

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST LUKE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chadderton, Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105708

Headteacher: Mr I Walsh

Lead inspector: Mr I H Jones

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Inspection number: 257776

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	194
School address:	Albion Street Chadderton Oldham Lancashire
Postcode:	OL9 9HT
Telephone number:	0161 633 3253
Fax number:	0161 633 7610
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Hughes
Date of previous inspection:	20 June 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Luke's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. It is situated in Chadderton, close to the centre of Oldham. It is of broadly average size for a primary school with 193 pupils on roll. Few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Pupils' standard of attainment on entry to the reception class varies from year-to-year, but is mainly below that typical for their age. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and statements of special educational needs is similar to most schools. A high percentage of these pupils have complex social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school gained the School Achievement Award in 2002 and the Active Mark Award in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2758	Mr I Jones	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs English as an additional language
19335	Mrs S Dixon	Lay inspector	
13132	Mrs D Lever	Team inspector	English Music Physical Education
17543	Mr R Coupe	Team inspector	Science Geography History Foundation Stage Personal, social and health education and citizenship

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>32</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school, which has become **reasonably effective** in a short period of time. It provides a good quality of education and gives satisfactory value for money. Teaching is good overall with a high percentage of very good practice. This results in pupils making good progress and achieving well. Significant improvements in all aspects of the school have not been reflected in national test results. The school is well led and managed.

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

- All partners in the school have worked as an effective team to bring about significant improvements in a relatively short period of time.
- Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science, but are starting to improve.
- Pupils now achieve well, although this follows an extended period when their achievement was unsatisfactory.
- Teaching has improved in its effectiveness and is now good overall.
- The positive attitudes and good behaviour of the pupils, now very evident in the school, lead to an enjoyable and productive environment for learning.
- The organisation of the curriculum prevents it from meeting the current learning needs of all pupils.
- The level of attendance is unsatisfactory.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The inspection in 2001 placed the school in special measures as it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. In 2002, it was inspected by HMI to assess the quality of education provided and the progress the school had made. The inspectors judged that it no longer required special measures. Since then, the school has continued to make good strides forward. Teaching and learning have improved, as has the curriculum and the pupils' behaviour and attitudes. The climate for learning is now good and pupils achieve well. Standards are starting to improve. The key issues from the last inspection have been addressed. However, it is too soon to evaluate their full impact upon the overall quality of education.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	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  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Overall, pupils achieve **well**. Standards are showing signs of improving, but remain low.

Pupils' attainment when they first join the reception class is below that typical for their age. Most make good progress, achieve well and are on course to reach the national standards (the early learning goals) in all areas of learning by the time they move into Year 1.

Although the achievement of 5-7 year old pupils is satisfactory and sometimes good, the standards they reach by the end of Year 2 are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in speaking are in line with those expected for their age and in listening are above.

Pupils in Years 3-6 now achieve well. Standards by the end of Year 6 have improved this academic year from well below to below average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. There are good, strong relationships in the school, which support effective learning. Pupils are punctual to lessons, but their attendance is unsatisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

Overall, the school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Examples of very good teaching were seen in most classes. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Assessment is good, and is particularly effective in guiding pupils' future learning in the reception class. The curriculum is satisfactory, although time is not always well used. For example, the high priority given to English and mathematics, appropriate two years ago, no longer meets the current needs of all pupils and overlooks the demands of all curriculum areas. The provision for pupils' care, health and safety is good. Support and guidance are good, pupils are fully involved in the school's work and their views are listened to and acted upon.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher's quiet, purposeful and determined leadership is a key factor in the school overcoming so many of its serious weaknesses in such a short period of time. Management effectively ensures that the school runs smoothly, but keeps its focus on improving the quality of education provided and raising standards. The governance of the school is good, giving clear direction and providing valuable support.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very supportive of the school. They recognise the huge improvements made under the leadership of the current headteacher and consider the school provides very well for their children. Most pupils talk with enthusiasm about the school and the improvements that have been made in recent times. Older pupils, particularly those in Year 6, regret that these changes, such as the new computer suite, have been established just as they are about to transfer to secondary school. They say that they are happy at school, feel secure and enjoy lessons.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards further in all subjects, especially English, mathematics and science.
- Bring the same sense of urgency to improving pupils' academic performance as has been given so successfully to improving their behaviour and attitudes, the school's learning environment and the quality and quantity of resources.
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching to that of the best in the school, paying particular attention to increasing pupils' opportunities to develop independent learning skills.
- Organise and manage the use of curriculum time so that it meets the pupils' current learning needs more effectively.
- Continue to improve attendance.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.**

Achievement in reception and Years 3-6 is good, and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards in the core subjects are below average in Years 2 and 6.

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

- Standards are improving, but remain low in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils now achieve well overall, as a result of the improving quality of education.
- Standards in ICT have improved greatly this academic year.
- Standards of handwriting and presentation are very good.

#### **Commentary**

1. The attainment of children is below that typical for their age when they first start school in the reception class. Pupils achieve well and the majority are on course to reach the expected goals in all areas of learning by the time they begin Year 1. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and is due to the measures taken by the school to enhance the curriculum, enrich the learning environment and to increase further the effectiveness of teaching for these young children.
2. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, although somewhat better in Year 2. Standards overall are currently below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection findings are similar to the school's results in last year's national tests for 7 year old pupils. When compared with similar schools, the results in national tests in reading and mathematics are above average and average for writing. The recently improved provision is starting to have a positive effect upon pupils' achievement. These improvements have yet to be reflected in the national test results, as shown in the table below.
3. Standards attained in science by pupils in Year 2 are below average. This represents an improvement from the 2003 teacher assessment results, which showed standards were well below average. This rise in attainment is due to the efforts of the school to improve the overall quality of education, especially the effectiveness of teaching.
4. The current Year 2 class has a disproportionate number of pupils who find learning difficult and this depresses the group's overall average performance.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.9 (11.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.0 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. The table below shows that in the 2003 national tests the Year 6 pupils attained standards in English, mathematics and science that were well below average. The trend over the last five years has not shown any significant overall improvement. Indeed, the results in English were the lowest for five years. When compared with similar schools, pupils' performance falls well below the average.
6. Earlier in their schooling, pupils in the junior classes had a very disturbed education. This particularly affected the progress made by the present Year 6. When the achievement of these pupils is viewed over their four years as juniors, it has been unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard to overcome the detrimental effects that these difficulties had upon pupils' learning. Significant improvements have been made over the last two years, especially to pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils are now achieving well, but the full impact of these changes has yet to be reflected in pupils' attainment in national tests.
7. Inspection findings broadly reflect the school's teacher assessments and indicate that pupils currently in Year 6 are performing at levels below those typical for their age in English, mathematics and science. However, they are performing at the expected level in speaking and listening. Standards of handwriting and presentation are very good throughout the school and reflect the determination and hard work of all staff.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.3 (25.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.5 (25.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.0 (26.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

