

INSPECTION REPORT

PEEL HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Salford, Manchester

LEA area: Salford

Unique Reference number: 105913

Headteacher: Mr G Simpson

Reporting inspector: Mrs. J Schaffer
23698

Dates of inspection: 12 - 16 June 2000

Inspection number: 194948

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Greencourt Drive Little Hulton Worsley Salford M38 0BZ
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W. Shepherd
Date of previous inspection:	20 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
J Schaffer	Registered Inspector	English Information Technology	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? Schools results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
J Madden	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values, and personal development How well does the school care for its' pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
P. Dennison	Team Inspector	Mathematics Physical Education	
T Handforth	Team Inspector	Science Design & Technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
P Ward	Team Inspector	Art Geography History Religious Education Under Fives Special Educational Needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is in an area where there is a considerable amount of unemployment and it suffers from a constantly changing population. There are 287 pupils on roll, which is larger than the majority of primary schools. More than 30 per cent of pupils have moved during their primary education, some several times. Sixty per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. There is a nursery class with 29 children who attend full-time. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery and to the school is well below what is generally expected for children of this age. All pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Thirty-five per cent of pupils have special educational needs. Of these, the majority have moderate or severe learning difficulties but a significant minority of pupils have needs related to health or medical circumstances and a number have emotional or behaviour problems.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Although standards in English and mathematics are not high in comparison to schools nationally, this school is effective in providing good quality education so that those pupils who stay at the school through most of their primary education make good progress. The headteacher sets a good example, which all staff follow, in having high expectations for pupils. Pupils respond by trying hard in their lessons and behaving well. This has resulted in an improvement in the standards achieved by pupils since 1997. The good introduction of the new strategies for English and mathematics has improved pupils' skills. Pupils who have not been able to attend regularly at other schools settle and make progress with their learning through the excellent care provided. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- There is a good, effective team of teachers.
- The headteacher, governors and senior managers provide strong leadership.
- There has been a good start to the implementation of the government's literacy and numeracy strategies.
- By the time they are eleven, pupils attain a high standard in religious education.
- There is exceptional attention to pupils' welfare.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.

What could be improved

- The school's results in national tests in English, Mathematics and Science.
- Standards in information technology for eleven-year-olds.
- The attendance and punctuality of pupils.
- The planning of work for pupils with special educational needs in separate groups.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in 1997. The school's results in national tests for eleven-year-olds were very low and although they are still well below the national average they have improved significantly. A great deal of work has gone in to improving the quality of teaching in all subjects, especially English and mathematics. Classroom organisation has been changed so that planning for pupils with higher attainment is better. At the last inspection, the school was asked to improve teaching in information technology and to raise standards in this subject. Teaching is now good in the new computer classroom and all pupils are learning to use computers at a good rate, although standards by the time pupils are eleven are still not high enough. Another area for improvement was planning and assessment in the nursery and this is now good. The organisation of responsibilities for senior staff is now very effective and the governors play an important part in strategic planning. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E*	E*	E	B
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	C
Science	E*	E*	E	D

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The school has improved its results for pupils aged eleven each year in English but because there is always a large proportion of pupils with special education needs who do not achieve at the higher levels this is not reflected in improved grades. The school set itself realistic targets for English and mathematics last year and it achieved them by a wide margin. The school is on track to achieve its targets this year. The standards as seen on inspection in Year 6 in all three subjects are below the national average. The standards achieved by seven-year-olds in the 1999 tests were well below the national average in reading and below in writing, but when compared to similar schools they are above average. Results for the pupils aged seven have improved each year except in mathematics. Standards as seen on inspection for this age group are well below the national average in English and below in mathematics. Seven-year-olds achieve the standards expected of them when they work on computers, but those of eleven have not had enough time to develop their skills on the new equipment and they have not achieved the standard expected of this age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Whilst the majority of pupils are interested in their lessons, quite a significant number have difficulty in maintaining interest when an adult is not present to encourage them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils know what is expected of them and most behave well. A minority are unable to control their emotions at times and on occasions they cause disruption to the general orderly atmosphere. This is quickly dealt with by staff.
Personal development and relationships	There are good relationships between adults and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves. Sometimes pupils speak roughly to each other but offence is rarely taken. Pupils are able to enjoy their time on the playground. There is an understanding of the need to be fair with each other and no bullying took place or was reported during the inspection. There have been a high number of temporary exclusions for pupils who needed time to reflect before coming back to participate in school.
Attendance	Pupils like school and most try to attend regularly but there is a high proportion of families who are easily tempted to keep pupils off for family events such as birthdays or shopping expeditions and attendance is unsatisfactory. Punctuality is poor.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching in both English and mathematics is good. Lessons are well planned with activities provided which match the learning needs of all groups of pupils. Class routines are very well established so that pupils have a good understanding of what is expected of them and they respond by behaving well and most work hard. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach basic skills in English and mathematics and so pupils make good gains in learning new skills in spelling and number calculations. However, some pupils do not have good recall of what they have learnt some time previously and work needs much revision for them. The quality of teaching was:- 97 per cent satisfactory or better; 21 per cent very good or better and just three per cent unsatisfactory. Religious education is taught particularly well. Pupils' interest is captured through stimulating ideas and they learn at a good rate throughout the school. Computer skills are being taught effectively and pupils are making good progress on computers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school plans a good range of opportunities for pupils' learning. Literacy and numeracy planning is good and provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	When support for pupils is planned in classes it is good. However, when pupils are taken out of classes for extra work in small groups, planning is not always effective and these pupils are not able to participate in the work of the lesson they have missed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils are taught to understand the difference between right and wrong and the school's shared ethos provides pupils with the security of knowing what is expected of them. A good sense of school community is engendered. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has excellent procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. In other subjects assessment is limited and in information technology there is not enough recorded assessments to keep track of pupils' achievements.

Parents are able to talk to teachers, or the headteacher before and after school and many do. Information to parents is at least satisfactory and often good. Parents appreciate the school but very few become involved and many do not bother to support the school by making sure that their children are punctual or attend regularly. This affects pupils' progress. The school has worked hard to improve links with parents and is currently bidding for extra funds to help develop this area which if successful should have very clear benefits for pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and deputy set a high standard of commitment, and in consequence pupils' welfare and their achievements are put first by the school's effective team of teachers. All staff, including non-teaching staff work well together as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are well informed about the school and take an active part in school improvement. There is a good working relationship between the school and governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	A strength of the school is the way it has monitored and evaluated the quality of teaching over the past three years. Teachers evaluate their work and take action to improve when necessary. School developments are evaluated well by governors and senior management. However, the school does not have a system of tracking pupils' progress from their entry into school to the time they leave.
The strategic use of resources	Priorities have been identified appropriately, and careful financial planning has enabled most areas of the school's work to be supported by sufficient funds. Principles of best value are applied appropriately.

There is an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff to teach the curriculum. Classroom assistants, particularly those in the nursery, give effective support to teaching staff. Some support staff have not had sufficient training in the methods recommended by the National Literacy Strategy. The school has good accommodation. The large grassed playing area is a particularly good feature of the school's outdoor facilities. There is no working area set aside as a school library, and this limits opportunities for pupils to develop independence, social skills and research skills. The books for older pupils to read independently are in need of up-dating. The quality and range of equipment in the nursery and reception classes is not satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child is happy at school. • There are good teachers. • Their child works hard and makes good progress. • The school is well managed. • The school is helping their child to become more mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range and number of activities outside of school time. • The right amount of homework. • The information provided by the school especially when pupils have achieved well. • More sponsored events to raise money for school fund.

Inspectors agreed with all the positive comments made by parents. The school provides a number of after-school clubs for pupils interested in sporting activities but opportunities to involve those interested in other areas would be helpful, for example computer, art or drama clubs. However, some schools are able to run these with the help of volunteers and parents, which means that teachers do not get overworked and currently this is not possible at Peel Hall unless greater funding is obtained. The school sets a similar amount of homework to other schools and this is satisfactory, although not all pupils bring homework back to school and a significant number of reading books go home and are not returned. The school provides satisfactory information and end of year reports give a clear idea of how well pupils are achieving. Parents are always welcome to talk to teachers before and after school. However, their view is that they are often contacted when pupils have misbehaved and not when there has been good behaviour. Parents are invited to assemblies which celebrate pupils' good achievements and there are certificates for good work and behaviour. However, the school is looking at developing ways in which parents can be further involved. Fund raising events are few and could be developed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school's results in national tests for eleven-year-olds in 1999 were well below the national average for English, mathematics and science. In comparison to schools with pupils from a similar background, the school's results in English were above average, in mathematics they were average and in science below average. The results in English are higher because the school places a great emphasis on teaching English. Results in the national tests need to be considered in the light of the pupils' attainment on entry which is well below that expected for the age group, the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and the high proportion of pupils who leave or join the school part way through their primary education.
2. From 1997, at the time of the last inspection when the school's results were very low in all three subjects, but particularly in English, the school has improved its results in English annually. In mathematics there was no improvement until 1999 when results improved markedly. Good teaching and the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have begun to improve results. The school set targets for 1999 for English and mathematics reflecting a small improvement on the previous year. They exceeded their targets by a wide margin. The targets for the current year were set higher again and the school is on track to achieve them. Standards, as seen on inspection, in Year 6 are below the national average in all three subjects. The pupils' standard of work in class is often higher than in tests because many pupils lack the confidence to tackle work without some adult encouragement.
3. The school's results in national tests in 1999 for pupils aged seven were well below the national average in reading and mathematics and below the national average in writing. In comparison to similar schools the school's results were above average for reading and writing and average for mathematics. The current standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 in mathematics are similar to last year, although there are more pupils with special educational needs in this year. More pupils are achieving the higher levels in mathematics but there are more unable to achieve a level at all. There is a similar picture in English, although there is no increase in the number achieving the higher level this year.
4. On entry to the nursery, the attainment of most of the children is very low. A small minority of children are attaining at the average level. Pupils make good progress in the nursery so that by the time they are five, although they have not reached the expected learning goals for this age they have learnt about stories and are beginning to recognise letters of the alphabet and to say the sounds they make. They can form letters correctly and some write their name well. By the age of five their attainment in mathematics is well below general expectations but they can count and name numbers up to 20. In personal and social development and in creative and physical development they achieve at a higher standard, but the most significant factor is that their use of English in speaking is well below expectations.
5. The standard of pupils' reading, writing and speaking in Year 6 is below the national average. Standards of listening are average. Higher attaining pupils achieve the national expectation well in their ability to read fiction and non-fiction accurately. They read with fluency and some put good expression into their reading although others lack the confidence to do this. When explaining the text higher attaining pupils are able to do so well, and make reference to the text they have just read. Average

readers find this more difficult. They are able to make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds when confronted by an unknown word. Lower attaining pupils are still struggling to make sense of texts which are appropriate for pupils two years younger than themselves. They use letter sounds to help them and they explain the parts of the story they have just read well. Pupils of higher attainment write in a variety of styles and structures. Their accounts and stories make good use of paragraphs and their choice of vocabulary is often adventurous and imaginative, especially in the poems they write. However, there are occasionally lapses in the use of correct verb forms and other elements of grammar even in the best examples of their writing. Average and lower attaining pupils struggle to overcome this difficulty. Many write as they speak and their spoken English contains many irregularities and incorrect grammatical structures. Nevertheless, those of average attainment write, at length, pieces, which are interesting and have a clear purpose in a fluent joined hand. They also use paragraphs satisfactorily. Lower attaining pupils write well when consideration is given to their attainment in reading. This is because they have achieved a good number of words they can spell accurately and they have determination to express their ideas. Many errors in grammar occur in their writing and ideas are not developed to any extent. Many pupils in the youngest classes find listening difficult, so that the fact that by the time they are eleven pupils have achieved a satisfactory standard in listening is good. They are able to listen intently to their teachers or to other pupils putting forward ideas and opinions.

