in their child's education and takes satisfactory measures to seek and act upon their views. The school has established very good links in the local and wider community, including with partner schools and colleges.**

## **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- There are good links between the school and parents.
- The school works hard to extend links with parents so that they can help their children's learning.
- Many high quality links are established with the community.
- Good links are established with other schools and colleges.
- Written reports to parents do not give them enough accurate information.

45. The school has put in place a good range of activities to help parents become involved in their children's education. A very good feature of this aspect of the school's work is the induction programme that is organised for parents and makes a valuable contribution to the well-being of children during their early weeks in the school. It provides a good first step in the home-school partnership. Opportunities are provided for parents of all children to take part in courses and special events linked to the curriculum. These help them to continue to find out about what their children are learning and to learn new skills themselves. The school organises leisure activities for parents and gives them access to the school nurse through a fortnightly drop-in service. Parents' evenings are well attended, and many parents and other members of the children's families support special events in school. Staff, including the headteacher, are available each day to meet parents, and the school ensures that an interpreter is available whenever needed to enable parents and teachers to communicate fully. The school sends parents regular, informative newsletters to keep them up to date with events. However, the information in written reports on children's progress is less useful to parents as it does not give them an accurate picture of how well their children are doing and what they need to do to improve. The school has issued parents with a questionnaire to seek their views on what the school does well and where they would like to see improvements made.

46. The school recognises the need to build high quality relationships with other organisations and has established many strong partnerships within the immediate neighbourhood, the wider local region and nationally, that enhance children's experiences, and give parents and other local people access to activities that would otherwise be inaccessible

47. The school works very well with partner schools and colleges. Pupils share special events with children in other primary schools, and appropriate procedures are in place to help them move confidently to secondary school. Senior staff support adult learners through links with nurseries, colleges and family learning groups. In particular, the school is well used as a base for students on work experience and for those training in childcare or teaching.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

48. Overall, leadership and management are **satisfactory**. Governance is good. The governing body is particularly effective as they have a clear vision, and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher provides good leadership and has managed the school effectively to promote improved standards since the previous inspection. She has established the school as a focus for the local community. There are monitoring procedures, but these are not applied consistently enough in all subjects in order to promote further improvements.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There is good leadership and management by the headteacher.
- The governors provide good, challenging support for the school.
- The governors and managers are fully committed to ensure equality of access for all.
- Financial management is good.
- The monitoring of the work of the school does not always result in rigorous action to improve.
- Some subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the work of the school and leading improvements in standards.

### Commentary

49. Since the last inspection the headteacher has led and managed the school well to produce significantly improved standards across most subjects. The key issues from that inspection have been addressed, although some improvements are still needed in Reception.

50. The governors are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and challenge senior managers to continue the improvements already begun. They ensure statutory requirements are fully met and manage the budget well to ensure that resources are available to support improved learning.

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1 063 840	Balance from previous year	156 182
Total expenditure	1 063 840	Balance carried forward to the next year	126 389
Expenditure per pupil	2 756		

51. The large carry-forward in the finances results from the school not needing to spend the usual building maintenance budget, due to centrally funded refurbishment during the last three years. This money is being held in reserve to meet future needs, particularly where reduced funding for supporting pupils with English as an additional language could reduce in-class support for these pupils.

52. The school is very successful in seeking additional funding from a variety of sources. For example a local company provides materials for the Breakfast Club and a trust provides significant financial support for the Year 6 residential experience. Recently the school has been involved in a successful lottery bid for Space for Sport and Arts, supported by Lancashire County Council, to provide a sports hall for school and community use.

53. This is a fully inclusive school: one in which pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have access to a sound education, enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors, and to extended learning opportunities.

54. The role of some subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed to ensure the consistent monitoring of the work of the school. This has resulted in variable improvement across subjects. The monitoring that has been carried out does not always clearly identify what needs to be done to improve, with the result that subject co-ordinators are not able to plan for continuous improvement sufficiently vigorously.