8. The last inspection found that standards in ICT were very low throughout the school. As a result of improvements made to the quality and quantity of resources and the effectiveness of teaching, standards have risen and are now below average overall. Pupils are now achieving well in this subject. This represents a considerable accomplishment in a very short period of time.
9. There was insufficient evidence gathered to make a secure judgement about standards in music and physical education, but in all other subjects they are broadly average. Religious education was not included in this inspection.
10. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the effective support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. All pupils, irrespective of their individual learning needs, are fully included in all aspects of lessons.

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

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have improved significantly in the last two years, and are **good**, as is the overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Punctuality is good. Attendance, although unsatisfactory, has improved since last year.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is invariably good, and often very good in lessons.
- Pupils are keen to learn, showing interest in and enthusiasm for their work.
- Pupils' relationships with each other and with members of staff are very strong.
- The level of attendance is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

11. Under the leadership of the current headteacher, the school's first priority since 2001 has been to improve pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes, as they had become a major obstacle to learning. The school's considerable success in this area is mainly due to teachers' high expectations and consistently effective management of pupils' behaviour. The learning mentor makes a significant contribution in supporting individual pupils. Staff deal promptly and fairly with any inappropriate response from pupils, using praise well to reward and highlight good behaviour. As a result of pupils' often very good behaviour, lessons focus on what pupils are to learn and progress is brisk. There have been no exclusions in the past year.
12. Pupils now want to learn, responding with enthusiasm to the demands made of them. Most listen carefully, concentrate well and work hard to complete tasks. They ask questions to gain more understanding, and volunteer comments that reflect their interest in the work. Many persevere well when they find some learning difficult, showing a determination to succeed.
13. Staff know the pupils very well, taking the trouble to find out about their individual interests and enthusiasms. This is particularly effective in the reception class, where adults' detailed knowledge of each boy and girl helps these young children settle quickly and feel safe, secure and ready to learn. In all classes, adults and pupils treat each other with respect and value one another as individuals. Pupils are willing to help one another in lessons, and do this without prompting from the teacher. Pupils work well together in pairs and small groups, sharing materials and equipment and benefiting from exchanging their ideas and thoughts about their learning.
14. The school's use of a variety of groupings in lessons is effective in providing pupils with a range of opportunities to develop their social skills in different situations. This, together with the encouragement teachers give pupils to respect the views of others, to see themselves as members of a community, and to take responsibility for their actions, contributes significantly to the harmonious atmosphere evident in the school.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.0	School data:	1.9
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.

15. Attendance levels remain unsatisfactory. Although the school has worked hard to improve the attendance of a small number of pupils, the problem persists and has an adverse effect on these pupils' learning. The appointment of a learning mentor has had

a considerable and positive impact upon this area of the school's work. Good attendance is promoted well with attendance rewards and the prompt investigation of absences. Punctuality is good and an improved area. Changes in early morning routines have ensured a prompt start to the school day and lessons.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching is good. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is rich provision for extra-curricular activities. The school provides good levels of care, support and guidance. Links with other schools are very good and links with parents are good.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. It is good in the reception class. In Years 1 and 2, it is satisfactory with some good and very good features in Year 2. In Years 3-6 it is good overall. Lessons seen during the inspection in Years 4 and 6 were often very good. The quality and use of assessment is good overall, and very good in the reception class.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching addresses the needs of all pupils, regardless of their abilities.
- Relationships are strong and the management of pupils is very good.
- The quality and use of teaching assistants and other support staff is very good.
- Opportunities for pupils to become independent learners are limited.
- Marking is of high quality and tells pupils very clearly how to improve their work.
- Very detailed assessment of progress in the reception class is put to good use.
- Too long is spent introducing some lessons.
- There is little use of ICT in lessons.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	11	8	0	0	0

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

16. The amount of good and very good teaching seen in lessons has improved since the last inspection. This is due to changes of staff since 2001, improved subject guidance that helps teachers plan effective lessons, and a programme of training that has strengthened teachers' knowledge, skills and awareness of the range of strategies they can use. This increased expertise enables staff to use methods that accelerate pupils' rate of learning. The good pace of many lessons, with frequently changing activities and well-chosen resources, holds pupils' interest and keeps them alert. Teachers' good subject knowledge, confident style and enthusiasm are infectious, and pupils respond well to the lively classroom atmosphere that stimulates them to learn effectively.
17. Pupils feel valued because teachers treat them with respect and take a personal interest in them as individuals. Teachers manage pupils with authority, as a result of which pupils have confidence in and respect for their teachers, who make their high

expectations of pupils very clear. Pupils respond very positively to the good working habits teachers have established.