6. The standard of pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening is well below the national average in Year 2. Pupils of higher and average attainment read texts appropriate for their age with fluency, but there are not a large number of these pupils. Lower attaining pupils recognise a good number of words without help but have difficulty in using the letter sounds they know well to work out words they cannot recognise. They also have difficulty in retaining the meaning of the text as they read. Pupils enjoy learning letter sounds and they know them well when they are working on a spelling activity. However, when writing their own independent pieces they often make errors in spelling common words. Pupils of average and higher attainment can organise their writing in different ways. For example they know how to set out a letter and what to write to someone away from home. Pupils of lower attainment copy write successfully and write a few sentences and words independently but they do not compose their own ideas confidently.
7. In mathematics and science in Year 6, standards are below the national average. The pupils of higher and average attainment make their own calculations, successfully choosing between the four operations of multiplying, dividing, subtracting and adding correctly. They can work in numbers up to 100 successfully and a few are able to do so to 1000. They can add and subtract decimals to two places but they do not have a good grasp of how to check the reasonableness of their results and the importance of doing so. The pupils of lower attainment, which is a comparatively large group, are not yet able to use numbers well enough to reverse operations such as multiplication and division without support from adults. In science, pupils' knowledge of materials and their properties, and of types of force such as the repulsion or attraction of magnets is satisfactory and they are able to make accurate and careful measurements. However, they have not had a great deal of experience of this and do not fully understand the part accurate measurement plays in systematic enquiry. They know that they need to make a prediction before carrying out a test but are less able to draw conclusions or check evidence.
8. In mathematics and science in Year 2, standards are well below the national average. Higher attaining and average pupils achieve a satisfactory standard in working out their own calculations using numbers to ten and can recall addition and

subtraction facts to 20. They are able to solve problems using multiplication facts for the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. Lower attaining pupils record numbers up to ten correctly and are beginning to have a satisfactory recall of addition facts to ten. In science higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand that heat changes materials and so can explain in simple terms the effects of cooking on different foods. Their knowledge and use of appropriate words to explain processes affects their level of attainment in science.

9. By the time they are eleven all pupils, including those of lower attainment can enter a sequence of instructions into a computer to control a computerised robot to produce shapes on the screen, for example, squares and hexagons. Higher attaining pupils can predict what will happen when they change the instructions, for example regarding the size of angle or length of side. They are aware of the effect of any errors in the sequencing of their instructions. All pupils have a good basic understanding of communicating using technology such as e-mail and of producing pieces of writing or pictures using an appropriate program but general keyboard and computer skills are not sufficiently advanced for the majority of pupils. For example, average and lower attaining pupils do not use the highlighting facility successfully. Seven-year-olds are achieving a satisfactory standard in information technology and throughout the school pupils are now acquiring skills and knowledge at a satisfactory rate. The pupils in Year 6 have not had the benefit of the new equipment which is now making a big difference to pupils' achievements and consequently their attainment does not match national expectations for eleven-year-olds. By the time they are eleven pupils achieve a standard in religious education which is higher than is generally expected.
10. Pupils acquire knowledge in their lessons well in most subjects but their overall achievement at the end of the key stage suffers for a number of reasons. Those pupils who begin their education in the nursery and stay throughout their primary education generally achieve well because their attainment on entry to the school is below expectations for their age but by the time they leave they reach the standards expected nationally for pupils of eleven. However, many pupils do not start their education in Peel Hall and some of those pupils have difficulty in catching up lost time. Pupils' achievements suffer because of poor attendance and in science and some other subjects, the difficulties pupils have in acquiring and retaining the specialised vocabulary of the subject limits their achievements.
11. Classes are streamed so that pupils with special educational needs are in classes where work is planned to meet their needs by the class teacher. This is a successful strategy and the achievements of pupils with special education needs are similar to their peers. The school has paid great attention to ensuring that pupils with difficulty in concentrating during lessons or taking control of their own behaviour develop a good attitude to their work. In order to achieve this, the pupils are withdrawn from class. In this withdrawal group pupils make good progress in their attitudes and some make very good progress in controlling their emotions. However, because of the planning for this group, progress in speaking and reading and writing is not as good as it could be. Progress in science and history is also affected when pupils are withdrawn from classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The attitude of most of the pupils to the school is good, although a minority are so influenced by their experiences out of school they cannot respond to school in a positive way. In the classroom, interesting lessons stimulate pupils' enthusiasm. The majority are then keen to answer questions, take a real interest in proceedings, and work hard. School events such as the Year 6 residential visit to Prestatyn and the Christmas productions are talked about with interest and some excitement.
13. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils eat lunch in the dining hall in an orderly fashion and play together well. They are keen to behave in an acceptable manner. When minor disruptions occur, pupils accept the judgement of adults but not very many are able to use their own judgements. There have been 13 pupils who have been given short periods of exclusion in order to reflect on behaviour which was extreme. There is little bullying, and that which does occur is dealt with swiftly, and with the involvement of parents if necessary.
14. Relationships in the school between pupils, and between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils co-operate well with teachers and each other, taking a lead from the friendly supportive manners of teachers in the classroom. In the nursery and Years 1 and 2, pupils find it much harder to share and co-operate. In a Year 2 lesson on information technology, for example, most pupils waited for their turn rather than taking an active interest in what their partner was doing.
15. The school has some procedures for developing pupils' initiative and independence, particularly for older pupils. For instance, pupils help to organise classroom equipment before school and at lunchtimes. Whilst some pupils respond very well and are proud to take up responsibilities, others find it difficult to maintain the necessary commitment and those who are often absent cannot easily accept that others have been given their job whilst they were away.
16. The school makes great efforts to promote the understanding of others' feelings, values and beliefs. There is particular emphasis on the teaching of Religious Education and personal, social and health education. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson on Sikhism, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the respect due to other religions and beliefs. The school also chooses charities to work for which increase the level of pupils' understandings of the needs of others. Last year they collected pens and pencils to help in the education of children in Tanzania.
17. Attendance at school is unsatisfactory and is due to a number of contributory factors from pupils' home circumstances. In addition, a significant minority of pupils can be up to an hour late for the start of the school day. This is having a marked influence on pupils' learning. As a result of missing large parts of the curriculum, they fail to make the necessary progress and are then never able to fulfil their potential.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good. It is satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons. In 67 per cent of lessons it is good or better with 21 per cent being very good and one excellent lesson. Three per cent of lessons was unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection when nine per cent was unsatisfactory and only three per cent was very good. Teachers have worked hard to improve the quality of their work since the last inspection by identifying good practice and discussing what works well and how best pupils learn. Although most of the best teaching is in Year 3 to Year 6, there is good quality work throughout the school, including the nursery.
19. In a school where many pupils have difficulty in settling to work or in maintaining interest in learning and some pupils have exceptionally challenging behaviour, no effective teaching could take place if pupils' lack of attention or inappropriate behaviour was allowed to affect the pace of lessons. Every teacher has established similar, easily understood and well organised class routines. These routines and expectations of good behaviour are clear to pupils and the good learning that takes place in lessons is only possible because the routines are so well maintained. The system is a strength of the school's provision and all teachers, both those who are experienced and those who are relatively new to teaching are able to plan effective lessons because it is so well established.
20. One of the significant features of the best teaching is the enthusiasm with which teachers approach subjects and introduce new information to pupils. The expectation of the teacher is that all pupils will want to listen, will enjoy learning and be interested and consequently pupils respond by listening and by trying hard to learn. The lessons in religious education and personal development were good examples of this. Presented by the teacher, with infectious enthusiasm, they captured pupils' imaginations because of the interesting way information and new learning was presented. Although teachers are aware that many pupils in their class are identified as having special educational needs or learn at a relatively slow rate, expectations are still high. Teachers often plan work or present information which seems too difficult for some of the pupils. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 class of pupils with lower attainment, the teacher followed a literacy lesson when pupils had studied a text about a proposed by-pass for a small town with a "council" debate. The pupils took on roles as councillors or the opposing environmental activists group. Pupils who had struggled to understand the original text were able to explain the issues and were delighted to be on the side of the activists who won the case. In a Year 3 and 4 class, the teacher used words such as "sequel" without a lengthy explanation and asked for examples of synonyms when obviously only a few pupils understood the terms, but this challenge to higher attaining pupils was listened to by others and some of average attainment reminded themselves of the terms so that when they were used again in the lesson more pupils were able to respond.
21. In the best lessons teachers are skilful in using the good practice of inter-weaving previous learning with new information or the work currently undertaken, without slowing the pace of the lesson. For example, a Year 6 lesson presented to the pupils for the first time the unusual structure of the short Japanese poetic form called the Haiku. In the guided reading group, the learning objectives were to evaluate the effect of the different poems and inform judgements with reasons. The teacher kept these objectives to the forefront but also skilfully reminded or referred pupils to their knowledge of other poets and poetic forms. The pupils responded well and the resulting evaluations they made were not only insightful but informed by comparison to other poems. In a Year 1 lesson on phonics, the teacher focused well on the new

letter sounds to be learnt but picked up previous learning with quick reminders or questions about sounds pupils had learnt the previous week. Pupils revised and learnt new phonics in the same session.