## COMMUNITY LINKS

55. The school is fully committed to its role as a community school and makes very good use of local expertise and resources. Pupils are taken on trips into the area around school to add an extra dimension to their learning, and many visitors are welcomed into school to support teachers' work. The school links very effectively with local residents and community organisations to find out the types of activities that would benefit the area and then seeks the means to provide them. Consequently, the school has helped to develop educational and leisure activities for pupils inside and outside lessons, and for adults during and after school hours. Partnerships with support agencies and businesses enable the school to offer courses that bring together different family members to work on common themes, such as literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills, and to offer personal support and advice to parents and pupils.

56. The school works alongside other schools and colleges to provide work experience and mentoring for students, and to share teachers' knowledge and experience to enhance what is provided for pupils. Educational and leisure courses are provided for adults. The school already offers a range of sports activities in addition to physical education, and it is anticipated that the completion of the new sports hall with a large classroom and outdoor games area, will provide for a wider range of activities for pupils and local residents. These will be led by qualified coaches in custom-built facilities. The school is highly regarded by those with whom it works, and is well used by local people, many of them parents of children in the school.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

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

57. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The majority of children have attended nursery before starting school in the September before they are five years old. Many pupils start school with English language skills that are well below average, and this has an impact on their progress. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory, and the children are offered a sound curriculum to develop their competence in all areas of learning.

58. All the staff work well together. However, insufficient focus is given to the strategic development of the Foundation Stage curriculum, monitoring of teaching and learning, and assessment of progress in all areas.

59. The accommodation is good and improvements have been made to the outside play area since the last inspection.

60. The use of time within the day is in need of review to ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to make choices, to demonstrate independence and to spend less time in larger groups. Best use is not made of snack time to develop social skills. More opportunities for independent writing are needed. These were issues in the last inspection and have yet to be fully addressed.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Children feel secure at school and are keen to learn.
- Children show good levels of concentration.
- Children sensibly share equipment with others.
- Too few opportunities are provided for the children to take responsibility for their own play and for the jobs that need to be done around the classroom.

### **Commentary**

61. The personal, social and emotional development of the majority of the children when they start school is in line with that expected nationally. These children settle quickly and make good progress. They are secure in the routines of the classroom and quickly learn how to behave in school. They have a genuine curiosity and are keen to investigate. A good example of this was the talk and enjoyment that came from investigating a collection of push and pull toys. A significant minority of children are relatively passive on entry to school, but gain confidence and join in, although they remain reluctant to initiate conversation and to stand up for themselves in play situations. These children are making satisfactory progress.

62. The more confident children demonstrate the ability to take the initiative and organise their own work. Too few opportunities are provided for all children to develop in this way. Teachers generally allocate activities to pupils; more needs to be done to encourage children to make their own choices and follow their own interests at times within the day. For example, snack time is usually directed by staff, with all the children in a large group in each class. Consequently the staff do all the work and the children are not sufficiently involved in this activity. Breaking classes into smaller groups and giving more responsibility to children in organising and distributing the snack would promote greater personal, social and emotional development.



## Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Bilingual support is used well to help children gain access to the curriculum.
- The children have positive attitudes to books and writing.
- Children are not given enough opportunities to develop as early writers.
- The way children are grouped within the day reduces their opportunities for speaking and listening.

### Commentary

63. Overall, the standards of communication in English when the children enter the school are well below those found nationally. A significant number of children lack confidence in speaking in English and have only a limited vocabulary. The staff provide a satisfactory range of activities to promote and extend both the children's spoken English and their attitudes to reading and writing. Many children are unable to use phrases and sentences in their speech, and often rely on gestures to gain attention. Progress is steady. The majority of pupils do not reach the expectations in this area of learning by the end of their Reception Year.

64. Bilingual support is used well to help children to understand and to join in activities. This has a positive impact on the progress of many children who become more animated and begin to respond verbally to the staff when using their home language.

65. The children are given good access to books and they generally handle them well. They are keen to hear stories. Some children gain some knowledge of letter sounds, and can recognise and read a few common words. The children are keen to take books home regularly. Some children begin to write independently; they can write some simple words and can then read their work back. For example, the children were very keen to write to Santa and some produced their own letters containing good attempts at common words. There need to be more opportunities for this early writing, as some children are hesitant and reluctant to try writing for themselves.

