

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Prospect Vale Primary School Heald Green, Cheadle.**

LEA area: Stockport

Unique Reference Number: 106071

Acting Headteacher: Mr S Duffy

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Reporting inspector: Mr P.T. Hill

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706798

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Prospect Vale  
Off Brown Lane  
Heald Green  
Cheadle  
Cheshire  
SK8 3RJ

Telephone number: 0161 437 4226

Fax number: 0161 498 8708

Appropriate authority: Stockport

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Jones-Pierce

Date of previous inspection: 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> April 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Peter Hill, RgI	Science Information technology	Leadership and management Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Efficiency
Jennifer Farmer, Lay Inspector	Art Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Attendance Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Melvyn Hemmings	English Design and technology	Attainment and progress Attitudes, behaviour and personal development The curriculum and assessment
Chris Cheong	Music Religious education Mathematics History Geography Under fives	Teaching

[this table should list all team members and also indicate, in the subject column, the team member with responsibility for under fives, special educational needs, equal opportunities and English as a second language]

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The school's provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good and a strength.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good.

The school has been well led and managed, during a difficult period, by the acting headteacher.

- There is a significant amount of good, and some very good, teaching.
- Relationships between all adults and pupils are very good and considerably enhance pupils' learning.
- Teamwork is very good throughout the school. Support staff and teachers work very well together.
- Support guidance and pupils' welfare are very good and strengths of the school.
- The partnership with parents and the community is very good.
- All staff are highly committed to raising standards.
- There is a very good ethos.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The school does not yet meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum for information technology.
- II. There is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- III. Assessment procedures need further development.

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

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall, despite recent staffing and organisational problems, the school has made satisfactory progress in meeting the key issues for development identified in the previous inspection report. There is a clear statement of aims, which guides all aspects of the work of the school. Considerable effort has been put into the systems for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and pupils' progress and levels of attainment. The governing body is now playing a full and significant part in the strategic management of the school. The school is successfully implementing a range of strategies to match work to pupils' ability and to raise standards. The school's capacity for future improvement is good.

• **Standards in subjects**

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

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

Standards in English are in line with the national average and in mathematics and science are above the national average. Standards in information technology are below the national expectation because not all aspects of the subject are covered. When compared with similar schools, standards are above average in mathematics and science and in line in English. The standard of pupils' attainment has been maintained during the period since the last inspection.



• **Quality of teaching**

	<b>Under 5</b>	<b>5 – 7 years</b>	<b>7 – 11 years</b>
English	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Information Technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
History		Good	Satisfactory
Other subjects		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Nursery	Very good		

Teaching was good in 34% of lessons and very good in 8%. It was satisfactory in 54% of lessons and unsatisfactory in only 4%. **This is a very positive teaching profile.**

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Good. Pupils enjoy attending school and are punctual for the start of the school day.
Ethos*	Very Good. There is a high commitment to raising and maintaining standards.
Leadership and management	Very good relationships and teamwork considerably enhance pupils' learning. Good. The acting headteacher, together with the senior management team, provides good and supportive leadership and has been very successful in developing teamwork and a shared sense of responsibility amongst all staff.
Curriculum	Good. It is well planned and managed and is considerably enhanced through an extensive program of extra curricular activities and sport.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well provided for throughout the school.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. This area makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school, to the pupils' attainment and progress and to the learning environment.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school is adequately staffed and has an above average level of support staff. Resources are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and the accommodation is bright, very well maintained, and used well.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

• **The parents' views of the school**

**What most parents like about the school**

Over 90% of parents who returned questionnaires agree or strongly agree that:-

- IV. They would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with their child(ren)
- V. The school gives them a clear understanding of what is taught
- VI. The school enables their child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work
- VII. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their child(ren)
- VIII. The school achieves high standards of good behaviour
- IX. Their children like school

**What some parents are not happy about**

X. No issues

Questionnaires were returned by a quarter of parents and 26 parents attended the Parents' Meeting. Comments made in the meeting, supported by some responses in the questionnaire, indicate that, although parents feel that staffing stability is still an important issue, their children have continued to make good progress during the past 18 months and parents are pleased with the school. Parents feel welcome in the school and noted a number of areas of improvement, including the quality of information they receive.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

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

XI. Raise standards in information technology by:

ensuring National Curriculum requirements are met; (Paragraph 134)

increasing the amount of time pupils spend using computers; and (Paragraph 136, 142)

further enhancing teachers' confidence and expertise in the subject. (Paragraph 140 )

XII. Improve assessment procedures by:

improving record keeping systems to allow monitoring of individual pupils' progress; and  
(Paragraph 45,47 )

ensuring that assessment information is used more effectively in planning lessons. (Paragraph 47 )

XIII. Meet the needs of higher attaining pupils by ensuring the work is challenging and matched to individual pupils' ability. (Paragraph 35 )

### **Other areas for development**

In addition to the key issue for the school to address, the following areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

XIV. Further develop monitoring and evaluation of standards and the curriculum and further increase the part played in this by the subject co-ordinators.

XV. Provide library access for all pupils. Increase opportunities for pupils to develop and improve their library and research skills.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1 The school is part of the Heald Green ward of Stockport. The school, opened in 1963, has undergone considerable development since this time and is a bright, well-furnished environment.

2 At the present time, half of the pupils come from outside the designated catchment area and even outside the Stockport Local Education Authority. A quarter of pupils come from the Wythenshawe area of Manchester.

3 The immediate catchment area of the school consists of a mix of mainly private housing and some rented accommodation. Pupils are drawn from a variety of socio-economic circumstances with many families being owner-occupiers. Overall, pupils' families' socio-economic circumstances appear to be average when compared with national data, although the circumstances of those in the immediate catchment area are above average.

4 The school has 237 pupils aged between 4 and 11 on roll with 47 children being aged under 5. 45 pupils are from other cultural backgrounds. At 19%, there is quite a large multi-cultural presence in the school with 16% of pupils speaking English as an additional language. At present, 29 pupils, (12%), are entitled to meals free of charge. This is below the national average.

5 The school has identified 41 pupils as having special needs, which is above the national average. Of these, 18 are at stages of the Code of Practice which specify additional support  
Pupils' levels of attainment on entry are average.

## **THE SCHOOL HAS THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT OF AIMS**

- To respect and value every child and family.
- To recognise and develop the needs of the individual child.
- To base the educational process on equal opportunities for all pupils.
- To equip each child with the basic skills, areas of knowledge and attitudes needed for future learning and adult life.
- To develop in each child physical, academic, emotional, spiritual, moral and social areas of growth.
- To give pupils access to a broad and balanced curriculum showing both a progression and a consistency of approach through both key stages.
- To fulfill each child's entitlement to the whole curriculum of which the National Curriculum is a major element.
- To provide a secure, friendly, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment.
- To promote mutual respect and self-esteem amongst all pupils, developing awareness of their own rights and responsibilities.
- To foster close working relationships with parents and the wider community.
- To nurture self-discipline consideration, co-operation and tolerance.
- To encourage lively and inquiring minds and the ability to make independent decisions.
- To involve children in the assessment and recording of their own work at appropriate levels.
- To promote governor and staff self-development and support.

The aims are supported by a statement outlining the school's philosophy.

### **Future priorities are to:-**

- XVI. Monitor the progress of the National Literacy Strategy.
- XVII. Introduce the National Numeracy Strategy.
- XVIII. Upgrade hardware for information and communication technology.
- XIX. Review teaching of physical education.
- XX. Review outcomes at Key Stage 1.
- XXI. Review the introduction of assessment strategies.
- XXII. Ensure support for new staff members and create teams.
- XXIII. Reduce class sizes at Key Stage 1.

• **Key indicators**

**Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	16	17	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results	National Curriculum Test/Task			
		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	13	14	15
	Total	27	28	29
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (71)	85(70)	88(73)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	88(84)

Teacher Assessments	Teacher Assessments			
		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	15	14	16
	Girls	14	15	14
	Total	29	29	30
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88(65)	88(76)	91(81)
	National	82(81)	80(85)	86(86)

.....

1

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

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	19	16	35

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14	17	17
	Girls	13	12	15
	Total	27	29	32
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	94(77)	83(70)	91(74)
	National	68(65)	69(59)	78(69)

  

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	14	17	17
	Girls	13	12	12
	Total	27	29	29
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	77(77)	83(77)	83(74)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	5.3
	Absence	National comparative data	5.6
	Unauthorised	School	0.3
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

### Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	2
	Permanent	0

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	8.0
	Satisfactory or better	96
	Less than satisfactory	4

.....  
2

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

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

6 The attainment of the majority of pupils, when they start school is in line with that expected nationally. By the time they enter Key Stage 1 the attainment of most pupils is above national expectations. The progress made by pupils under five is good.

7 The national tests for 7-year-olds in 1998 show that the proportion of pupils in the school reaching the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments for science indicate that pupils' performance was below the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was above average in reading and writing and close to the national average in mathematics. In comparison with other schools with pupils from a similar background pupils' performance was close to the average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. The test results for 1999 show an improvement so that in comparison with similar schools pupils' performance was average in reading, well above below average in writing and above average in mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the pupils currently in Year 2 is average in English, mathematics and science. These fluctuations in standards attained are the results of the differing abilities of successive cohorts and the upheavals caused by the major staff changes seen in recent years.

8 In information technology the proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected for their age is average. In religious education the majority of pupils achieve standards in line with the expectations of the Stockport Agreed Syllabus.

9 During the key stage, the progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. Progress is satisfactory in information technology and religious education. In the non-core subjects there is good progress in history and physical education, and satisfactory progress in design and technology, geography, music and art.

10 The national tests for 11-year-olds in 1998 show that the proportion of pupils in the school reaching the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national average in English and mathematics and close to the average in science. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above the national average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. In comparison with schools with pupils from a similar background pupils' performance in English and mathematics was well above average, and broadly in line with the average in science. The 1999 test results show some decline in comparison with other schools so that pupils' performance is average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Inspection findings show that attainment of most pupils currently in Year 6 in English and science is in line with the national average, and is above in mathematics. These fluctuations in standards attained are a result of the differing abilities of successive cohorts and the upheavals caused by the major staff changes seen in recent years.

