

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DIAL PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106043

Headteacher: Ms. Jennifer Curzon

Reporting inspector: Margaret Lewis  
22787

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 September 2001

Inspection number: 196017

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Blackstone Road Offerton Stockport Cheshire
Postcode:	SK2 5NE
Telephone number:	0161 4831445
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Southwick
Date of previous inspection:	21 - 24 April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22787	Margaret Lewis	Registered inspector	Science Art Music Equal opportunities	What the school should do to improve How high standards are How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good curricular and other opportunities are How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents / carers
22955	Doreen Cliffe	Team inspector	English Geography Physical education English as an additional language	
22062	Peter Graham	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology The Foundation Stage	
31012	Ann Welch	Team inspector	Mathematics History Religious education Special educational needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Dial Park Primary is an average sized primary school with 228 pupils aged between three and 11. Twenty-three children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Less than one per cent of pupils come from a minority ethnic background and the percentage of pupils speaking English an additional language is low. The school provides good, secure accommodation and facilities in a modern building re-built in 1994. It serves a mixed area of private and rented housing and takes more than half of its pupils from a nearby local authority housing estate. An above average number of pupils (27 per cent) are eligible for free school meals. Movement of pupils into the school has recently increased. Fifty-six pupils are registered for special educational needs which is above average. Two have statements of special educational need. When they begin the nursery a significant number of children are below average for their age in mathematical development, in language and communication skills and in personal and social skills.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. The recently appointed headteacher has made a good start in tackling some needed improvements. As a result, some real strengths are beginning to emerge in order to improve standards. The teaching is becoming more effective and the pupils are learning at a better rate in lessons. There is still work to do to raise standards from their current below average levels in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and to put right the lack of achievement in the past. The headteacher, staff and governors are working well as a team to improve the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Children in the three to five age range are taught well and make a good start to their education.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress.
- Teachers manage pupils very well and behaviour is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and show good attitudes to their work.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for their personal development. As a result, relationships in the school are good.
- The headteacher has a very good grasp of what the school needs to do next.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English and mathematics at the ages of seven and 11. Standards in geography and ICT at the age of 11.
- The governors' involvement in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- The quality of teaching which has some shortcomings in the classes for pupils aged from seven to 11.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has dealt well with the issues for improvement identified in the inspection report in April 1997. Pupils' behaviour is good both in and out of lessons. Teachers assess pupils' progress thoroughly; the school now makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Despite these improvements, standards of attainment have fallen and not enough recognition had been given to this until the appointment of a new headteacher in April 2001. Since then, the reasons for falling standards have been analysed and the school is moving forwards more rapidly.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	C	E	D
mathematics	C	D	D	C
science	C	C	C	B

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

Over the past three years, a pattern of falling standards has emerged in English and mathematics for 11-year-olds. Pupils have not achieved enough and the school has failed to meet its targets for their attainment. It has not done as well in English as other schools with similar social and economic settings. In all other subjects except geography, pupils attain the national expectation for 11-year olds. The increasing proportion of pupils at the higher levels of special educational needs, and disruption resulting from frequent staff changes, have partly contributed to this fall in standards. Standards in ICT are improving although pupils at the end of the juniors have gaps in their knowledge due to past experiences. Standards of handwriting and presentation are good but throughout the school pupils do not write at length well enough. Levels of reading skills are not as high as they should be for most pupils. In mathematics, pupils achieve well in mental arithmetic. Standards in religious education are as expected at seven and 11 years old. Standards are improving in the infants and are beginning to rise in English and mathematics. Children in the nursery and the reception classes make good progress and are on target to reach the levels expected for their age by the time they begin in Year 1.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They work well in lessons taking a pride in the work they produce. Pupils enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite. Their good behaviour contributes well to their learning and personal development and results from the school's high expectations.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with adults. They are caring towards others. The school successfully involves pupils in taking responsibilities and initiatives.
Attendance	Levels of attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

*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.*

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because the teaching is good. In the infants and the juniors, most of the teaching is satisfactory and in many lessons it is better. Good teaching is evident in both the infants and the juniors. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught at least satisfactorily and in some classes are taught well, although this has not always been the case. The way that teachers develop pupils' skills in listening and speaking is good in most classes. Skills of reading are not taught systematically enough to help pupils build up words and to progress quickly. In Year 5, mathematics is taught very well. Mental arithmetic is taught consistently well and is a strength of mathematics teaching, although teachers do not check pupils' work well enough to provide work at the right level. The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well and they make good progress. Teachers manage pupils very well and this results in good attitudes to work and good behaviour in lessons which enables all pupils to learn. Teachers are committed to raising the standards of pupils' attainments at 11 in ICT and are currently undergoing training to develop further skills and expertise.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad. Children in the nursery and reception classes receive a stimulating curriculum. There are gaps in information and communication technology that affects standards in this subject.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are helped effectively in lessons and make good progress towards the devised targets in their individual education plans. Staff manage the challenging behaviour of some pupils very well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils are assessed when they begin the school and make satisfactory progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There are sound opportunities for pupils to explore their own responses to a variety of situations. The school provides a strong moral code and encourages pupils to work together responsibly and co-operatively. It provides well for pupils to learn about their own culture.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. It pays good attention to checking and supporting pupils' personal development and behaviour. Assessment of pupils' academic progress is good.

The school works well with parents and involves them with their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good direction for the school to move forward. The deputy headteacher and senior managers give good support and work well together. The vision for the school is shared fully by staff and governors. Subject leaders have taken on increased responsibilities for managing their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive of the school and fulfil most of their duties satisfactorily. They have relied too much in the past on the headteacher to report information of the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher does this thoroughly. Governors are beginning to be more involved in these areas of their responsibilities.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school uses its funding appropriately for the benefit of all pupils. Financial management is sound. The school has sufficient teachers and skilled staff to help pupils. The accommodation is good and well organised. The school applies the principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school. The school expects them to work hard and become mature and responsible</li><li>• The teaching is good and children make good progress and behave well</li><li>• Parents are comfortable to approach the school with questions and problems</li><li>• The school is well led and managed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities outside of lessons and more homework</li><li>• More information on activities and pupils' progress</li></ul>

Inspectors mostly agree with the views of parents. However, teaching is mainly satisfactory rather than good and not all children make enough progress. There are few activities outside of lessons and there is insufficient homework for the oldest pupils. Parents receive about the same amount of information on children's progress as in most schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