66. Children are given too few opportunities to speak in small groups. This slows their development. The staff provide good language role models for the children, but are not systematic enough in their assessment of vocabulary and language structure, or in the reinforcement of these when responding to children. During the inspection, opportunities to broaden English language skills were missed, because too few staff were available to join in with the children's play activities, and to model and extend the use of English.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The staff provide a good range of activities to support mathematical development.
- The children are very positive about number and counting.
- Assessment is not used rigorously to plan what children should learn next.

## Commentary

67. Many children work at the level expected for their age, and are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of the year. They begin to count to 5 and beyond, some counting on past 15. They begin to recognise numbers and some try to write them. During the inspection an able girl was seen organising floor tiles from 1 to 20 in order, and then putting the correct number of bricks on to each tile. Many children have a sound understanding of simple patterns and tried hard when printing Christmas patterns around their letter to Santa. Throughout the inspection, the children were very keen to talk about numbers, and often chose mathematical activities when given the opportunity to do so.

68. The teachers provide good opportunities for mathematical development, but sometimes have the children in groups that are too big to allow all of them to join in. For example, a biscuit tin containing ten biscuits was well used in one session by the teacher to reinforce counting, and to introduce the idea of *one less*, as in turn, different children were given a biscuit. The activity gained the attention of the children, but not all of them came forward to get a biscuit, and were therefore not given the opportunity to count for themselves. In another lesson the children were observed investigating the concept of *heavy* and *light*. The teacher had prepared good resources, and there were clear gains in understanding as the children handled the packages and discovered the difference for themselves.

69. The teachers know the ability of the children, but opportunities are not provided for all the adults working with the children to share their observations and set targets together for the next steps in learning. Consequently, not all staff know the mathematical attainment of each child.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good opportunities are provided to broaden the experience of children and to extend their knowledge of the wider world.
- Good use is made of computers.

## Commentary

70. The children make good progress in this area of learning and are on track to reach the expected levels by the end of the year. The staff provide a wide range of practical activities for children that have a positive impact on their progress. The children have access to a range of construction apparatus; they use these well in both large and small scale building activities. For example, a group of five children were actively engaged in building a tower of plastic bobbins taller than themselves. This activity successfully supported their mathematical development and their personal and social development, in addition to increasing their understanding of how objects fit together and balance.

71. The computers are used well and the children show confidence when using them to read books on screen, play games and draw pictures. A group was operating the Roamer, a robot controlled by computer, and trying to programme it to stop at a particular point on the carpet. The children had great fun and learned much during the session. The staff regularly take the children out of school and use the locality well to develop an understanding of the main features of the area in which the children live.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The outside space provides good opportunities for the children's physical development.
- Some of the teaching provides too few opportunities for the children to make choices for themselves.

### Commentary

72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children make sound progress in all aspects of their physical development, and should reach expected levels by the end of the year. During lessons in the hall, they move with confidence, and show good control as they balance and move in a variety of ways. Some of the teaching observed is too directed, and more opportunities need to be provided for the children to make decisions and take more initiative in the ways in which they move. The children have access to an outside space throughout the day, and this is used well and provides opportunities for more independence. The children make sound progress in their manipulative skills. They were observed using a range of pens and pencils, and handling dough and small construction apparatus with both confidence and growing control.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for role play.
- Children play very well together, but interaction between them is sometimes limited.
- Children are given too few opportunities to demonstrate independence in their artwork.

### Commentary

73. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Good opportunities are provided for the children to dress up and play in a range of situations, including in the shop and the home corner. Some were able to stay in character and made up stories together, but many were relatively quiet and only interacted in a limited way with one another. With more staff support for these activities, there would be improved opportunities for the children to develop both socially and creatively.

74. Too few opportunities are provided for the children to make choices about their paintings and pictures. Their access to a wide range of materials is too limited, and they have too few opportunities to choose to paint, stick and mix colours, and experiment with a range of media. The children are sometimes having too much done for them.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

The provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are improving.
- Teaching is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Handwriting and presentation are very good.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their writing skills in some of the foundation subjects.

#### Commentary

75. Standards in English are satisfactory. This year's test results were not as high as usual, due to the movement of pupils in and out of the year group. When compared with all schools nationally, standards in 2003 by the age of seven and eleven are well below average. There are a few pupils who gain the higher levels at age seven and at age eleven. When compared with pupils in similar schools, standards are well below average.