11 In information technology the proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected for their age is below average. In religious education the majority of pupils achieve standards in line with the expectations of the Stockport Agreed Syllabus.

12 During the key stage, the progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory.



Progress is unsatisfactory in information technology, and satisfactory in religious education. In the non-core subjects there is good progress in history and physical education, and satisfactory progress in design and technology, geography, music and art.

13 In the non-core subjects, in both key stages, the common strengths of pupils are that they are good communicators and have good presentational skills. Pupils demonstrate initiative and independence when engaged in investigative work in each year group. Pupils are very willing to take full part in group and class discussions and show a good knowledge and understanding of subject-related vocabulary. They show good collaboration skills when required to do so.

14 A common weakness, especially in Key Stage 2, is the limited ability of pupils to use information technology to enhance their work in other subjects.

15 Throughout the school most pupils have average skills of literacy. The majority of pupils can read a suitable range of texts accurately and can recount stories and express preferences. Pupils can talk with appropriate knowledge and understanding about books. Most pupils can locate information using contents and index pages in non-fiction and reference texts, but the limited use of the library is hindering the effective development of their independent research skills. Pupils can write in a suitable variety of forms in subjects across the curriculum. Standards in handwriting have improved since the previous inspection with most pupils taking pride in their work and achieving a good standard of presentation. Spelling standards are satisfactory and pupils use cursive script from Year 2 onwards. Pupils have a well-developed vocabulary, punctuate their work correctly and sometimes use word- processing to present their work. Oracy standards are above average. Throughout the school pupils are confident communicators. They express their ideas clearly in class discussions and listen attentively to teachers and to each other. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of subject-related vocabulary. The school is satisfactorily implementing the Literacy Strategy in a satisfactory way. Some teachers are more confident than others in delivering the literacy hour activities, and there is recognition of the need for a more consistent approach through the school. These literacy skills are being suitably used in other curriculum areas such as investigative research writing in science.

16 Pupils in Key Stage 1 have average levels of numeracy, while in Key Stage 2 they are above average and pupils have good skills in written computation, including manipulation of decimals and fractions. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have a good recall of multiplication facts. They are able to mentally manipulate number and are becoming adept at explaining their strategies. Pupils make effective use of their mathematical knowledge and skills particularly in science, design and technology and geography.

17 In science, when pupils start Year 1, there is emphasis given to ensuring practical tasks are used to help develop their knowledge and understanding. As pupils pass through Year 2 they learn how to handle simple scientific equipment carefully and safely and how to make simple predictions. They also effectively develop the skills of recording their findings in a variety of ways.

As they pass through Key Stage 2 pupils are able to learn how to use a wider range of scientific equipment. The skills of carrying out investigations are effectively developed. By the end of the key stage pupils are skilled in carrying out a fair test and have a good scientific vocabulary to be able to explain their work.

18 In information technology, when pupils start Year 1, suitable attention is given to developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. As they pass through Year 2, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to use a range of IT equipment and software in a variety of situations. At the end of the key stage most pupils show suitable ability to use computers and to talk about what they have done using appropriate technological language. However, as they pass through Key Stage 2

the pupils are not given enough time on computers to suitably develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject. The subject curriculum is limited and not all the aspects of the Programmes of Study are appropriately covered. As a result, the progress of pupils is unsatisfactory and their attainment by the end of the key stage is below average.

19 In religious education, the pupils in Key Stage 1 show a suitable knowledge and understanding of the basic information about Christianity and are effectively developing their awareness of other major world faiths. Emphasis is placed on sharing and respecting the beliefs of the different religions represented amongst pupils and this is a major contributory factor to the harmonious atmosphere that 20 is so evident throughout the school. The pupils in Key Stage 2 are given many opportunities to develop a greater awareness of the diversity of religious faiths and they show that they can recognise the key features of the major world religions. They learn about Christian Living and how individuals, such as Dr. Barnardo, can have a positive effect on the society in which they live. Pupils are effectively developing the skills of examining their own emotions and thoughts and in expressing them to others.

21 The attainment of the majority of pupils with special educational needs is below average but commensurate with their abilities. Standards in speaking and listening are good, with pupils making effective contributions to class discussions. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual educational plans. This is a result of the well-structured teaching that pupils with special educational needs receive.

22 There are no significant variations in the attainment of pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background. In the core subjects there is evidence that the higher attaining pupils are not always suitably challenged and as a result are not attaining the standards of which they are capable. There is evidence of significant variations in standards attained over time and these fluctuations are a result of the differing abilities of successive cohorts and the upheavals caused by the major staff changes experienced in recent years.

#### · **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

23 There has been an improvement since the previous inspection and the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are now very good and a strength of the school. The pupils enjoy coming to school and respond very well to the very caring ethos promoted by the school. These features are having a positive effect on their progress and the standards that they attain.

24 While they are in the Nursery and Reception classes children make very good progress in their personal and social skills and are able to relate very well to one another and to adults. They show respect for property and resources and are able to take turns and share equipment fairly. Children show much interest and enjoyment in their work and, during play activities, demonstrate good levels of self-control. Children demonstrate that they can sustain interest for lengthy periods of time, work collaboratively and show personal responsibility.

25 In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils show a very mature approach to their work and demonstrate great interest and enjoyment in what they are doing. They apply themselves willingly to their tasks and are very keen to answer questions and join in discussion during introductions and plenary sessions in lessons. This was very evident in the literacy and numeracy sessions throughout the school. They show reverence when listening to or saying prayers in class and in the hall during collective worship. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning and are able to sustain concentration throughout the lessons. They enjoy their activities and co-operate well with their teachers and each other. This is especially the case when they are involved in first-hand practical experiences. A

good example of this was seen in a science lesson in which pupils in Year 5 were working very well together in an activity to filter sand from water. Pupils throughout the school show a great deal of confidence when speaking to adults and to each other.

26 The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils in both key stages is very good and they are happy to accept the discipline of the school community. They see any rules and sanctions as fair and understand that rules exist for the benefit of all. Pupils respond well to the high expectations set by staff in terms of relationships, conduct and mutual respect. This has a positive effect on standards of achievement and the quality of life within the school. Pupils show respect for the building, books and equipment. They also show a great deal of self-discipline. Pupils behave very well in the dining room, in the playground and when moving around school. They are very polite and courteous and hold doors open without prompting. They show genuine interest in others, initiate conversations and listen politely to responses. In the year prior to inspection there was one fixed period exclusion. Over the last three school years the rate of exclusions is falling. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection but pupils are aware of the procedures to follow if bullying does occur. They have confidence in their teachers that bullies will be dealt with firmly and justly. The staff deals with any instances of misbehaviour quickly and in a sensitive manner.

27 Pupils with special educational needs respond well in class, particularly where additional support is provided. They try hard with their work and concentrate well on the tasks provided. They behave very well and are keen to learn.

28 The school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The school provides a very secure framework in which pupils are co-operative, trustworthy, and tolerant. Pupils show a great deal of respect for other people's feelings, value and beliefs. This is often observed in discussions when pupils are prepared to listen to the opinions of others, even when they do not share them. Relationships within the school are very good and pupils relate very well to each other and to adults. There is good provision for pupils to take on increasing responsibility as they pass through the school. The school ensures that pupils are involved in the routines of the school from the day they start school. They act as register monitors and the older pupils effectively help the younger ones during lunchtime. When engaged in collaborative groupwork, pupils show initiative and are willing to take responsibility. This was seen when pupils were involved in mathematical and scientific investigations in both key stages. Pupils effectively contribute to the life of the local community by singing carols to elderly residents at Christmas and by links with charities such as Dr. Barnardo's and the Francis House Children's Appeal. The school stresses the uniqueness of each child but also helps children to appreciate and celebrate the talents of other pupils. The school is a well-ordered and very friendly community, to which pupils contribute fully.

- **Attendance**

29 Attendance is good. The attendance and unauthorised absence rates are broadly in line with the national average and the vast majority of pupils enjoy attending the school. Punctuality is good with most pupils making every effort to get to school on time. Registers are taken promptly at the start of each session, are conscientiously completed and comply with statutory requirements. Most lessons run to the published timetable.

- **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

## • Teaching

30 During the inspection week one of the class teachers was absent and one of the teachers is in her first term of teaching. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with a significant amount of good teaching observed. Teaching is good in over a third of lessons, and very good in almost a tenth of lessons. Teaching was unsatisfactory in four percent of lessons. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching is less than in the previous inspection.

31 Since the previous inspection teaching has improved in those areas where there was some concern. Work is now better matched to the ability of pupils where there are special educational needs. The over complex grouping of pupils has also improved.

32 Teaching of pupils under five is good overall and very good in the nursery. Teachers create a very good working atmosphere. They have good relationships with the classes to which the children respond well. Planning is detailed. Work is planned so that the children move smoothly from the Desirable Learning Outcomes to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Support staff are well briefed and have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and assessment. Classroom routines are clear and organisation is good. Work is mostly well matched to the needs of individual pupils, though sometimes the expected rate of progress for the higher attaining pupils is too slow and the teaching doesn't sufficiently challenge pupils. Day-to-day assessment is detailed and sometimes used well to inform the next steps for individual pupils.

33 In Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory overall with a substantial number of good and very good lessons. In a little over a third of the lessons teaching is good or better, and six percent very good. Teaching in only one lesson was unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in history. Teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics, science, information technology, religious education, and physical education. Insufficient teaching of music, art, design technology and geography was seen during the week of the inspection for judgements to be made. Lesson planning is sound and sometimes good. At its best, it clearly identifies what the pupils are expected to learn from the lesson, and the pupils understand the learning target. In the best lessons effective discussion, comment and precise questioning to different ability groups of pupils are used well to extend the pupils' understanding. A good example of this was in a mathematics lesson where the teacher skillfully addressed individual questions to the different ability groups in her mixed age class. Less effective teaching is characterized by unclear instructions given to pupils and lack of pace.

