

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY SOULS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blackburn, Lancashire

LEA area: Blackburn with Darwen

Unique reference number: 119517

Headteacher: Mrs C Davies

Lead inspector: Mr G Yates

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st October 2004

Inspection number: 267053

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	196
School address:	Wilworth Crescent Blackburn Lancashire
Postcode:	BB1 8QN
Telephone number:	01254 249892
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss Margaret Wells
Date of previous inspection:	1 st February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Souls Roman Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven years. It draws its pupils from two Roman Catholic parishes on the outskirts of Blackburn. The area consists of mainly private accommodation. At the time of the inspection there were 196 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Twenty-eight pupils have been identified as having special educational needs which at around 15 per cent is broadly average. The pupils receive support for dyslexia, and moderate learning, emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. There are very few children from minority ethnic backgrounds and none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. When children start in the reception class, their attainment is generally above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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23319	Vincent Leary	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Holy Souls Roman Catholic Primary School is a good school with many very good features. A very strong Christian ethos underpins all aspects of school life. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, which means that pupils achieve well. Current standards in Year 6 are well above the national average in English and mathematics. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good. Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are very good overall. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards of attainment in English and mathematics are well above those found in most schools by the time pupils leave.
- The Christian ethos of the school is very strong. In this inclusive community, pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented are provided for very well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership. She is supported well by senior staff and by a very good governing body.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. As a result pupils achieve well. Both teachers and pupils benefit greatly from the good support they receive from classroom assistants.
- Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to use and develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills.
- In mathematics most pupils in Years 1 to 5 have good basic number skills. However, they do not always apply these skills well when asked to solve mathematical problems.
- Spiritual, social, moral and cultural provision is very good overall. As a result pupils have very good attitudes and get on very well with each other, and behaviour is of a high standard.
- Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn to play orchestral instruments and the school choir is an absolute joy to hear.

Good improvements have been made in provision since the previous inspection. Standards in art and design have risen and work is now displayed well throughout the school. The building has been improved but storage space is still at a premium. Higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged and good assessment procedures have been put in place, with the findings used appropriately to set targets for pupils to achieve. The quality of teaching has improved, with almost one third of the lessons seen during the inspection being very good or excellent.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	B	B	B
Mathematics	B	B	C	C
Science	B	B	C	D

*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.*

Inspection evidence shows that **pupils' achievement is good**. The inspection judged that current standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Pupils in this age group apply their numeracy skills very well but this is not the case in other classes. Standards in ICT are in line with those found in most schools but the lack of equipment has a detrimental effect on the opportunities provided for pupils to develop and use their skills. In the reception class, standards are above the goals children are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and average in ICT.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good overall. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and are very sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils have a good understanding of racial and ethnic diversity for their age. Their attitudes to work are very good and they mostly behave very well in and around school. Attendance is well above the national average and most pupils arrive at school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is of a good quality overall with many examples of very good or excellent teaching. Throughout the school the teaching of reading, writing and number is thorough, but more opportunities are needed to enable pupils to use their numeracy and ICT skills. The school provides a good curriculum that meets national requirements. The quality and breadth of the curriculum are enhanced by very good instrumental and choral music provision and by ongoing initiatives, including those aimed at helping gifted, able and talented pupils to improve their skills further.

The school's partnership with parents is good and strong links have been established with the church, local community and other schools. The school provides a very good level of care for its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The headteacher, with the support of senior staff, provides very good leadership. The governance of the school is very good. Financial management is effective, with very good use being made this year of accumulated funds to develop provision for pupils who are gifted, able and talented.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold positive views of the school. The majority of children like being at the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- provide more opportunities in Years 1 to 5 for pupils to apply their number skills in solving mathematical problems;
- ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to use and develop their ICT skills.

(The school is very aware that both areas for improvement need to be addressed.)

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall. Standards are **well above average** by Year 6 in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs achieve **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well.
- Pupils use their basic numeracy skills very well in Year 6 but less so in other age groups.
- Achievement in English, mathematics and science is good.
- Pupils have average ICT skills but progress in developing skills further is hindered by the lack of regular opportunities to use them.
- Pupils in the school choir have very good choral skills.

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement is good overall because a well-organised and well-designed curriculum is taught effectively and pupils' progress is assessed well in English, mathematics and science. Most resources, including staffing, are matched to curriculum needs and this plays an important part in the school's success in helping its pupils achieve well. Very effective practice in ensuring that all pupils are equally included in learning activities helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve well.
2. The 'big picture' on achievement at this school is clear:
 - Children start in the reception class with above average attainment in literacy and numeracy.
 - Pupils leave Year 6 with standards in English and mathematics that inspectors judge to be well above average. This indicates that pupils make good progress overall during their time at the school. Higher attainers are challenged effectively.
 - Pupils have satisfactory ICT skills, but are not provided with enough opportunities to develop their skills, so achievement is limited to being satisfactory.
 - Throughout the Foundation Stage, children achieve well.
 - Pupils achieve well in science, with standards above average in Year 2 and 6.
 - Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well.
3. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a good start to their education through the good teaching of a curriculum that is based firmly upon their learning needs. They make good progress. Most children are set to attain standards that exceed the levels expressed as average through the early learning goals for children of their age.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (15.2)	14.6 (14.6)