##### **Standards.**

1. Standards of attainment in English and mathematics are below average because pupils have not made as much progress and achieved as much as they should in the past. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in English and mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching the national standards in English was well below the national average and below schools in similar social and economic settings. In mathematics, results were below the national average for schools nationally but at the national average in comparison with similar schools. Results were better in science where pupils achieved at the national average compared with all schools and above the average for similar schools. Although there have been some improvements and standards have varied from year to year, the school's results have not kept pace with national trends in recent years and the school has not added enough value to the oldest pupils' education. No national comparisons are yet available for test results for 2001. Initial indications of results for 11-year-olds in English are that pupils have attained similar below average levels as in 2000, close to the average in science, but have dropped lower in mathematics. There is, however, a more positive picture in the infants where standards are beginning to rise in English and mathematics and are maintained in science.
2. In 2000, the school reached its targets in mathematics, exceeded them in science but did not reach them in English. Targets set for 2001 were very challenging and not realistic taking into account the make-up of the group of pupils who sat the tests. The girls' performance has been lower than that of boys in English, mathematics and science. The school is aware of the need to improve standards and under the leadership of the recently appointed headteacher is beginning to take steps to do so, but these have not yet had sufficient time to take effect.
3. At the previous inspection, standards in English and mathematics for pupils aged seven and 11 were in line with the national average. In science, pupils aged seven attained the national average and exceeded it at age 11. However, in test results shortly following the inspection, pupils' performance at the age of 11 had fallen and was below the national average in both English and science. Current inspection findings show that standards in English and mathematics are below the national average at the end of both the infants and the juniors. Standards are maintained in line with the national average for science at the age of seven but no longer exceed the national average for pupils aged 11. These findings are an improvement compared with the 2000 test results for all schools nationally in English and similar to those in mathematics and science.
4. Children start in the nursery with below average skills in all areas of learning except in their physical development, which is as expected for their age. A significant proportion of children in the nursery have below average skills in mathematical, language and communication development, and personal and social development expected for their age. Many nursery children do not go into the school's reception class but to schools nearer their homes. Results of assessments by teachers in the nursery and reception classes and inspection findings, show that the children make

good progress and most are on line to achieve the expectations for their age in all areas of the curriculum by the time they begin in Year 1.

5. Although no national comparisons are yet available, there is a much better picture in the school's 2001 results for seven-year-olds in both English and mathematics than in the 2000 results. In 2001, more pupils reached the expected level 2 and a third reached the higher level 3 in mathematics. In English, almost a half, reached the expected level in reading and writing and a further quarter reached the higher level.
6. Several factors contributed to the below average attainment in English and mathematics of 11-year-olds over the past two years. Results reflect the increased number of pupils on the higher stages of the special educational needs register. Results also reflect the increased proportion of pupils who need help because they find learning difficult. A quarter of the pupils who took the tests in 2001 joined the school part way through the juniors and many found it difficult to make quick progress. In addition, changes of staff sometimes fragmented the progress of these pupils. Although pupils with special educational needs made good progress based on their levels of previous attainment, they did not reach the levels expected nationally. The current class of 36 Year 6 pupils has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, as does the Year 2 class. Both classes suffered from disruption in their learning last year.
7. Over their time in school, the oldest pupils in the infants and the juniors have not made enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics to attain the levels expected for their ages. The few pupils with English as an additional language who have recently joined the school make satisfactory progress. Although pupils reach the national expectation for seven and 11-year-olds in speaking and listening, their attainments in reading and writing are not high enough. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy, but in the infants, pupils do not acquire a secure understanding of letters and sounds quickly enough to enable them to build up words successfully. Older pupils in the juniors find it difficult to explain what they read. In both the infants and the juniors, pupils find it hard to write long pieces of work independently. They have difficulty using the skills they learn and practise in independent and imaginative writing. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is below average in Years 2, 3 and 6. As a result of very good teaching, pupils in Year 5 learn very well, although their overall attainment is not at the expectation for their ages, they make good progress. Where teaching is consistently good in mental arithmetic at the beginning of numeracy lessons, pupils are achieving well and showing improvements in their understanding of numbers.
8. In lessons, pupils better progress than in the past. Their achievements are improving, but have yet to be reflected in the results of national tests.
9. In science, pupils attain at the national average at the ages of both seven and 11. They show good attitudes to practical investigations and learn to record these systematically. They develop understanding of planning a fair test and record this well. Pupils in Year 6 apply their knowledge of what they have learnt previously well to new learning. Recent developments in ICT are having a good effect on pupils' achievements in the infants and the juniors. Standards for seven-year-olds are in line with expectations for their age and they make sound progress. They demonstrate a satisfactory development of skills and build upon their learning in the Foundation Stage. Due to limitations to their earlier learning and a lack of funding for the subject until the summer 2000, 11-year-olds attain below the national expectation for their age in ICT.

10. In all other subjects except geography in Year 6, standards are as expected nationally. In religious education they are in line with the locally agreed guidelines. However, this is not as high as at the previous inspection for music, physical education, geography, design technology and religious education in Year 6.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. The school has successfully maintained the good features found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils show enthusiasm for school and are interested in their work. In one very good art lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils studied surreal pictures by Miro and Magritte. They became so engrossed in drawing their own surreal pictures that they did not want to stop when it was time to go home. Pupils' work is generally well-presented and most pupils take a pride in their work.
12. Parents are pleased with pupils' behaviour. In lessons, in the playground and around the school behaviour is usually good. Pupils know the high expectations the school has of their behaviour and strive to meet them. Although some children find it difficult to meet these expectations, they are helped to do so very well by teachers and support assistants and consequently there is minimal disruption to lessons. Parents have no concerns about bullying. They report that the occasional incidents are dealt with very quickly and effectively. There has been one recent exclusion.
13. As at the previous inspection, relationships are good throughout the school. Teachers and other adults respect the children which results in similar responses from them. Pupils are polite and friendly to other pupils and to adults. They have the opportunity to contribute to class rules and this helps them to understand the reasons for rules and to respect them. Lunchtime in the dining hall, for instance, is a pleasant, social and happy occasion. Pupils respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others and have a good understanding of the impact of their actions. In lessons, for instance, they listen to and consider each other's responses sensibly.
14. Pupils take responsibility and show initiative by being involved in duties such as lunchtime monitors and play supervisors. They raise money for a range of charities. They currently support a pupil's education at a school in India and exchange correspondence by letter and e-mail. In addition to making a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, this initiative extends pupils' knowledge in geography, religious education and ICT.
15. Attendance is satisfactory. It is around the national average for primary schools. Pupils are usually punctual for school.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

16. The quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory and in 43 per cent of lessons it was good. Teaching was satisfactory in 49 per cent of lessons, very good in 6 per cent and unsatisfactory in 2 per cent. The amount of satisfactory and better teaching is similar to the last inspection, when almost 9 per cent of teaching was good or better. However, at that time there was a higher proportion of very good and better teaching. There have been changes in teachers since then. Two teachers have been appointed this term to Years 1 and 6, and have added greater stability to the staffing, following a period of disruption.