34 In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, with 2/5 of good or better lessons observed and with eight percent very good teaching. Teaching was unsatisfactory in only four percent of lessons. Teaching is good in science and physical education. It is satisfactory in English, mathematics, information technology, geography and religious education. In design technology, history, music and art, insufficient teaching was seen for judgements to be made.

35 Teachers have sound subject knowledge, with some good expertise in areas of the curriculum such as science and history. Subject knowledge is unsatisfactory in information technology. Long-term and medium-term planning is variable but mostly good. Quality of the day-to-day planning is variable with the best being precise and clearly focused on the learning goals. It doesn't sufficiently take account of the differing abilities of pupils especially for the higher attaining pupils. Some lessons challenge pupils well, and deepen their knowledge and understanding through good exposition and pupil activity and discussion. Less effective teaching is characterized by inappropriate pace to the lesson, or when the teacher has not clearly explained the purpose, or method for an activity, or the teacher questioning is overlong and unclear.

36 In both key stages, methods and organisation used by teachers are sound. Questioning of pupils is satisfactory with some good opportunities given to pupils to articulate their own methods and understanding. In good lessons, pupils are given some appropriate opportunities to work with a partner or in a small group, the correct terminology is promoted and there are clear expositions and explanations by the teachers.

37 In both key stages pupils are well managed. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and the ethos of learning is very good. Teachers are concerned for the welfare of pupils. They expect high levels of behaviour and commitment from pupils. Teachers value pupils' contributions, and this develops the pupils' good attitudes to learning, which, in turn improves standards.

38 Although teaching is satisfactory overall, and rarely unsatisfactory teachers do not systematically use assessment and record keeping to inform the next steps for individual pupils and groups.

39 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs by teachers and support assistants is good.

40 When direct support of information technology was seen, it was satisfactory. There is too little direct teaching for pupils to make the necessary progress, and the Programmes of Study required by the National Curriculum are not being met. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use the computer equipment in school and to build on the early skills taught in school or brought from home. Insufficient time is given to the direct teaching of information technology, and teachers' own expertise needs developing.

41 Homework is used to reinforce and extend what is learnt in school, but systems vary from class to class.

· **The curriculum and assessment**

42 The curriculum that the school provides for the children aged under five, in the Nursery and the Reception classes, is good, being broad, balanced and relevant for all the children. It effectively covers all the areas of learning and experience that are expected for this age group and provides a secure foundation for the future demands of the National Curriculum. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and also on the children's personal and social development. This emphasis and the significant amount of good teaching that the children receive in the Nursery results in them making good progress in their academic skills and allows them to show increased confidence as they settle into the school routines.

43 The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is good, being broad, balanced and relevant. It meets the statutory requirements to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum but there are some areas of information technology that are underdeveloped. The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy in a satisfactory way and has also made a suitable start with the National Numeracy Strategy. There has been suitable additional time devoted to literacy and numeracy, but the school has worked hard to maintain pupils' access to all areas of the curriculum and there is good coverage of most Programmes of Study. Of particular note is that French, as a modern foreign language, is taught to pupils in Year 6 on a weekly basis as a means of adding to their learning experiences. The demands of Stockport's Agreed Syllabus for religious education are met in full and there are daily acts of collective worship. The school very effectively supports the pupils' physical and personal development. There is very good provision for pupils to experience personal and social education, including health education and attention to drug misuse. The school provides for sex education within the health education curriculum in a sensitive and supportive manner in the context of family life and values. Throughout the school, pupils are very well prepared for the next stages of education and for life in general.

44 The school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. There is good quality provision for pupils with special educational needs, with effective procedures in place for the identification and assessment of these pupils. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is very well organised and maintains a comprehensive register for identified pupils. The Code of Practice is fully implemented.

45 Since the previous inspection, the school has improved its long and medium-planning in order to better support continuity and progression of learning for pupils. This planning is now secure. The long-term planning provides a broad overview of the aspects of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study delivered by each year group. Teachers draw their medium-term planning from this overview to detail what and how the pupils are going to learn during each half term. This recent improvement in planning, led by the acting headteacher, has not yet refined the school's short-term planning to clearly identify the key learning objectives and skills to be taught in each lesson. The school recognises that the short-term plans should be more focused which includes planning opportunities to evaluate what pupils have learned in order to effectively inform the teachers' future planning.

46 There is a very good programme of extra-curricular activities, including competitive team games, that enrich the curriculum. These include netball, football, athletics, cross-country, choir, recorders, guitar, French, needlecraft, art, computers, country dancing and sign language. These activities are offered mainly to pupils in Key Stage 2 as it is felt that the school day is already long enough for pupils in Key Stage 1. All the teachers and a high number of pupils take part in these activities. The school gives pupils opportunity to take part in a wide variety of educational visits that very effectively enrich the curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences for pupils. These include trips to the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester and the Macclesfield Heritage Centre. There are trips to see the Halle Orchestra at the Bridgewater Hall, and to the 'Roman Experience' in Chester to further pupils historical knowledge and understanding of the Romans in Britain. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to take part in annual residential experiences. These have included an outdoor pursuit and adventure stay, and visits to Germany, Belgium and Holland to enrich the pupils' experience of foreign languages, culture and history.

47 The procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory, and what is learned from assessment and testing is not effectively used to determine the next stage of pupils' learning. There are suitable systems for assessing pupils' attainment but the information available from these is not used effectively by some teachers to set work that is well matched to the pupils' abilities, especially the higher attaining pupils. This was a concern in the previous inspection. There is not sufficient use made of planning, on a day-to-day basis, to take full account of pupils' prior attainment, nor is there effective use made of

assessment information by some teachers to influence their future planning. The acting headteacher has led a review of the assessment procedures and, as a result, new and comprehensive procedures are to be introduced in the spring term to seek to improve this aspect of the school's provision. The school has made suitable headway in analysing end-of-key-stage tests to identify areas for development and is beginning to introduce target setting to improve the performance of individuals and groups of pupils. Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs is used in a satisfactory way to plan future work.

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

48 The spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of pupils is very good and a strength of the school. The combined effect of this provision has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and their achievements. Spiritual development is good. Assemblies make a positive contribution towards pupils' spiritual development by giving them valuable time to reflect on their own life and the lives of others. Due respect is given to the different faiths practised by pupils. Appropriate provision is made for those pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship. In lessons, pupils are made aware of the wonders of the natural and wider world. Music, art, literature, RE and history all contribute to pupils' spiritual development with staff receiving and valuing pupils' ideas across the whole curriculum.

49 Provision for moral development is very good. High expectations are made of pupils in terms of their personal conduct and, in the main, these are achieved. A firm framework of moral principles is consistently applied and promoted. Staff acts as good role models and moral themes feature strongly in stories, assemblies and in discussions with pupils. From the time they start Nursery and throughout the key stages, pupils are taught to distinguish wrong from right and how to make appropriate choices. The school places great emphasis on self-discipline and pupils being responsible for their own actions. The result is an orderly community, with pupils showing obvious enjoyment at being in school and in contributing to the friendly and purposeful learning environment.

50 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Staff throughout the school demonstrate considerable respect for pupils, raising their confidence and self-esteem in all aspects of school life. Staff provide good role models for how relationships are initiated and sustained. School routines, opportunities to work and play collaboratively in, for example curriculum subjects, in concerts put on by the school, in residential experiences and extra-curricular activities, promote the development of pupils' social skills. Children under five have well planned opportunities for social interaction and to develop appropriate independence and responsibility. As pupils progress through the school they are expected to contribute more to both the school and wider community. For example, older pupils help supervise the younger ones in the dining area, they entertain younger pupils during wet play times, they raise money for charities, such as a hospice and feeding the homeless, they act as monitors and entertain others. Pupils are able to dine in an attractive environment with background music playing to make it a meaningful, social occasion.

51 Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Throughout the curriculum, but particularly through music, art, drama, RE and English, pupils learn about their own culture and traditions. For example, they learn to appreciate the work of past and present composers and artists, and learn to appreciate the contributions to history made by people such as Grace Darling and John F. Kennedy. A good range of well-planned visits and visitors such as poets, writers, musicians and theatre groups supports cultural development. Visits have included the Bridgewater Hall to see an orchestral performance, a heritage centre and costume gallery. Multi-cultural development is good. Pupils have a range of opportunities to learn about the customs and values of different cultures. Through religious education, art, music, literature and visitors, pupils learn the contribution that all cultures have made to

our world. The school values and celebrates the cultural heritage of all pupils through assemblies, displays and in class. For example, at Eid festival, Muslim pupils demonstrate their traditional clothing, prayers, food and artifacts. Pupils listen to a range of music that includes African drums, Asian pop, Islamic chants and Spanish flamenco. Asian geometric patterns are covered in art lessons. Pupils visit the Manchester Jewish museum and synagogue, and the school has a good range of artifacts, which are used in attractive and informative displays.

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

52 The support, welfare and guidance that pupils receive is very good and a strength of the school. All staff take responsibility for pastoral care very seriously and successfully create a caring and supportive ethos. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support. Relationships are very good and pupils have confidence to share problems with staff. The school is a vibrant but well-ordered and friendly society, to which pupils make a significant contribution.

53 Monitoring of academic achievements and personal development is good. Pupils' annual reports have improved since the previous inspection and now contain comments from the pupils. However, although they highlight achievements, the reports contain very little about weaknesses and areas for future development. Procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The consistent approach to behaviour management makes a positive contribution to every aspect of the school community. The continual development of very good relationships between staff and pupils and the encouragement of self-discipline ensures the minimum need for sanctions. Bullying is a rare occurrence in the school but the staff are ever vigilant and deal with any incidences sensitively and quickly. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are very good with the school working closely with parents and the EWO to ensure good attendance and punctuality and by creating a friendly and enjoyable learning environment that pupils want to be a part of.