mathematics	17.0 (17.4)	16.2 (16.3)
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There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in literacy, numeracy and science. As a result standards overall are above average. The previous inspection found that the number of pupils achieving higher levels in subjects was limited. This is no longer the case with, for example, a third of the age group achieving level 3 in reading in the 2004 national tests. However, pupils' speed and accuracy in applying basic number skills are not as good as they should be. Standards as expressed through the 2004 national test results at the end of Year 2 indicate above average attainment in mathematics, reading and writing. The improvement in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that reading standards have improved again this year. Teachers and support staff have worked hard and effectively to sustain this upwards trend. Standards in ICT are average but insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use their skills.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (27.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.4 (27.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.4 (29.5)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 achieve well overall in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils' speed and accuracy in using their basic number skills to solve problems are not as good as might be expected. In Year 6, because of the high quality teaching, pupils achieve very well and standards in English and mathematics are well above average. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory and standards are average. However, pupils do not receive enough opportunities to use and develop their skills because of the lack of equipment. The 2004 national test results in English were above average, and average in mathematics and science. The upward trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection evidence shows there to be no discernible difference between boys' and girls' results.
6. It was possible to see only limited amounts of work in other subjects, but achievement in most lessons was rarely less than good. The previous inspection found standards in art and design to be below average. This is no longer the case and standards are in line with those found in most schools. ICT is not used well to help pupils develop skills in other subjects. The skills of literacy are used satisfactorily across the curriculum.
7. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. This is because teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils and quickly identify any pupils who have special educational needs, providing suitable work to help meet such needs. The school rightly prides itself on being inclusive and provides a nurturing environment for all pupils. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils in their age groups.
8. Each year, the school sets realistic, challenging targets in English and mathematics for its Year 6 group of pupils. These targets are very carefully based upon close analysis of

pupils' performance. The school achieves a considerable degree of success in achieving these targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to learning and behave very well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good overall**, enabling pupils to grow in confidence and enjoy their school life. Relationships at all levels are very good. Attendance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships between staff and pupils result in a strong sense of harmony and teamwork.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and are keen to learn.
- Pupils develop very well personally, maturing into well-rounded individuals, aware of the needs of others.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good overall.
- Cultural provision, although good, needs to extend pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of multicultural society.

Commentary

9. Staff are very good role models. Their sensitive approach to behaviour management contributes much to this secure and happy school community. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with staff and other pupils, and pupils of all ages play well together on the playground. There is a genuine spirit of friendship and mutual support throughout the school. This is a similar picture to that of the previous inspection. There have been no recent exclusions of pupils.
10. Most pupils are highly motivated learners. They are interested in their work and enjoy their learning. They are particularly responsive when lessons have a robust level of challenge. For example, in a Year 5 drama lesson, pupils were required to produce their own sketches and did so very well. In many lessons, pupils work well both individually and collaboratively, and also are quick to recognise and celebrate the achievements of the pupils around them. Pupils' questionnaires revealed that pupils are very positive about the school. They especially like the friendly and supportive atmosphere, and the very good rapport with their teachers.
11. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The assemblies create a good framework for the spiritual awareness of pupils and provide them with opportunities to reflect on issues that affect their lives. Their sense of spirituality is further promoted through much of the teaching that encourages, excites and creates a real desire to learn. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher developed pupils' questioning skills by asking some to volunteer to be quizzed by other pupils. The response was overwhelming, many pupils offering to go in the 'hot seat'. This resulted in a high quality discussion. This kind of positive learning climate increases pupils' confidence and self-esteem as they move through the school and supports their good achievement.
12. Pupils' moral and social development is very well promoted through the personal, social and health education curriculum, by visits and visitors and by the strong example that all staff provide. This develops pupils' self-confidence, extends their horizons and

establishes values as they grow and mature. Pupils throughout the school have good opportunities to contribute to the school rules and make decisions about important aspects of their educational and social activities. An important mechanism for this is the school council.

13. Pupils are knowledgeable about their own culture. They are provided with some experiences of life in a multicultural society through their links with other schools, their topic work in geography and history, with some input through music, art and design and the French language lessons. However, more could be done to develop pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.2
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.

14. The level of attendance is well above the national average. The school monitors registers on a regular basis and contacts parents where attendance is a cause for concern. Most pupils are punctual, and lessons make a prompt start throughout the day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education overall with good opportunities provided for enrichment. Teaching is effective and leads to a good quality of learning. Curricular provision is good and the care and support given to pupils are very good. Links with the community are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment procedures are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school.
- Teaching is of a very high standard in Year 6.
- Good use is made of classroom assistants.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills in Years 1 to 5.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop and use their ICT skills.
- Good assessment opportunities have been put in place in English, mathematics and science.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (9%)	8 (24%)	17 (50%)	5 (15%)	1 (3%)	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.

15. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection with over 80 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection being good or better. The reception and other teaching areas for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are better organised and teachers use assessment information well to plan future work in English, mathematics and science.
16. Good teaching in the reception class provides a very firm foundation for further learning. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 1 to 6, enabling pupils to achieve well. Teaching in Year 6 is of an exceptionally high standard. The school's policy of social inclusion is carried out successfully and as a result pupils feel valued.
17. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are generally well implemented in Years 1 to 6. All teachers have a good knowledge of how basic skills should be taught. Lessons are well prepared and organised, and teachers make good use of information from assessment in English, mathematics and science. Occasional satisfactory use is made of ICT, but the school needs to provide more equipment and teachers more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their skills. Pupils make satisfactory use of their literacy skills in most other subjects. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 are provided with good opportunities to use their numeracy skills in quickly solving mathematical problems.
18. In the Foundation Stage reception class, particular strengths in teaching include the prominent profile given to children's personal and social development, and to communication, language and literacy skills. Good provision successfully broadens children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The teacher and support assistants work successfully as a team. Teaching methods work well, are consistent and promote very good attitudes in the children, who are eager to learn. There is a good balance and range of activities. All adults have a clear idea of what children know, can do and understand. Observation and recording of progress and early diagnosis of any difficulties are reflected in the provision of a wide range of activities. This enables all children, including those with special educational needs, to succeed.
19. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 6. The curriculum is carefully planned and well taught, so as a result the quality of learning is good. Lessons contain achievable objectives and usually proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers use a good variety of methods to build on pupils' previous learning. Questioning is successful and challenges pupils to think. Tasks in English are well matched to pupils' needs. However, lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work show that pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to use their numeracy skills in solving problems in Years 1 to 5. Classroom organisation is very good and the behaviour management policy is applied very well. A key factor that contributes to highly successful teaching in Years 5 and 6 is tasks being set that are challenging, including 'hot seating', and that allow pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding at a brisk pace.
20. Teaching is good in science. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use an effective range of teaching methods. Teachers give clear instructions about how to tackle the work, time to accomplish it and extra help if necessary.
21. Good use is made of the specialist skills of teachers, as for example in music. The choir of governors is very active in supporting choral music in the school. Teachers have high levels of expertise and as a result pupils benefit greatly and make good progress.

22. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified and the necessary help is given.
23. Homework is provided in all classes at a similar level to that found in most schools.

Assessment

24. Overall provision is good in English, mathematics and science. The school is developing its approach to collecting assessment data and the use made of the information in the foundation subjects [art and design, design technology, geography, history, music and physical education]. Throughout the school, teachers monitor and record carefully pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science using a range of formal and informal procedures. As a result, teachers know their pupils well, share this information with pupils and involve them in target setting.
25. A strength of the school is its inclusive approach to education for all pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and higher attaining pupils benefit from good assessment of their work. Adults are aware of pupils' different learning styles, and they plan and organise activities to match pupils' needs. Individual educational plans and well-considered strategies for support, based on accurate information, enable pupils who have special educational needs to achieve well.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**, and particularly strong in English and mathematics. Recently introduced imaginative teaching and learning strategies are improving curriculum provision. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra activities that boost pupils' skills in sports, arts, and personal development. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weakness

- Recent innovations to the curriculum are enriching learning opportunities.
- Learning is enjoyable with many varied opportunities which stimulate and motivate the pupils.
- ICT equipment is lacking in quantity.
- Despite good improvements to the building, inadequate storage space remains a problem.

Commentary

26. The curriculum is broad and well structured and gives ample time to all subjects. The school provides good learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in the rest of the school. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have contributed to the consistently high standards in English and mathematics. Teaching is more challenging and a clear focus has been given to meeting the needs of all pupils, a good improvement since the previous inspection. A particular strength of the curriculum is the way in which it embraces all pupils, regardless of gender or ability. This integration is very successful, because it does not highlight or focus on the differences between pupils. Instead, it offers the same curriculum, but takes great care to ensure that those pupils who need support receive it. For example, pupils with special educational needs have very effective provision. Work is matched precisely to their needs and pupils enjoy the challenges set for them, based on manageable steps. The school provides in addition for gifted and talented pupils, with new systems recently implemented.
27. Curriculum provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection. It is well planned and complemented by the innovative use of a 'thinking skills curriculum' where pupils in Years 3 to 6 participate in specific lessons in 'mind mapping' and thinking skills. These techniques were also evident in other lessons observed throughout the inspection. For instance, in a science lesson in Year 3 the teacher involved the pupils in mind mapping the main causes of tooth decay. This resulted in key words such as 'bacteria', 'acid' and 'sugar' being highlighted by the pupils. In Year 6 pupils learn to speak French.
28. The school enriches the curriculum very well with many varied opportunities. Whenever possible, pupils visit a place of interest to bring alive each topic. There are visits to their local church. Of particular note is the special emphasis given to music. Throughout the school many pupils have lessons on string, woodwind and brass instruments. There is also a flourishing choir in which singing is of high quality. To enhance pupils' personal qualities, and consolidate their music skills and enjoyment of school life, the school participates in local music festivals and parish services. Pupils receive skilled training from local coaches in sports, like football, cricket and athletics.
29. Since the previous inspection there has been satisfactory improvement overall in provision for ICT. The school is now fully implementing the programmes of study for ICT. Pupils learn basic ICT skills and research skills on a regular basis. However, there are too few opportunities to use computers to practise new skills and to use ICT in different aspects of their learning. This makes progress unsatisfactory in this subject.
30. There is a good match overall of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The sense of joint purpose that binds all staff is a strong feature and a key factor in the school's success.
31. The accommodation has been extended but storage space is poor. As a result, the hall, which is the only through route to classrooms, contains various items of equipment which severely restrict the area available for physical education lessons. The improvements made to the building are of a good quality and consist of classrooms, a new library and an outdoor play area for reception and Years 1 and 2 pupils. The school has a well-considered action plan in place to address the inadequacies in accommodation. There is a good range of resources in most subjects, except for ICT.

Care, guidance and support

This is a very caring school, in which pupils feel secure and happy and where they can learn and develop effectively. Procedures to support and guide pupils are very good overall. The school makes very good attempts to seek pupils' views of the school and values their comments.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and help to provide a very good standard of pastoral care and academic support.
- Overall, procedures for child protection are good; however, there is a need to ensure that staff training is updated.
- The school has very good arrangements for seeking pupils' views.
- There are good procedures for the induction of children into the school.