17. There is a higher proportion of good teaching in the nursery and reception classes, and in Years 1, 4 and 5. Very good teaching in Years 4 and 5 raises the rate of pupils' progress. For instance, in Year 4 art the very good knowledge and expertise of the teacher helped pupils to understand and extend their observations of how Surrealist artists worked. They then used what they had learned and observed as a starting point for their own work. Teaching in Year 6 is satisfactory although work is not always carefully tailored to match the different levels of ability of all pupils. In classes where more good and very good teaching occurs, this has a marked effect on the rate at which pupils learn. For instance, in science in Year 1 about how different sounds are made, pupils made good progress in their observational skills. This was a result of well-structured teaching with a strong focus on pupils observing and recording observations carefully. Good and very good lessons generally move at a good pace and teachers use time and deploy support staff well. The school plans to reorganise the teaching of mathematics and English at Years 5 and 6 to be set into classes of similar ability in order to provide pupils with the right challenges and increase their learning. Booster classes are planned for infant and junior classes to help raise the attainment of specific groups of pupils. The very small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching in the infants was due to a rare occasion of unsatisfactory management. This involved a group of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties new to the class, which prevented learning from taking place.
18. A high proportion of good teaching in the nursery and reception classes leads to children achieving and learning well. All staff show good understanding of children's needs and provide a responsive and exciting atmosphere for learning. Planning is thorough and is based on the early learning goals identified for this age. All adults put strong emphasis on children's personal, social, and emotional development.
19. The teaching of English and mathematics was satisfactory during the inspection. However, this has not always been the case. For instance, work has not been marked well enough in some classes to help pupils improve, and pupils of different abilities have frequently received the same level of work. Homework is not used consistently enough in the upper juniors. This has hindered the progress of more-able pupils because there has not been enough to challenge them.
20. In English, teaching was balanced between good and satisfactory. Teachers develop pupils' skills of listening and speaking well across different subjects. They give good opportunities at the beginning and end of lessons and in *circle time* for pupils to listen and discuss. Pupils are taught to read and write in accordance with the National Literacy Strategy, but in the infants, pupils are not helped sufficiently to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to build words when reading. In the juniors, many pupils have difficulty understanding the meaning of what they read. Teachers do not check pupils' progress in reading as they move through the school to make sure that the books they choose are matched to their levels of reading. Not all pupils read a wide enough variety of books. Home/school reading logs are often not completed by parents. When they are, pupils make better progress in reading. Teachers are working hard to raise the standards of writing but do not give pupils enough opportunities to write at length and over a wide enough range of situations.
21. Teaching and learning in mathematics were satisfactory in 50 per cent of lessons, good in 33 per cent and very good in 17 per cent. There was a higher proportion of good teaching in the infants than in the juniors although some very good teaching was seen in Year 5. For instance, a very good focus on what pupils were to learn, and well-directed questions given at a good pace, ensured that pupils of all abilities applied the skills they had learned and explained them accurately. A consistent

strength of the teaching is that mental arithmetic is taught particularly well and has a good effect on pupils' learning. For example, in a lesson in Year 5, challenging mental arithmetic games to develop pupils' knowledge of number were used effectively to *beat the clock*. Mental arithmetic usually has a good pace and provides all pupils with a challenge to their thinking in solving problems. However, teachers do not always use their assessment of pupils' work to plan work to match pupils' understanding. This means that not all pupils make the progress they are capable of.

22. Teachers are developing and increasing their knowledge of ICT through a planned training programme. This has a good effect in the infants where pupils' attainment is as expected nationally. The school has met the demands of this subject at the junior level for almost all areas of ICT although teacher expertise is not yet secure in all areas of the curriculum. For example, in using ICT to control what happens in a science investigation. Teachers do not make enough use of ICT across all subjects, for instance, in the use of data bases in science and mathematics, and word processing in English.
23. Teachers' knowledge across other subjects is generally sound although some in the juniors lack confidence in music. Training currently taking place in the juniors is increasing pupils' learning successfully. Geography has not been taught consistently in the past and the oldest pupils have not developed skills and understanding to the level expected for their age.
24. As a result of good teaching, pupils with special educational needs learn well and generally make good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. Individual educational plans contain suitable, achievable targets, which give direction to teachers' planning. This ensures that work is planned to match pupils' understanding. Occasionally, in mathematics, the match of work to pupils' targets is not sufficiently accurate, and pupils' progress is not fast enough. Teachers are good at including pupils with special educational needs in every part of lessons. Their reassuring manner and gentle prompting give pupils the confidence to join in and achieve success, for example, when working out calculations or during plenary sessions when they share their work with the class.
25. A strength of teaching is the way that teachers and support staff manage pupils on a daily basis. This very good management of pupils, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, is usually evident in all lessons and results in good behaviour and makes sure that all pupils are able to learn. Staff have good relationships with pupils. They use their sense of humour well and give praise appropriately, at the same time as maintaining firm and fair discipline. They award team points for good efforts and pupils take pride in receiving these.
26. Teachers make good use of resources for learning. For instance, the use of small white boards speeded up the pace of pupils' learning in literacy. History is made meaningful to pupils by visits such as a tour of the local area. Support staff who work with groups of pupils and pupils with special educational needs are well deployed and briefed by teachers. They relate well to pupils and make sure that they receive the attention they need to progress in their learning. Classroom assistants work frequently with pupils in the computer suite and, as a result of taking part in staff training, do so very effectively.
27. The school has a homework policy which sets out the expected programme for pupils as they progress through the school. This works satisfactorily for the infants,

although homework for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is not sufficiently structured to prepare them for secondary school.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

28. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils. It is good for children in the nursery and reception classes is good. These are similar findings to those at the previous inspection. In all subjects except ICT, statutory requirements are met. Not all of elements of ICT are fully met since teachers have not completed their training and there are gaps in their knowledge and confidence. However, the school has given this a high priority in its development plan and staff training is taking place. Although geography is now planned and taught in accordance with the nationally recommended guidelines, this has been inconsistent over time and older pupils have not learnt as much geography as they should. An action plan has been prepared and resources recently updated to ensure that geography is taught place. Religious education is taught in accordance with locally agreed guidelines.
29. The school rightly emphasises the teaching of literacy and numeracy to tackle the drop in standards in these subjects. However, although pupils have opportunities to write in other subjects, particularly in the juniors, there is not enough time for pupils to extend their imaginative writing at length outside the literacy hour.
30. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. It meets all the requirements of the national Code of Practice and statutory requirements for pupils with statements of special educational need. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs is above the national average; almost a third of pupils on the register have emotional and behaviour difficulties. A small number of pupils receive extra support from the local education authority's support team. This helps them improve and manage their behaviour more successfully. Three pupils, two of whom have a statement of special educational need, work in a year below that of their peers.
31. The number of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) is small but varies from time to time, mainly when families move into the area to take up short term appointments. The local authority's EAL support service is used to help pupils when they first join the school. Provision for pupils currently in school is satisfactory. They have full access to the curriculum and are included in all activities. Their progress is in line with others in their year groups. Teachers use the school's assessment and new tracking system to monitor progress. There are no separate educational plans to monitor the needs and progress of EAL pupils.
32. A significant number of parents who responded to the questionnaire did not feel that the school provided an interesting range of activities outside lessons. A small number of after-school clubs took place during the inspection, mainly of a musical nature such as recorders and singing. All clubs were only available to older pupils. Other extra-curricular activities include visits to local places of educational interest such as Bramall Hall and the Stockport Hat Museum. Pupils in Year 6 also have the opportunity of a short residential visit. The school has secured some additional funding to extend and develop extra-curricular activities which should help to improve the present satisfactory provision.