54 Child protection procedures are satisfactory. Although the headteacher is the designated person for child protection procedures he has not yet received the appropriate training. However, he attends case conferences as and when necessary, liaises with outside agencies and is fully conversant with the Local Authorities' practices and procedures, as are all staff. The school has begun to address the Care and Constraint legislation.

55 There is very good programme for personal, social and health education. Since the previous inspection the school has won the Healthy School Award. Lessons are timetabled for personal, health, and social education and some topics are covered in science. Year 4 also has circle time, which as well as developing speaking and listening skills, also makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development, self-esteem and confidence. Other topics covered include awareness of substance abuse, personal hygiene, safety and healthy eating. Some pupils take part in the Crucial Crews Project, the Education for Life Caravan, Theatre Bus have visited the school and run alcohol abuse workshops with pupils. Sex education is sensitively taught on a developmental basis. A good range of visitors, such as the police, road safety officer, dentist, school nurse and doctor attend the school to support pupils' welfare and safety. Pupils have access to a nourishing, well-balanced meal at lunch times. The kitchen staff have consistently provided a high quality service recognised by Stockport Direct Services.

56 Procedures for accidents and emergencies are very good. Several members of staff are qualified first aiders and there is a well-equipped medical room. Fire drills are carried out periodically and risk assessment undertaken by head teacher, a designated teacher for health and safety, the governing body and care taking staff. The supervision of pupils at lunch times is good and has improved since the previous inspection. There is now an adequate number of supervisory staff and they are caring, vigilant



and interact well with pupils. Although the mid-day supervisors do not receive formal training, since the previous inspection they have been given a manual and they meet from time to time with the headteacher to discuss policy and procedures.

- **Partnership with parents and the community**

57 The school continues to foster good links with parents and the community and again this aspect is a strength of the school. Information to parents is good. Since the previous inspection the school has introduced an additional parent/teacher evening which has been well received by parents and is very well attended. Letters and newsletters sent to parents are timely, informative and friendly in tone. As a direct result of a questionnaire sent out by the school to all parents, class teachers now inform them by letter about the topics and areas for study that will be covered that term or half term. The School Prospectus is an attractive and informative document. Parents' involvement in their children's education and the life of the school is good. The school continually welcomes parental help and involvement and some parents regularly help out in classrooms, particularly in the Nursery and Key Stage 1. Parents also help by demonstrating aspects of past life, for example, a grandparent demonstrated the use of a dolly-tub and some parents help with odd jobs around the school. There is very good support for special events such as school concerts, sports days and class assemblies. The school has recently re-kindled the Parents Association which plans to organise social as well as fund raising events.

58 Partnership with the community is very good. Many aspects of the curriculum and topic work are enriched by well planned, appropriate visits or visitors. Pupils have the opportunity to visit places of historic interest such as Bramhall Hall. The school makes good use of the local environment, for example, pupils visit a local supermarket, local church, and post office and there are planned visits to the library. For environmental studies, pupils use the nature area in the grounds where, for instance, they do pond dipping. The school has effective links with the local airport authorities, local departmental stores and a league football club which provides coaching facilities and pupil access to the learning suite. The school has formed an effective partnership with a university and has plans to develop this further. Visitors include clergy, theatre groups and artists-in-residence. Links with the main feeder school and other primary schools are good. Staff meet on a regular basis and through a series of visits and meetings, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- **Leadership and management**

59 The school has, over the past year, had staffing difficulties brought about as a result of a number of circumstances outside its control. During this period the acting headteacher has had to cope with considerable change and re-organisation. Throughout this time he has provided the school with good leadership and management, ensuring that, despite a large staff turnover, there has been good teamwork and pupils have continued to make good progress.

60 The acting headteacher is well supported by the governing body and the school has very clear aims and a strong educational philosophy. Both of these areas were identified in the previous inspection report as Key Issues and areas for development. The governing body has clearly developed its role in the strategic management of the school and has put in place a committee structure and a school development plan to identify and meet the school's needs in the coming year. The school aims are together very clear and are supported by a statement outlining the schools educational philosophy. They provide a clear framework which guides the work of the school.

61 The school has a very good and strong ethos with a high commitment to maintaining and raising standards. The relationships between all staff and pupils in the school are very strong and this is a very positive area which considerably helps pupils to make good progress in a secure environment.

62 The school has a detailed and comprehensive development plan. Priorities and areas for future development are clearly identified and are costed through an associated budget sheet. Although the document is very thorough it is quite difficult both to follow and to use as a tool for measuring the progress of the areas for development. The school is aware of the need to refine the school development plan.

63 The role of the subject co-ordinator has recently been considerably strengthened and developed. This, together with a review and development of subject guidance and policies, is having a very positive affect on standards. Subject co-ordinators see all colleagues' plans and have informal opportunities to support and advise. Co-ordinators have recently been provided with a budget for developing and resourcing their areas. This has helped with further defining their roles and responsibility and has helped to strengthen the role across the school.

64 The school has made an appropriate and successful response to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Effective strategies have been established and realistic targets have been set.

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

66 As a result of good leadership, the development of good teamwork, and some very hard work between all concerned, the school has successfully progressed through a difficult and challenging period and continues to develop. It is well placed to sustain improvements in the future.

67 The school is successful in meeting all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum with the exception of information technology, where there is insufficient coverage of the Programmes of Study.

• **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

68 The school is adequately staffed with teachers who are appropriately qualified to teach pupils of primary age. There is an above average number of support staff who are well deployed throughout the school and to work with pupils identified as having special educational needs. Two staff have been appointed part time especially to work with pupils with learning difficulties.

69 The cycle of staff appraisal is not fully established. In-service training has been provided for subject co-ordinators and this, together with recent clarification of the role of the subject co-ordinator, has had a good impact on teaching and learning. Staff development is carefully planned and the school makes effective use of the advisory staff of the local authority for advice and support, especially during recent months. Newly qualified staff are appropriately supported and are provided with development time away from their classes.

70 The school has spacious accommodation, which is well maintained both inside and out. Most of the school is provided with double glazing and some re roofing to insulate against aircraft noise

associated with the nearby Manchester Airport. The de-mountable classrooms have recently been considerably improved and reorganised and, despite the lack of soundproofing in these buildings, are pleasant environments. Recent improvements have been made in most areas of the school. There is a very pleasant dining area. The school environment is very well cared for by all staff and pupils and is excellently maintained by the site manager and cleaning staff. Attractive displays in corridors and classrooms support the curriculum and some circulation areas are used for information and communication technology and for some individual support of pupils. All the school accommodation is used well, with the exception of the school library which is currently under-used. The school has identified this shortcoming as an area for development.

71 The school has spacious grounds, with an extensive grassed area. There is a good size hard playing area, an impressive playground area with large fixed play equipment and an excellent environmental area with a very interesting and well-established pond.

72 Resources for learning are adequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum. They are good for geography, religious education and for early years. The computers are of good quality, being up-to-date machines, but the school has more pupils to each computer than is the national average. In its planning, the school has identified this as an area for development.

- **The efficiency of the school**

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

74 The school development plan (SDP) is a comprehensive document providing a clear direction for the work of the school. There has been a careful identification of the school's future needs, especially in the light of the changes in staffing and future staffing needs. The SDP has been based on a review of standards and the current provision. Governors have been very involved in its development and the Local Education Authority has provided advice and support, including facilitating links with an established headteacher on a regular basis. All developments have been very carefully costed and are linked to the school budget, although these links are not always clear. The plan has success criteria and is proving to be a good tool for school improvement.

75 There is an efficient system of financial and budgetary control through the head teacher and school administrator working closely together. The finance committee of the governing body are closely involved in all aspects of the school budget and are provided with regular financial information. The committee, and especially the chair of the finance committee, have a very clear picture of finances. The school is a 'cheque-book' school and makes good use of the system. Which has allowed the school more control over its financial resources. Good levels of financial control are confirmed by Local Authority audits, which are frequent for 'Chequebook' schools.

76 There has recently been a change from central funding for resourcing to a system providing subject co-ordinators with a budget for their area. This has been important in providing co-ordinators with more responsibility for their area, enhancing their status and in developing the effectiveness of their role.

77 The school makes good use of information technology in the management of finances and day-to-

day running of the school. A commercial software package is used and both the acting headteacher and the school administrator are trained in its use.

78 Staff are deployed effectively throughout the school, including two teachers who are employed part time to work mainly with pupils identified as having special educational needs. The level of support staffing is above the national average and the deployment is very effective. This is considerably enhanced through the good relationships and strong teamwork evident throughout the school.

79 Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. There is efficient use of funds identified to support these pupils and there is good and effective teamwork between teachers, support staff and visiting staff from the LEA. This aspect is well co-ordinated and as a result pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.

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

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

81 The school makes good provision for children under five years of age with very good provision being made by the Nursery. At the time of the inspection all of the children in the Nursery and the Reception class, and one child in the mixed aged class were under five years of age. Arrangements for starting the Nursery and Reception classes, at the beginning of the school year, are sound.

82 The overall attainment of children on entry to school is generally in line with the nationally expected level but varies greatly from child to child. By the age of five, children achieve levels above that normally expected of their age group in language and literacy, physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world with children's attainment in mathematics being at the expected level and personal and social development being well above expectation. In the Nursery and Reception classes children overall make good progress.

83 The Nursery classroom is spacious with a large enclosed outdoor play area while the two Reception classrooms are linked by a jointly used cloakroom area. The rooms are colourful, well organized, and stimulating with due regard to health and safety.

84 Personal and social development is a strength of the school with well above average attainment being achieved for the majority of children by the age of five. The children are confident and establish effective relationships with other children and adults alike. Children work well alongside one another willingly. They are beginning to learn to co-operate with others, for example children in the nursery share, and take turns well with the 'seals' and 'dolphins' in the water play. They show appropriate self-respect and most have a high level of self-confidence. They are able to establish effective relationships with adults and other children. They demonstrate independence very well in selecting activities and materials and in personal hygiene. They carry out teacher given tasks very well, working with out reference to the adults, when asked to do so, to a high level of independence, self-confidence and commitment to the task. Their behaviour is very good. Children's attention span and concentration is very good. The awareness of right and wrong is well promoted by the teachers. They treat their own and other people's property with care and consideration, picking up toys from the floor and clearing away enthusiastically.