22. Teachers plan work carefully. Throughout the school good use is made of assessment information to group and set pupils and because of this work is well matched to pupils' level of attainment. During lessons teachers are continually assessing how well pupils are learning. Many of the younger pupils have difficulty in sustaining interest through the long whole class sessions of teaching literacy and numeracy. Teachers have good strategies for keeping these sessions lively and the interest of pupils maintained. Teachers have a good understanding of how to use the closing session of lessons to best advantage. For example, in a mathematics lesson in a Year 2 class the teacher used the session not only to assess pupils' knowledge about the two times table but also gave higher attaining pupils another opportunity to explain strategies they used to work out their calculations. Teachers use homework effectively to support work in class.
23. Lessons where improvements were needed were few. They were satisfactory in some aspects but contained elements which affected the learning of a group of pupils, rather than the whole class. In these lessons problems arose because the teacher had not clearly defined the objectives of a group task. In a lesson in a reception class pupils used play areas happily but there was insufficient purpose in their play and so they did not make good gains in learning to talk to each other and in developing their vocabulary in so doing. Most teachers identify clear objectives for group reading sessions but on a few occasions sessions did not focus sufficiently on the aspect of reading where pupils were weak and so pupils' difficulties with, for example expression, were not improved. In numeracy and literacy lessons, teachers carefully time each part of the lesson and ensure a good balance of activities, but this is not always the case in science where pupils sometimes spend too long listening.
24. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs set clear and achievable targets for individual pupils and groups of pupils, and are reviewed regularly. However, a few teachers have not yet had sufficient training to enable them to implement these as well as they might. Support staff make a positive contribution to pupils' learning by providing the individual attention that enables pupils to feel secure and to gain in confidence in tackling new tasks. In most instances there are good levels of liaison between class teachers and support workers. Teachers use information technology with confidence to develop learning in other areas of the curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics, but also in art and history. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection.

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

25. At the time of the previous inspection the curriculum met statutory requirements. It was broad and balanced and pupils had equal access. There was a good programme of work for personal, social and health education but planning in the nursery and for information technology was unsatisfactory. Both these areas have been addressed effectively.
26. The planning for the nursery and for children under the age of five in the reception class is satisfactory. All the areas of learning for this age group are planned effectively to provide activities and tasks which meet the needs of the children. A clear action plan has been developed to enable the school to be prepared for the

introduction of the revised framework for the foundation stage in September of this year.

27. The school offers a broad programme for the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Religious education is taught according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus and is a strength of the school. Planning for all subjects takes account of the new requirements to be implemented in September. The inclusion of a regular lesson for personal, social and health education is also a strong feature of the curriculum.
28. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced and developed well through focused planning, reviewing and training of teaching staff. The only area where the school has not yet been effective is in providing guidance and training to some learning support assistants and voluntary helpers in the methods recommended in the literacy framework. There has been appropriate planning for extra support for pupils in the older classes to achieve well in the national tests.
29. All subjects have policies and either subject guidelines or schemes of work. In the light of the planned changes to the year 2000 National Curriculum, schemes of work are currently under review with many subject areas considering the adoption of the national guidelines. A strength in this area is the system by which subject co-ordinators monitor plans and outcomes. There are hand-written notes accompanying each subject indicating co-ordinator's comments to each teacher, and reviews of work.
30. The school is effective in fostering pupils' intellectual and physical development and prepares them well for transfer to the local high school. Very good links have been established with this school. There are regular visits from high school staff and also pupils visit the high school. Here they experience sample lessons and meet the teachers who will be responsible for them after their transfer.
31. Strategies to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum are in place but are not always fully effective. The school's organisation of classes supports pupils with special educational needs because class teachers can plan work to meet their needs and there are good levels of effective support in classes. Both have a positive effect on the standards of teaching and learning. However, there are times when pupils are withdrawn from lessons to work on a separate programme of study. Pupils are taken out of literacy lessons and set work which does not relate to the work undertaken in the class. The class teacher then has the difficulty of providing these pupils with the opportunity of knowing what has occurred during the whole class shared reading time. Pupils with special educational needs also miss lessons such as history and science. Whilst teachers make every effort to ensure that work is still covered, in effect some pupils are not receiving their entitlement to a full curriculum.
32. The school provides a satisfactory number of extra curricular activities and for the pupils who regularly attend them they contribute well to subject areas such as physical education and music as with the rehearsal for the millennium choir. However there are no clubs to develop interests in subjects such as information technology, art or drama.
33. Visitors enrich the school's educational provision. For example, talks by local experts on birds and their habitats and the Life Education Caravan, which develops activities in science lessons. The immediate environment does not provide many opportunities

for visits and the school is hesitant to incur expenses for parents by arranging trips which involve travel. However, the school undertakes a number of visits each year. For example, the Year 6 residential trip to Prestatyn, the nursery children went to the Salford museum and older pupils participated in Salford Environment Day at the Ethnic Centre. These are greatly enjoyed and contribute to pupils' learning significantly, evident in the lively pieces of writing produced by pupils in Year 6 about their participation in the Environment Day. The pupils would benefit from an increased number of visits to enrich and develop the curriculum.

34. The overall provision for spiritual moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's provision for moral development is very good and social development is good. Both contribute significantly to pupils' personal development. The development of pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is satisfactory.
35. The school has a good ethos in which all pupils are seen as individuals and positively valued. It fulfils the requirements for a daily act of worship focusing on a broadly Christian foundation. The themes, which incorporate pupils' contributions through singing, role play and answering teachers' questions provide satisfactory spiritual awareness. The main contributions to spiritual awareness come in religious education lessons where the good teaching and choice of themes greatly enrich this area.
36. A strong sense of morality underpins the aims and ethos of the school. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They are well aware of the responsibility they have for their own actions and show a concern for the well being of others. These are part of the rules, which all classes have and in the rewards and sanctions used. Opportunities are provided in many subject areas to explore moral issues, for example, when considering the contrasts between the lives of the richer and poorer people in Victorian Britain. There is a good understanding of the meaning of loyalty and caring for the environment. The good standards of maintenance and cleanliness of the school building and grounds, together with the efforts of teachers and staff in providing good quality displays set pupils a good example.
37. Pupils develop good social skills as they move through the school. All staff members provide good role models for pupils, who, in turn recognise the high expectations made on them in terms of behaviour and they respond in a positive manner. Their understanding of citizenship is well developed by fund raising activities for charities such as Poppy Appeal or annual donations to St. Annes' Hospice following the school show. Group activities and team activities both within lessons and as part of extra curricular activities, also promote pupils' personal and social development well.
38. The quality of provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Most pupils share a common cultural background and are given opportunities to appreciate their local heritage through visits, for example by pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 to Smithills Hall in Bolton. Geography allows pupils to consider alternative lifestyles and cultures; history allows them to examine the changing nature of their own culture as well as that of other societies such as that of the Ancient Greeks. There is also good provision made to develop an awareness of ethnic diversity in society through, for example, the outline of Islam presented through religious education. The school's policy to be inclusive and have an 'open door' has resulted in growing links with the local community. Local organisations such as Peel Football Club which was formed by local parents have regular meetings at the school. The community police officer, representatives of social services, the local education authority advisors and other officials regularly visit the school. The vicar of St. Paul's Peel church is a regular visitor to school and pupils make visits to the church and this has helped develop

their knowledge in religious education.

39. The school governors willingly help the school in practical ways. They visit school regularly and all have links to particular curriculum areas. This has a very beneficial impact on both the governing body's knowledge of the school and in supporting the school's determination to raise standards and improve the quality of provision further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school has excellent procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. All relationships in the school are good, the teaching and support staff providing especially good role models.
41. Teachers have very detailed knowledge of all pupils' physical, emotional and intellectual needs, including those pupils who are looked after by other agencies. Detailed records are kept and information passed to those who need it. There are frequent discussions about the needs of individual pupils.
42. The Child Protection Policy is securely in place. The majority of teachers has received a good level of training, while the most recently appointed teachers have been trained by the school, as have welfare staff. The school is always represented at case conferences. Liaison with the appropriate outside agencies is close and supportive. Many pupils suffer difficulties in their home circumstances, and teachers, and in particular the headteacher, spend numerous hours dealing with their welfare. The school has built up a network of good relationships with many members of the local services and with appropriate outside agencies. Most effective in supporting the school are the local police, social services, the community nurse and the group of nearby local schools. Peel Hall was instrumental in starting a support group of local schools and this has been effective in sharing ideas and co-operating on matters of admission and attendance.
43. The school is a safe and secure environment. Regular checks are made on health and safety aspects within the school and the school grounds. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well supervised by the teachers and welfare assistants. The welfare assistants have been trained in playing games and sport. In addition, they have been trained in techniques to diffuse conflict and restrain pupils.
44. All procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good. The school rules are clear and to the point, and are applied consistently. Behaviour management strategies in the classroom ensure that pupils' learning is not disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. If there is a continuing problem with a child's behaviour, parents are contacted and asked to come in to discuss ways of helping their child. Bullying is kept to a minimum by effective supervision at all times, and pupils are clear that bullying will be reported. Decisive action is taken when this happens. Brief exclusions are used when other strategies have failed. Because of good behaviour management, pupils who have been excluded from other schools settle and make progress at this school.
45. Attendance is well below the national average and the rate of unauthorised absence is well above the national average. In addition, the number of pupils late and very late for the morning sessions is extremely high. The school has made repeated efforts and used numerous initiatives to correct this situation, and its procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. However, the numerous disadvantages suffered by pupils and the lack of commitment to the benefits of

education in some families undermines the school's best efforts. It continues to monitor closely attendance and punctuality, and to work within the school, with other schools in the area and with the Educational Welfare Officer to improve the situation.