Commentary

32. Pupils are provided with a very good level of personal support and guidance that is underpinned by teachers' good knowledge of them and very good relationships between pupils and all members of staff. Pupils say that they are confident to approach teachers should they have any problems and that they would be provided with appropriate guidance and support. The provision for pupils' welfare is further enhanced by the provision of class 'confidentiality boxes' which enable pupils to raise any concerns they may have, anonymously and in confidence if they so wish. Staff maintain good records of pupils' academic and personal development. All pupils have discussions about targets for improvement and how they can achieve these targets. The school provides very good care and support for pupils with special educational needs, which have a positive impact on their learning.
33. The school is committed to providing a safe working environment for staff and pupils. The health and safety policy meets statutory requirements and is well implemented by the headteacher. Risk assessments for educational visits, including residential trips, are well established. First aid provision is good and good records of accidents and injuries are maintained. Overall the procedures for child protection are effective. The headteacher is the designated teacher; she has undergone appropriate training and has a good knowledge of child protection procedures. However, there has been insufficient recent training of other staff.
34. The school actively seeks pupils' views of the school mainly through the school council, circle time and pupil questionnaires. The school values pupils' views highly and, where practicable, takes them into consideration when reviewing policies and procedures. For example, the provision of water bottles for all pupils and the choice and provision of toys in the playground were results of recommendations made by the school council. This not only ensures that pupils feel valued and fully part of the school, but also contributes to their understanding of citizenship and the part they play in a community.
35. The school has good procedures for the induction of pupils into the school. Parents are given appropriate information and guidance about these procedures and how they can help to prepare their children for school life. Parents and children have opportunities to visit the school and meet with their teachers prior to admission. The reception teacher

visits local nurseries to discuss and receive information about the children's academic progress and personal development. Year 6 pupils provide a 'buddy system' for the new children, which provides them with a source of friendly support and guidance. These procedures enable children to settle quickly into the school environment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **good**. The quality and range of information provided for parents are good. Overall, parents have positive views of the school and a significant number of parents are actively involved in the life of the school. The school has developed good links with the community, which make a good contribution to pupils' learning. There are good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are good.
- The school has established strong links with parents which make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The involvement of the school in the community and the links with other schools are good.

Commentary

36. Overall, the quality of information given to parents is good. The school brochure and governors' annual report provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities and meet statutory requirements. Regular newsletters and letters about specific events, including information about what their children are studying, ensure that parents are kept up to date about current school activities. Attendance at parents' meetings is very good. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality; they give clear guidance on pupils' attainment and progress and identify targets for improvement. The school's procedures for seeking parents' views of the school consist mainly of informal consultations. The school has in place plans to improve these arrangements. There are very good arrangements to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in the development and review of their children's individual educational plans.
37. Parents have positive views of the school. In particular, they are pleased with the quality of teaching, the expectation that their children will work hard and the way in which the school is helping their children to become more responsible and mature. They are also pleased with the progress their children make, the way in which the school is led and managed and the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Evidence from the inspection confirms these positive views of the school.
38. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is good. A significant number of parents help in the school, supporting the reading scheme by listening to pupils read, assisting in classrooms and accompanying pupils on educational visits. The school makes good use of parents' skills, for example helping with French lessons, cooking, and art and design lessons. The provision of homework diaries assists parents to support their children's learning at home. There is an active Friends Association that organises social and fund-raising events. Significant amounts of money have been raised to finance additional learning resources, for example the Life education caravan and shelving in the library. All of these factors have had a positive impact on pupils' learning.
39. The school's links with the community are good and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There is a very good range of visitors to the school, including artists, musicians and theatre companies, who enhance pupils' learning in drama, art and design and music. The school makes good use of the local community. Visits to a local museum and art gallery support pupils' learning in art, geography and science, local field trips

support pupils' learning in history, science and geography, whilst links with local sports clubs provide cricket and football coaching in physical education. The school's close association with the local parish church support pupils' spiritual and cultural development very well.

40. The school's links with other educational establishments are good. Strong links are established with the local secondary school. Pupils are involved in a range of sporting and social events at the secondary school. The school has developed good arrangements for pupils' transition, including effective liaison between staff and the transfer of information relating to pupils' academic and social skills, Pupils have a beneficial half-day induction at the secondary school, when they meet their form tutor and experience a range of lessons. Strong links with local colleges involve students' work experience, and teacher training placements are frequent.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good, overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Management of the school is good. Governance of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and inspires staff to achieve them very well.
- Commitment to the principles of inclusive education lies at the heart of the school's success.
- The governing body is very effective and holds the school closely to account.
- Financial management is very good and enables the school to be staffed well.

Commentary

41. The headteacher sets the tone by her drive, energy, vision and skill. She provides very good leadership and is highly thought of by parents, staff and pupils. The ethos of the school is very good and firmly grounded on Christian principles. At the heart of all the school does are the needs of the individual child. Pupils of all attainment levels and background are involved fully in all aspects of school life. Key leadership posts have been filled effectively. The school's management structure enables effective management of the curriculum. Senior staff provide good leadership of the curriculum and teaching. Day-to-day management is good and the school's administrative assistant provides very good support.
42. The school monitors its own performance very closely, through analysis of data, checking pupils' progress, and checking the quality of teaching and learning, of planning and of pupils' work. The previous inspection reported that there was no tracking of pupils' progress. This is not now the case; tracking systems are used effectively in ensuring that pupils are making good progress.
43. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. Provision has improved much since the time of the previous inspection. The co-ordinator is conscientious and efficient. Provision is organised very well, with good use made of classroom assistants and the very good skills of a part-time teacher.

44. Governance of the school is very good. Governors are ably led by an experienced chair of governors. As at the time of the previous inspection, the governing body is strongly committed to the school's success. The deficiencies found in the school brochure in the previous inspection have been rectified fully. Governors share a common vision and support the headteacher and staff very well. They are very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and act as a critical friend. All governors are attached to classes and, even when school visits are difficult due to work commitments, correspond with 'their' class by e-mail.