85 The attainment in language and literacy development by the age of five is above that normally found. Children under five make good progress in language and literacy. Listening skills are well promoted by the staff. Most of the children listen to each other with interest in large and small groups. They are willing to talk, with some using a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency, to express their thoughts. A very good example of this was children in the Nursery talking about musical instruments they had played, knowing all the instrument names, and talking confidently about which one they would like to play next time. Most pupils join in well with singing rhymes and songs. Elementary reading skills are established quickly in the Reception classes. Children are able to recognize some initial sounds, and many pupils can, by the time they are five, use them to spell simple words. Pupils can form letters correctly and write clearly.

86 Attainment in mathematics by the age of five is in line with the level expected of children of this age. Pupils are learning to use mathematical language appropriately to describe amounts, quantity and time. By the time they are five they are able to sort, order by height, match objects and make simple patterns. Most are able to count objects to ten and some beyond, and most pupils can write numerals accurately. Some can add numbers up to ten and undertake subtraction accurately using practical

equipment. A few can solve practical problems.

87 Children make good progress in knowledge and understanding of their environment. They are involved in a very good range of interesting activities. An example of this at the time of the inspection, involved pupils examining a flower to predict and observe what would happen to a white flower when given red water. While in another classroom, the “home corner” was typical of the Victorian era. Children are able to talk well about where they live, and their families. They describe well their school lives and features of their school environment that they like. They are becoming increasingly familiar with how things change over time.

88 Satisfactory progress is made in the development of children’s physical skills. Children develop good skills of physical control, mobility, co-ordination and awareness of space. Good provision is made for children to play with a wide variety of resources, such as water and tearing and cutting in order to develop their co-ordination. The Nursery class has access to large enclosed outdoor play space and a good variety of outdoor toys. The Reception classes appropriately have a separate area of the main playground for playtime play. Each class uses the hall and physical education equipment at least on a weekly basis as well as the schools physical education equipment.

89 In the area of creative and aesthetic development, children make good progress. Staff provide a wide range of activities including art, craft, music, movement and imaginative play. Children soundly express their ideas in drawing, painting and modelling. In doing so, they show they can use their imaginations and communicate their feelings effectively. Good drawings, in the Nursery, show a range of skills developing well, with the higher attainers showing many features of a person, while others omit some detail. Children’s art in various media is well displayed.

90 The overall quality of the teaching for the under fives is good with very good teaching in the Nursery. Teaching and support staff collaborate well. Teachers’ subject knowledge is good, but not always with appropriately high expectations for the full range of abilities of the pupils. Given the basis of very good teaching in the Nursery, care needs to be taken to ensure that all skills and knowledge are developed and extended at an appropriate rate and level in the Reception classes, especially in areas such as singing, construction toys, sand, water and mathematics. Management of pupil behaviour is very good. Relationships are positive. There is a happy atmosphere, in which children feel secure. Planning is satisfactory, appropriately using the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age group. It sometimes focuses on the activity planned rather than the learning that needs to take place. Preparation is very thorough. Good assessment of pupils is undertaken on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes. Day-to-day assessment is carefully undertaken and often used well in the planning to inform precise learning objectives for individual pupils.

91 Early years education is well resourced and co-ordinated. The curriculum is broad, and appropriately balanced. Arrangements for liaison with parents and carers and for reporting to them are good but the information given to parents when their child starts Reception lacks detail about the curriculum for this age group.

- **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

- **English**

92 The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds are well above the national average in English and well above average for schools in similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades in the tests is high in comparison with the national average. The 1999 results are not as good and in comparison with similar schools the performance of pupils is in line with the average. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently at the end of the Key Stage 2 is in line with the national average. The 1998 test and assessment results at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment in reading was in line with the national average and in writing well above the national average. When compared to similar schools pupils' performance was average in reading and well above average in writing. The test results for 1999 confirm that these standards are being maintained. The attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average. There is evidence that the higher attaining pupils are not always suitably challenged and as a result are not attaining the standards of which they are capable. There have been significant variations in standards attained over the last three years in both key stages and these fluctuations are a result of the differing abilities of successive cohorts and the upheavals caused by the major staff changes seen in recent years.

93 The progress that pupils make in both key stages in speaking and listening is good and their attainment at the end of the key stage is above average. In Key Stage 1, pupils show that they are able to listen carefully to stories and explanations given by teachers and other pupils. They can respond with relevant answers to questions. Pupils showed that they are very eager to take full part in group and class discussions, especially during the introductions and plenary sessions of the literacy hour. These skills were shown to good effect in a lesson for Year 2 pupils on analysing an extract from Samuel Pepy's Diary. During the lesson the pupils were able to answer questions and talk about the Diary in a confident and clear manner. During Key Stage 2, pupils continue to be good listeners and are very responsive to the ideas and views of others. Pupils are able to speak clearly and vary their tone in a range of situations. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 3 in which they were effectively discussing the use of speech bubbles as a means of presenting ideas. They can describe events and convey opinions and are able to adapt their talk to a range of purposes. This was shown in a Year 5 lesson on developing a playscript in which the pupils were able to put forward, in a clear and articulate way, a range of creative ideas about the script.

94 The progress that pupils make in both key stages in reading is satisfactory and their attainment at the end of the key stage is average. In Key Stage 1, pupils can read accurately from texts suitable for their age. They can discuss what they have read and predict what will happen next. Most pupils are able to use a range of strategies including the use of phonics to determine unfamiliar words. This was seen to good effect in Years 1 and 2 in the literacy hour sessions. The majority of pupils enjoy books and many can confidently express opinions about their reading and are able to use books in a suitable fashion for information. This was also observed in a Year 1 lesson in which pupils were learning how to extract information from a variety of recipes. In Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils can read a range of texts accurately and can recount stories and express preferences. In a Year 5 lesson, on developing a playscript, the pupils showed good knowledge of the text and were able to read aloud in an accurate and confident manner. Pupils in Year 6 can speak with suitable knowledge and understanding about their favourite authors. In a lesson in Year 6 pupils made effective progress in their understanding of narrative perspective when reading an extract from the 'Secret Garden' and in their ability to locate and make use of ideas and information. The school is aware that there are limited opportunities for higher attaining pupils to read demanding texts and to evaluate them with reference to stories by different authors. To address this issue, and to improve the standard of reading in general throughout the school, a review of how reading is taught is currently being carried out. This is to centre on a move away from

the reading schemes and onto a 'real books' approach as a means of more effectively challenging pupils of all abilities in their reading. This is allied to a move away from hearing individual pupils read and onto the group shared and guided reading methods that are an integral part of the National Literacy Strategy. The class libraries do not have a satisfactory range of fiction books for pupils to read, and the main library is not used effectively to support an improvement in pupils' reading skills or to develop their independent research skills. The school is aware of this and is currently reviewing how to improve provision to help support the raising of standards in reading.

95 The progress that pupils make in both key stages in writing is satisfactory and their attainment at the end of the key stage is average. In Key Stage 1, most pupils are able to use an interesting range of vocabulary and show an awareness of the reader in their writing. Many pupils are able to write a sequence of sentences and punctuate them accurately, with simple words spelled correctly. In a Year 1 lesson on extracting information from recipes, the pupils showed ability to recognise verbs as 'doing words'. During a lesson in Year 2 pupils showed suitable understanding of how to identify and use plural words and speech marks in their writing. The school has identified an intention to further raise standards by targeting an increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in the writing tests. In Key Stage 2, pupils can write extended narratives and use increasingly complex sentence structures and more difficult punctuation skills. Most pupils' writing is grammatically correct. Pupils draft and edit their work successfully. Pupils are able to use dictionaries and other reference materials to suitable effect to help them in their learning. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the structure of playscripts and of associated imaginative writing. The standard of pupils' spelling is satisfactory. Pupils' handwriting and presentational skills have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. The school is targeting a further improvement in this aspect of the pupils' learning. A legible joined script is started in Key Stage 1 and suitably developed and refined through Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 show a clear, legible and neat cursive style of writing.

96 Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the learning targets identified in their individual education plans. This is a result of the well-structured support that these pupils receive. Standards in speaking and listening are good with pupils making effective contributions to class discussions.

97 In both key stages, pupils make satisfactory use of their literacy skills in other subjects. This is evident in their investigative report writing in science and their research writing in history and geography.

98 The response of the vast majority of pupils in lessons is good. Pupils listen very carefully to teachers and are very eager to make contributions to discussions. They are able to concentrate for extended periods and are well behaved. Pupils handle reading books and other English resources with care and respect. They are able to work independently or collaboratively, as appropriate. In all classes there is a very good working atmosphere in lessons, to which pupils respond confidently and positively. They show a great deal of interest and enjoyment in their English activities.

99 The quality of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory with a significant proportion of good teaching. Teachers' planning is thorough and there is good preparation for the lessons. There is effective classroom organisation and management that results in pupils being given good support to make progress in their learning. Marking is positive but lacks the setting of suitable targets to improve individual pupil's performance. Teachers are effective in using questioning to move pupils' thinking on and this was seen in most of the literacy sessions that were observed. In most lessons seen teachers demonstrated secure subject knowledge and expertise. Some teachers are more confident than others in delivering the literacy hour activities, and there is recognition of the need for a more consistent approach through the school. Examples of good teaching were seen in lessons in Years 2 and 3, in which the



teachers provided activities that were motivating and imaginative and which effectively developed pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. An example of very good teaching was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 5 in which the teacher showed very high expectations of pupils' performance, very good questioning skills and allowed pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers make limited use of information technology to enhance pupils' work in English.