46. Personal safety is given a very high profile. During lessons, particularly physical education and science, pupils are taught to understand safe practices and to use them. A unit on safety in the health education programme deals with all aspects of safety in the home, at school, and in the world at large. The school is visited by the police, fire service and railway police who teach the pupils about safety in the neighbourhood.
47. Healthy living is also emphasised as the school is part of a local 'Healthy School' scheme. For example, pupils are offered the opportunity of protection against tooth decay by a mobile dental health unit. The school nurse spends time talking to parents and pupils about aspects of health care. She also talks to pupils in Year 6 about puberty, health, and personal hygiene. The Drugs Education Policy was renewed in 1998 and is taught through personal, social and health education (PSHE) appropriately.
48. Assessment is satisfactory overall. There are good procedures in place to assess pupils' achievements in mathematics and English. In English pupils' reading in Key Stage 1 is assessed carefully and the pupils are given appropriate targets which are written in the reading record so that they know how they need to improve. Although pupils' reading is assessed satisfactorily in Key Stage 2, the good practice of setting targets is not continued. In science pupils' achievements are assessed at the end of each block of work. However, there is insufficient assessment of pupils' achievements in other subjects and in information technology, teachers have not got a sufficiently well organised method of recording pupils' achievements.
49. The school uses assessments well to organise the classes and smaller groupings of pupils and takes good account of the assessments made for pupils with special educational needs in this process. Teachers' lesson plans are securely based on the assessments they have made of pupils' achievements in previous lessons. This is done particularly well in English and mathematics. Work is marked well, indicating that teachers have a good view of the way pupils have understood lessons and what they need to do to improve further. There are effective procedures in place to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The school maintains a register of special education needs. Pupils are provided with additional support, either in class or in small withdrawal groups, helping them to meet the targets in their individual education plans. Assessments of pupils' achievements in the withdrawal groups in Key Stage 2 are not used sufficiently by class teachers to plan the next stage of work for these pupils.
50. Pupils' personal development is satisfactorily monitored and supported by the school. Children entering the nursery visit before starting, and parents are encouraged to be part of nursery life. Pupils' personal record books contain good, up-to-date information on all aspects of their development. Reports to parents detail the personal development of their child. Pupils moving to the secondary school are supported by both schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents are pleased with the school and the quality and effectiveness of what the school provides and achieves. Aspects some parents would like improved are; provision of after-school activities and clubs, setting the right homework and the information provided by the school. Those few parents who are involved with the school would like to see more parents taking an active part and supporting the school in a more positive way.
52. The inspection team found that the school has tried hard to put on sporting activities after school, but with a very low take-up. However, clubs to develop other interests are not available and might be more successful. Homework was found to be satisfactory. Pupils from Year 1 onwards are taking home reading and spelling. Maths and science homework is regularly set and many pupils use the public library to research the answers to homework questions for religious education. Pupils taking the national tests for eleven year olds take home work which reinforces work in the classroom as well as revision books. Information provided for parents was also found to be satisfactory, with a range of information being sent out. There are regular letters to parents about school life, such as staff changes and extra provision being made for pupils by "booster" classes. However, the school fails to provide, for example, regular newsletters, and details of projects being undertaken in class. End of year reports give priority to reporting in general on English and maths, and emphasise problems pupils may be experiencing or where they may be succeeding well. The school works closely with a number of parents whose children may be experiencing problems. A few parents feel that they are only given information about their children when they misbehave, not when they have succeeded at something special. However, the school provides parents with opportunities to celebrate good work in assemblies.
53. On the whole, links with parents are good. Parents are able to talk to teachers before and after school, and often do. There are two parents' meetings per year, the second after the annual report, which gives them the opportunity to discuss their children's needs for the new academic year. The home/school contract is in place, but take-up by parents has been limited. The parents of children about to enter the nursery are invited into the school with their children during the term before they take up their place. They are also encouraged to come into the nursery before and after school. Parents are invited to discuss the test results. A request from parents for an additional parents' evening in the spring term has been agreed to by the school.
54. The area of partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs has been identified as one for development, and the school has already started planning to increase parental awareness and involvement. Presently the partnership with parents is satisfactory. There is regular contact about those pupils with particular special educational needs, as well as the two whole school meetings twice per year which are held to discuss the progress of their children.
55. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is at present unsatisfactory. Many parents find it difficult to be interested or committed to any form of education. This is particularly apparent in the lack of punctuality in many families, and in the number of unauthorised absences. There are few parent helpers apart from those actually employed by the school. At present there is no Friends of the School organisation to encourage fund raising but one is being formed. The school has put in a bid for extra funds to support its work in this area and, in spite of the apparent difficulties in parental involvement, development should have tangible benefits for both school and pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The headteacher has the vision needed to provide good quality education at this school. There are difficulties here which do not face headteachers or staff in most other schools and these are met with determination founded on the common purpose to put pupils and their achievements first. The senior managers, and in particular, the deputy headteacher set good examples in the work they undertake and consequently there is an enthusiastic and committed staff team, including those with non-teaching positions.
57. Governors are well informed about all aspects of the school's work and this enables them to make an effective contribution to supporting the school. The chair of governors has been involved with the school for a very long time. He and the vice chair are clear about the importance of governors' roles in identifying areas for improvement and discussing these with the headteacher and senior managers. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when governors played too small a part in school development. Governors are aware that the school's results are well below the national average but stand by the school in its belief that pupils make good progress, whatever their attainment by the time they are eleven, or for however long they stay with the school. The school has not yet organised a system of tracking pupils' achievements from their first assessments when they enter the school, through to the age of eleven when they take the national tests. This would be a very useful management tool, both to ensure that pupils' rate of progress is checked regularly and to judge the school's effectiveness. Governors are organised satisfactorily and make sure that all statutory requirements are met.
58. The school has focused its efforts on appropriate priorities and sufficient time and resources have been allocated to see projects through. The current focus on improving the involvement of parents is timely as the school has rightly identified the need to support parents as much as possible so as to raise attainment. A priority for the school in recent years has been to improve teaching. Subject leaders have been effective in improving the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics and English. Classroom observations have had a specific focus so that aspects of practice needing improvement could receive attention. There is a comprehensive system of monitoring and evaluating planning which has resulted in teachers reflecting on their practice, asking for guidance from those with greater knowledge and taking appropriate steps to improve when necessary. At the time of the previous inspection criticism was made of the lack of challenge to pupils of average and higher attainment. The school has taken steps to address this. Planning identifies work to extend their learning and the system of streaming which developed from the previous methods of class organisation supports these pupils well. However, the school does not have a working library and so pupils are not able to pursue research activities or become more independent learners and this is a missed opportunity for those of higher attainment.
59. The day-to-day running of the school is very efficient and is appropriately focused on the need to ensure that a calm and orderly atmosphere prevails. All staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. New staff are incorporated well into the whole staff team by an effective process of mentoring. The deputy has good skills in supporting and encouraging less experienced staff members. The local authority allocated the school a "Beacon School" partner. Visits and discussions have been used to the best advantage to develop management skills. The school is currently involved in an exciting bid for extra funds through the regeneration budget to support parental involvement but has not yet heard if it has been successful.

60. Financial planning is good. Spending levels closely reflect the school's priorities for development and the aims of the school and sensible projections are made of future needs. The school had a period of financial difficulty before the previous inspection and this has been overcome well. Specific grants and funding for groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs and the provision of money to boost the attainment of older pupils are all used appropriately. The headteacher and chair of the finance committee work closely together to monitor the school's financial position. The finance committee consider implications of the school's spending and alternatives are discussed so that due consideration can be given to getting the best value for the money that is spent. The subject leaders are involved well in helping to ascertain best value for money. For example, the subject leader for information technology spent a great deal of time before ordering the new computer suite, checking whether the supplier recommended by the local authority was best value, and in the end chose an alternative supplier.
61. The recommendations of the most recent audit report by local finance officers have been carried out. The office runs efficiently and up-to-date information is readily available when it is needed. There is satisfactory use of modern technology, but more could be done to improve the school's management systems, particularly with regard to pupils' records and to support the headteacher in organisational planning such as timetables and special educational needs records.
62. The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified teaching and non-teaching staff to support pupils' learning in all areas of the curriculum. Training is appropriate and well organised. There is a need for training a small number of support staff in the methods of the Literacy Strategy. Long term absences of staff have made in-roads into the school's finances which in turn is reflected in the money available for resources. Some areas of the school are now badly in need of extra and improved resources. The most important amongst these are the books which are read by older pupils; the range and quality of the small area designated as a library and the resources for the reception classes and the nursery. The school has good accommodation both inside and out and it is maintained at a good standard. The school suffers from a high level of vandalism but it is a priority that this is never evident to pupils. For example, broken windows are repaired immediately and the governors have agreed that grills should not be installed so as to provide the pupils with the pleasant environment they deserve. The computer room is well presented and organised with good quality equipment. The library area for pupils from Years 3 to 6 is very small, not well arranged and does not encourage an interest in books.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The governors, headteacher and senior management of the school should draw up a post-inspection plan to:-

- continue to seek to improve teaching and the pupils' learning so as to improve the school's results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of both key stages, particularly in English and mathematics and in science at the end of Key Stage 2; (paragraph references: 1, 3, 23, 80, 86, 92)
- continue the current programme of work in information technology and improve procedures for assessment so that pupils' at the end of Key Stage 2 attain satisfactory standards; (paragraph references: 9, 134, 136)
- seek ways to improve the punctuality of pupils by seeking to improve parental involvement and support; (paragraph references 17, 45)
- improve the planning of work for those groups of pupils who are taken out of class to work in a small group by planning the same work for them as those in the class, which can then be undertaken with the good support which they already have. (paragraph references 11, 31, 106, 131)

64. The report identifies other minor weaknesses which the school should consider:-

- the library area is not satisfactory for pupils to carry out research and borrow books so as to develop their social skills and independent learning; (paragraph references 58, 63, 91)
- the books for older pupils to read, particularly those for pupils with lower attainment are in need of up-dating as are the resources in the reception classes and nursery; (paragraph references 62, 74, 76, 91)
- parents and pupils would appreciate a greater range of extra-curricular activities; (paragraph references 32, 51)
- there is no system to track individual pupils' attainment from the time of their entry into school to when they leave; (paragraph reference 57)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	18	46	31	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	256
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		175

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	105

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	51
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	57

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	31	19	50
	(1998)	25	20	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23(13)	24(20)	25(19)
	Girls	16(8)	17(12)	18(15)
	Total	39(21)	41(32)	43(34)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78(46)	82(71)	86(76)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22(17)	22(17)	21(18)
	Girls	16(13)	18(14)	16(14)
	Total	38(30)	40(31)	37(32)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76(67)	80(69)	74(71)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	30	46
	1998	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9(6)	8(6)	10(3)
	Girls	16(4)	12(2)	13(2)
	Total	25(10)	20(8)	23(5)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54(32)	43(26)	50(16)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8(4)	6(6)	11(5)
	Girls	16(4)	9(2)	11(2)
	Total	24(5)	15(9)	22(7)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52(16)	36(29)	52(23)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	225
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	23.5

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	30	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	557937
Total expenditure	550356
Expenditure per pupil	1748
Balance brought forward from previous year	18390
Balance carried forward to next year	31740

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	285
Number of questionnaires returned	88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	39	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	43	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	44	11	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	38	13	0	8
The teaching is good.	64	32	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	35	14	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	23	1	6	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	22	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	38	9	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	25	3	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	32	3	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	30	22	1	11

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65. The school has a nursery and two reception classes which provide education for children under the age of five. There is a welcoming and secure environment and a good induction programme to help children settle in to school life with ease. The staff who are knowledgeable, caring and hard working work well as a team. The planning and preparation for each session is thorough enabling children to have access to a satisfactory range of activities. The co-ordinator for under fives provision has only been in post for seven months. Together with the senior management team and the local education authority advisor a clear action plan has been developed to enable the school to be prepared for the introduction of the revised framework for the foundation stage of education in September 2000. The key issue identifying planning and assessment in the nursery as a weakness at the time of the last inspection has been very well addressed.
66. Assessments which are undertaken when the children join the nursery and the reception classes show that they start school with varying levels of attainment. The majority of children have very low levels of attainment. A small minority of children is attaining at the average level. Although by the age of five children have made good progress overall from entry to the nursery to their time in reception, their attainment in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world is still below the expected learning outcomes for children of their age. Their personal and social development, physical and creative development is better. Overall the quality of teaching is good.