18. Skilled and sensitive support staff, including the learning mentor, are used very effectively in lessons to work with individual pupils or small groups. Often, these pupils have problems that affect their ability to learn. Due to the very good support they receive, they are able to join in all activities provided and benefit accordingly, making good progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills. All pupils benefit from the considerable ICT skills of two of the teaching assistants, whose input into specific lessons greatly enhances the quality of pupils' experiences.
19. In recent years, as part of its drive to raise standards, the school has put high levels of structure and teacher intervention into lessons. This has been successful in managing what was pupils' disruptive behaviour and poor attitudes, and the results are evident in the improvements now seen. Not all teachers have recognised the opportunity to adjust their teaching style and strategies accordingly. Where pupils experience the teacher's constant interaction, control and management of their learning, they have little need to think for themselves or to organise, plan and reflect on their work. Over-dependent on the teacher's support and guidance, they are unable to perform to the level they appear to have achieved in their class work when this crutch is removed, for example when they find themselves in a test situation. This is depressing the standards all pupils, particularly the more able, achieve in national assessments. Furthermore, pupils are insufficiently prepared for the style of teaching they will experience in the next phase of their education.
20. Teachers give much time and thought to the marking of pupils' work, basing their comments on careful assessment of each pupil's progress and needs. The marking of pupils' work in Years 4 and 6 is of a particularly high standard. Detailed reference to what pupils have done well, and what they need to do next, leaves them in no doubt about precisely how to improve their work. Although feedback to pupils in the reception class is, as expected, usually verbal rather than written, it is of very high quality. It is based on very detailed observation and recording of the very small steps pupils take in acquiring new skills, knowledge and understanding as they engage in the wide range of stimulating activities provided. Teachers' comments are of great value in strengthening pupils' confidence and encouraging them to go a little further in their explorations and investigations.
21. Less effective practice is seen when teachers spend too long introducing the lesson. This usually occurs either because teachers try to cover too much or because they are not clear about precisely what they want pupils to learn. The result is that some pupils become restless at being kept so long before they can start to work on tasks more finely focused on their own specific learning needs. A further consequence is that pupils have insufficient time to complete their work, and this reduces the amount of progress they make.
22. Most of the school's computers are housed in the ICT suite or the nearby library. During ICT lessons held in these areas, tasks frequently relate to work that has been covered in other subjects, such as history, geography and English. This demonstrates very good use of ICT as a tool for learning across the curriculum. However, such opportunities are weekly, and there are few occasions on a daily basis when pupils, other than those in the reception class, use ICT to support their learning in other subjects during lessons in the classroom.

## The curriculum

The overall provision of the curriculum is **satisfactory** and meets all statutory requirements. Enrichment activities are **good**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvements have been made to the curriculum, the accommodation and resources in the reception class.
- Curriculum time is not always well used.
- There is good curricular enrichment through additional activities.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good.

### Commentary

23. The school provides an appropriate curriculum that enables all subjects to be taught in line with national guidelines and meets statutory requirements. The school has successfully satisfied the key issue of the last inspection referring to the Foundation Stage. Provision here is now good and the improvements to the building and its resources are very good. They contribute to children's good achievement at this early stage of learning.
24. Since the last inspection, the school quite understandably has concentrated on developing the curriculum in the subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Although other subjects have not been neglected, there has been less emphasis placed on their development. Subject leaders oversee their subjects well and policies and schemes of work have been reviewed and developed in most areas of learning. However, the school does not have a clear view of how the curriculum is implemented. As a result, periods of teaching and learning time are not used productively. This leads to a reduced amount of time allocated to some subjects and, consequently, coverage is thin.
25. The school is committed to providing a curriculum that is of benefit to all. It is very successful in this so that inclusion and equal opportunity are very good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to achieve as well as others. Curriculum enrichment is good. Wide-ranging after-school and lunchtime activities extend learning in lessons. Effective curricular links with the local high schools and industry also help to make learning interesting. Similarly, educational field trips and visiting speakers enhance pupils' programmes of study, adding flavour, excitement and depth to the overall curriculum.
26. Although in its early stages of development, the curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. The school has a useful policy for sex education and pupils are made aware of the dangers of drugs. These aspects of pupils' personal, social and health education are often supported by the expertise of the school nurse and specialist groups.

### Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is **good**. Pupils are actively encouraged to be involved in the school's work.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are good and are very good in the Foundation Stage.
- The quality of support, advice and guidance for all pupils is good overall.
- Pupils' views are sought, valued and acting upon.

## Commentary

27. The very good relationships that exist in this school community and the good provision for social and moral development have created an environment where pupils are confident and happy. This has a positive effect upon their learning. There are comprehensive arrangements for the health and safety of all in school. For example, younger pupils benefit from safety surfaces for outdoor play and older pupils learn about aspects of personal safety in personal and social education lessons. Child protection procedures are good, and key members of staff are appropriately knowledgeable.
28. The academic and personal support and guidance offered to pupils is good. Success is recognised well and the marking of pupils' work provides good information about how they might improve. Whilst targets for improvement are provided for groups of pupils, they have not been developed for individuals. The school has good relationships with outside agencies and pupils with special educational needs are well supported. In particular, those with behavioural problems have made significant progress due to the support of the learning mentor.
29. The school's arrangements for seeking and acting on pupils' views are good. There is an effective school council. Pupils feel that the school listens to them and takes prompt action in response to their ideas. For example, a ready supply of drinking water is now provided, and pupils who behave well at lunch times are rewarded by eating at a special dining table.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is **good** and that with other schools is **very good**. The partnership with the community is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong links with other schools enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' learning experiences.
- The close working relationship between the school and parents has a positive effect upon pupils' learning.
- The arrangements for seeking and acting on parents' views are good, as are those for dealing with any concerns.
- The mechanism for the transfer of pupils to secondary school is good.

## Commentary

30. The school works well with parents. Parents are appreciative of all that the school provides, especially the many recent improvements. They feel that the school is approachable and that their views are considered and acted on well. The role of the learning mentor has had a positive effect upon the school's relationships with all

parents, but particularly where there are concerns about attendance and behaviour. Parents feel well informed about school life and the school is keen to develop this further with more information about the work that pupils are doing and the content of the curriculum. There are good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress with the school. Written reports are issued in the summer term, but there is some variation in the quality. Good examples were seen in Year 2. Overall, reports lack clear targets for improvement.