45. The school development plan provides a detailed set of well-considered priorities for the coming year. It is backed up by challenging action plans. Governors take a long-term view of school development, ably advised by the headteacher. A very good example of this was the time taken to appoint a deputy headteacher. The governors wanted the best possible appointment to be made and took a year to make their decision. As a result the school has a very good deputy headteacher. Her skill and boundless energy are an inspiration to all.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	447,389
Total expenditure	431,170
Expenditure per pupil	2,200

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	28,841
Balance carried forward to the next	45,060

46. The governing body takes great care to get best value from spending decisions. The school is managing a high balance carry-forward but this will be drastically reduced by the end of the year. The reduction will come as a result of the current funding given to support work being undertaken with gifted, able and talented pupils. Given the quality of its provision, its efficiency and the good achievement of its pupils, the school gives good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

47. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is consistently **good** in all areas of learning. There has been good improvement in the standards attained in mathematics and in knowledge and understanding of the world. There are 30 children on roll this year (2004) and many parents were unsuccessful in gaining places because of the high demand. Almost all children come to the school with some pre-school, playgroup experience. Standards on entry are above those expected for children of this age, in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Children achieve well during their time in the reception class because of the good teaching and the interesting, relevant curriculum which meets their particular needs. At present, whilst outdoor play is planned for, it does not match the quality of other areas of the curriculum, but is satisfactory.
48. The teaching in the reception class is consistently good. The class teacher works closely with the nursery nurse and classroom assistant, all of whom understand the needs of young children and make learning fun. Children's progress is frequently assessed and the information gathered is used well to plan the next step in their learning. Children with special educational needs are catered for well and are provided with specific support.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children settle into school quickly and happily.
- They achieve well because of the good teaching they receive.
- The positive relationships established make children feel confident enough to learn.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's personal development and most children exceed the expected goals by the end of the year.

Commentary

49. The development of children's personal and social development is given high priority and underpins all the work in the reception class. Children enter school with positive attitudes to learning. The well-structured induction arrangements, which include individual interviews with parents about children's needs and preferences, do much to ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy ones. As a result, children quickly settle into the caring and safe environment, where basic routines and high expectations are fostered. The very good working relationships between members of staff and volunteer helpers are effective in showing children how to relate to each other. The warm welcome extended to them at the start of each school day helps to make children feel secure and confident. Tasks are well prepared, so that children's interest is quickly engaged. Adults work hard to instil a sense of belonging, based on personal care and making children feel comfortable and liked. Good teaching, which emphasises kindness to each other, and planned activities that require co-operation, result in good social development. Members of staff place strong emphasis on the development of children's self-esteem, confidence and independence. As a result, most children respond well to new challenges, such as

changing independently for physical education lessons, tidying away after activities and taking on small responsibilities such as being the class helper. Girls and boys are encouraged to play and work together. They take part in rich learning opportunities, so that they develop a good range of skills across all areas of learning. They achieve well and at the end of the year standards are above average.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school builds well on children's prior learning and most children achieve above average standards, especially in speaking and listening and in reading.
- Teaching is generally good, but sometimes the work provided in writing is not sufficiently well matched to children's needs.

Commentary

50. Children continue to build on the good progress made in their pre-schools towards the attainment of the early learning goals in this area of learning, and, due to the good teaching they receive, most children exceed the goals by the end of the reception year. Good opportunities are provided for children to improve their speaking and listening skills through role-play, stories, poems and rhymes. Effective questioning encourages them to give considered answers and builds firmly on prior learning. Staff insist that children listen to each other. The good relationships established between adults and children mean that children grow in confidence, because adults are interested in what they have to say. There is good provision for reading development. Children enjoy books and most listen attentively when stories are read to them. In a lesson observed, the teacher helped extend children's vocabulary and understanding by bringing in a selection of fruit, to help them recognise some of the more exotic items mentioned in the text. Occasionally, when books are less suitable or when they are tired, a few children become restless and find concentration difficult. Children take books home to practise reading, and parents are advised on how they can help their children recognise 'key words' at home. Opportunities are frequently taken to emphasise sounds that different letters make and to extend vocabulary. In a very good lesson seen, the teacher used appropriate resources very well to help children recognise and sound out the initial letters of words. This session was exactly the right length to keep children well focused on the task, and was presented as a game, to increase motivation and interest. The children found this great fun. Later on in this lesson the more able children were given the opportunity to try rewriting the story of *Handa's Surprise* in their own little books. Most of these children were able to write well-formed letters with some recognisable words. Another group were making pictorial shopping lists, cutting out pictures of the items for their lists from magazines. These children had well-developed hand control, but their progress in writing was slowed because they were required to copy underneath the teacher's writing rather than being encouraged to 'have a go' for themselves. Further evidence of this restriction was seen in examples of children's previous work. Some of the worksheets seen amongst children's work were unsuitable because they were not well enough matched to the needs of individuals.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve above average standards by the end of the reception year.
- The teaching is good overall, but children are occasionally given unsuitable worksheets.

Commentary

51. Children enter the reception class with above average standards in mathematics. They continue to achieve well and, by the end of the reception year, most children exceed the early learning goals for mathematics. In practical lessons staff use an interesting range of teaching methods and resources, including ICT, so that children develop a good understanding of all aspects of mathematics. Good links with other areas of learning, such as literacy and art, help to make the tasks meaningful to the children. Adults introduce mathematical language effectively and consequently children name shapes such as squares, triangles and circles and use terminology such as 'longer', 'shorter' and 'equal to' when comparing size. During the inspection children were seen working practically to find 'one more than'. In these lessons, all adults are deployed effectively to help promote children's learning. They make effective use of questioning to check children's knowledge and to move their learning forward. However, in the examples of work examined, there were a great many worksheets that were inappropriate for such young children, preventing them from learning mathematics through 'doing' rather than 'recording'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of the reception year.
- A good range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Children enter the reception class with average standards in knowledge and understanding of the world. However, most children reach the early learning goals for this area because of the good teaching they receive. Children are provided with a very good range of experiences which helps extend their understanding of the world about them. Well planned activities, such as tasting a variety of unfamiliar fruit linked to a story heard in their literacy lesson, give children a good knowledge of the wider world. Visitors are invited to talk to the children about a variety of topics and this helps them to develop their breadth of understanding. During the inspection, the school nurse visited the class to promote healthy eating and keeping clean. This was pitched at exactly the right level and built well upon the rest of the work the class were engaged in. During the inspection, observational skills were promoted effectively as children studied different types of fruit through using magnifying glasses. In ICT, they are taught well to use the mouse to control the screen cursor when moving images across the screen and to control programmable toys. In the lessons seen,