Personal and social development

67. By the age of five, the majority of children have made good progress and attain the desirable outcomes in this area of learning. Personal and social development is given high priority. In the nursery children show good understanding of the routines, for example, when they have their morning snack. In the reception classes they follow instructions well when its time to go to their different learning groups and all the children sit quietly when in the school assembly. In both settings, nursery and reception, the children are encouraged to be patient. Most show consideration for each other, however, a minority still find it difficult to share. Many children are growing in independence in their dressing skills and personal hygiene. Children learn to work as part of a group. They show respect for the equipment and most are beginning to work well co-operatively. Staff provide good opportunities for the children to learn about different cultural traditions an example of this being celebration of Christian Jewish and Hindu festivals of light. Children in both the nursery and the reception classes are well behaved and have a growing understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
68. Teaching is good. The clear expectations of children to grow in independence and to have good behaviour enables the children to make good progress in their personal and social skills.

Language and literacy

69. The language and literacy skills of the majority of the children are well below what is usually expected of children of their age and this restricts their growth in knowledge and skills in other areas of the curriculum. Many find it difficult to listen well and have a restricted vocabulary level. The children develop their language skills through a wide range of well-planned activities, for example in the nursery through role-play in the hairdressing salon and in the reception classes through the more structured teaching in the literacy hour. In both settings children are encouraged to pick books up and to read them. They enjoy having stories read to them. Most are able to recognise alphabet letters and familiar words and with the aid of illustrations many of the older children are beginning to interpret the text. In the reception classes, children are encouraged to take their reading book home to read each night. Where parents and friends hear them read this is beneficial to the children and clearly supports the work of the school staff. The children are taught to form their letters correctly and although some still write their letters the wrong way round many are able to write over and under the teachers' script and a minority of children can write simple sentences unaided.
70. Overall the quality of language and literacy teaching is good. Lesson planning reflects the desirable outcomes of learning and also the requirements of the literacy hour. Activities are planned to meet the individual needs of children. Skilful questioning by the staff encourages the children to think and to talk. A good emphasis is placed on phonic skills. The literacy project has been introduced well. Teachers provide a good role model for clear speech and how to form letters correctly. When children are playing for example, using the sand tray or are involved in the role play area, staff usually engage children in discussion, question them effectively and challenge them to think. Children with special educational needs receive carefully planned teaching to meet their needs.

Mathematics

71. Many children have not reached the desirable outcomes by the time they are five. The children's attainment is very low when they join the nursery. During their time in the nursery and in the reception classes they acquire early mathematical vocabulary through discussion about mathematical activities. Children are encouraged to count sort and to match a variety of items. They are beginning to recognise numbers and to write numerals unaided and to use mathematical language such as in front of, bigger than and more. Many can recognise and name numerals and recite to 20.
72. Teaching is good. The teachers and the nursery nurse demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn mathematics. There are well planned opportunities for children to develop their mathematical language and understanding of number. Children are encouraged to participate in counting games, to estimate, weigh, measure to compare size and to record their findings. Water and sand are used for problem solving. Every opportunity is taken to improve their knowledge and skills including use of number lines, blocks, rhymes, stories, baking. These activities are effective in successfully encouraging number recognition and counting skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. From a low level of attainment when children begin school, children make good progress. However, they have a lot of knowledge to catch up on and therefore by the age of five many children have not reached the expected level of understanding of the world around them. Children are encouraged to find out about and identify features of living things and to investigate and question why things happen. They talk about their families and a wide range of events including where they live and when it was their birthday. There are well-planned visits to widen the experiences of the children, for example, to Larkhill place, the library and a local church. Children are growing in knowledge and understanding about festivals and celebrations as well as days of the week, months of the year, the weather and how life used to be.
74. The majority of the teaching is satisfactory. There is also some excellent teaching, for example, when children are involved in baking cakes where the teacher very skilfully encourages them to tell each other what they should do next and what they have found out. In one reception class, some play activities are not structured sufficiently to allow purposeful play and investigation, and sometimes resources are not well organised. For example, children playing with a construction set decided to make a car but the necessary pieces were not provided. In a sand play activity children were not sure what choices they should make or what was the purpose of their play and so their learning was limited. There are insufficient good quality resources in both nursery and reception classes. Good opportunities are provided in each class for children to use the computer and this has enabled children to know how to operate equipment and complete a simple program.

Physical education

75. Children's attainment in this area matches general expectations and the children's progress is good. In the nursery the children confidently ride bicycles. They push and pull wheeled toys and make models out of the limited range of construction materials. In the reception classes they are beginning to handle tools and modelling materials with increasing skill. Despite the fact that there are a significant number of children who have poor co-ordination, when playing games, they run, skip, jump and throw and catch bean bags with increasing control. Children are making good progress in their physical skills.
76. Teaching is satisfactory. All the children including those with special educational needs are well supported to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable. There is appropriate attention given to safety and clear instructions and skilful questioning extend well the children's understanding of what is required. There are satisfactory outside areas for children to use in both nursery and reception classes but an insufficient range of equipment to enable teachers to plan a good variety of activities.

Creative development

77. Children's attainment is at a level expected of five year olds and all children make good progress. The children enjoy mixing paint and drawing and painting imaginative pictures which are effectively displayed. They have explored sound colour and texture in their butterfly and pasta pictures. They sing well together and can remember the words and tunes to simple rhymes.
78. Teaching is good. Staff have been creative in the use of limited resources. Children are given carefully planned opportunities to explore colour and shape and to use their imagination through art, music, stories and imaginative play.

ENGLISH

79. The school's results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven in English were well below the national average. However, when compared to the results of schools with a similar in-take, results were above average. A third of pupils have special educational needs and this affects the school's results in national tests and the standards achieved in the current Year 6 and Year 2. Over a period of three years, since 1997 the school's results in tests for eleven-year-olds have improved annually. They are now at the same level as the national average four years ago. The good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has had a beneficial effect on pupils' attainment. Results have improved at the same rate as the national trend. Standards, as seen on inspection for eleven-year-olds, are below the national average. Classroom work is of a better standard than that produced in tests because many pupils need the encouragement of an adult to do their best.
80. Standards in reading and writing, as seen on inspection for seven-year-olds, are well below the national average. The school's results in the 1999 tests for pupils aged seven were well below the national average for reading and below for writing. When compared to similar schools the results were above average. The slightly higher results for writing have not been repeated this year because there are more pupils with very marked special needs in this year group.
81. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below what is generally expected for this age. Achievements by the end of the key stage are satisfactory although pupils acquire knowledge and improve their skills at a good rate in lessons. Achievement slows because too many pupils move schools several times. Also some pupils do not attend regularly, or miss the early part of the school day. Those pupils who began their schooling in the nursery and who achieve the national expectations by the time they are eleven, and there are a number of these, have made good progress when consideration is given to their attainment on entry. The school set a realistic target for the national tests in 1999, which it exceeded by a good margin. The target for this year was also set at a realistic figure and is on track to achieve it.
82. By the age of eleven pupils of higher and average attainment achieve a satisfactory standard in reading but a significant minority do not read with sufficient fluency and comprehension so that standards overall are unsatisfactory. Higher, and average attaining pupils read fluently and can talk about the books and authors they know. For example, the popular author, D. King Smith was chosen as a favourite and the book he wrote compared to the film "Babe". When confronted by an unknown word with irregular spelling such as "Cyrillic" pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds to read it successfully. Lower attaining pupils read with little expression and often without fully understanding or considering the meaning of what they have read. Pupils of lower attainment in the older classes spend time reading to adult helpers who are careful to check mis-read words but do not have many skills in promoting comprehension and this is one of the main weaknesses in the school's mainly good or very good provision for pupils in English. By the age of seven pupils of average and higher attainment read books which are appropriate for their age, paying good attention to punctuation and expression, although a significant number do not pay good attention to expression. They explain that books have main characters and can, for instance, name several stories and books which have a bear as a central character. They explain well the difference between a fiction and non-fiction book. Lower attaining pupils are hesitant readers. They struggle hard to keep the text going and do so because they have a good number of words they recognise. Despite knowing letter sounds they do not always use them to help read unknown words unless prompted by an adult. Despite good teaching of phonics in the literacy

lessons these pupils still have difficulty sounding out words independently. The whole class shared reading sessions are very helpful to lower attaining pupils and they join in well particularly at the end of the week as they become familiar with the text. This activity will have helped them to build up the words they recognise by sight.

83. Standards in writing are similar to those in reading. Higher and average attaining pupils aged eleven write in a joined and legible hand. They have made good gains in their understanding about different styles and formats. For example, they write letters of complaint, accounts of visits, poems and atmospheric stories. In one story the writer successfully sets the scene in a deserted factory for a journey back in time to when the factory was bustling with life. Punctuation and paragraphs are used accurately most of the time but occasional lapses of grammar occur in most pupils' work and there are also a number of pupils who make simple spelling mistakes because they are following their pattern of speech. Pupils of lower attainment try hard with their writing. Most achieve a legible joined hand. They write using a reasonable number of correctly spelt words but their difficulties with grammar are quite pronounced and their ideas are not developed to any great extent. By the time they are seven higher attaining pupils write using well-shaped letters but have not achieved a joined hand. Writing is lively, sets a scene and tells a story. However, even the best pieces indicate difficulties brought about by a limited vocabulary. For example, a pupil writes that a dragon "flamed " a tree. Pupils of lower attainment write short pieces about themselves using a few well-known words and ideas shared by the whole class. Letters are not always formed correctly and full stops often forgotten.
84. Pupils in the youngest classes are taught to listen carefully and teachers throughout the school have developed a wide range of strategies to improve listening skills. In consequence, although many pupils, particularly those of lower attainment have difficulty in concentrating for acceptable periods of time, by the time they are eleven the pupils achieve a satisfactory standard in listening. Some of higher attainment listen carefully and can in consequence respond effectively, with mature understanding, to the opinions of others. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in speaking is below national expectations because too many lack confidence or have a limited number of words where the meaning is clear to them. Those of higher attainment can explain their ideas and opinions well.
85. Teachers are aware of the problems pupils have in acquiring an effective vocabulary and in gaining confidence and individual teachers do much to promote pupils' acquisition of spoken English. However, the school would benefit from increasing knowledge and expertise in this specialised area of learning because there are many pupils whose attainment is very low in speaking English.
86. The quality of teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. It was good or better in almost three quarters of lessons. A quarter of lessons were satisfactory and a small fraction unsatisfactory. Teachers plan work carefully, making sure that all sessions of the literacy lesson have clearly defined objectives and activities which are matched to pupils' levels of attainment. Pupils learn at a good rate because new work takes account of what they have learnt before. For example, when teaching about the difference between writing in the first person to writing in the third person, the teacher provided an activity that pupils were very familiar with: writing what a character might be saying in a speech bubble, using their new learning about reported speech. Teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach letter sounds and effective strategies to make these sessions lively. For example, teachers say the sounds loudly and clearly, write them, get pupils to write

them on the white board, list words in which the sounds occur and then just as interest is flagging introduce a quickly learnt jingle which all enjoy. A suggestion that these sessions might be further improved if all pupils were able, on occasions to join in using a small wipe board was keenly accepted, because teachers are reflective about their practice. Guided reading sessions were often very good with clearly identified objectives, shared with pupils, and assessments made of how well pupils achieved. In these sessions pupils improved their reading at a good rate. In a few instances guided reading sessions were not done so well, and in one, pupils failed to make sufficient progress.