100 The subject curriculum is satisfactory and the school is implementing the Literacy Strategy in a suitable manner. However, some teachers are more confident than others in delivering the literacy hour activities and there is recognition for a more consistent approach through the school. The long and medium-term planning for English follows the framework of the National Literacy Strategy and is effective in ensuring progression and continuity of pupils' learning through the school. The short-term planning is not as secure and often does not clearly identify the key learning objectives and skills to be taught in each lesson. The school recognises that the short-term plans should be more focused and include an opportunity to evaluate what pupils have learned in order to effectively inform the teachers' future planning. The procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory, and what is learned from assessment and testing is not effectively used to determine the next stage of pupils' learning. There are suitable systems for assessing pupils' attainment but the information available from these is not used effectively by some teachers to set work that is well matched to the pupils' abilities, especially the higher attaining pupils. This was a concern in the previous inspection. Insufficient use is made of planning, on a day-to-day basis, to take full account of pupils' prior attainment, nor is there effective use made of assessment information by some teachers to influence their future planning. The school acknowledges the need to further develop the use of assessment information to set manageable targets to improve individual and group performance. The school has made suitable headway in analysing end-of-key stage tests to identify areas for development and is beginning to introduce target setting to improve the performance of individuals and groups of pupils. Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs is used in a satisfactory way to plan future work.

101 There is good subject leadership by an able co-ordinator whose work is having a positive effect on standards achieved. She has worked with the acting headteacher to develop an action plan to support an improvement in standards through the school. There is an adequate range of resources for English but the school is aware of the need to extend the range of fiction and non-fiction books to better support the development of pupils' reading skills in both key stages. The school has a main library but it is not suitably used to develop pupils' reading and research skills. The main improvements since the previous inspection have been the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and an improvement in the pupils' handwriting and presentational skills.

#### • **Mathematics**

102 At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the key stage.

103 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum test for seven-year-olds showed that the percentage achieving the level expected for their age [Level 2] was below the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the next higher level [Level 3] was above that expected nationally. In comparison to all schools overall they achieved higher than the national average and high when compared to similar schools.

104 These results were an improvement on the previous year. Test results over a three-year period show that results have fluctuated.

105 Across the key stage pupils demonstrate sound knowledge of number facts and place value. They are developing good understanding of number patterns, for example the pattern evolved from counting in fives and tens. By the end of the key stage many pupils are beginning to understand multiplication and can confidently add and subtract money to 50 pence and some to a pound. Pupils can describe accurately properties of shapes and complete simple measurement tasks. A good example of pupils' growing understanding in measurement seen at the time of the inspection, involved pupils working together to make classroom objects balance a number of cubes.

106 Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with attainment in line with that found nationally. They make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment across the key stage. They are acquiring and consolidating knowledge at an appropriate rate. All abilities of pupils make satisfactory progress. Progress in mental recall of number facts, data handling and using and applying their mathematical knowledge is slower than other aspects.

107 In national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999, the percentage of pupils attaining the national expectation (Level 4) was above the national average for all schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the next higher level (Level 5) was in line with that found nationally for all schools. In comparison to all schools overall at Key Stage 2 they have achieved higher than the national average and higher than the average when compared to similar schools.

108 These results were better than the previous year with a larger proportion of pupils achieving the national average. The achievements of boys and girls are broadly similar. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment for the current cohort will be similar.

109 Across Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate sound knowledge of number facts and tables and in some classes it is good. Pupils recognize approximate proportions of whole numbers and shapes, and in Year 4 pupils can use fractions well to describe such proportions them. They are developing good ways for working things out and many pupils can explain their methods clearly. A good example observed of this, involved pupils "correcting a pupils' work sheet" and having to explain the pupils' errors and put right the pupils' work using both mental and written methods. They are developing sound measuring and recording skills through a range of practical activities.

110 By the time they are eleven, pupils have good levels of attainment in some areas of mathematics, however attainment is less strong in handling data and problem solving. Most pupils have good understanding of place value and can use all four operations with accuracy. They can work out the median and mode of given amounts and work out percentages. Some pupils can understand and explain the pattern of triangular and square numbers. They can record measures and add money using decimal notation. Some pupils have the appropriate skills to work independently and follow their own lines of enquiry. Attainment of pupils with special educational needs is below average but commensurate with their abilities.

111 Pupils make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment overall, with stronger progress being made in the middle of the key stage. They are acquiring and consolidating knowledge at an appropriate rate. Progress for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well provided for by teachers and support staff. Progress is less good when pupils investigate a range of solutions, solve problems or use information technology to handle data.

112 Across the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their response in lessons is good. Pupils sustain concentration, listen attentively and apply themselves willingly to the activities set for them. Pupils have a lively interest in their mathematics work. They respond enthusiastically. They co-

operate well when given opportunities to do so.

113 There is some satisfactory use of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum such as science and design and technology. Information technology is not used well to support the teaching of mathematics.

114 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages, with some good and some unsatisfactory features. Teachers' long-term planning for the National Numeracy Strategy is sound. The planning of individual lessons is satisfactory, with many lessons having appropriate clear learning outcomes. Most teachers have sound subject knowledge for the subject and some structure their lessons well. Pupils are mostly well managed. The most effective teaching is characterized by pupils being told precisely what they are learning within the lesson, clear exposition, brisk pace, and interesting tasks well matched to prior attainment which serves to lead them on from what they already know and understand. When effective, ways are found to ensure that all pupils contribute to mental arithmetic sessions, and all pupils are challenged. The pupils are well provided for by support staff.

115 When the teaching is satisfactory or unsatisfactory rather than good, tasks are unchallenging for the more advanced pupils, teachers are not sufficiently aware of pupils' prior knowledge or their own subject knowledge is unsatisfactory. Sometimes children are not given information about the length of the activity and are given too long to complete tasks or pupils are not well managed. Occasionally opportunities are missed for children to co-operate with others. Teachers give few opportunities for pupils to engage in situations where they investigate a range of solutions, ask questions, generalize, or are asked to select appropriate strategies to solve problems.

116 The school has made a satisfactory start to implementing the National Numeracy Strategy.

117 The subject is soundly managed by the subject co-ordinator and there is a satisfactory level of learning resources. There is a new policy for the subject and the new government documents are being used, as the starting point for satisfactory long-term planning. The lack of assessment and record keeping is preventing the precise identification of short-term targets. A new system is currently being developed but is not yet being used. Some monitoring and evaluation is undertaken though more needs to be done to ensure that standards continue to improve for all attainment targets.

118 The school has made some improvements since the previous inspection. There is now less reliance on a scheme, long-term planning is better, mental methods are being taught in most classes and recently there have been some improvements in standards. The commitment of the acting headteacher and the staff to raising standards indicates that the school has the capacity to improve still further.

## • **Science**

119 At both key stages pupils' attainment in science is in line with the national average. Last Year pupils' performance in Standard Attainment Tests was above average at in Key Stage2 both in comparison with schools nationally and with similar schools. Throughout both key stages pupils are very competent in experimental and investigative science. They have a good experience of setting up and carrying out experimental work, and the majority of pupils are able to produce hypotheses and draw conclusions. Results are carefully and well recorded.

120 Pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress in science. Attainment target one, experimental and investigated science, is very well carried out in all classes and especially in Key Stage

2. In one Year 5 science lesson, one pupil representing each group explained the results of an experiment and the whole class then took part in attempting to explain what had happened, and why. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils, having worked in small groups on investigations, clearly demonstrate good understanding by developing hypotheses to explain what they have been doing.

121 Pupils like science and are enthusiastic in their response to science lessons. They are careful in their experimental work and in their recording, working well in pairs and small groups, and are confident and clear when explaining their work to the teacher and to the remainder of the class. Pupils are responsible with equipment and careful when setting up experiments. Behaviour is good in all science lessons.

122 Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are well prepared and clearly identify the areas of the National Curriculum to be covered. They are well resourced and teachers make use of appropriate and varied strategies for teaching the class. Teachers expect all pupils to make good progress and as a result pupils try hard and there is a purposeful atmosphere. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress as a result of careful well-planned teamwork between support staff and teachers. In one Year 5 lesson, pupils with special educational needs made very good progress as a result of the high level of support he received from the support staff and the class teacher.

123 The co-ordination of science across the school is good. There is a clear policy and a good scheme of work in place. The science co-ordinator is well qualified with a very good subject knowledge. She carefully monitors pupils' coverage of the scheme of work and of the requirements of the National Curriculum and pupils levels of attainment, analysing SATs results and identifying areas for improvement. There has been a strong focus, supported and directed by the co-ordinator, on experimental and investigational work.

124 Resources for science are satisfactory with sufficient equipment for pupils to engage actively in experimental and investigative work. The scheme of work is supported by appropriate resources and by a satisfactory range of paper resources and textbooks.

125 Areas for development identified in the previous report have been met and all teachers ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged in lessons.

· **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

· **Religious education**

126 The attainment of the majority of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus for this subject. Pupils make satisfactory progress in this key stage. The attainment of the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is also in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus and they also make satisfactory progress.

127 The pupils in Key Stage 1 show a suitable knowledge and understanding of the basic information about Christianity and are effectively developing their awareness of other major world faiths. Emphasis is placed on sharing and respecting the beliefs of the different religions represented amongst pupils and

this is a major contributory factor to the harmonious atmosphere that is so evident throughout the school. The pupils are taught about aspects of Christian belief and that Jesus is the Son of God. They are able to celebrate and learn about a range of religious festivals such as Christmas, Eid Mubarak, Diwali and Easter. In Year 1, the pupils learn that it is good to share, by listening to how Jesus cared and provided for people who were poor and hungry. In Year 2, they suitably develop their knowledge and understanding of how Christians and Muslims treat their 'Holy Books'. To do this, good use is made of the pupils' own experiences and Muslim pupils are given the opportunity to explain to the class how they approach and use the Qu'ran. They are able to learn about moral issues, such as helping others, by listening to the story of the 'Good Samaritan'. The pupils in Key Stage 2 are given many opportunities to develop a greater awareness of the diversity of religious faith and they show that they can recognise the key features of the major world religions. The school has built up a wide range of religious artifacts to effectively support this study of other religions. The pupils are able to effectively further develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity. They learn about Christian living and how individuals, such as Dr. Barnardo, can have a positive effect on society. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson effectively developed their understanding of the similarities and differences between traditional Christian and Hindu wedding ceremonies. In Year 5, pupils are able to reflect upon the importance of having agreed rules for living and also to deepen their understanding of Judaism. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson were seen to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the Holy Books of the major world faiths and in the skills of examining their own emotions and thoughts and in expressing them to others.