76. Pupils in the Infant classes achieve well. Achievement improves for more pupils as they progress through the Junior classes and by the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6, many more show the range of attainment achieved by the majority of pupils in schools nationally. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught to write in paragraphs, and more attention is given to the teaching of common words and spelling patterns. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to support each other and give advice about how their work might be improved. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 thoroughly enjoy working with Shakespeare plays, and are able to recognise the meaning and spellings of both words and phrases used in the text. They still find it difficult to understand the language beyond the literal, for example in phrases such as 'from hand to mouth' and 'ivory hands'. They are using increasingly more complex sentences and exciting vocabulary.

77. Standards of writing are satisfactory. Pupils start school with below average standards and make good progress in the Infant classes, due to the very good support that they receive. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of writing styles, including story, report, letter and instruction writing. Pupils in Year 2 are able to provide some very good words to describe the members of the Bear family instead of using the words *sad*, *happy* or *mad*. They are capable of extended writing and use good punctuation including speech marks; spelling is good. Standards are below that expected for the higher levels, because they still do not have the extended range of vocabulary and understanding. However, this is developing because of good teaching that ensures that pupils widen their vocabulary and understanding in all subjects. Pupils with SEN and with English as a second language, achieve very well. There is appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities. A sample of work from each pupil is collected every term in order to show progress in writing, but this work is not analysed sufficiently to direct teachers' planning for the next stage of learning.

78. Speaking and listening skills are below average in Infant classes, but pupils make good progress as they move through the school, and they become more confident in speaking and using the English language. Pupils are encouraged to answer the questions posed by the teacher, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas with one another. There are opportunities for pupils to express themselves in 'circle time' in the Infant classes, but these are not offered to the same extent in the Juniors.

79. Pupils achieve well in their reading. Pupils in all classes except Years 5 and 6, read regularly to an adult, who makes careful notes about their progress. However, this information is not used to plan future work. Pupils in one of the Year 5 classes rarely have the opportunity to read to an adult. Pupils in Year 6 read in groups to the teachers, who spend considerable time helping them to understand new words and phrases. Pupils enjoy reading,

80. The teaching of English is good and sometimes very good. The National Literacy Strategy is now embedded in the school's work. Some of the teaching is of a high quality. Most teachers work very hard to ensure that the pupils understand the text that they are reading and the words used in the lesson. Activities are planned well and match the needs of the pupils. The work of support staff is very effective in working with groups of pupils to ensure that they are on-task and understand what they have to do. The pupil's home language is often used to emphasise a point or to explain things more clearly. Pupils in Year 5 particularly enjoy their work on 'The Tempest', and with the support of the teachers, are able to describe the character of Caliban. Pupils in Year 3 identify the key words in a text and use them when writing their own paragraphs. Handwriting and presentation are very good in all subjects across the school. The pupils have very good attitudes to learning and enjoy both the focussed attention and the support that they receive.

81. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and has introduced strategies to raise standards. By analysing national test results, she identifies areas that require improvement, but as yet this information is not used in a structured way to plan new learning. Many pupils do not know what they need to do in order to improve, and although they have targets in their books, they are not referred to on a sufficiently regular basis. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning, and teaching and learning in the classroom, but this is not done on a regular basis.

82. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in all aspects of English, and pupils have made good progress. Challenge is now greater for the higher attaining pupils, but this is not as evident in some of the foundation subjects. There is now a moderated portfolio of annotated work to which National Curriculum levels are allocated, but teachers do not give levels to the work collected from the pupils each term.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

#### **The use of literacy skills across the curriculum is often unsatisfactory.**

83. Literacy skills are not well used in other subjects in all classes. There is evidence of pupils writing newspaper articles in history in Year 4, and pupils writing instructions of how to make robots in Year 2. Few pupils used their research skills in a Year 5 history lesson, and pupils in a Year 4 geography lesson were not sufficiently encouraged to write captions on their posters about Nelson. Some pupils in Year 3 used the Internet to make notes about sea creatures, prior to writing a paragraph. Overall there has not been a specific focus on how writing in other subjects can be used to raise standards in English.