87. The subject leaders have ensured that nearly all staff have a good knowledge of the objectives of the literacy hour and the methods and strategies recommended. A few staff have not had the opportunity to attend all the training, either because they are new to the school or have had prolonged ill-health. The co-ordinators are aware of this and have appropriate plans to ensure that staff can be given guidance and support whenever it is needed. Over the years, experienced teachers have built up good strategies for supporting pupils' with lower attainment in speaking and listening.
88. All groups of pupils learn at a good rate during class lessons. However, when pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for work in a separate group, they do not always learn sufficiently well. In lessons planned to improve their independent writing they make good progress because they have more attention from an adult who can encourage them with their spellings and support them in thinking out their own ideas. In other sessions, which are linked to a specific reading programme they make less progress because the objectives of the session are not sufficiently well planned or linked to the work they do in class. The writing sessions, although successful in themselves do not follow the work undertaken at the same time by the class and this creates planning difficulties for the class teacher as these pupils have not read the whole class book. Pupils who remain in the school for most of their primary education generally make good progress, but there are numbers who leave or join part way through and this limits their progress. There are also pupils who do not attend regularly, or who are frequently late and these pupils often miss literacy sessions and their progress suffers.
89. There are satisfactory systems for assessing pupils' progress. This starts with the good assessments teachers carry out on pupils' work. Work is marked consistently well throughout the school with comments which pupils can read, or can be read to them by an adult, which indicate not only how well pupils have achieved but also what they need to do further. There are good assessment systems for checking pupils' skills at the end of each half term. For example, checking pupils' knowledge of letter sounds. From Year 2 onwards there are effective tests at the end of each year to judge the progress pupils make over longer periods. Subject leaders evaluate pupils' work from all classes, and in particular the independent writing that pupils produce. Discussion takes place on the levels the teachers have assigned to written pieces to ensure that work is assessed at the same level.
90. Reading is assessed well in Years 1 and 2 and targets are set for pupils. These are written in the pupils' own record book so that they are aware of their targets and when they have met them. This is not done in Years 3 to Year 6. In these classes pupils read to a number of helpers, who are supportive of pupils' efforts but do not appreciate the need to assess pupils' reading and identify how pupils can improve. Comments in these reading records are very brief and mainly an encouragement to keep trying when what is needed is a clear view of how to improve.

91. The subject is well led by two subject leaders who are really tackling the job with enthusiasm. They have been supported by the adviser from the local education authority and visits to the school's linked Beacon school. They have been very successful in providing good resources which are lively enough to capture the pupils' interest and have resisted the temptation to purchase a blanket scheme. Because of this, teachers have adequate support from resources but also develop their own material and use texts, which interest them, and consequently the pupils. For example, during the year work in Years 4 and 5 by a teacher covering a long term absence features lively imaginative writing and exercises on English grammar based on "Oliver Twist", the teacher's own choice of text. The subject leaders have monitored and evaluated teaching, planning and pupils' achievements very well and they have good insight into where they need to direct their future efforts. They are aware that the books for pupils of lower attainment in Years 3 to 6 are in need of updating and that the organisation of the library does not support pupils' reading for research purposes.

MATHEMATICS

92. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests mathematics for pupils aged seven were well below the national average. However, they were in line with the average results of schools with a similar intake. Taken across the four years from 1996 to 1999, attainment was well below the national average. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were also well below the national average. However, they were in line with the average results of schools with a similar intake. Taken across the four years from 1996 to 1999, attainment was very low in comparison with the national average. However, the average National Curriculum points score at the end of both key stages has improved since the previous inspection.
93. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has led to improvements in teachers' planning and a clearer focus on developing pupils' mental strategies. There is clear evidence from the inspection that standards are improving in both key stages, although overall, they are still below the national average at the end of Years 6 and well below at the end of Year 2.
94. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below that expected for the age group. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well above the national average. There is considerable mobility in the school population with a significant proportion of pupils who have transferred to the school having special educational needs. Whilst higher attaining pupils achieve the standards expected nationally, the high proportion of lower attaining pupils means that overall, attainment in both key stages is below the national expectation. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make satisfactory progress in relation to their ability.
95. Pupils in both key stages make at least satisfactory progress over time, and in lessons, many pupils make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop an appropriate mathematical vocabulary, an awareness and knowledge of shapes and their properties and simple data handling skills. However, many pupils are still consolidating their knowledge of number facts. By the end of Year 2, the higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of place value and they carry out simple calculations accurately. Most have good understanding of pattern in number and know the difference between odd and even. They can use money effectively and can work out simple problems mentally. They develop skills of simple data handling and can construct and interpret graphs. Lower attaining pupils have less confidence in their

recall of number facts but they are able to use apparatus effectively to aid calculations. The majority of pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape, space and simple measures. Pupils with special educational needs are given work which appropriately builds on their previous knowledge, all be it in very small steps. They make good progress in lessons when consideration is given to their prior attainment but their progress over a longer period of time is similar to other pupils.

96. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils carry out written calculations accurately and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of number facts. However, some pupils still have insufficient knowledge and recall of multiplication tables and addition and subtraction facts. Their mental arithmetic skills are weak and this affects the speed at which they can work. Pupils have an appropriate mathematical vocabulary, an understanding and appreciation of number pattern and measures and an awareness and knowledge of shapes and solids and their properties. The higher attaining pupils have an understanding of percentages and can perform calculations involving fractions and decimals with accuracy. They are able to calculate the perimeter and area of shapes. The lower attaining pupils can apply the four rules of number effectively, use a range of units of measure competently and can construct simple graphs to illustrate data they have collected. Attainment in problem solving is less secure. Lower attaining pupils often have difficulty with interpreting the questions and knowing which mathematical skills are required to produce a solution. Pupils can measure length, weight and capacity with a reasonable degree of accuracy, but are not always confident or accurate when making estimates or recording their work. Pupils are becoming confident when handling data. They can interpret graphs and charts to find particular information.
97. Standards of numeracy at the end of each key stage are unsatisfactory overall. Higher attaining pupils are able to use their multiplication tables effectively and handle number satisfactorily in mental work. They make effective use of mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum such as science. However, many pupils do not have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding of mathematical processes.
98. The majority of pupils display positive attitudes to work. They behave well and respond positively to challenge. They are keen to contribute to discussions and settle quickly to their work. When required, they collaborate well with other pupils, sharing ideas and equipment sensibly. These positive attitudes to learning have a beneficial effect on their attainment and progress. However, there is a significant minority of pupils who find it very difficult to concentrate for any length of time and who show little interest in the work provided.
99. The teaching of mathematics in both key stages is good overall. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory. It was good in 69 per cent of the lessons observed and very good in a further 23 per cent of lessons. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when teaching was reported as sound and sometimes good.
100. This good teaching reflects detailed subject knowledge, and very good management of pupils. It features careful planning and skilled diagnosis of misunderstandings. Throughout the school, good use is made of assessment information to group and set pupils and to plan work that is well matched to their needs. Lessons are usually well prepared and structured, with clear aims which reflect the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers have worked hard to gain familiarity with its components and requirements and to present them to pupils. The mental arithmetic component is taught effectively throughout the school with examples of well-paced and balanced lessons seen in each key stage. In the best lessons seen, teachers managed

challenging pupils well, had high expectations of pupils' mental and written work and planned in detail the lesson activities. Teachers' explanations are good and tasks are matched to the differing ability groups within the class. Teachers make good use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding and provide support as necessary. A good example was a lesson on number facts in Year 2, where the teacher's good classroom management skills and appropriately high expectations of behaviour and attainment led to pupils responding positively. Direct teaching and good use of challenging questions enabled them to consolidate their understanding of multiplication tables, and number facts. Pupils were encouraged to discuss their mental strategies to clarify understanding and demonstrate useful ways of calculating mentally. Good use is made of an appropriate range of practical apparatus to support learning and develop understanding. Good examples of this were observed in mental arithmetic lessons when teachers made good use of digit cards, number lines and 'hundred squares' to develop pupils' skills of counting on and counting back and their understanding of multiples. In a Year 6 lesson on co-ordinates, the teacher made very good use of questions to remind pupils of earlier learning and of the relevant mathematical vocabulary associated with the task. This revision was then used very effectively as the basis of new learning. Clear instructions and explanations ensured that all pupils had a clear understanding of the task and enabled them to make good progress.

101. Teachers generally make good use of questioning to assess and develop pupils' understanding and provide support as necessary. Pupils receive good feedback on their work through verbal comments although written marking is not always used effectively. Day to day assessment is good and teachers know their pupils well. Weekly planning is evaluated effectively and teachers record pupils' progress against the learning objectives outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy. The school analyses the results of National Curriculum tests and is beginning to set targets for improvement based on these.
102. There are good displays of mathematics around the school which enhances work in the subject. Homework is used effectively to support work in mathematics through the learning of multiplication tables and number bonds and through work which reinforces classroom activities.
103. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leaders have provided useful guidance to support colleagues in the implementation of the Numeracy Strategy. There are effective systems in place to monitor the quality of planning, teaching and learning. The subject meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and has sufficient resources. Mathematics has been a priority area in the school development plan and the school has effective strategies to develop numeracy. The National Numeracy Strategy is now used as an effective framework for planning and is having a beneficial effect on standards especially in mental work and the development of mathematical language. There is evidence that these strategies are beginning to have some impact on the problem of raising attainment.

SCIENCE

104. The results of the national tests for pupils aged eleven in 1999 were well below the national average. The school's results since 1996 have improved but not sufficiently to be reflected in the grades. Observations made during the inspection indicated that attainment in science was below national averages rather than well below as in the national tests. When compared to schools of a similar in-take the results are below average. The trend over time does show an improvement in scores but the school

does not do as well in science as in English and mathematics. The contributing factor to this difference is that one of the main areas of difficulty for pupils is the use of scientific vocabulary. When it has just been taught, as in a lesson, pupils are then able to express their understanding of the scientific processes they have been studying. However, some time later the vocabulary is not retained and so in a test situation earlier learning, where attainment had been satisfactory, is forgotten.