children used computers efficiently to access a range of software. Opportunities are provided daily to experiment with a range of construction toys, to learn how things fit together and what materials are best to use to achieve desired results. In their religious education lessons children are taught about times that are important to their community, such as Christmas and Easter, and how to share important events in their lives. These lessons also promote the Christian ethos of the school very well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are above average.
- Children are very well managed, so they work and play safely together.

Commentary

53. Children receive regular opportunities each week for physical activities such as running, jumping, climbing and balancing, during timetabled lessons, both in the school hall and in the playground when the weather permits. On entry to school, most children have above average skills. Good quality teaching ensures that these skills are built on well and children exceed the standard expected by the end of the year. The teacher's very good class management skills ensure that lessons in the school hall develop at a good pace and that all learning objectives are met well. Children have regular access to a secure outdoor area and they enjoy the times they run about and play together. In the classroom, children are given frequent opportunities during the school day to use small tools and instruments, including paint brushes, pencils, scissors and crayons, to develop their fine motor skills. Both boys and girls develop their manipulative skills well when playing with small and large construction equipment, with interest and dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, so children achieve well.

Commentary

54. Most children are set to exceed the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching is good in this area of the curriculum. Members of staff are effective in getting responses from children related to what they see, hear, feel and imagine. Most children reach, and many exceed, the standard expected for their age by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. Their creative development is successfully fostered through a wide range of experiences such as mixing paints, choosing particular colours for a purpose, and making constructions, collages and paintings. During the week of the inspection, they were exploring colour, texture and shape and the knowledge gained was expressed and reinforced through the medium of printing. Work displayed around the classroom shows that children are given an appropriate range of experiences, including studying the work of famous artists. In whole-class music lessons and in small groups, children explore how

sounds can be made and sing simple songs. Teachers give time to role-play, to allow children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination. This allows them to extend their language skills successfully by re-enacting familiar situations from stories that have been read to them or by making up their own. Such experiences enrich children's learning and enhance their spiritual, social and cultural development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been good improvements to provision since the previous inspection because of the very good leadership and management of the subject.
- Standards of attainment are well above average in Year 6.
- Teachers provide a good range of work.
- There are good opportunities for speaking and listening. There are very good arrangements for reading.
- Pupils do not always use their literacy skills well in other subjects.

Commentary

55. The subject leader has shown a clear vision and is resolute in tackling the weaknesses from the previous inspection. Every aspect of provision, apart from the use of literacy in other subjects, has shown good improvement. Teaching is good overall. This good provision is a result of rigorous monitoring of teaching, tracking pupils' progress and taking effective action. For instance, to improve standards in reading she has introduced an ICT reading program to promote independent reading, increased the range of books and introduced comprehensive reading records to track progress in reading. Of particular note is that the subject leader, through her own outstanding practice and high aspirations, has supported and led the staff very well.
56. Standards in all aspects of English in the current Year 2 are above expectations. In recent years, standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 have been above those expected for their age, with the exception of reading in the year 2003. This was due to boys underachieving. Effective strategies have been implemented to address this gender issue. Currently, standards are well above the national average in Year 6. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. There is now no significant difference between the attainment of boys and that of girls.
57. Speaking and listening skills are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. There are very good opportunities for speaking and listening and role-play in classrooms. Teachers create a climate in which pupils are confident to speak, because they know that their contributions will be welcomed and appreciated. For instance, during the inspection, pupils in a Year 5 drama lesson produced their own sketches. With little supervision and working in groups they wrote their scripts, organised their 'props' and finally performed their acts with confidence, demonstrating good speaking and listening skills. These opportunities have a positive impact on the quality of the pupils' speaking and listening skills.

58. Teachers provide good opportunities in English lessons for pupils to write in a wide variety of contexts. A good range of classroom materials, such as word banks and displays of points of grammar, supports pupils' writing well. Good attention is paid to developing grammatical skills, spelling and handwriting. There are some displays of a range of individual pupils' work which encourage them to write well, but presentation of pupils' writing around the school does not feature strongly.
59. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. Guided reading and opportunities for individual reading are very well organised. Initiatives such as the Accelerated Reader software program are being used to promote independent reading and provide pupils with diagnostic information. This project is proving popular with reluctant readers. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 made the following observations: "It gets me to read for half an hour each evening", "I now look more closely at words and their meanings", and "Some books are good and you get prizes". Reading is well supported by parents, and pupils show good library skills. Most are familiar with the Internet and with the use of computers for word processing. Most pupils of average and above attainment are able to name favourite authors and can talk articulately about the books they have read.
60. Teaching is good overall, throughout the school. Significant strengths are an insistence on high standards of behaviour, the good use of teaching assistants, the high level of encouragement pupils receive, planning, and teaching methods that sustain pupils' interest. This was particularly true of an excellent Year 6 lesson, where a pupil was in the 'hot seat' in the role of an author's brother and was able to justify why he broke the author's doll. The strengths of learning are pupils' application to their work, their productivity and their capacity to work independently and collaboratively. Teachers work effectively with teaching assistants, so that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. A range of additional schemes helps pupils of lower attainment and those who are making insufficient progress at other levels. The use of ICT is satisfactory in English, where pupils use computers to word process their work and improve their presentation.
61. The subject leadership and management of English are very good, with a clear commitment to improvement. There are regular procedures for monitoring teaching and learning. Much good practice takes place on an individual and on an informal basis. A high whole-school priority has been given to developing reading and writing skills.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Overall, provision is satisfactory. When given the opportunity, pupils use language well, especially writing, across the curriculum, for example to present arguments, describe investigations or narrate historical events. However, occasionally opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills well. For example, there are some examples of copied work in science. Word processing is occasionally used to improve the quality of pupils' work but overall the use of ICT is unsatisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in Year 6 representing good achievement.
- In Years 1 to 5 not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their number skills in solving mathematical problems.
- Teaching and learning are good overall across the school and particularly strong in Year 6.
- Good leadership by the subject co-ordinator is having a positive impact on standards.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to enhance learning.
- Assessment systems and the use made of the information gathered are good.