33. The school has sound links with the community. The school makes good use of the local area to enhance pupils' learning particularly in geography, history and religious education. This includes visits to the Church, the park and the local museum. Staff from the local council's recycling unit work with the pupils. Players from a local football club have provided coaching sessions.
34. Satisfactory links exist between the school and other local partners in the education system. Reception staff liaise with local playgroups and nurseries as part of the induction programme. This helps children settle into the school quickly. There are appropriate arrangements to support pupils moving to the local secondary school and pupils in the juniors have their swimming lessons in the secondary school's pool, which familiarises them with the school before they transfer.
35. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). In addition to being timetabled as a specific subject, aspects of the PSHE curriculum are taught through assemblies, science and circle time. Visitors to school widen pupils' understanding, for instance, of safety, and about the police force and fire service. These visits make a good contribution to pupils' awareness of health and road safety. The school teaches sex education and holds a very good drugs education day each year for older pupils. A visiting theatre group helps pupils to prepare and perform their own production. The headteacher, who co-ordinates this area, has good plans in place, for instance, to take part in the national healthy schools' scheme.
36. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good and remains a strength of the school since the previous inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school's ethos and the quality of relationships contribute very positively to this aspect of school life.
37. The headteacher and staff use assemblies to raise spiritual awareness. They choose appropriate music to create a meaningful atmosphere. An assembly based on *friendship* included relevant stories or personal experiences and encouraged pupils to value their friends and gave opportunities to take part in discussions and activities. Pupils observed that *friends help you when you are sad....lonely* and that *a friend is someone to share troubles and good things with*. Time was made for singing hymns, listening to a variety of music and for quiet prayer and discussion. Opportunities for *stillness and thought in reflection* have recently been added to the curriculum and are beginning to be effective in raising pupils' spiritual awareness. Pupils in the reception class, for example, reflected on what they enjoyed doing at school, while pupils in Year 6 were given the opportunity to reflect on the importance of keeping promises, after listening to the *Ramayana*.
38. Teachers provide a strong moral code. The ethos of the school is based on care and consideration for others and is reflected in the good example set by all staff. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong from an early age. Pupils in Year 1 were very clear about the way their teachers expected them to behave before they set out on their visit to the local park. Teachers discuss unacceptable behaviour with pupils and encourage them to see the point of view of others and to accept responsibility for their actions. Regular opportunities to discuss moral issues occur during special times when pupils come together and very sensitively discuss matters that are important to them. Teachers encourage all pupils to take part and help them to gain in moral development. Pupils are involved in making the rules for their classroom. In Year 3, one pupil's contribution included *don't laugh at people when they get something wrong*, while another suggested *be a buddy not a bully*.

Pupils have opportunities to consider wider moral issues, such as re-cycling. The school has recently become a member of the Stockport Waste Action Club which actively involves pupils in carrying out what they have learnt in lessons.

39. Provision for social development is good and is linked closely to how the school promotes moral development. Teachers encourage pupils to work together responsibly and in a co-operative way and provide many opportunities for them to practise and develop their social skills in class discussions, particularly in personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils in Year 5 took a very mature view as they considered the characteristics of a bully and suggested ways of dealing with bullying. All agreed that telling someone was a must. The school places great emphasis on good social behaviour and rewards pupils with individual incentives such as *Golden Time*, and team points. There are monitors for many of the school's routine tasks. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have responsibility for organising the healthy snacks on sale during break times as well as getting computers ready for use in the computer suite and setting up the hall for assembly each day. They act as *buddies* for pupils in the reception class when they transfer from the nursery. These duties are carried out in a sensible and trustworthy manner. The school helps to prepare pupils for good citizenship by giving them opportunities to organise events for charity. Pupils have also taken on responsibility for supporting financially an Indian pen pal during her time at school in India. Residential visits for pupils in Years 5 and 6 help pupils to work together in unaccustomed circumstances.
40. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. In geography, teachers introduce pupils to different ways of life in other countries, and in particular to the difficulties experienced in less developed parts of the world. Through corresponding with their pen pal in India, they find out about the many differences between her school day and their own. In the juniors, studies in history, of the Tudors, the Victorians and Britain since the 1940s help pupils to see how their own culture has been shaped over time. Pupils become immersed in their local history as they study the many Victorian buildings in the area. What is taught in lessons throughout the school, is reinforced by the number of field trips and visits to buildings of historical importance. Pupils learn about famous painters and composers during art and music lessons. In assemblies, they hear a range of styles of music by composers from many different cultures. Visitors to the school include theatre groups, musicians, poets and dancers. The school has good contacts with the local parish church and the rector visits the school on a regular basis. However, there are no opportunities for pupils to gain experience from visitors of other faiths or to visit other places of worship. This is an area the school needs to develop.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41. The school continues to take good care of its pupils and this is still a high priority for all staff including part time lunchtime staff and kitchen staff. Since the previous inspection, it has made improvements to ways in which academic performance is monitored and to promoting and checking pupils' behaviour. At the last inspection, the school did not have good enough systems to check on pupils' progress. These have been improved and are now good.
42. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory although procedures are brief and there is not sufficiently detailed written guidance for staff. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection and staff know that she must be informed of

any concerns. However, although experienced, the headteacher has not had any recent training in child protection and neither have the staff.

43. Educational support and procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs are good. Individual educational plans are reviewed regularly and modified in response to how far targets are achieved. The school makes good use of the local education authority services such as those supplied by an educational psychologist and special needs support teachers. Support staff provide sensitive guidance for pupils with emotional and behavioural problems and this helps them to work with minimal disturbance. Parents whose children receive support for their special educational needs are kept fully informed and are rightly pleased with the school's caring approach.
44. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The secretary monitors registers and parents are contacted on the first day of absence if they have not informed the school. The headteacher follows up any attendance concerns with the parents and if this is not successful the education welfare officer makes a home visit. Pupils who achieve full attendance in the year are awarded a certificate and this is helpful in promoting good attendance.
45. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The behaviour and anti-bullying policy is good with emphasis on rewarding good behaviour and encouraging self-discipline. All staff apply the policy consistently and actively encourage good behaviour. Pupils gain points for good behaviour leading to *golden time* where they choose an activity. This boosts pupils' self esteem effectively and reminds all pupils about the expected standard. Pupils in Year 6 are appointed as *buddies*. Their role is to help sort out squabbles and defuse any playground conflicts, which they do responsibly. There is a good range of outdoor games and activities at lunchtime and mid-day staff play games with the pupils. All these initiatives make a positive contribution to above expected standards of behaviour. Good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour work well to create a school where bullying is relatively rare.
46. Assessments made when children join the nursery and reception classes and continuous day-to-day checking by teachers provide good information about what children know, understand and can do. This information is well used by Foundation Stage staff to monitor how children are progressing in their learning and to plan a programme of activities that suits the learning needs of all children. This helps to ensure that all children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage.
47. Procedures for assessing attainment and progress in the infants and the juniors have undergone significant development recently. They provide useful information to help teachers ensure that pupils build effectively on their knowledge, skills and understanding. Regular assessments in English, mathematics and science are identified in teachers' planning and are linked closely to what the pupils are expected to learn. However, the information is not always used as well as it could be to provide suitable work for pupils of different abilities. Most other subjects are also assessed. There are some good elements within these assessment procedures and, although not yet fully established, they are already beginning to have a positive impact on teachers' planning and pupils' learning.
48. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress through the school are sound. Records are kept, pupils' progress is plotted and, in English and mathematics, targets for improvement are set regularly. In addition to fulfilling its statutory obligations

regarding assessment, the school uses a range of optional assessment materials to assess pupils' attainment and progress. The results of these are analysed in detail and used to identify strengths and weaknesses in what the school provides so that provision can be developed.

49. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. They are good in the nursery. Teachers keep appropriate records and review progress regularly. The school celebrates pupils' achievements with team points, written praise, stickers and certificates. It keeps daily record books for pupils with particular problems in personal development. There are opportunities for pupils to take responsibility by looking after younger pupils and carrying out routine tasks such as taking registers to the office. A school council is due to be formed later this year to give pupils a voice in matters of school life.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

50. Parents are mostly satisfied with the school and the education that their children receive. There is some dissatisfaction about the range of out-of-school activities; the quality of information about pupils' progress, how closely the school works with them and the amount of homework. The inspection findings support some of these concerns. The current range of after-school clubs is limited and the homework required is less than in many primary schools, particularly for older pupils. The school provides information of a satisfactory quality for parents. It keeps parents informed about school life and events in a half-termly newsletter, and additional letters are issued as necessary. At the start of each school year, teachers send parents a plan of the work under subjects to be studied that year, together with useful information about school routines, home/school agreement and Internet rules for signature and return. Parents of children in the Foundation Stage have their own notice board which includes a weekly plan and a copy of the latest newsletter.
51. There are three consultation evenings each year with flexible times to suit parents. The school encourages parents to discuss any concerns at other times by contacting the class teacher or the headteacher. It provides an annual written report at the end of each year. In the Foundation Stage, reports cover the six areas of learning and state clearly what each child knows and can do. In some areas, the report indicates how well the child is doing in relation to national expectations for their age. In the infants and juniors, reports contain brief comments about each subject. In English and mathematics, there is an indication of the National Curriculum level at which the child is working. All reports have space for parents' comments and these are generally completed. The school produces useful booklets on the skills it teaches and held a writing workshop for nursery parents.
52. The school has good links with parents. Admission arrangements in the nursery include a home visit by staff. Pupils joining the reception class attend part time for the first week so they are not too tired. Thereafter, arrangements are flexible to suit the needs of the child. The school encourages parents to become involved in their children's education and invites them to help in school. Some parents help in lessons. Parents are invited to family assemblies once each term, are expected to oversee homework and to listen to their children read at home. The school seeks their views every two years by means of a questionnaire.

53. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home. Several parents help out in classes and with trips and other events. They listen to their children reading and help them with project work at home.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

54. The management of the school was good at the previous inspection. Over a period of time, the leadership and management was satisfactory. The recent appointment of a new headteacher in April 2001 and the work completed in a short time shows good potential for improving leadership and management, and raising standards.
55. The school now has an increased number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and at the upper levels of special educational needs. Local behavioural support staff recognise that the school helps these pupils and deals with their problems so well that it is seen as a good example for other schools. In the past two years the school has undergone a difficult period of staff changes which included the headteacher, two other teachers and the absence of the deputy headteacher and another teacher. Taken together, these changes have contributed to a fall in standards in English and mathematics since the previous inspection and also in some other subjects. Staffing has been maintained by temporary teachers and managed satisfactorily by the governing body. For the term before the appointment of the headteacher, the school was led satisfactorily by the deputy headteacher.
56. The headteacher has begun to move the school forward and to improve and develop it in many positive directions. After thoroughly auditing the school's position and analysing the results of national tests in 2000 and 2001, a supplement was made to the school's development plan that indicates specific areas where learning can be improved and a good understanding of what needs to be done. The main emphasis is correctly on improving learning in English and mathematics in order to raise standards. To achieve this, the headteacher has put a good system in place from the beginning of the current year to track pupils' performance throughout the school.
57. The headteacher is supported well by the deputy headteacher, and a re-shaped senior management team whose members have a strong commitment to raising standards. Monitoring of planning and of lessons has been undertaken by the headteacher in every class. A further programme of monitoring is planned. New co-ordinators in mathematics and English are taking on greater managerial responsibilities. Together with the headteacher, they analysed their roles and now have a clear understanding of what is expected. Action plans are in place for almost all subjects and co-ordinators are beginning to use them consistently to check developments in their subjects. Some co-ordinators have yet to check the teaching in their subjects.
58. The school benefits from a full complement of mostly experienced governors. Governors are supportive of the school but tend to rely too much on the headteacher to keep them informed and in the past have not been critical enough. Governors are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. For example, until the appointment of the headteacher, they had not looked closely at the results of national tests or at the year-on-year results. Nor had they fully recognised that standards had fallen over time or asked the reasons why. Most governors have not been involved recently in curriculum matters. However, an

action plan drawn up by the headteacher and governors will involve them more fully in all developments. The governing body is aware that its report to parents does not meet all statutory requirements. This was the case at the previous inspection.

59. The school manages its funds efficiently. Governors have begun to review the budget monthly and the headteacher has begun to make a forecast that includes future spending. Due to cautious and sensible management, a budget surplus of 8.7 per cent accrued at the end of the last financial year. The school is aware that this is more than recommended but had put aside more money than was needed for new buildings and saved money on maintenance for several years. It now has a planned programme of spending that will benefit pupils. The forecast for the current year will reduce the surplus to 4.8 per cent; close to the recommended amount.
60. A good feature of management is the prudent use made of resources. Governors monitor the budget regularly and good financial controls are in place. As a result, pupils benefit from the purchase of a computer suite and a library. The number of teachers in the infants has increased by one and there are extra support assistants throughout the school. Educational priorities are supported well through financial planning. The surplus projected for the end of the current financial year is earmarked for improving play facilities for the youngest children and extending the outdoor area to incorporate a newly drained section of the field. Governors ensure that additional funding is used for its intended purpose. The money allocated to support pupils with special educational needs is used well. The effectiveness of the provision is reflected in the good progress made by these pupils.
61. Procedures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of spending on standards. Day-to-day administration is efficient. For instance, computers are used effectively to place orders and pay accounts. The recommendations of the local authority audit have been acted upon.
62. The school has sufficient, appropriately qualified teachers to teach the National Curriculum, religious education and the Foundation Stage. However, it has recently gone through a difficult period of unavoidable disruption in staffing. The school managed this as well as it could at the time but, nevertheless, frequent staff changes and the use of temporary staff caused disruption to pupils' education in several classes. Good arrangements are in place to induct new staff. Newly qualified teachers receive good mentoring and support. The provision of the support staff is generous and effective. There is appropriate teaching support for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Teaching assistants provide additional help in classes and for small groups. They make a very good contribution to pupils' learning and behaviour. The accommodation is good with spacious classrooms. Most of it was rebuilt after a major fire in 1994. The school manages the accommodation carefully and has provided an attractive and inviting library and computer suite. The school has a satisfactory range of resources, which are of good quality and quantity. They are readily accessible and used to good effect.