31. Parents are supportive of their children's education and want them to do well. Special events in school are very well attended and parents have some opportunities to come into school to see their children at work. The school is keen to involve parents more in supporting their children's learning at school and at home and has sound plans in place to do so. For example, a more informative home-school book is to be introduced in the next academic year.
32. The school's links with the community are satisfactory. Good use is made of the wider community to enrich learning. A variety of visits to places of interest is made and specialist groups come into school to support different areas of the curriculum. For example, dance and music groups have raised pupils' awareness of other cultures.
33. The school's partnership with other schools is very good and has a very positive effect upon pupils' learning and social development. A nearby secondary school provides very good support for physical education and personal and social education. The professional development of the teachers also benefits from these links.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership by the headteacher is **good**. The governance of the school is **good**. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a well-led, well-ordered community in which all pupils enjoy their learning in a secure and caring environment.
- The governing body, headteacher and staff work together as an effective team to improve the overall quality of education.
- The leadership and management of the school are clearly focused on raising the academic standards of the pupils, but current results indicate that there is still much to do.
- The school's accurate view of its own strengths and weaknesses is well used to determine priorities for development and to shape its improvement plan.
- Finances are managed carefully and are suitably focused on the school's priorities, which are designed to raise standards.

### Commentary

34. Prior to the inspection in 2001, the school had gone through a period of serious decline. Pupils' behaviour deteriorated to an unacceptable level, standards fell dramatically and staff morale reached a low ebb. This resulted in the school being judged to require special measures as it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. In 2002, the school was inspected by HMI who judged that it had made sufficient improvement to no longer require special measures.

35. Under the quietly determined and persistent leadership of the newly appointed headteacher, ably assisted by all staff, and with the valuable support and guidance of the governing body, the local education authority and the diocese, the school has made significant improvements. It is now an effective, improving educational establishment. This represents a considerable achievement in a relatively short period of time, particularly in terms of the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils, the accommodation and resources, the curriculum and the effectiveness of teaching. However, these evident achievements have not been translated into higher standards for Year 6 pupils in national tests.
36. The school has a clear and accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, resulting from careful, systematic monitoring by the headteacher, staff and the governing body. The school has used the information to help develop a most effective improvement plan that exemplifies highly competent strategic thinking and a determination to improve. The plan is systematically monitored, reviewed and adjusted to help ensure that it remains relevant and focused on the developing priorities.
37. The headteacher's clear vision for the school is shared by the governing body, staff and parents, and is focused on the education of the whole child. This shared vision provides a very clear sense of direction for the school's development and is starting to be reflected in most aspects of its life and work.
38. Subject leaders fulfil their management responsibilities well, ensuring that resources and systems are in place to support teaching and learning. With the support of the assessment co-ordinator, they are building a comprehensive picture of the progress and attainment of pupils in English, mathematics and science. Information gained from monitoring in other subjects is not used as effectively to evaluate whether pupils are making sufficient progress.
39. The headteacher manages the school effectively and ensures that it runs smoothly. This supports the teaching and learning process as well as the implementation of the longer-term initiatives to raise standards. His management of the process of bringing about the improvements required, without overwhelming staff or diverting their efforts from their essential task of teaching pupils, has been good.
40. There have been many changes to the membership of the governing body since 2001. The current governing body fulfils its role effectively and has a clear understanding of the achievements of the school and the challenges that it faces. Their decisions, based on first-hand knowledge, are well informed and well focused on priorities. They fulfil the statutory aspects of governance well and play an active role in holding the school to account for the quality of education that it provides. They are always ready to question and challenge the school when necessary. The school's finances are managed well, are guided by the principles of 'best value' and are targeted on supporting the school's improvement plan. The current financial surplus forms part of the school's longer-term strategy for improving resources and accommodation.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	379 107
Total expenditure	408 441
Expenditure per pupil	2 127

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	59 334
Balance carried forward to the next	30 000

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

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

41. In successfully addressing the issues identified by the last inspection, the school has made clear improvements and provision is now **good**. The very good assessment of each child's progress is used effectively to identify the next steps in their learning. Well-planned activities appropriate to the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, are now provided. Impressive improvements have also been made to the accommodation and outdoor play areas.
42. Children join the school with attainment below that expected for their age, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and in personal and social development. Overall, teaching and learning are good, and all children achieve well. However, when teachers do not make it clear what children are to do, a slower rate of learning occurs. Although the majority of children are in line to achieve the goals expected by the end of the year, a few will fall short of the goals for communication, language and literacy and for personal and social development.
43. The teacher's leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. She and the very competent teaching assistant form an effective team. Good management of the stimulating classroom and programme of interesting activities ensures that children feel secure and benefit from the wealth of opportunities provided. On the whole, they respond well and try hard to please.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

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

- Adults are good role models and provide sensitive guidance and support.
- Children are encouraged to make choices and develop some independence.
- Adults have very good knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs.

#### **Commentary**

44. As a result of the good teaching they experience, most children achieve well. Almost all are likely to reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year.
45. Children work well together in pairs and small groups. They respond well on the many occasions when they are invited to make choices about their work. They share equipment sensibly, although sometimes they are not too good at putting it away at the end of sessions. In their dealings with each other and the children, teachers demonstrate the standard of behaviour they want the children to adopt, and children are happy to follow this lead. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with firmly but fairly, as children begin to understand the effect of their actions on others. Adults use their detailed knowledge of individuals well to encourage hesitant children and to give all children confidence to try new activities. Children feel safe and secure when moving around, playing outside or joining the whole school in assembly.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of activities and stimulating resources encourages the development of children's speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- Teachers are too accepting of children interrupting other speakers.