## MATHEMATICS

**Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is good.** Current standards are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. Teaching is good throughout the school, so pupils learn and achieve well. Leadership and management are sound, and progress since the last inspection is good for the younger pupils and satisfactory for the older ones.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in mathematics are improving.
- Setting is used effectively in Years 5 and 6.
- Teaching is good.
- There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
- Assessment is not used strategically to inform planning for teaching and learning.
- Monitoring is not consistent, nor is it rigorous enough to promote improvement.

84. At the end of Year 2, standards in the 2003 national tests were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Standards were similar for pupils aged eleven. Improvement in performance over the past few years has been erratic, although standards achieved show that pupils make significant progress, as many pupils enter school below the national average.

85. The introduction of setting in Years 5 and 6 has contributed to the rise in standards, as it has focused both teaching and planning. The four attainment targets in mathematics for investigating, number and algebra, space, shape and measurement and handling data are now all fully covered, with good improvement in problem solving and collecting data.

86. The quality of teaching is good, and often very good, throughout the school. Teachers choose subjects that interest the pupils so they are keen to learn. For example, in Year 2, in learning about data handling by recording a two-column table, the teacher made the lesson fun by tossing 30 coins and calling 'heads' or 'tails'. Working together, they made a chart, tallying 'heads' for the teacher and 'tails' for the pupils, who were very excited and pleased to win by two points. Teachers share learning objectives with the pupils and give clear guidance, so that the pupils know exactly what to do. Teachers have high expectations of their classes, and they effectively identify what the pupils have learnt at the end of the lesson. For instance, in a lesson on how to measure angles, pupils were confident in reporting that they had learnt to use a protractor, and describing how important it was to be accurate. The pace of good lessons helps pupils to maintain concentration, and differentiated questioning ensures that all pupils are involved. Teachers know their pupils very well and relationships are very good, so that pupils feel secure and are not afraid of making mistakes.

87. Part of the reason for lower than expected standards in mathematics is the lack of technical language and understanding. Special educational needs and bilingual teaching assistants, make a significant contribution to language development, both by focusing learning and by using the pupil's mother tongue.

88. Assessments are not always analysed to monitor the progress of pupils over time and to inform future planning for teaching and learning. The level of challenge for some more able pupils is rarely high enough for them to attain the higher National Curriculum levels. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and not fully in line with the school policy.

89. Monitoring of pupils' work is not thorough or consistent enough for teachers to plan targets or match work to the levels of the National Curriculum.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

90. The planning of mathematics across the curriculum is at an early stage and not yet fully effective. Good cross-curricular work in geography was evident in a Year 2 class, when pupils made passports, which entailed measuring their own height and weight. Year 6 pupils used mathematics in ICT to devise a formula for calculating perimeters when given the length and width of different rectangles.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are positive and well-behaved, and are eager to learn.
- There is good management and effective monitoring of the subject.
- There is good development of the use of in-class support for higher attaining pupils, those with SEN and those whose English language skills are limited.
- There are good subject links with the local secondary school, which gives teachers access to more specialist science equipment to support teaching and learning.
- Standards in national assessments at age eleven are well below the national average.

### Commentary

91. By the end of Year 2, pupils are attaining below average standards as indicated by teachers' assessments. However, the standards have been rising for the last three years, with increasing numbers attaining the higher Level 3 standard.

92. Standards in science have been showing a trend of increasing numbers reaching the nationally expected Level 4 in the end of Year 6 assessments. However, the numbers reaching the higher Level 5 is well below average. This is an indication that pupils' understanding and ability to communicate scientific information, limits their higher level attainment.

93. Pupils, in both the Infants and Juniors, work hard and concentrate well, and as a result, they achieve well. Their ability to understand is enhanced by teachers' constant use of the correct scientific vocabulary and clear explanations of both meaning and use. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on healthy food, the teacher carefully explained that *pear* was a fruit and *pair* meant two items.

94. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they plan lessons to challenge pupils of all abilities. Pupils are managed well, and practical activities are carried out safely. Pupils respond well and learn effectively from the activities they complete. Support staff are very effective in helping more able pupils, as well as those with SEN and language difficulties, in their learning of science.