### 63. WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher staff and governors should:

#### **A. raise standards in English, and mathematics at the ages of seven and 11, and in information and communication technology at the age of 11.**

In English:

- improve the teaching of phonics to ensure that pupils build sequentially on what they learn;
- increase the opportunities for pupils to develop the skills they learn in literacy lessons to improve their ability to write at length;
- monitor the acquisition of pupils' reading skills rigorously and ensure that the books they read are matched closely to their reading levels;
- develop pupils' understanding and skills to respond to a wider range of books.

In mathematics:

- use the results of assessment more effectively to ensure that tasks are matched consistently to the needs of pupils of different levels of ability.

In information and communication technology:

- ensure that the skills and expertise of teachers and staff are developed to enable them to teach all parts of the curriculum.  
(see paragraphs; 3, 7, 20, 21, 22, 81, 82, 88, 120.)

#### **B. raise the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistent in all classes to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can by:**

- making sure that all teachers plan well-matched work for all pupils across all subjects;
- ensuring that marking of pupils' work is useful for moving them on in their learning; and
- developing the use of homework for pupils towards and at the end of the juniors.  
(see paragraphs; 19, 20, 21, 27, 47, 83, 112.)

#### **C. Improve governors' knowledge and understanding of the school by:**

- extending their roles, responsibilities, and accountability for the curriculum;
- involving governors fully in analysing and evaluating the school's performance;
- ensuring that the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory guidelines.  
(see paragraph 57.)

**In addition to these key issues for action, the following weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:**

- Review the documentation for child protection and ensure that all staff are fully trained in child protection procedures.  
(see paragraph 42.)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	21	24	1	0	0
Percentage	0	6	43	49	2	0	0

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

### 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)	12.5	228
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		61

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		56

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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 (Year 2)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	13	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	11	11	10
	Total	20	22	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 ( 69 )	81 ( 81 )	78 ( 81 )
	National	83 ( 82 )	84 ( 83 )	90 ( 87 )

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	22	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 ( 75 )	78 ( 81 )	81 ( 81 )
	National	84 ( 82 )	88 ( 86 )	88 ( 87 )

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	12
	Girls	13	13	17
	Total	21	21	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 ( 72 )	68 ( 64 )	94 ( 89 )
	National	75 ( 70 )	72 ( 69 )	85 ( 78 )

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	12
	Girls	14	13	17
	Total	22	21	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 ( 75 )	68 ( 69 )	94 ( 89 )
	National	70 ( 68 )	72 ( 69 )	79 ( 75 )

*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	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	188
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	
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.*

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Average class size	27

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	259

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	1:12

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	477688
Total expenditure	464811
Expenditure per pupil	1937
Balance brought forward from previous year	28637
Balance carried forward to next year	41514

### Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

239

Number of questionnaires returned

75 (31.4%)

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Tend to agree</b>	<b>Tend to disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
My child likes school.	59	37	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	56	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	36	15	1	3
The teaching is good.	49	48	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	52	11	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	33	5	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	56	12	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	36	57	4	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	44	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	32	32	9	8

### **Other issues raised by parents**

10 (13%) made additional comments: strongest points in order were: parents are pleased with the school and the progress their children make; the school does not provide enough out of school activities; more information could be provided to parents on school activities, children's work and the progress they make; more homework could be set; there are too many changes in staff.

## **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**

64. Since the last inspection the provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved. As a result of this and the high expectations and commitment of staff and the good quality of education provided for them, children make good progress. Since the last inspection the reception class has been relocated next to the nursery so that there is now a distinct Foundation Stage where a strong team of teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants share their expertise to benefit all children. This has a significant positive effect on children's learning.
65. When children start in the nursery most have below average skills except in their physical development. A significant number of children's mathematical and language and communication skills are below average and many show below average personal and social skills. Each child's progress throughout the Foundation Stage is monitored and the information gained is used effectively to plan further activities. By the end of the reception class, most children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and reach the goals expected of them. The nursery has established good systems to help children settle in. It has recently introduced home visits and encourages parents to be actively involved in supporting their child's learning.
66. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn, and plan to the national expectations for the Foundation Stage. Both teachers and support staff use questioning skilfully to help children learn. This is particularly effective when adults work closely with the children and results in children expressing themselves clearly. Nursery nurses and support staff have a clear understanding of their role in each planned activity. Great care and attention are paid to ensuring the early identification of individual needs and to developing personal and social skills.

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

67. Teaching and provision for personal, social and emotional development are good. Strong emphasis is given to this area due to children's poorly developed skills. Children make significant progress and most are likely to reach the expectation for this area by the end of their reception year. While most children's personal and social skills are still below those normally expected for their age when they leave the nursery, they have made good progress. They continue to develop personal and social skills in the reception class. Routines are well-planned and clear, and the children know what is expected of them. For instance, children in the nursery put on aprons without prompting when painting and playing in the water trough. As a result of teachers' high expectations, they made good progress and become increasingly interested in their learning. Most older children in the reception class show improved concentration and are keen to learn. They quickly learn to select resources and tidy away when they have finished. They develop an understanding of what is right and wrong and become more aware of the need to listen to instructions. For instance, when working in the hall with apparatus, they realise that if everyone is to be safe they must not run behind benches when others are working. Teachers promote children's listening well when working in groups. Staff provide a warm and caring environment where children are helped to co-operate with each other. They develop

independence in caring for themselves. They learn to take care of their personal belongings and change for physical development lessons unaided.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

68. Teaching in language and literacy is good. Despite steady progress in the nursery, children's skills in language and literacy are still lower than average by the time they join the reception class. However, their learning accelerates when they attend all day in the reception class and by the time they begin Year 1 most achieve the expected goals in this area. Through planned use of a good range of language and constant discussion, questioning and explanation, all adults play a significant part in the development of communication, language and literacy. In the nursery, there are wonderful opportunities for children to broaden their vocabulary. For example, in water play, staff encourage them to use words such as *frozen*, *melting* and *straining*. Children are helped to develop an interest in reading and books, and in story time they learn to recognise letter sounds and to follow text when reading together. They take books home regularly to share with their parents. They listen to and re-tell stories in story time and when acting out activities. Through the lively approach of all adults, many children develop an enjoyment of language. In the nursery when children played in *Grandma's Cottage*, they showed an increasing ability to tell the story of *Red Riding Hood* as they took the parts of different characters. Staff in the reception class build on children's interest in stories. For instance, children thoroughly enjoyed the story *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* before going on their own imaginative bear hunt. All staff place good emphasis on developing speaking and listening. They encourage children in the nursery to talk about their own experiences in large and small groups. By the time they reach the reception class, they do this with increasing confidence. In the nursery, children learn to recognise their names and begin to write them legibly. In the reception class, most children read and spell familiar words and write simple sentences. Children learn to use computers successfully in both the nursery and reception classes to support and develop their writing and reading, for instance when recognising new words and letters.