### **Commentary**

46. Teaching is mainly good and sometimes very good. All children progress well as a result, and most are likely to attain the standards expected by the end of the reception year.
47. Throughout the day, many opportunities focus on promoting children's language skills. Children are becoming familiar with an increasing number and range of well-displayed words. The attractive reading corner, where children select their favourite stories, is welcoming and well used by the children who sit quietly, sharing and talking about the books quite happily. Detailed records of which books children have read, both at school and at home, give a clear picture of each child's progress. The higher-attaining children read aloud, building new words from the sounds of their letters and using picture clues. Non-readers show interest in books and make up stories from looking at the pictures.
48. Children's current work is focused around the theme of travel. Many writing materials and stimulating situations, such as the travel agent's shop, encourage children to write as they play. Nearly all make recognisable letters, and many write short sentences or phrases, such as "he is a boy". At other times, they create their own passports, lists and stories. Although adults frequently engage children in using their speaking and listening skills, in group sessions they allow too many children to call out answers, thus reducing the opportunity for others to speak in front of an audience.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good balance of teacher-led and child-selected activities.
- Mathematical language is developed well.

### **Commentary**

49. Good quality teaching enables children to progress well and they are on track to achieve the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Nearly all children count accurately to 30, and use this knowledge to record the day, date and month of the year. Most enjoy solving problems requiring them to calculate one more or one less. Singing games and jingles, led by the teaching assistant, are used effectively to reinforce counting skills. Adults encourage children to use the correct mathematical language, such as the terms "bigger, smaller, taller and shorter" to compare, for example, the size of poppies. The correct names of mathematical shapes are drawn to their attention, for example when the teacher said, "What a fine prism you have made."

Some children use the computer to make simple pictograms, although others need considerable help to do this. Higher-attaining children collect data, create their own graphs about eye colours on the computer and make simple observations about their findings.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are keen to take part in exciting and well-planned practical activities.
- ICT is used effectively to promote learning.

### **Commentary**

50. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are in line to achieve the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Good teamwork and effective planning result in the preparation of stimulating and exciting activities designed to move children on at a good rate in their learning. Often these activities reflect the time of year, successfully raising children's awareness of the changing seasons. For example, children are currently planting a variety of garden plants. They learn their names and watch their growth and development, becoming aware of how important it is that the plants have light and water. Areas, such as the home corner and sea world, are thoughtfully resourced to encourage children's engagement in imaginative play. Children use them creatively and with enjoyment.
51. Children pack for their imaginary Spanish holidays, and when questioned they tell how Spanish weather differs from that in Oldham. They learn about other cultures through stories and celebrations. Their ongoing collection of "Pennies for Peru" gives them some awareness of another country and its people's needs. Children use a good variety of construction kits to build a range of structures, such as bridges and hotels. Computers are nearly always available and children are keen to use their skills, developing increasing control as they manipulate cars across the screen and match objects together.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for children's physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good resources, particularly for outdoor activities.
- A wide range of activities enables children to gain increasing control of their bodies.

### **Commentary**

52. Children achieve well and are on track to achieve the goals expected because of the good teaching and extensive range of stimulating activities provided. The high quality, newly installed outside soft play area, and the very good range of suitable equipment provided ensures that children develop physical skills and control without fear of hurting themselves. Children enjoy the exciting activities provided and demonstrate good skills, climbing, running and jumping confidently. They use scooters and tricycles with

enthusiasm, showing good control of speed and direction. Smaller items of equipment, such as balls, bats and ropes also help them to develop good body control and co-ordination. Children are taught how to use equipment safely but sometimes forget when they are excited. In the classroom, they use scissors, spreaders, brushes and other tools with appropriate skill and control, operating the mouse effectively when working with the computer.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The range of activities provided is broad, stimulating and well planned.
- Children enjoy their work and concentrate well.

### **Commentary**

53. Teaching is good and children make good progress. They are in line to achieve the goals expected by the end of the reception year.
54. A wide range of equipment and materials is prepared for children's choice and use. Children are confident to express their ideas, feelings and enthusiasm in their drawings, paintings and collages created from paper, card, shapes, tinsel and many other materials. They have a growing awareness of different colours and the shades of one colour. Musical instruments – tuned, untuned and from different countries – are displayed prominently for children's regular use. They explore sounds with enthusiasm and enjoy singing with the teacher and teaching assistant, especially when clapping or beating a rhythm on an instrument. For example, one boy repeated a nine beat rhythm on a drum. They engage in role-play with obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment becoming different characters in the world of their imaginations.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The overall provision in English has improved in the last three years.
- Standards are rising. Pupils' handwriting and presentation are very good throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching has improved, and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the skills they need to become independent learners are few.
- Time is not always used to best effect.
- Pupils' opportunities to use ICT are limited.
- English is well led and managed.

## Commentary

55. Since 2001, much work has taken place to improve the curriculum and teaching of English. A policy and scheme of work are now in place, and provide a sound structure from which teachers plan work on a termly, weekly and daily basis. New resources, including reading and writing materials and the recently completed library, are attractive, stimulating and appealing to pupils, whose response includes a greater interest in and enthusiasm for reading. National guidance on how to teach literacy is used consistently in all classes, and helps to ensure that the curriculum reflects national requirements.
56. The outcomes of national tests in 2003 showed that standards achieved by pupils aged seven in reading and writing were below those typical of pupils of this age. Inspection findings confirm this picture in relation to pupils currently in Year 2. The class has a disproportionate number of pupils who find learning difficult, and this depresses the year group's overall performance. That said, from the point when they started school three years ago with levels of attainment below those expected of pupils aged five, they have made satisfactory and, in some respects, good progress. Their achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards in speaking are in line with those expected, and in listening are above. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and each other, demonstrating their understanding and interest by asking questions and volunteering clearly expressed comments about what is being discussed.
57. Results in national tests in 2003 for pupils aged 11 were the lowest in English for five years, and were well below those found nationally. Compared with their performance four years earlier when aged seven, these pupils' rate of progress in English as they moved through the junior classes was very low, and was seriously affected by the disruption evident in the school when they were in Years 3 and 4. Inspection findings indicate that pupils currently in Year 6 are performing at a level below that typical of pupils of their age in reading and writing, but are at the expected level for speaking and listening. These pupils were similarly affected by the difficulties the school was experiencing when they were younger juniors, and their rate of progress slowed markedly during that time. Since then, and in the past two years particularly, they have made progress at a much more rapid rate and overall have achieved well. Current standards found in Years 3-6 and in Years 4 and 5 specifically, are rising and represent good improvement on those attained in recent years.
58. Standards of handwriting and presentation are very good throughout the school. The school has put great effort into this aspect of pupils' work and is well rewarded by the very high standards evident in their books and classroom displays. This reflects pupils' greatly improved attitudes towards their work and the pride they take in its appearance.
59. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in all aspects of English due to the high quality support they receive from both teachers and teaching assistants. Tasks are modified to suit their abilities and to reflect their individual education plans. As a result, they are fully involved in all activities and make consistent gains in their learning as they move through the school.
60. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Judgements about teaching are based on evidence gained from the eight lessons seen, the work in pupils' books, discussions with staff and pupils and the planning documentation. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3-6, it is good and sometimes very good. Overall, this represents improvement in the past three years, and is the main reason for the improved rate of pupils' progress.