128 The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory through the school. They are fully involved in lessons and are able to share their work and discuss what they are writing with other pupils and the teacher. During their religious education lessons they improve their basic skills of reading, writing and speaking and listening.

129 The pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils show great respect for the feelings, needs and beliefs of others and demonstrate they can reflect on the consequences of their own actions. This was evident in lessons for pupils in Years 4 and 6 in which they were able to effectively share their own thoughts and beliefs in a respectful atmosphere that allowed time for quiet reflection. The pupils listen carefully, have the confidence to express opinions and enjoy opportunities to listen to stories with moral messages.

130 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. The planning for lessons is thorough and the pupils are given positive feedback and encouragement during lessons. Most of the teachers have secure subject knowledge and are familiar with the requirements of the Stockport Agreed Syllabus. Teachers prepare their lessons very well and are supported by a variety of visual resources, including a range of religious artefacts from the major world faiths. Lessons are often linked to pupils' own lives and this is effective in allowing them to talk about their own experiences in a religious context. An example of this is when Muslim pupils in Year 2 are given the opportunity to explain to the class how they approach and use the Qu'ran. The importance that the teachers give to religious education is shown by the high quality displays of the pupils' work around the school.

131 There is a well-structured subject curriculum with a good balance of opportunity to study Christian beliefs and the other major world religious beliefs, such as Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Whole school assemblies and planned opportunities in lessons provide pupils with good opportunities for individual, quiet reflection to develop an understanding of an inner self.

132 There is good leadership of the subject by a committed co-ordinator who can effectively advise and support her colleagues, and whose work is having a positive effect on the standards attained by pupils. The long and medium-term planning for religious education follows the framework of the Stockport Agreed Syllabus and is effective in ensuring progression and continuity of pupils' learning

through the school. The short-term planning is not as secure and often does not clearly identify the key learning objectives and skills to be taught in each lesson. The school recognises that the short-term plans should be more focused and include an opportunity to evaluate what pupils have learned in order to effectively inform the teachers' future planning. The procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory, and what is learned from assessment is not effectively used to determine the next stage of pupils' learning. Insufficient use is made of planning, on a day-to-day basis, to take full account of pupils' prior attainment, nor is there effective use made of assessment information by some teachers to influence their future planning. There is a good range of resources including religious artefacts, reference books and bibles. The accommodation is adequate, allowing opportunity for individual work or small group and whole class discussions. The main improvements since the previous inspection have been the introduction of a new scheme of work, improved resource provision in terms of religious artefacts and the development of a portfolio of pupils' work to show exemplars of the required standards.

### **Information technology**

133 The use of information technology (IT) is seen as an important area within all aspects of school life. It is a significant part of the School Development Plan and is seen as a priority area for development.

134 However, IT, in all the areas of the National Curriculum, is not yet fully developed across the school and some features are not sufficiently covered. As a result, especially in Key Stage 2, IT does not currently meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

135 The majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 have levels of attainment which are average in relation to national expectations. A significant number of pupils in Year 2 have above average levels and are able to input text into a word processing programme, having first selected and opened the programme, and can edit the text. They know how to open clipart, choose a graphic and paste it into their document. Pupils also have a sound knowledge of how IT can be used to control a floor turtle.

136 Towards the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have further developed their word processing skills and are generally competent when using most aspects of the computer interface. Their skills in using data handling programmes and manipulation of number and modelling are limited and this is the main area where attainment is below expectation. The amount of access to the use of IT, and especially computers, is limited and does not allow sufficient time to cover the required aspects and so develop the expected knowledge, understanding and skills.

137 In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and a significant minority make good progress. This is as a result of some good whole class teaching and demonstrations. Pupils in such lessons demonstrate above average levels of recall of how to use the computer and clearly show that they link new information with knowledge and skills they already have.

138 In Key Stage 2, progress is unsatisfactory, mainly as a result of limited access. There are two basic reasons for this: pressure from recent educational initiatives resulting in more limited time being available in the timetable, and; a less favourable number of computers within the school than is found in schools nationally. Pupils have some planned access to IT but this is not sufficient to allow them to learn new applications and so make the progress required by the National Curriculum.

139 Pupils' response to information technology is good. In whole class lessons in both key stages

pupils are interested and concentrate hard. Pupils are keen to answer questions and, when required, to demonstrate what they can do. They do this in a very responsible fashion. Behaviour is invariably good, with good levels of co-operation and sharing. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils work outside the classroom using the group of computers between Years 5 and 6. Here they are sensible and well behaved and apply themselves well to their tasks.

140 The school uses a mixture of whole class teaching and of individual and small group work. In both key stages, teaching is satisfactory and there is some good teaching. A small number of IT lessons was seen, mainly in Key Stage 1. Teachers are generally well organised and a few have a sound knowledge of the subject, although across the school this has been identified as an area for development. Planning is good and identifies clearly what is to be covered. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are good and this contributes very positively to pupils learning.

141 The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed to the role. She has reviewed the existing scheme of work and has linked this with the QCA recommendations. She intends that this will build on the good practice already within the school and improve the less well-developed aspects. The co-ordinator sees all colleagues' plans and so has a clear view of the coverage of the curriculum and is also able to help and support other teachers where required. The co-ordinator has good links with the LEA support services and the school has been successful in its bid for funding under the National Grid for Learning scheme.

142 Resource provision overall is satisfactory. However, the number of computers is less than that found in similar schools. The quality of the IT resources is good with modern multi-media computers, almost all with colour printers, being in all classrooms. The co-ordinator is reviewing software, which for most aspects of the National Curriculum, is adequate and, in some areas, is good. Software for handling number and data is limited and recognised as an area for development. The computer to pupil ratio is not as advantageous as is found in schools nationally and this, linked with current timetable and teaching strategies, is restricting the amount of time that pupils are using IT. The school is very aware of this issue and has it as an area for development in the near future.

## **Art**

143 For some classes the timetable is structured so that art alternates with design and technology and for other classes art is taught towards the end of the week. As a result, the opportunity to observe art lessons was limited during the four days of the inspection. However, the subject is secure in the curriculum and the school provides pupils with a sound range of experiences in art. These are to be seen in all areas of the school including classrooms and corridors.

144 The range and quality of pupils' artwork on display indicates that they are making satisfactory progress and are gaining in art knowledge, understanding and skills. Both two and three-dimensional work is undertaken and in many classes there are links with other subjects, for example, symmetry and pattern in mathematics. In a number of classrooms there are good examples of studies based on art and pattern from other cultures. Throughout the school, pupils are conversant with colour mixing, have experience of a range of media and materials and have studied the work and style of a number of artists.

145 As only one art lesson was seen it is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching. However, teachers' plans for lessons during the week, the amount of artwork on display and scheme of work indicate art is secure in the timetable and pupils are provided with a varied and relevant art

experience. Art teaching is enhanced through the work of visiting artists; for example, a potter has worked with pupils in both key stages, and through extra curricular activities including fabric work.

146 The art co-ordinator has only had this responsibility for a short while. She is well qualified and organised. The Stockport Authority scheme of work is used, providing guidance for teachers and ensuring that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met as well as building teacher confidence. The co-ordinator sees all colleagues' plans and gives advice and support where it is needed.

147 There are adequate resources overall, with a good range of paints and materials for two dimensional work. A quite substantial budget allowance has been spent on resources which meet the needs of the scheme of work. There is an adequate range of teachers' resources, providing information about the life and work of famous artists.

### **Design and technology**

148 Due to timetabling arrangements there was opportunity to observe only two lessons in the subject during the inspection. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and interviews with staff and pupils indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through both key stages.

149 As they pass through Key Stage 1 the pupils learn about the properties of different materials and how best to shape, assemble and join them. In Year 1, pupils learn how to make models out of construction kits, such as 'mobilo', 'lego' and 'Clix'. They also have opportunity to develop their understanding of food technology by designing and making a healthy meal. In Year 2, pupils learn how to design and make wheeled vehicles out of recycled materials and, in so doing, make simple evaluations of the finished product. In one lesson for Year 2 pupils, they made good progress in learning how to use simple levers made out of card to generate movement in their models. As they pass through Key Stage 2 pupils, continue to make suitable progress in their designing and making skills and are able to develop their skills in using a wider range of materials and tools. In Year 3, the pupils investigate a range of structures in terms of stability. They also learn how to evaluate different joining methods and how to strengthen paper and card by rolling, folding and layering. The pupils in Year 4 know how simple mechanisms can be used to produce different types of movement. In a Year 5 lesson, the pupils further developed their skills in food technology by designing and making a bread roll for a lunchbox. During this activity there was good development of their ability to evaluate their work and make modifications as it progressed. In Year 6, the pupils have opportunity to use their scientific knowledge and understanding to design and make moveable fairground rides. There is suitable development of pupils' technological vocabulary and of their ability to evaluate their designs and finished products. The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in technological activities and make suitable progress.

150 Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour in the lessons seen was very good. They show that they recognise the need to work safely when engaged on technological tasks. They are keen to talk about their work in design and technology and pupils indicate that they are able to work co-operatively, allow others to express an opinion and listen to their advice.

151 There is not sufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in the school. In the lessons observed there was thorough planning and the teachers showed a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. The activities provided were motivating and the skilled explanations and demonstration of techniques given by the teachers were effective in enabling the pupils to make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject.