105. By the time pupils are seven, they are beginning to develop some sound scientific knowledge and to understand that tests can be carried out to find out what happens, for example to materials when they are squashed, twisted or bent. They know that some materials change when they are heated, for example when a cake is baked. In Year 1 pupils studying how materials can be changed do simple experiments and observe the effects of change in materials, for example the effect of heat on ice cubes.
106. In Years 3 and 4, pupils understand the difference between solids and liquids and are aware of gases. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils of higher and average attainment can explain different kinds of forces and their measurement and relate them to gravity and its function in the earth/moon system. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the function of major organs of the body such as the heart, the circulation system and the purpose of the skeleton. Progress in learning is overall satisfactory and occasionally good. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good and they enjoy the experiments and the discussions that follow from them. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in classes by the teacher and other adults. However, there were occasions when groups of pupils were withdrawn for special educational needs support and the tuition given, whilst relevant to aspects of literacy, did not also promote the science curriculum. Taken over time this could have a detrimental effect on their progress in scientific knowledge and confidence.
107. Teaching in science was always satisfactory, with the majority of lessons seen being of good and occasionally very good quality. Teachers manage their pupils' well using a variety of suitable strategies to manage pupils' behaviour which can sometimes be quite challenging. Questioning to promote scientific knowledge and vocabulary was done well. Resources and experimental set ups were well organised and of good quality and teachers modified the recording systems to support low attaining pupils.
108. The subject leader offers support to colleagues and has overseen the introduction of a new national approved scheme of work. Also "booster" classes have been introduced to raise attainment in the national tests. There is some evidence that these are succeeding in individual cases. However, the school's concentration on improving pupils' attainment in mathematics and English has limited the time for the development of science.
109. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are monitored by the subject leader, though the amount of time for direct classroom observation is limited. The new scheme has ensured that learning objectives are clear and that pupils are given a programme of work which builds well on prior learning. However, there is a difficulty in ensuring that pupils who join the school part way through their primary education have no gaps in their prior knowledge.
110. Resources for the subject are not over generous and need reviewing again. In the last inspection report staff development, whole school planning, and attainment were all identified as issues to be addressed. The new scheme of work, streaming of classes and the "booster" classes for science have addressed all the issues fully, except low attainment and here there is evidence of slow improvement.

ART

111. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection week. Evidence from this lesson and also scrutiny of wall displays and teachers' planning indicate that throughout the school pupils are generally working at a level expected for their ages. They use a variety of media including pencil, paints, crayons, charcoal and clay.
112. By the time they are seven, the pupils mix colours to provide the required effect. Their work indicates that they are growing in understanding of the work of famous artists. A large picture in which children used strips of tissue paper for the background and a range of material had been produced in the style of Kadinsky and pupils' work show understanding of the way the artist worked to achieve the result. The multicultural tiles completed by Year 2 pupils make an impressive display and were done with care and good control in application of paint.
113. By the time they are eleven, pupils' work includes observational drawing, imaginative painting, collage and print making. When involved in printing using a clay block pupils use vocabulary associated with art. In Year 3 pupils have painted designs using a selection of colours. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 experiment effectively with some of the methods and approaches used by other artists, for example, seascapes in the style of Turner which show careful application of paint and a growing understanding of the use of subtle shades. Their observational drawings of flowers in containers show that many pupils have developing skills in recording the finer details of line and tone in their work.
114. Progress overall is satisfactory and better where pupils have had the opportunity to work from direct observation and to choose from a range of media. Discussion with teachers and non-teaching staff and scrutiny of their teaching plans show that careful consideration is given to the requirements of pupils with special educational needs. There are well-planned opportunities for experimentation to enable all pupils to make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and skills.
115. Pupils have good attitudes to work. In the lesson observed they were enthusiastic, willing to help each other and completed their work with care. In the withdrawal group pupils were eager to talk about their drawings of which they were obviously proud.
116. Teachers have planned carefully to ensure that has been the greater opportunities for observational drawing, for working in 3D and with textiles. In the lesson seen which was satisfactory, the teacher used questioning effectively to encourage pupils to review and improve their work. Occasionally over-direction of work meant that opportunities were missed for pupils to make their own choices and for them to develop their independence skills.
117. A good initiative has been the detailed reviews in the co-ordinators' file which show that staff regularly evaluate the suitability of their teaching, the particularly successful areas and also those which could be improved. Observation of lessons, the work displayed and discussion with teachers and pupils demonstrates that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met in full. Pupils are introduced to an appropriate and broad range of activities. The co-ordinator has produced a useful policy document for the subject. The school is in the process of reviewing the scheme of work and is aware of the need of this to ensure progression in the development of skills and knowledge. As yet there is no portfolio of work to assist teachers in their planning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. It was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology during the inspection. The following judgements are based on examination of the school's documentation, analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers. Generally pupils aged seven and eleven are attaining standards generally expected for their age.
119. By the time pupils are seven they can construct simple toys such as finger and sock puppets or clowns of card with moving joints. They can explain their work and describe their methods. The finished items are of sound quality, showing that pupils have worked with care and knowledge about how to finish off their models using paint or collage details. As a link with their literacy work, pupils performed simple puppet plays for their peers.
120. By the time they are eleven pupils make more detailed designs and have a good understanding of the need to have a design. For example, some pupils found the instructions for making musical instruments on the Internet and printed these off to help their own designs. All pupils can use a number of tools appropriately, for example hack saws and various methods of joining sheet materials and wood. They make simple tests to evaluate whether their work is fit for the purpose for which it was intended.
121. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 have designed and made simple 'pop up' scenes to illustrate a story line. The older pupils design, build and test simple bridge structures and simple musical instruments, incorporating their own colouring and also contributing occasionally to materials, for example, fishing line for the gut for strings. Pupils talk with interest about their work. Finished products show that they make satisfactory progress in understanding the need to finish items with care. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
122. The subject leader offers help and support to colleagues. He monitors teachers' plans and their reviews of their teaching. The present scheme of work is under review in the light of new guidelines being issued nationally. Resources for the subject are suitably stored but not over generous and should be reviewed when the new scheme of work is put in place. The present situation is an improvement on that at the last inspection in that the subject has a policy and scheme of work. Standards achieved and attitudes to the subject are similar.

GEOGRAPHY

123. There was no opportunity to observe teaching of geography during the inspection week. Judgements have been based on pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator and with pupils about their work. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils of average and higher attainment are reaching a standard generally expected for their age. Those of lower attainment and those with special educational needs do not record a great deal of their work and their knowledge and use of vocabulary is below expectations.
124. The pupils have been given the opportunity to investigate their surroundings. Year 1 pupils have been on a walk around Little Hulton and made a simple plan of the locality. This includes a key. Their recordings include written accounts of their investigations and also other forms of recording including simple graphs in response

to questions about places. The teachers' review indicates that some pupils found describing features in their local environment a hard concept and were not confident enough to express their opinions and thoughts. The pupils have been involved in recording the weather and in making basic maps of their routes to school.

125. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have been made aware of different types of weather around the world. Their weather reports are informative. The pupils have investigated hot and cold countries and compared seasonal weather in Britain. They are developing an understanding of geographical vocabulary for example, some pupils can use the term "climatic zones" in the right context. Pupils are given the opportunity to carry out enquiries and seek explanations. They use information technology well to record their routes to school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were given the opportunity in the Autumn term to use a variety of sources to find out about the European Union and linked this to a topical news event, the dispute over beef between France and Britain.
126. No lessons were observed, therefore no firm judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. However, there is plenty of evidence to reflect that teachers ensure that the subject is made relevant to the pupils. Work is often linked to other areas of the curriculum, for example, information technology and art. Pupils are presented with sound and appropriate information. Opportunities are provided for recording and communicating ideas about places and for using maps. Pupils are encouraged to use geographical language and to engage in discussion. The list of geographical language which is used by teachers is helpful to them in their planning to ensure pupils knowledge is developed appropriately. Teachers' planning which has been identified as an area for development shows that work is beginning to be better matched to the differing needs of pupils and pays good attention to the development of geographical skills. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met, which is an improvement from the last inspection.
127. The subject leader who has only been in post for eight months has audited the school resources, written the school policy and is in the process of reviewing and further developing the scheme of work. She has worked hard to ensure that the teachers' plans meet the statutory requirements. Educational visits, for example, to North Wales together with investigative work in the locality are relevant to class experience and develop the knowledge and understanding of the pupils. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate but need to be extended to include more photographs.

HISTORY

128. There was very little history being taught during the inspection week. Evidence for the subject is based on scrutiny of the school's documentation, the pupils' work in books and on display, teachers' planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and with pupils. Pupils of average and higher attainment reach a standard appropriate for their age. Those of lower attainment and pupils with special educational needs do not find it easy to use the vocabulary necessary to describe historical events or the main characteristics of the periods they have studied and their attainment is below what is generally expected for their age.
129. In Years 1 and 2, opportunities have been provided for pupils to put events in order so as to develop a sense of chronology. Pupils have been introduced through stories to the life and times of King Alfred, Mary Seacole, the Mayflower and when gran was a girl. This increases their knowledge and understanding about the past as does comparison between life then and life today in terms of toys, homes, clothes worn

and everyday life. In a Year 3 and a Year 4 class pupils develop knowledge and understanding through discussions about Viking homes, weapons, long ships and the reasons for Viking raids. Year 5 and 6 pupils have studied life in Victorian times and made comparisons between times then and now. They have studied ways in which life has changed in the immediate locality of Little Hulton. Higher attaining pupils can write about their findings as reports or stories. However, lower attaining pupils do not have sufficient skills in literacy to read information or to record their work in writing.

130. No firm judgement can be made as to the quality of teaching across the school as only one lesson was seen. In this lesson good quality teaching enabled effective learning to take place. The enthusiastic presentation by the teacher and the interesting content together with the opportunity for role-play and investigation enabled the pupils to describe and write about the dress of ancient Greek gods. They were given good support so that they could find out about aspects of the period from non-fiction books and to make distinctions between their own lives and past times.
131. On occasions, pupils with special educational needs do not have sufficient time during history lessons to complete their written work as they are withdrawn to join a group for extra work in English. Discussion with pupils shows that there are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to find things out for themselves in order to enable them to gain a better understanding as to why people in the past acted as they did. Pupils talk with interest and enthusiasm about the historical periods they have studied. Their work is often presented with care. Pupils in the older classes have produced work using word processing facilities.
132. There is satisfactory subject leadership. The co-ordinator has been in post for nine months so is at an early stage of responsibility for the subject. The policy which has recently been rewritten provides helpful guidance as does the new scheme of work. The scheme will assist teachers in their planning and improve the opportunities for skills to be taught in a more systematic progressive way. A good initiative has been the introduction of a new planning format to ensure a whole school approach to teaching and learning. Although planning is thorough and the content of lessons meets the requirements of the National Curriculum the present cycle of two years means that at times history is taught in depth for only one academic term per year. Standards seen at the last inspection have been maintained.
133. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate but need to be extended to include more artefacts. There are a few visits and visitors to the school to enrich the learning opportunities of pupils. However, there are not many, and pupils, especially those of lower attainment would benefit from learning about history in the most colourful and direct way possible.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

134. At the time of the previous inspection the standard of pupils' attainment when they were seven and eleven was below expectations and the progress of pupils throughout the school was unsatisfactory. Teachers needed training and equipment and programs for use on computers were outdated and insufficient. There has been a significant amount of improvement since then. The school now has a sufficient number of modern computers which are on a network and they are sited well with support equipment such as a colour printer. Teachers' knowledge and

understanding of the subject has improved markedly and pupils throughout the school are now making good progress. The pupils aged seven have achieved a standard which matches national expectations for their age. Although the standard of those of eleven is still below national expectations, they are making good progress and have covered all of the relevant aspects of the programme of study although not to a high enough standard.