95. The subject is well managed. From an analysis of teachers' assessments and national test scores, the co-ordinator has identified the need to support more able pupils to improve their English language skills and understanding, in order to promote higher level achievement in science. This initiative is currently supported by funds from the Excellence Cluster and Education Business Partnership. As a result, more able pupils are targeted for additional support in lessons, and this enables them to achieve higher standards.

96. There are good subject links with the secondary school, both for curriculum coherence on transfer and in providing supporting materials. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson a vacuum pump and associated equipment had been borrowed to demonstrate that sound does not travel through a vacuum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Overall, provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The quality of resources is good.
- Pupils achieve well.
- There are good links with other subjects.
- Extended learning opportunities for gifted and talented pupils enhance achievement.
- Assessment is not used well enough to direct pupils' further learning.

### **Commentary**

97. Standards at the age of seven are in line with national expectations and are above for pupils aged eleven. Pupils throughout the school achieve well, due to the good teaching they receive. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were found to be unsatisfactory and ICT across the schools to be underdeveloped. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has led the development of the subject well, and has enhanced the confidence of colleagues by teaching alongside them and helping them to develop their skills.

98. Action taken by the school has improved standards: there has been considerable investment in computers and a computer suite has been installed. A scheme of work that delivers the full curriculum has been developed, and there has been effective staff training.

99. Learning is good throughout the school, because pupils feel confident and well supported. The work set consolidates and extends pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils were challenged to improve writing, so that the text was easier to read; they improved it by adding graphics and extra facts, which were copied and incorporated into their text from an internet website. In order to appeal further to an audience, they improved the presentation of their writing by changing fonts and adding colour.

100. Good links with English, history and mathematics are being established. In Year 6, pupils used the program, called 'English, Storyboard' to construct a multipage storyboard with picture backgrounds, objects, characters and text. High attainers created a six-page text on 'A Haunted House', that included complex sentences and imaginative language. Information and communication technology was used in history in learning about Henry VIII and the Tudors. Pupils were very excited to open the Internet Explorer to find 'Tudor Search' and hear Tudor music and see Henry VIII's wives cry.

101. Links with mathematics are used in printing block graphs and exploring mathematical models, using spreadsheets.

102. Gifted and talented pupils are very proud of the CD-ROMs they have made, using the video camera. They filmed 'A day at school' showing pupils working, and copied the disc to give to parents. This activity was funded through the Excellence Cluster.

103. A survey conducted by the co-ordinator, showed that fewer than half the pupils came from homes without a computer. Neither linguistic limitations, nor the lack of a home computer, prevent pupils from making good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

104. A good programme to develop skills is in place, which is clearly linked to assessment procedures. It is at an early stage of introduction, and so it is not yet possible to evaluate its long-term impact on pupils' attainment.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography and history

Provision for geography and history is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The work in geography and history is enhanced by the range of visits and visitors.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- The higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

#### Commentary

105. In humanities, work was sampled in **geography** and **history**, with only three lessons seen in these subjects. However, an analysis of work and discussions with pupils and the co-ordinators, indicate that standards are generally in line with what is expected nationally. Provision for history and geography has improved since the last inspection. Planning indicates satisfactory coverage of National Curriculum requirements. The co-ordinators of both subjects are very enthusiastic, and are working with the primary schools in the Excellence Cluster to be creative in finding better approaches to teaching the subjects.

106. Throughout the school, pupils have good opportunities to make visits to various museums and places of interest. The Curriculum Entitlement Strand of the Excellence Cluster helps to subsidise the cost for the pupils.

107. In the **geography** lesson seen in Year 1, With the help of the teacher and the bilingual support assistant, pupils could name the clothes in a suitcase and say what type of place and country they might be worn in. The adventures of Barnaby Bear provide pupils with opportunities to find out about other countries, and by the end of Year 2, pupils identify some countries, such as Pakistan and England, on the map of the world. In Year 4, pupils have studied the local area in history and are now studying some aspects of life in Nelson. They have looked at the services available, and are working on posters to show the areas of interest. By the end of Year 6, pupils are more knowledgeable about other countries. However, most classes had not studied geography during the term in which the inspection took place.