152 The subject curriculum is satisfactory being broad and balanced and there is effective leadership



of the subject by the co-ordinator. The long and medium-term planning follows the QCA guidelines and is effective in ensuring progression and continuity of pupils' learning through the school. The short-term planning is not as secure and often does not clearly identify the key learning objectives and skills to be taught in each lesson. The procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory, and what is learned from assessment is not effectively used to determine the next stage of pupils' learning. The accommodation is adequate for practical groupwork activities. There are adequate resources that are suitably stored.

## **Geography**

153 Too few lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 for a secure judgement to be made about the quality of the teaching. Judgements on attainment and progress are based on the one lesson seen, discussions with pupils, and a scrutiny of their work and an examination of teachers' plans.

154 Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1.

155 By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are able to decide on their likes and dislikes in the school and the local environment. They can identify and describe features in the locality and are aware of places that are not local. They can draw their own maps of the route to the library. They are beginning to locate regions on a map and become familiar with the use of an atlas. They are starting to use appropriate geographical terms.

156 Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.

157 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to talk about the water cycle and can explain how it works. They know about the British Isles and some contrasting locations such as Egypt and the human and physical features of the village of Chembakoli in India. They have developed skills of map reading and finding information from reference books and aerial photographs. Some pupils are able to identify features on photographs that distinguish a canal from a river, and talk about the uses of each. They are starting to understand the importance of locations for the development of communities. Pupils with special need pupils make good progress.

158 Pupils have positive attitudes to geography. They listen attentively and levels of concentration are good. They are keen to answer questions and are generally well behaved. Pupils work well co-operatively when asked to do so.

159 Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, but this would be better, and standards higher, if a clear structure of progress was built into a scheme. Good attention is given to the subject and there are some good structured opportunities given to pupils to use a wide a wide variety of sources for study. For instance, pupils in Year 6 are provided with aerial photographs and CD ROM. Teachers give pupils some good level of challenge and use interesting methods, such as working in pairs and small groups, to make the subject interesting and challenging for pupils. Some sound use of questioning is used to encourage pupils to contribute.

160 There is only a brief policy and no clear scheme of work in place. At Key Stage 1, with mixed age classes, long-term planning is not in place which leads to insecure progression of skills, knowledge and understanding. Resources for geography are good with some appropriate use being made of photographs, CD ROMs and atlases.

## **History**

161 Too few lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 for secure judgements to be made about the quality of the teaching. Judgements on progress are based on the one lesson seen, discussions with pupils, and a scrutiny of their work and an examination of teacher planning. In Key Stage 1 no lessons were observed so it is possible to form a judgement on teaching.

162 Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 1. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with some historical knowledge and understanding already well developed. By the end of the key stage pupils show a developing sense of the difference between old and new, for example, in styles of clothing and methods of transport. They can explain the difference between the past and the present using knowledge from their own families to illustrate their understanding. The pupils can demonstrate good knowledge of the people they have studied, such as Guy Fawkes and Samuel Pepys. They have good understanding as to why events occur and why things have changed. In Year 2 for example, pupils discussing why the Fire of London burnt for so long showed good understanding of building features of the time.

163 The good progress is continued through Key Stage 2. By the age of eleven, most pupils have good knowledge of the periods they have studied and can discuss the reasons for the main events and changes. In Year 3, the exciting teaching methods used, help to develop good knowledge about ancient Rome and the Roman invasion of Britain. In Year 4, some good contrasts are made between Tudor and present times as pupils learn how Britain has changed. While in Year 6, pupils study the life of a Victorian child. Most pupils can make good links and contrasts between the past and the present, and many have developed a good understanding of the characteristic features of periods of history. They are able to describe the main events of the period and know of the important people. A few pupils can make links between the periods studied. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge of historical sources.

164 Progress overall is good in terms of extending historical knowledge, but is inconsistent in terms of the acquisition of historical skills. In some classes there is a good focus on reasons for actions and on changes within and between periods of history.

165 Pupils have good attitudes to history and enjoy their work. They mostly behave well in class and are keen to discuss the events and times that they are studying.

166 In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good. In Key Stage 2, insufficient teaching was seen to be able to judge the standard of it overall. Teachers mostly have a good knowledge of the period that they are teaching, lessons are well prepared and structured. Pupils, resources and time are managed effectively. Teachers make good use of a pertinent range of resources and deploy interesting methods. Good links are made with developing pupils' literacy skills, such as through a whole class play reading about the Roman conquest of Britain. Very good use is made of visits to places of historical interest. There is good teaching about facts and sources of information. Teaching is less strong in helping pupils to develop an understanding of change or to identify changes within and between periods. The teaching of skills to aid historical enquiry need strengthening and making developmental as pupils go up the school.

167 The subject is well managed and an effective planning structure is in place. Resources are mainly satisfactory.

## • **Music**

168 There was only opportunity to observe two lessons during the inspection. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and interviews with staff and pupils indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through both key stages.

169 While they are in Key Stage 1, the pupils learn how to sing a variety of songs and in so doing demonstrate reasonable rhythm and pitch. They can handle instruments in a suitable manner and are able to collaborate well when performing. The pupils in Year 1 explore body percussion sounds and how to put together sounds to make music of their own. Pupils in Year 2 show that they can recognise and name all the basic percussion instruments and relate sounds heard to drawn symbols. In one lesson, they showed good ability to make sounds that represented the noises of the 'Fire of London' with their voices and then with a variety of instruments. In Key Stage 2, pupils sing clearly, tunefully and with enthusiasm and are able to listen to and respond well to music. In Year 3, the pupils learn how to listen to and appraise well-known pieces of music and to use percussion instruments for composing. In Year 4, the pupils are able to effectively link their work in music to their historical activities by learning Tudor songs in preparation for a visit to Bramhall Hall. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils showed good ability to listen to and evaluate a variety of pieces of music and in so doing were able to use suitable musical vocabulary to answer the teacher's questions. By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils can sing expressively with controlled phrasing and are able to appraise their own performance and that of other pupils in a constructive way. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in musical activities and make satisfactory progress.

170 The pupils' response to music is very good. The majority of pupils show a great deal of interest and enjoyment in their singing and when experimenting with sounds. This was very apparent in a singing practice for the pupils in Key Stage 2 in which they responded with great enthusiasm. They are very willing to listen to and appreciate the musical talents and contributions of other pupils and handle musical instruments with great care. Pupils listen very attentively and are keen to follow the teachers' instructions.

171 There is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. In the lessons observed, the teachers' planning was thorough and relationships with the pupils were very good. The teachers were confident and emphasised the correct use of musical terminology.

172 The subject curriculum is satisfactory, being broad and balanced. There is good leadership of the subject by a co-ordinator with secure subject knowledge who is able to effectively support and advise her colleagues. The scheme of work, based on 'Lively Music', is effective in promoting progression and continuity of pupils' learning and also in introducing pupils to music from a variety of different cultures. Thus the subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' cultural development. Pupils are given opportunity to take part in a range of musical performances in the school, and also to sing in the carol concert in St. George's Church. Pupils have had opportunity to go on trips to see various musical performances that have included a visit to the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester to see the Halle Orchestra. The school provides pupils with a rich and varied musical environment that is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activity that includes guitar, recorders and choir. The pupils are constantly exposed to a wide range of good quality music with background music being played at various times of the day, such as in assemblies and at lunchtime, to further develop the pupils' appreciation of music. There are visiting peripatetic teachers for clarinet and violin tuition that further enhances the provision within the subject. Resources are adequate with a good range of instruments, including some from other cultures.

## **Physical education**

173 In both key stages pupils make good progress in physical education. The subject is important and

is well-organised throughout the school. Pupils at both key stages have good control of their bodies when engaged in a wide variety of activities including running, jumping, balancing, rolling and vaulting and using equipment in gymnastics. Pupils, in both key stages, understand the importance of working safely with equipment and apparatus of good behaviour.

174 Pupils' attitudes towards the subject are good. Co-operation is good and they listen carefully to their teachers, and to each other, when engaged in team, group or paired activities. Pupils are willing to demonstrate skills and combinations of movement to the rest of the class. They do this very sensibly and with obvious enjoyment.

175 Lessons are well planned with clear detail about what pupils are to learn. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Most teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and lessons are well organised. Standards of presentation and organisation are good and, where appropriate, teachers and pupils change into suitable clothing.

176 Co-ordination of physical education is satisfactory throughout the school. The co-ordinator has implemented a new scheme of work and provides teachers with advice and support where this is required. There have been training sessions for all staff to ensure high standards and uniform practices. The development of physical education is a priority area for the school and is in the school development plan.

177 Overall the school has adequate facilities for physical education. For indoor activities, the school hall is reasonably sized allowing dance, gymnastics, and small team games to be safely engaged upon. Outdoor areas are spacious and include a variety of stimulating fixed equipment which can be safely used at playtimes as well as for more formal activities. Resources are adequate and include a good range of small games equipment.

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## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

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### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

178 The inspection of Prospect Vale County Primary School was undertaken by a team of four inspectors who, over four days, completed a total of fourteen inspector days in the school.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Documentation provided by the school was analysed.

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

Before the inspection, the reporting inspector held a meeting with 26 parents.

• **DATA AND INDICATORS**

• **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	237	1	41	29
Nursery Unit/School	20	0	0	0

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

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

Total number of education support staff:	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	137.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20

[ Where applicable ]

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

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	32.5
Average class size:	20

· **Financial data**

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	466850
Total Expenditure	466850
Expenditure per pupil	1817
Balance brought forward from previous year	59326
Balance carried forward to next year	58237

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 237  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 63

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	29	56	10	3	3
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	59	35	3	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	24	46	27	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	40	46	6	8	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	35	54	5	5	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	30	62	5	3	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	32	52	8	6	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	57	3	10	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	41	54	3	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	38	52	8	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	63	30	5	0	2

### Other issues raised by parents

Questionnaires were returned by a quarter of parents and 26 parents attended the Parents' Meeting. Comments made in the meeting, supported by some responses in the questionnaire, indicate that, although parents feel that staffing stability is still a important issue, their children have continued to make good progress during the past 18 months and they are pleased with the school. Parents feel welcome in the school and noted a number of areas of improvement, including the quality of information they receive.