135. By the time they are seven pupils have learnt to control the mouse and keyboard so that they can use a variety of programs selected by their teacher. They are able to talk about how information technology is used in the outside world. For example, explaining that in some shops when an item is ordered, the shop assistant checks a computer screen to see if it is available. Most pupils have a good understanding of the need to save work if they wish to return and work on it later. They can use a wide range of facilities on an art package to design patterns, choosing colours and repeat operations with enjoyment. They know how to add a piece of writing to the page and many are beginning to be aware of the benefit of typing with two hands on the keyboard.
136. By the time they are eleven higher attaining pupils can test, modify and store a sequence of instructions to produce a variety of shapes using an on-screen robot. Some are confident in performing actions to communicate or find information, such as sending an e-mail message but because they have had a limited experience in previous years they are less confident in using computers to investigate outcomes. For example in a lesson on producing a variety of shapes using instructions to an on-screen robot, some pupils waited for further instructions from the teaching before attempting an irregular shape, others made guesses, and moved on further because they made mistakes and then discovered how to put them right themselves. Pupils have worked on data handling programs and can make sensible choices about how to select and organise information in different ways. Pupils of higher and average attainment are able to use a range of facilities in word processing programs to produce different forms of information. However, few have learnt how to combine text and pictures and some lower attaining pupils have difficulty with simple procedures such as highlighting. Some pupils are effective in using two hands on the keyboard but this is the minority.
137. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons carefully, including the seating arrangements which, with the current number of machines, always involves paired work and occasionally pupils working in threes. This element, which has a direct influence on pupils' social development and their ability to share ideas so as to get the best from the computer would benefit from further consideration. Teachers are currently changing pupils' partners frequently, for good reasons, but an effective way of working is to establish longer pairings so that pupils get to know each other and how to develop a working partnership. Lessons are generally a good balance of teacher instruction with opportunity for pupils to work at the computers and improve their skills practically. In one lesson when pupils were also learning about the letter sounds during the computer lesson, the teacher missed some opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of information technology because the part of the lesson with direct instruction was too short. In the best lesson, the teacher gave the pupils opportunity to work and then stopped the whole class to make further explanations to help solve shared as well as individual problems. In other lessons teachers tended to become too involved in solving pupils' individual problems. Work is well matched to pupils' previous learning and pupils move on and learn the next procedure at a good rate. Pupils' confidence is generally good, although quite a number of pupils are hesitant about making mistakes and need more encouragement

to have a go and learn by errors and the way to put them right which is intrinsic to the whole process.

138. The subject is well led, even though the subject leader has been unavoidably absent for some of the time during the current academic year and since the arrival of the new equipment. There is a well planned programme of work and staff have been given good guidance on using the new system. There is a good balance of planning to ensure that computer knowledge and skills are used in different curriculum areas but because of the circumstances this has not yet been fully put into practice. There is also some support available to help pupils of lower attainment and those with special educational needs but at present this involves only a small number of pupils and the school has much to do to get this operating as effectively as possible. The timetable for the computer suite is effective and allows some flexibility so that teachers can match work to pupils' needs as far as possible.

MUSIC

139. By the end of each key stage pupils reach a standard in music appropriate for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The rate of learning is often good in individual lessons because the teaching is good..
140. Pupils in Year 1 develop an awareness of the changes in sound texture within a piece of music and learn to pick up and imitate by clapping simple rhythms. They also use a simple grid diagram to introduce the idea that music can be written down and read again and thus prepare for standard musical notation when they are older. In Year 2 they develop their singing skills and knowledge, learning about pitch and accompaniments. They use untuned percussion instruments in simple compositions and to accompany their singing.
141. Year 3 pupils and those in Year 4 use the theme of weather as a stimulus to explore a variety of patterns in sound using a range of percussive instruments. They are able to play thoughtfully and make decisions about the kind of sounds they want before bringing them together for a musical performance of good quality and enjoyment for those listening.
142. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils explore time signatures supported by a recorded tape and booklet from the BBC Music Workshop Series. They learn the sounds of the various rhythms and the notation for them. They sing with confidence and awareness of pitch, for example, when performing a two-part song.
143. The quality of teaching was good overall. The visiting music teacher from the local education authority takes lessons regularly. Her good subject knowledge results in very stimulating lessons which build on pupils' prior attainment and inspire both pupils and the class teachers who assist in the lesson. All lessons are well planned and are relevant to the pupils' interests. Teachers without musical expertise are confident and able to lead music lessons with enthusiasm. Pupils respond well to the well planned activities and usually have very enjoyable lessons. Although the school does not have the services of a pianist for assemblies, the headteacher and his colleagues give a good vocal lead which enables pupils to join together to sing tunefully in the whole school group.
144. The scheme of work for the subject, though clear and effective, is under review in the light of the new curriculum guidelines. The standards of achievement are similar to those found at the last inspection. The overall quality of teaching has improved and

an effective scheme of work is in place. Resources have improved overall except in respect of tuned percussion instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. During the inspection, the only physical education lessons observed were outdoor games lessons in Key Stage 2. However, teachers' planning and discussion with teachers indicate that the school provides a balanced programme of physical education which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils in both key stages learn to play games, participate in gymnastic activities, develop athletics skills and respond to music through dance. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have swimming lessons.
146. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their skills of ball control. These included passing and receiving a ball; catching and throwing skills; controlling a ball using a hockey stick and multiple batting skills. It was not possible during the inspection to see a swimming lesson, but all pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity for swimming lessons. By the end of the key stage, the great majority can swim 25 metres. Pupils have a clear understanding of the effects of exercise on the body. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of the key stage attainment is broadly in line with national expectations.
147. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They dress appropriately for physical activity and behaviour is good. They work hard to improve skills, are well motivated and enjoy themselves. They quickly follow instructions to put out equipment. They listen carefully and concentrate on the activities of the lesson. Older pupils in particular are interested in each other's performance and appreciate each others' efforts. The opportunities provided for teamwork and a sense of fair play support the development of pupils' social skills.
148. The quality of teaching observed was good overall. It was never less than satisfactory with some good and very good teaching at Key Stage 2. Pupils are familiar with established routines for changing into kit at the beginning of each lesson. Planning is good. Lessons are well organised, structured and clearly planned to offer progression and a safe working environment. Teachers set appropriate challenges, provide clear instructions and explanations and encourage pupils to develop skills. Questioning is used effectively and use is made of pupils to show examples of good practice. All lessons begin and end in an orderly manner and contain appropriate warm-up activities. Pupils are given the opportunity to evaluate their work and that of their peers. This is effective and results in pupils trying to do their best and taking pride in their work. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and interact well with their pupils. Relationships and class management are good. In the best lessons teachers regularly provide new challenges and encourage pupils to achieve higher standards.
149. The subject is well led. There is a clear and effective scheme of work which identifies the development of skills and ensures that all pupils have access to an appropriate range of activities. Good use is made of external coaches to support the development of skills in sports such as football and rugby. There is a good programme of extra-curricular activities. These include a gymnastics club, football, netball, rounders and cross country running. The school takes part in competition with other schools. There is an appropriate selection of apparatus and equipment to meet National Curriculum requirements. The school has the use of two halls as well as outdoor facilities which include a large playing field and two playgrounds.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. The attainment of most of the pupils aged seven meets the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils of lower attainment and those with special education needs achieve a lower standard but all pupils make satisfactory progress. As pupils move through Years 3 to 6 their earlier knowledge and understanding is very successfully built on enabling pupils of higher and average attainment reach standards above those usually expected for pupils of their age. Those of lower attainment achieve a lower standard, especially in their written work. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding despite the fact that their particular difficulties in language and literacy make it difficult for them to record their work in detail. Overall pupils make very good progress in acquiring and developing good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other principal religions represented in Britain.
151. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a reasonable knowledge of Christianity and an awareness of other religions. In the reception class pupils discuss special occasions. When asked about their work they show satisfactory knowledge that weddings, birthdays and Christenings are special. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about special people. They are gaining in knowledge of stories from the Bible and the people that Jesus met and helped. They show good knowledge of the story of Blind Bartimaeus. The pupils discuss relationships, successfully reflect in a simple way on their own and others' feelings and show good understanding of the meaning of the story in relation to their own experiences of friendship and helping one another.
152. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils learn more about ways in which a range of religions celebrate festivals and significant events. Most pupils know the key features of Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. They listen carefully to each others' views and show respect for different beliefs and customs than their own. Years 3 and 4 pupils demonstrated significant knowledge that shabbat plays a significant role in shaping Jewish family life. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding alongside their peers.
153. There is specialist teaching for pupils throughout the school apart from the under five children. Teaching observed at Key Stage 1 is good enabling pupils to make good progress in their knowledge understanding and skills. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good. Lessons for both key stages are very carefully planned using the guidance of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
154. The teacher is extremely knowledgeable. Her teaching is energetic and enthusiastic and this is reflected in the response of the pupils to the high challenge of lessons particularly at Key Stage 2. A good example being a lesson on Sikhism where Year 6 pupils were successfully involved in independent research. The teacher had provided a very good range of resources for this purpose. The school's main library, however, does not promote independent learning and was not seen being used for this purpose during the inspection week.
155. The teacher has a wonderful gift for story telling and imparting information in such a way that the pupils retain information very well indeed. Very skilful questioning is used to check the pupils' understanding. She is particularly successful in enabling pupils to express their feelings openly and confidently despite the fact that many pupils have a restricted vocabulary and at times have difficulty in communicating their

feelings and views. Review documentation shows that work in both key stages systematically builds on and extends pupils' knowledge understanding and skills.

156. The policy, which has recently been reviewed, has been ratified by the governors. It contains a very useful list of words to assist teachers in their planning. Other helpful aids for teachers are the samples of work. Resources are well organised. There is not yet a formal system of assessment but skilful questioning is used to check understanding and knowledge.
157. Religious education is included alongside the National Curriculum and is taught to all pupils. The school has adopted the Locally Agreed Syllabus. At the moment there is no formal assessment or recording of the pupils' progress but the quality of informal assessment is good and helps the teacher in her planning of the next steps in learning. The school is satisfactorily equipped with teacher resources for the Christian faith and an appropriate range of artefacts for other faiths. The curriculum is further enhanced by visiting clergy who give generously of their time to support teaching and learning.