Teachers deliver lessons with confidence and enthusiasm, using resources well to make activities interesting and stimulating. A good match between what teachers want pupils to learn and what they require them to do ensures that lessons achieve their purpose. The best teaching maintains a brisk pace throughout, whereas sometimes teachers spend too long introducing new learning and pupils have insufficient time to practise and develop their skills and complete their work.

61. Although older pupils are involved in individual research projects and required to work alone as well as in pairs and small groups, activities are very structured and the teacher maintains firm control of pupils' learning, frequently questioning, challenging and reminding them of what they are expected to achieve. This works very well in individual lessons, but the over-use of this approach results in pupils relying on the teacher rather than developing the skills they need to organise and manage their learning. Their experience of a range of teaching styles, allowing them to reflect on how they learn best, and to begin to have some control of their learning, is limited. As a result, when required to work without this close support and guidance, most experience some difficulty and the standard of their work becomes a truer reflection of what they can do. Standards are unlikely to rise until this aspect of current practice is addressed.
62. The amount of time devoted to English throughout the school is generous. In spite of this, teachers regularly continue lessons beyond the time allocated, resulting in the erosion of time for other subjects and activities. Time spent on guided reading, appropriate to pupils' needs some time ago, is now excessive and further restricts the time available for other subjects.
63. Opportunities to use ICT on a daily basis are limited because most of the computers are housed outside classrooms and not available to pupils in the normal course of lessons. Although computers are put to good use in extending pupils' literacy skills during weekly visits to the computer suite, pupils have a limited appreciation of the use of ICT as a powerful tool for learning.
64. English is well led and managed. Based on her monitoring of teaching, pupils' work and performance data, the co-ordinator has a clear picture of the standards attained and how provision and standards need to improve. In the past three years, and working with external consultants, she has led the many improvements found in subject planning, resources and teachers' knowledge and skills. She is aware that a review of the time allocated for English is overdue.

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

65. Opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their language and literacy skills in other subjects are good. Throughout the school, emphasis is given to encouraging pupils to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions and to listen carefully to those of others. Pupils read for pleasure and for information in subjects such as history, geography and science. Their work demonstrates that on many occasions they use their skills to produce writing covering a range of purposes.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are low, but are starting to show signs of improving.
- Pupils are now achieving well and making good progress as a result of good teaching.
- The positive attitudes and good behaviour of pupils leads to an enjoyable and productive environment for learning.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their independent learning skills.
- Assessment procedures provide a clear picture of pupils' progress and attainment.
- The subject is very effectively led and managed.

### **Commentary**

66. The last inspection, undertaken by HMI in 2002, found that the school had made significant improvements since it was judged to be failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education one year earlier. The school had experienced a very disturbed time in its history, resulting in standards dropping considerably and pupils underachieving. Despite the huge efforts made by the school, the legacy of this poor provision is still evident today in the standards achieved by pupils in mathematics at the end of Year 6. That said, the school continues to improve.
67. The 2003 national test results for Year 6 show that pupils attained standards well below average and achieved less well than pupils in similar schools. Inspection findings show that current standards are improving but are below average. Standards in Year 2 are below average and similar to the 2003 test results. The school's teacher assessments of pupils' performance closely match the inspection findings.
68. In the last two years, the school has worked with determination to halt the decline in standards and bring about improvements. Initially, the school focused on improving the behaviour and attitudes of pupils, which had become poor and a major obstacle to learning. In this endeavour, the school has been highly successful and pupils are now well behaved and have good attitudes to their learning in mathematics. Planning for lessons is consistently good and reflects national guidance. Resources are improving and currently are sufficient to support the teaching of the National Curriculum.
69. The school recognised that to raise standards, teaching and learning must improve. Good professional development has taken place and is starting to have a positive effect upon standards. This is particularly evident in Years 4 and 5 where the pupils are beginning to overcome the detrimental effects of their poor experiences in the subject earlier in their school career.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is now good throughout the school. Teaching was very good in half the lessons seen. This represents a significant improvement, especially in Years 3-6. This high quality teaching is directly responsible for the pupils now achieving well and is particularly noteworthy as it follows a lengthy period of serious underachievement.
71. In the very best lessons, the teachers press the pupils on in their learning at a consistently fast rate, yet provide sufficient periods of calm working time for them to consolidate new concepts and procedures. On occasions when teachers dominate

each and every part of the lesson, pupils do not have opportunities to develop their own learning strategies and confidence in the subject.