### **Mathematical development**

69. The teaching of mathematics is good. Most children are likely to reach the expectations in this area of learning by the time they begin in Year 1. In the nursery, teachers support mathematical development through activities such as number games, number songs and rhymes, and counting in practical situations. They begin to understand and recognise numbers by using their fingers to trace the shape of sandpaper numbers. Teachers use a variety of activities to develop children's number skills and give them good opportunities to use their newly developed skills in real situations. For example, children count out cartons of milk for snack time and make sure that the right numbers of children play in each area. Most children in the nursery count objects up to five confidently and are beginning to write the numbers. Their knowledge of shapes develops well and by the end of nursery, most children name shapes such as square and triangle and refer to properties such as the number of sides and corners. Higher attaining children describe rectangles and refer to curved sides of shapes such as circles and semi-circles.
70. As children move into the reception class they extend their understanding of mathematics and begin to add and subtract simple numbers. They begin to recognise coins and use them to make amounts up to ten pence. When working with time, they identify parts of the day and put activities from their own day into

order. Teachers use a range of resources such as sand and water well to develop children's understanding of simple weighing and measuring. Children are beginning to use mathematical language such as *big* and *little*, *under* and *over*. Children with additional educational needs make good progress.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

71. Provision and the quality of teaching in knowledge and understanding of the world are good. By the end of the reception class, most children are in line to reach the expected goals in this area. All adults use conversation and careful questioning very effectively to develop children's understanding of the world around them. For instance, when exploring the properties of an *ice hand* in the water tray, the nursery nurse used well-directed questions to develop the children's language and challenge them to think about what happened as the ice melted. Good questioning plays a major part in helping children to learn. Very effective questions and explanations helped children to understand the properties of a variety of man-made and natural objects. They quickly learned the difference between rough and smooth. In the reception class, children develop their understanding of living things as they name parts of a flower and sequence the life stages of a butterfly. When they grow seeds, they learn that plants need water to survive and they demonstrate increasing skills in observation and recording as their seeds grow. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers plan visits to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, children become increasingly aware of their environment as a result of local walks, and visits to places such as Manchester Airport, where they learn about different forms of transport. Teachers make good use of computers. Children use a mouse to move objects on the screen with increasing accuracy.

### **Physical development**

72. By the end of their reception year most children achieve the expected levels in this area. Many children joining the nursery have well-developed physical skills and most are confident and competent when riding and controlling wheeled toys such as tricycles. They are not good at holding pencils, paintbrushes and scissors accurately but as a result of good teaching, children make good progress. Adults provide good opportunities for children in the nursery and reception classes to develop physical skills. Children learn to handle, manipulate and explore a variety of materials such as dough and clay and to sort small shapes. This helps them to improve their co-ordination. In the nursery, children quickly develop accuracy when using scissors and they become increasingly successful with painting recognisable shapes. This progress continues in the reception class where children often demonstrate good skills in using paint brushes. Both in nursery and reception, children develop a sense of space and improved co-ordination through playing with balls and large wheeled toys, although the small sloping outdoor area restricts their progress. Children in the reception class develop an understanding of how to control their bodies and move in different ways. All adults take every opportunity to join in planned activities both inside school and in the outside areas.

### **Creative development**

73. Children make good progress in this area of learning where the quality of teaching are good. By the end of the reception class most children's attainment will be in line with expectations. Children paint, draw and build models from a range of materials. Teachers give good opportunities to explore colour: children in the nursery develop their painting skills and learn how to mix colours. Although many do not recognise

colours, when they first begin in the nursery they learn quickly by using them. Teachers plan well to link activities in all areas of learning so that they are meaningful for children. Children's paintings and models are displayed around the classes, which helps their sense of feeling valued. Construction kits and junk materials such as large cardboard boxes enable children to use their imagination as they make models. Teachers give good opportunities to children to act out stories to promote their imaginative and creative development. In the nursery, adults made a significant impact on children's creative development through joining in with role play in *Grandma's Cottage* and encouraging them to use their imagination when recreating the story of *Red Riding Hood*. In reception, *Mr Brains* provides children with good opportunities to develop imaginative play. Children enjoy singing and making music with instruments. By the end of the reception class, some children have an awareness of how music is written down and higher attaining children are starting to write down and play their musical compositions. Children become increasingly skilled at drawing pictures using the computer program *Dazzle*.

## ENGLISH

74. During the last inspection, standards in English were higher than the national average at the end of the juniors and pupils reached the national average by the end of the infants. Standards have dropped at the ages of both seven and 11 and are below the national average. This is due to several reasons. There are currently more than a third of pupils identified with special educational needs in the current Year 6 and a similar number in Year 2. Of these, a significant number also have targets for improving their behaviour identified in their individual education plans. In addition, both classes also endured some disruption caused by changes to teaching staff. This affected both the current Year 2 and 6 classes. Circumstances out of the school's control meant that there was considerable mobility of staff during the last year. Standards at the age of 11 have improved since the 2000 test results and, although not at the national average, are now below and not well below average. Pupils aged seven achieve below the national average in both reading and writing. This is the same as in the 2000 test results in reading but not as good in writing.
75. By the ages of seven and 11 pupils attain standards in speaking and listening that are in line with national expectations. Teachers give due importance to developing pupils' skills in speaking and listening throughout the school. This is evident during the introduction and end of lessons. Teachers set good examples by speaking clearly and listening carefully to pupils' responses. They give good opportunities to pupils to use a good range of vocabulary and question pupils skilfully. An example of this was in a Year 5 geography lesson when, through careful planning of a series of lessons, pupils debated a controversial issue on the development of a local supermarket. They articulated their ideas clearly, expressed their own opinions and commented on others' views in a mature manner. Pupils in Year 6 adapt their talk to the demands of different contexts with increasing confidence. When answering questions they take account of the views of others. Teachers strive to give good explanations and clear instructions in lessons. In most classes the pupils listen well to instructions and questions and understand the main points in discussion. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop confidence in speaking individually and in groups. They become aware of how to speak in different situations, and talk politely to visitors and other adults. They are confident when answering questions. However, some pupils in Years 2 and 6 listen less well to adults and to each other.
76. Standards in reading are below the national average for pupils aged seven and 11. At the end of the juniors, many pupils read with expression, but the books they

select often lack challenge. Pupils have favourite authors but are not all familiar with a wide variety of fiction and well-known authors. Pupils talk about the characters and plots of the books they read but are not secure in inferring and making deductions from what they are reading. They understand how to use an index, contents page and glossary and use dictionaries with confidence. A smaller number use a thesaurus successfully. Pupils at the end of the infants have few strategies to help them read unfamiliar words and wait for help without having a try on their own. They occasionally use picture cues but they are not secure in their knowledge of sounds of letters and blends of letters. They remember a small number of favourite stories but are not familiar with many authors and do not talk confidently about the stories they read. Pupils are beginning to understand how to use contents pages in non-fiction and know what an index is for. Most pupils have difficulty in using simple dictionaries by using the initial letter and when they do, a lack of knowledge of alphabetical order makes the task slow. In addition to books from the reading scheme, pupils also select library books. They talk about these enthusiastically. Many pupils find it difficult to make a personal response to the books they read, or discuss the impact of characters and events upon the stories although in some junior classes, pupils are expected to contribute to short book reviews. In some lessons, there is not enough use of the sort of questions that require pupils to explain or justify their answers and so consolidate their understanding. For instance, in Year 6, the teacher placed insufficient emphasis on reinforcing pupils' understanding of new work when studying the characteristics of different types of texts. Some pupils enjoy reading poetry but few read non-fiction for pleasure. Although home-school reading records are kept, they are not making a telling contribution to raising standards. When these records are used well there is a positive dialogue between teachers, parents and pupils.