Commentary

63. The results of national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2004 are average compared with all schools. Inspection findings show that standards this year in Year 6 are well above average, with achievement being very good in this age group. This improvement is due to two factors. The quality of teaching is excellent, and good use is made of assessment and data analysis, in order to provide work that closely matches pupils' learning needs. Pupils are very confident in solving practical mathematical problems, for example when asked to use percentages to work out the reductions in price of goods in a sale they do so quickly and accurately. This enhances their learning, resulting in well above average standards. There is now no significant difference between the results of boys and of girls.
64. In other age groups most pupils achieve well and have good basic number skills. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are above average. Teachers have clear and high expectations of all groups of pupils. The school has recognised that more emphasis should be given to involving pupils in using their numeracy skills to solve problems. However, the strategies put in place are still fairly new and a survey of previous work showed that insufficient emphasis has been given to this aspect of mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, due to the effective support of the classroom assistants.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection, when it was found to be satisfactory. The quality of teaching in Year 6 is of a particularly high standard. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and question sharply to encourage pupils to think through their answers. In the best lessons, teachers are highly skilled in targeting questions at specific pupils, in order to challenge all levels of attainment. The use of a 'class mathematician of the week' board

and of individual target setting has improved provision and heightened the profile of the subject.

66. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She provides good leadership, monitors planning well and is beginning to formally analyse strengths and weaknesses across the subject. Good use is made of the school's assessment systems, to ensure pupils are provided with appropriate strategies which help them improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Overall, satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support other areas of the curriculum. Links are made with the ICT curriculum but insufficient use is made of data handling and spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. Pupils have good scientific knowledge.
- Teaching is good overall and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given good opportunities to set up their own investigations.
- Assessment information is used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Commentary

68. Standards in science have improved since the previous inspection and are now above average. The work seen in books during the inspection confirms that standards in Year 6 are above average and that pupils are now achieving well. However, in the 2004 national tests the number of pupils attaining at an above average level was lower than in previous years and overall results were average. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. A survey of work shows that ICT is not used well to support learning. A major strength of the subject is pupils' good scientific knowledge.
69. In Years 1 and 2, pupils cover a good range of scientific topics and undertake a satisfactory number of investigations. Discussions held with pupils from Year 2 showed that they enjoy their work, especially when they are given the opportunity to engage in practical activities. Evidence from previous work demonstrates that pupils have, for example, been involved in compiling a diary of results with regard to the time taken for seeds to germinate.
70. Pupils in Year 6 have planned a fair test to look at the harmful effects of micro-organisms. They understand the importance of changing only one variable when carrying out an experiment. However, a survey of previous work shows little evidence in other classes of pupils consistently being asked to draw their own conclusions when undertaking scientific enquiry. In some classes pupils are asked to copy text, rather than write up their work using their own words. As a result, opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills.
71. Teaching is good overall. It is good when pupils are given the opportunity to engage in scientific enquiry including close observation. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed being asked to work in groups to design their experiments. In Year 4 a good science area has been established which provides pupils with relevant information about the human skeleton. During the week of the inspection, good teaching in Year 3 ensured that pupils made good gains in their knowledge of how to keep teeth healthy. All teachers incorporate health education well. This is especially evident in Year 5.

72. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator provides support for teachers on a day-to-day basis and ensures that there are appropriate resources. She has undertaken a survey of work to identify areas for development. Good practice in the subject includes pupils being given realistic targets for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The lack of equipment means that pupils do not have regular access to ICT resources in order to practise and refine their newly acquired skills.
- The control and modelling aspect has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory.
- Teachers use the interactive whiteboard effectively to teach basic skills.
- Teachers make unsatisfactory use of ICT and miss opportunities to develop it through other subjects.
- Assessment procedures are not in place.

Commentary

73. Pupils' standards of attainment in ICT are in line with the average expected in both Year 2 and Year 6. This represents a similar picture to that seen at the previous inspection, with an improvement in developing pupils' understanding of the use of computers to control devices and monitor events. Since the previous inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement in provision overall. All classes have timetabled access to the interactive whiteboards and most teachers use them competently to instruct pupils in basic ICT skills. However, the school does not have an adequate number of computers for pupils to practise regularly and refine newly acquired skills. This hampers their progress and achievement.
74. Overall, pupils in Year 2 demonstrate satisfactory skills in all strands of ICT. By Year 6, pupils reach expected levels in using ICT to communicate information using word processing programs and art packages. They use a graphics program well to produce personal profiles and input instructions for operating traffic lights, using a control program. They use formulae to make simple calculations using a spreadsheet and narrow down searches for information in their data-handling work. Pupils have good skills in finding information on the Internet. They are able to download information, such as pictures that they can use, and they make satisfactory notes on the information contained on web pages. Their skills in using data-handling programs are less well developed, although they can use spreadsheets to produce graphs.
75. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Pupils receive a balanced curriculum, covering all aspects of the ICT programme of study. The scheme of work is thorough and meets requirements well. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to give effective demonstrations to pupils using the interactive whiteboard. These demonstrations make clear to pupils what is expected of them. In observed class sessions in ICT there were only three computers available for pupils to use. In the better lessons the teacher organised the whole-class activities well, engaging all pupils in productive activities. The pupils showed good responsibility for their own learning and used the programs confidently to complete their tasks. However, in a less effective lesson the limited access to the available computers and methods used for grouping pupils were not effective and adversely affected pupils' progress and achievement.

76. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator conscientiously monitors teaching and pupils' progress through looking at planning and pupils' ICT books. This gives her a clear idea of provision for ICT. There are no whole-school assessment procedures.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. This is an aspect of ICT which the school has identified for development, with resources identified to buy software to support the use of ICT in different subjects. There are some good examples of pupils and teachers using ICT to extend and enhance their learning, mainly through the effective use of the whiteboard in literacy lessons. For instance, in both Year 2 and Year 6 literacy lessons pupils used the whiteboard to demonstrate their understanding of grammar. However, word-processing and data-handling programs are insufficiently used across the school for recording ideas and presenting work in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

78. **Religious education** was not inspected and will be the subject of a separate Diocesan inspection. Only one lesson was observed in **geography** and none in **history**, so there is insufficient evidence to make judgements on provision. Analysis of the work sampled in pupils' folders indicates that they receive a satisfactory curriculum and attain the expected standard. This is similar to judgements made during the previous inspection. Planning for both subjects is linked effectively to the national guidance documents that cover all the required skills.
79. In the Year 2 lesson observed in geography, teaching and learning were both good. An interactive whiteboard was used effectively to teach geographical skills and to help pupils understand how to set out a simple table to compare and contrast Blackburn with Blackpool and how to interpret the information presented. The lesson built well on prior learning and effective links were made with pupils' history lessons.
80. The displays in the humanities subjects have been improved since the previous inspection and now support teaching and learning well. However, when marking pupils' work, teachers seldom give advice to help pupils improve their history and geography skills. The leadership of history and geography is currently under the stewardship of the headteacher, who has introduced a satisfactory form of assessment.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. Very few lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education. It was not, therefore, possible to make judgements about provision in these curriculum areas.
82. In **art and design** the available evidence shows that standards are now average throughout the school and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop satisfactory skills in painting, as well as appreciating how different colours and textures can be used for effect. They make drawings from observations. For example, pupils in Year 1 successfully sketched self-portraits and created good facial images, showing skills in observing visual clues. In other year groups there are strengths in painting, using watercolours to depict their feelings about landscape and good examples of pupils using a range of art forms such as weaving and pottery. For instance, pupils in Year 4 designed tiles embossed with geometric shapes, making good links to their mathematical work. The school has extended the curriculum provision in recent years by the introduction of a number of initiatives to improve standards in art and these have been effective. For example, it has introduced an art week, with a whole-

school focus on several artists. Pupils in Year 6 produced good quality sketches of animal forms following a visit to Bowland Forest Sculpture Park. There are now bright and striking displays of pupils' work around the school, producing a stimulating backdrop to learning. However, the use of ICT to support art teaching and learning is underdeveloped.

83. Pupils have good skills in making a variety of items in **design and technology**. They assemble shelters, ensuring rigidity through well-made brackets. Some designs, such as those for sandwiches and pencil cases, are imaginative and individual. Pupils evaluate their work sensibly, so that they can learn from any mistakes. This is good practice and a good improvement since the previous inspection. For instance, in a Year 3 lesson on sandwich making, pupils produced a wide variety of opinions on their creations. They wrote about the design aspect having to be good, so that the filling did not spill out.
84. In **music**, many pupils clearly benefit from a range of good activities. Music enjoys a high status in the school and is positively promoted by teachers, some of whom are capable musicians themselves. Standards and achievement in the performing elements were identified as good in the previous inspection. The good standards have been maintained since then.
85. The choir and instrumentalists perform during the celebrations of major religious festivals, school productions and performances such as the summer musical festival. The choir also enters local competitions and has performed in a choir competition at Blackburn Music Festival. There is very good tuition in brass, woodwind, strings and recorder and guitar. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development, by raising awareness of the songs of other cultures. Of particular note is the quality of singing by the school choir. During the inspection, a significant number of boys and girls, led by the chair of the governing body and supported by the deputy head, performed a range of songs and hymns to a high standard.
86. In **physical education** lessons, most pupils are able to plan and demonstrate soundly a simple sequence of actions involving moving, stretching and jumping. Space in the school hall is limited because it is used for storing equipment from other curriculum areas. As a result of the restricted space, when some activities are taking place teachers quite rightly insist that half the class sit and watch the other half, then there is a group change-over. This aspect of teaching limits the progress pupils make.
87. In addition to physical education lessons and swimming, there is a wide range of activities to enrich the curriculum. These include football and netball. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in competitions, often with pupils from other schools. Out-of-school clubs include a fitness club. The school has recently been awarded the Active Mark by Sports England in recognition of its achievements in physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. No overall judgement can be made about these aspects of learning. It is very evident that the school, through its provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship, is raising pupils' self-esteem and developing well their personal and social skills. Work in this aspect is closely linked to provision for religious education. There is a curriculum in place for education in personal relationships. Aspects of citizenship are taught in all classes.. In one lesson in Year 2, pupils were well taught and made good progress in their understanding of safety and strategies for keeping safe. Health topics are taught mainly

through science and physical education. The school council develops in its members the importance of thinking of their school and how it can be improved. Teachers make good use of assemblies to promote moral concepts such as honesty and fairness.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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