72. The needs of all pupils are mainly well met through carefully planned activities closely matched to their individual learning requirements. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well because of the very good quality support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. On occasions, higher-attaining pupils spend too long on the introduction and revision parts of a lesson before moving on to more challenging work. This limits the progress that they make overall. The teachers' assessment and marking of pupils' work is very good. It supports each pupil's learning well, providing a clear picture of what they need to do to improve.
73. The subject is very well led. There is a clear focus on improving standards. Regular monitoring by the subject co-ordinator provides a clear picture of the standards achieved and progress made. The analysis of the standards attained is very detailed and shows how they are rising year-on-year as pupils move up through the school. The school's projected Year 6 targets for pupils currently in Years 3, 4 and 5 are achievable, but are insufficiently ambitious if the school is to attain the national average. The school's published targets for Year 6 pupils are considerably higher than its own projections and, based on the school's current performance, are unrealistic.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

74. Teachers reinforce numeracy skills well in other subjects of the curriculum. Few examples were observed in lessons during the inspection, but pupils' work, such as in design and technology, shows many instances of number and measuring skills being used to good effect. For example, Year 2 pupils used measuring skills in following a recipe to prepare and cook 'smoothies' in food technology. Links between work in mathematics and ICT are strong, for instance pupils in Year 6 use their calculating skills to check auto-totalling functions when using spreadsheets to work out the costs of a picnic.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching contributes to rising standards.
- There is good provision for learning through practical activities and investigation.
- Pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the work set, especially the higher-attaining pupils in Years 3-6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

### **Commentary**

75. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are below average. This represents an improvement on the 2003 national test results that showed standards to be well below average. The school's performance data, coupled with inspection evidence, show that standards are now better than at the last inspection. This is due to the effectiveness of the measures taken by the school. However, evidence indicates that pupils' performance in the 2004 national tests will not fairly reflect this improvement. This is due to the particularly high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in Year 2 and because the Year 6 pupils

have not had sufficient time to catch up on missed learning in their earlier school life. However, pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress from year to year.

76. The overall quality of teaching is good, with examples of very good practice. This is a major factor in the pupils' improving rate of achievement and rising standards. Planning and preparation are good, leading to exciting activities in lessons in which relevant resources are plentiful. Features of good teaching include the regular provision of practical investigations and opportunities for pupils to experiment in lessons.
77. The work of older pupils shows that although they often benefit from very good teaching, the activities they are expected to complete do not take sufficient account of the ability range in the class. Whilst most pupils are very effectively challenged, others, particularly the more able, are not attaining as well as they might. In addition, the use of a limited range of teaching styles inhibits pupils developing the confidence and ability to work independently.
78. Teachers' marking is of high quality. They regularly make very good comments in pupils' well-presented workbooks, helping them to recognise where they have gone wrong and how they can improve. Good contributions to the development of other aspects of the curriculum are often seen in science lessons, such as when pupils are writing, measuring and using ICT.
79. Pupils enjoy their lessons and respond well by showing high levels of interest and concentration. They work well together as they devise fair tests that enable them to compare their hypotheses to their conclusions.
80. Science is well led and managed. Since the last inspection, the policy has been revised and a scheme of work reflecting national guidelines has been implemented. Now firmly embedded, these contribute to improvements in both teaching and standards. The subject leader has a good grasp of the curriculum and satisfactory monitoring arrangements are in place to assess pupils' achievements. Resources are plentiful and of good quality. Links with local high schools and industry are good and provide opportunities for curriculum enhancement. For example, employees of a national company worked with pupils and helped them to learn about electrical circuits.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection.
- Pupils are achieving very well due to good teaching and greatly improved resources.
- Standards have improved but gaps remain in pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

81. Standards are rising. In the two ICT lessons observed, most pupils were working at levels broadly average for their age. However, discussions with them about their knowledge and skills in ICT, and an analysis of their previous work revealed that they had very limited understanding of some aspects of the subject, such as 'control'. Consequently, the standards overall are below average. This does, however, represent

good improvement since the last inspection two years ago when standards were well below average. The rate of improvement has been particularly rapid this academic year since the creation of a new computer suite complete with new computers and programs.

82. Pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well. This follows a period, prior to the last inspection, when there was considerable underachievement and limited progress. The school is working successfully to fill the gaps in pupils' ICT skills and knowledge, but has not had sufficient time to address all the issues.
83. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers are pressing the pupils on in their learning at a good rate. However, pupils' limited ICT experience and basic subject knowledge does mean that they have much to do to catch up. Teachers plan imaginative and challenging activities, often linked to work in other subjects that capture the pupils' interest and create an atmosphere of excitement that motivates them to succeed. For example, Year 6 pupils talked with animated enthusiasm about creating computer presentations using video clips, pictures and music downloaded from the Internet. One girl demonstrated a lively presentation about dancing that she had created using a wide range of ICT techniques and skills. Teachers manage behaviour well. Very effective use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. Some teaching assistants have good ICT expertise and this is used to very good effect to enrich the pupils' learning experiences.
84. The subject is very well led by the headteacher. The school has budgeted carefully to enable the ICT resources to be improved as a matter of high priority. Resources are now good and improving. The new computer suite, opened this academic year, has had a major, positive impact on the effectiveness of teaching and the richness and scope of pupils' learning experiences. A scheme of work and policy has been introduced that guides and supports teachers well in their planning of pupils' work.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

85. Computers are well used to support and enrich learning in other subjects. For example, in mathematics, the Year 6 pupils used spreadsheets to calculate the costs of a picnic and conducted research into bridges as part of a design and technology project. The Year 5 pupils used a website enquiry sheet, created by the teacher, to investigate the historical and geographical facts about Blackpool.

### **HUMANITIES**

86. **Religious education** did not form part of this inspection. **History** and **geography** were sampled but, because of the way the school timetable was planned, only one history lesson was seen. From looking at timetables, plans and pupils' work, and through discussions with staff and pupils, there are indications that standards meet national expectations. That said, in some classes, the spread of the history and geography curriculum is sometimes thin, so that when pupils leave school the extent and range of their learning is narrow.
87. In **geography**, pupils in Year 1 learn about their local environment; what they like and dislike and how they can make it a safer place to live. They also learn about place and direction by drawing plans and routes. Classroom displays show the pupils are aware of the activities people participate in when they are on holiday at the seaside. By the end of Year 2, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding to areas further afield.