108. Two **history** lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils distinguish between items such as toys, from the past and the present. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 study different periods in history, such as the Victorians and Tudors. Pupils in Year 5 were studying the Romans and were very excited by the 'finds' in the sand. However, too much of the work completed is similar for every child, and there are too few opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to use a range of writing skills. This is particularly the case where pupils copy from the text, filling in the missing words.

109. Good support is provided by the learning support assistants for pupils with SEN. This ensures that all pupils have the same access to the curriculum.

110. Pupils enjoy history; behaviour is good, but there is insufficient or varied recording of work in their books. The work is not sufficiently tailored to take account of different needs, and there is little challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

111. There are no assessment procedures in place for history or geography. The development of these is a focus in the School Improvement Plan.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- A monitoring and evaluation programme has been established.
- Some teachers lack confidence in teaching the subject.
- There are no assessment procedures in place.

## **Commentary**

112. On the basis of inspection evidence, standards of attainment have improved since the previous inspection. The programmes of study used by the school are well matched to the local Agreed Syllabus. Standards of work achieved by the pupils are satisfactory. This is based on observing seven lessons in both Infant and Junior classes and discussing work with the pupils and the co-ordinator.

113. In the lessons observed and in work analysed, there is evidence that pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the customs and traditions of Christianity, Sikhism and Islam. Younger pupils visit the local church, and they observe a baptism and a wedding. They are very interested in the range of celebrations, and studying these contributes to a deeper understanding of the traditions of their own and other faiths. For example, at the time of the inspection, all the pupils had been involved in a celebration of Eid and were preparing to celebrate Christmas in the traditional way.

114. In the lessons seen, the teaching was satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 had a better understanding of the nativity story when it was translated into Urdu by the bilingual classroom assistant. The subject knowledge of the teachers is variable, and some lack confidence in teaching the subject. The work presented to the pupils, particularly in the Junior classes, is often not sufficiently tailored to pupils' needs. Teachers do not assess how well the pupils are achieving in the subject. There are no records kept about what the pupils know, understand and can do. There is good support from the learning support assistants for pupils with SEN, but there is very little challenge for those pupils who are more able.

115. Pupils enjoy their activities and have good attitudes to learning. The older pupils are interested in their own religion and in the similarities between the stories in the Bible and in the Koran.

116. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and is receiving support from the previous co-ordinator. Since the previous inspection, the school has acquired a wide range of resources that reflect the religions taught, and these are used well by the teaching staff.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and pupils are achieving well.
- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Art and design is used well to promote the cultural development of pupils.
- The curriculum is rich and interesting.
- The few high attaining pupils are not always catered for, and could produce more complex work if asked to do so.
- Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching in art and design are not established.

#### Commentary

117. The teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory in both key stages. However, work in sketchbooks, display and other evidence indicates that teaching is generally good, and results in work of good quality by the time the pupils reach Year 6. For example, some detailed work had been undertaken in Year 6 relating to the built environment; over some weeks, the pupils produced high quality work in a range of media, illustrating pattern, shadow and texture. Many pupils demonstrated confidence and control of paint, pastel, and pencil, and used each well to achieve the effect they wanted. Sketchbooks are well used and allow pupils to practice skills before they apply them to the work in hand.

118. The school uses work in art and design well to promote and celebrate cultural diversity. The pupils in the Juniors recently worked with an artist in residence to produce large fabric wall hangings depicting world religions. The pupils are rightly proud of this work and are eager to talk about it.

119. Units of work are well planned so that they increase pupils' understanding of techniques and the work of major artists. For example, in a Year 2 class some pupils were observed practising drawing figures in the style of L S Lowry, prior to producing, as a class, a large composition of an industrial scene.

120. Teachers are aware of which pupils have a particular talent in art and design, but do not always adapt the activity offered in order to provide the extension that these pupils need to make further progress. For example, in Year 3, when working on pattern relating to the production of wrapping paper, the more able pupils could have been asked to consider more complex and sophisticated work than the remainder of the class.

121. The co-ordinator monitors planning and reviews the quality of the work produced, but has had no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

#### Design and technology

122. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in design and technology is broadly in line with national expectations. No lessons were seen during the inspection as the subject is taught in two to three yearly 'technology weeks', and so no judgement on teaching and learning could be made. Evidence from a variety of sources, including medium-term planning, sketchbooks and displays, shows that pupils achieve well and make satisfactory progress.

## Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The subject is effectively led and managed.
- There are good resources for teaching and learning.
- There is a good range of instrumental teaching available to pupils.
- Standards for pupils aged seven are below average.
- Assessment procedures and processes are under-developed.

123. Attainment is below that expected for pupils aged seven. Nevertheless, the introduction of the new scheme of work and programme of training for staff has raised standards and improved the quality of teaching. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils aged eleven have made good progress and attain standards in line with the national average. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards in music were unsatisfactory.

124. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and musical expertise. Good leadership promotes enthusiasm and high expectations for the development of the subject across the school.

125. Resources are good and include a wide range of instruments, among which are tuned and untuned percussion instruments, and those from a wide range of cultures. There are opportunities for many pupils to learn to play an instrument or have vocal tuition. Local authority peripatetic teachers offer tuition in guitar, violin and keyboard. Extra-curricular activities include choir and recorder practice. Good links with the community are established through carol singing, joint concerts with a neighbouring high school and taking part in the school's Music Festival.

126. Because of lack of experience and language difficulties, a significant number of pupils, aged six and seven, are at an early stage of singing together. In assembly, they sing tunefully, but general singing skills are underdeveloped. They can explore ways in which sounds can be changed, as they showed when they recognised long and short sounds after listening to the sound effects of fireworks. However, as they cannot select and order sounds or use symbols to represent sounds, they are not attaining the nationally expected standard.

127. Junior pupils achieve well, making good progress. In Year 6, they understand musical elements, pitch, rhythm, beat and timbre. Listening to music, they recognise mood and acoustics. For example, whilst listening to 'atmospheres', they recognised acoustic or electronic sounds. Higher attaining pupils can plan, perform and record a class composition using chords.

128. Assessment of pupils' work is not thorough or constructive enough. Many pupils do not understand how well they are doing or how they can improve. The school is aware of this weakness, and assessment is identified as an area for development in the school improvement plan.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average.
- Teaching is good.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic.
- There is a good range of well-supported extra-curricular sports activities.
- Good opportunities are provided for outdoor and adventurous activity on the Year 5 residential visit, as well as during one-day visits.
- The opportunities for pupils to experience games and athletics are limited by the lack of access to playing fields.

### Commentary

129. Standards seen by inspectors were above average in Year 6. Pupils showed good co-ordination skills and body control, both in free movement and in using gymnasium apparatus. Both boys and girls showed good hand-eye co-ordination when playing indoor cricket. Pupils achieve well in their physical activities and show a good commitment to healthy physical exercise.

130. Overall, in the three lessons seen, teaching was judged to be good, with one lesson judged to be outstanding. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and encourage pupils to be active with well-chosen activities, which enhance both learning and physical development.

### Example of outstanding practice

The experienced teacher's very good subject knowledge made this a very well planned lesson which ensured that all pupils made excellent progress and developed skills from the previous lesson. The warm-up, characterised by intense stretching and loosening exercises, involved all pupils, who controlled the rate at which they worked to meet their own needs. The lesson proceeded with pupils developing a range of body shapes, which were then incorporated into a sequence of five or more shapes. Regular peer assessment engendered new ideas and focussed the effectiveness of the very high work rate. For over an hour, no pupil stopped working; this was clearly the result of self-motivation resulting from the way the teacher had captured pupils' interest and stimulated motivation. As a result of personal gymnastic development directed by the pupils, the standard of work shown in the plenary far exceeded that normally found.

131. Pupils in Year 4 enjoy the opportunity to visit a local swimming pool and learn to swim. Inspectors did not support the concern that some parents raised over changing facilities for swimming. They found that, although facilities were not modern, boys and girls were in separate areas and pupils were able to use individual cubicles for changing, to ensure individual privacy.

132. The limited outdoor facilities for games do not prevent active competitive sports from taking place. There are extra-curricular football, cricket and netball teams that regularly play against other school teams. Such teams involve both boys and girls and during the cricket practices seen, effective coaching ensured that they were developing both good skills and team awareness.

133. The school is currently involved in the building of a sports hall and is keen to develop sporting links with the community through a community sports liaison officer, who also assists in physical education lessons and extra-curricular activities in school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*