For example, they study the lifestyles of Katy Morag and the residents of the fictitious Scottish island of Struay, comparing this life to that of people on the mainland. In Year 6, pupils' comprehensive study of rivers and mountains enables them to have a good understanding of the physical features and knowledge of their own and other countries. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have benefited from field trips that give them first-hand knowledge and practical experience, and contribute effectively to their geographical knowledge and understanding.

88. In **history**, by the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the past and how things change with time. They are taught to recognise how homes, toys and conditions were different in the past. They extend their learning through listening to stories about the past, such as about the Great Fire of London and Remembrance Day. Links with geography compare seaside holidays today to those enjoyed by their grandparents. As they move through the school, pupils learn about different eras, varying from the Ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans to the Tudors, Victorians and children in World War Two.
89. Management of these subjects is satisfactory, but not enough emphasis is placed on ensuring the even distribution of curriculum time in all classes.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

90. Although these subjects were sampled during the inspection, there is insufficient evidence on which to base secure judgements about provision. No lessons were seen in music, art and design or design and technology. Only two were seen in physical education, both in infant classes.
91. **Music**, now taught mainly by class teachers, benefits from the introduction of a policy and a scheme of work based on published materials designed for non-specialists. This ensures the steady development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. It also gives a positive message to pupils about the staff's interest and competence in music and willingness to engage in the subject, which was previously taught by a part-time specialist teacher. From looking at teachers' plans, it is evident that provision reflects national requirements, although a minimal amount of time is devoted to the subject. This improved provision reflects good leadership and management of the subject.
92. Responding to earlier criticism of the standard of older pupils' singing, the school has introduced a weekly singing lesson for all classes, taken by the headteacher, who is the co-ordinator. Older pupils have worked with a music producer to compose, perform and record their own song. Pupils' enthusiasm for singing and the quality of their performance has clearly improved, as seen by their participation in assembly songs of celebration, and now reflects the standard expected nationally. The status of music has been raised by the school's use of professional musicians to give pupils experience of African and West Indian music and dance. This has also been effective in raising their awareness of other cultures. The introduction of whole school musical productions twice a year gives purpose to pupils' work and also the opportunity to perform for an audience, which they enjoy.
93. The provision for **physical education** has improved significantly in the last three years, and indications are that it is now satisfactory. This is due to the very good leadership provided by the co-ordinator, whose enthusiasm for the subject and determination to bring about much-needed change have been successful in raising the profile of physical education and increasing staff confidence and pupil enjoyment.

94. The introduction of a policy and scheme of work has given teachers a firm structure from which to plan the two weekly lessons for each class. In the two lessons seen, during which pupils worked hard, improved their skills and clearly enjoyed their work, satisfactory and good teaching was observed. The removal of obsolete apparatus and equipment, and its replacement with attractive and lightweight items that pupils can move and arrange themselves has done much to increase pupils' enjoyment of physical education. The co-ordinator's establishment of strong links with the nearby secondary school and other local primary schools has had many benefits, not least of which are:
- the opportunities pupils experience to work with secondary school specialist teachers;
  - visits to the secondary school where they are able to use its facilities;
  - engagement in competitive sports with pupils from other schools;
  - the opportunity to take part in short courses or *taster sessions* in sports with which they are less familiar, such as lacrosse, cross country, tag-rugby and basket-ball;
  - a growing familiarity with the school to which most pupils will eventually transfer;
  - development of the co-ordinator's own subject knowledge, expertise and ability to lead and promote further improvements.
95. The needs of younger pupils have been addressed and include the establishment of a weekly gym club for pupils in Year 2. This is very popular and well attended, as is the wide range of activities now provided throughout the school.
96. The school's improving provision in physical education was recognised recently when it received the Active Mark award. Pupils' success in inter-school competitions such as netball provides further evidence of improved opportunities and rising standards.
97. The work seen indicates that standards in **art and design** are broadly average. Displays throughout the school show a satisfactory range of work. This includes paintings, some in the style of famous artists, portraits drawn in charcoal, pencil and pastel and clay work. In the main entrance area, good examples of work from each class, based around the theme of flowers and leaves, are well displayed. A photographic record of pupils in the process of creating art and design work illustrates well that they are developing their skills and knowledge as they move up through the school. The pupils' sketchbooks provide an interesting record of their art and design work over time. Some books also include work for other subjects, such as design and technology, and this confuses the purpose of the books. Currently, the sketchbooks are not used sufficiently regularly. This restricts pupils' opportunities to develop and perfect their drawing, to experiment using different techniques and to practise and improve their skills.
98. The analysis of planning, subject policies and pupils' work in **design and technology** indicates that National Curriculum requirements are met and standards are average. Pupils' work in Year 2, supported by a detailed photographic record, indicates that they are involved in a satisfactory range of interesting activities that develop their ability to create designs reflecting specifications, to evaluate their work at each stage and, where necessary, make well-considered adjustments. Older pupils develop their skills and knowledge well, building successfully upon previous learning. In Year 6, for example, pupils have designed and constructed bridges that meet predetermined load-carrying requirements. The Year 4 pupils have good opportunities to practise their design, making and evaluation skills. This is well illustrated through their project to create containers to carry money.

99. During the last two years, resources have improved for both art and design and design and technology and the school has introduced informative policies and guidance for these subjects. This represents a notable improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator for both subjects was on official leave during the inspection. Without opportunity to discuss in detail the provision for the subjects, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about their leadership and management.

#### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

100. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. The competent subject leader has worked very hard to ensure the successful implementation of this aspect of learning. In a short time, she has produced a useful policy and a helpful scheme of work to support teachers. The subject has been allocated an appropriate, regular distribution of curriculum time. A good range of resources has been purchased to support learning. Several other good initiatives, such as the co-operation and involvement of local high school teachers, the Healthy Schools' Award and in-service training for teachers have all contributed to the good provision offered to pupils. Although no direct teaching was observed, pupils speak highly of the benefits they receive through learning about aspects of their health, through discussing their feelings and emotions and how they should respond to others. Their well-presented workbooks confirm the good extent of their learning.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</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>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