77. Standards in writing are below average in both the infants and the juniors. Handwriting is good and pupils form letters correctly from an early age. High standards of presentation make written work attractive and easily accessible. By the end of the juniors, all but a small number of pupils join their letters and their handwriting is fluent and regular. Spelling is usually accurate and of satisfactory standard. Pupils use basic punctuation accurately, however, many of the skills they have learnt through grammar and punctuation exercises during literacy lessons are not used as effectively in pieces of longer writing and standards are not as high as is expected for their age. The examples and the range of longer pieces of writing are limited in both the infants and the juniors, because teachers do not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in writing imaginatively and at length. The marking of work is not used sufficiently well to recognise what pupils have learnt or to identify areas that could be improved. The best examples of longer writing in other subject areas were in pupils' work in history in some junior classes. This subject makes a good contribution to pupils' writing skills. For instance, pupils in Year 4 have written with feeling about evacuees in a study of life during the Second World War, and they have written clearly about life in Victorian Stockport. At the end of the infants, many pupils use joined writing confidently and spelling knowledge is developing in line with national expectations. Pupils write in sentences and use simple punctuation but find it difficult to write stories at length.
78. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In a minority of lessons it is good. Teachers generally have a good rapport with pupils and praise them frequently to develop their confidence. Where teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, planning of lessons is good and takes account of the needs of all pupils in a class. However, there are frequent instances where insufficient regard is given to more able pupils and the work does not always challenge their thinking and understanding as much

as it could. Teachers do not regularly provide further activities to extend the learning and understanding of higher attaining pupils during lessons. At times, teachers allow the pace of lessons to slacken once work has been set, not giving pupils clear information of what is expected and the deadline within which they have to work. This results in pupils not always finishing activities. The use of assessment to identify and set targets for pupils is at an early stage of development. Homework is not used consistently in all classes, particularly in the juniors, to support and reinforce pupils' teaching and learning.

79. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator for English, who is new to the post, is well-supported by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Literacy has high priority in the school's development plan. The results of tests at seven and 11 years old have been carefully analysed and an action plan with a clear emphasis on raising standards in writing is in place. A programme of staff development is underway as well as special programmes to improve literacy. This puts the school in a good position to raise standards in English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. In National Curriculum tests in 2000, the proportion of 11-year-olds reaching the standards expected was below the national average and well below the average found in similar schools. This is lower than those at the time of the previous inspection. Results were affected by the high proportion of pupils, almost half, who had special educational needs. In addition, a significant number of pupils in the Year 6 class had joined the school part way through the juniors and this had a detrimental effect on the overall picture of standards. Nevertheless, the school reached its target for mathematics in 2000. Although no national comparative data is available yet, results of tests in 2001 indicate that standards continue to be below those expected. Taking the three years from 1998 to 2000 standards have risen, although not as much as the national trend.
81. The proportion of seven-year-olds reaching the standards expected was well below the national average and that achieved in similar schools. Again, the high number of pupils who had special educational needs affected results. However, in 2001 there is a much better picture with more pupils reaching the expected level and a third reaching the higher level.
82. Inspection findings show that standards remain below expectations for both seven and 11-year-olds. However, in each class well over a third of pupils have special educational needs either for learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties and some have both. The school sees the raising of standards in mathematics as a priority. It has made a thorough analysis of test results and has identified gaps in pupils' learning. This has highlighted some weaknesses in their ability to interpret data from graphs and pie charts and calculations involving money and time. The school has begun to take steps to improve standards. Plans are in preparation for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to be set in classes of similar ability, with a view to giving most pupils the right challenge and moving them on at a good pace.
83. Teaching and learning is good in the infants and satisfactory overall in the juniors. Teaching in Year 5 was very good. Pupils' work over a year shows that they are not always making fast enough progress. Teachers do not use consistently the information gained from the school's procedures for assessing pupils' achievements in mathematics to plan work to match the ability and attainment of different pupils. As a result, within most classes, there are times when pupils of different abilities are

given the same work to complete. This is most noticeable when worksheets are used. In these circumstances, some pupils find that their work lacks challenge while others may be unable to complete it. The brightest pupils in Year 6, for example, practised their already secure addition and subtraction skills, while on another occasion, less capable pupils struggled to measure angles within other angles. When the information available from the monitoring and assessment process is used properly, and pupils' work is planned well, for example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils' progress is faster and they narrow the gap between what is expected and what they achieve.

84. A good feature of all lessons is the mental mathematics session. When all pupils take part and it is fast, and paced well, pupils enjoy the challenge of having to think quickly and *beat the clock*. In Year 6, for example, pupils worked out the 24 times table by first doubling the six times table to make the twelve times table and then doubling again. As well as helping pupils to remember their tables, this kind of activity helps them to solve problems mentally which at first appear too challenging. All teachers place strong emphasis on this aspect of mathematics. In a very good lesson in Year 5, for example, the teacher helped pupils to develop strategies to add mentally, and at speed, numbers such as  $57+39$ , by rounding 39 to 40 and taking one away after the much simpler addition. Because of the very good relationships with their teacher, pupils confidently explained their methods using mathematical vocabulary such as, *rounding* and *adjusting* correctly in their explanations. Higher attaining pupils went on to add, for example, 235 to 198 with speed while less able pupils, with good support from the classroom assistant, were able to add numbers such as 8 to 19 using this method. Another good feature of the lesson was that pupils were given the opportunity to apply their new skill in the context of mathematical problems.
85. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 know how to teach the basic skills of numeracy and recognise the importance of practical activities in helping pupils to understand mathematical concepts. The teacher in Year 1 used a variety of practical activities and games to maintain the interest of young children, while at the same time helping them to count back from ten and understand the concept of *one more* using numbers to 20. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 carefully counted the money in their purses to pay, for example, £1.42 for a teddy. However, they were not so accurate when working out change from a £1 to pay for other items.
86. The school gives good support to pupils with special educational needs. Teachers plan work to match the targets on the pupils' individual educational plans and pupils respond well to the extra support they are given during mathematics lessons either from their teachers or support staff. In Year 3, for example, by drawing attention to what they already knew about the relationship between coins, the classroom assistant enabled pupils to use this knowledge to choose the right coins to match the price tag. Occasionally, work is not matched to the pupils' individual targets, for example, in Year 6, when, despite the good support given by the classroom assistant, pupils were unable to cope with the number of steps within the calculation and their progress in this instance was unsatisfactory.
87. A strong feature of all teaching lies in the firm and consistent way that teachers manage pupils' behaviour. Prompt action from teachers and support staff puts an end to any misbehaviour and ensures that other pupils get on with their work. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and this helps to create a pleasant and co-operative atmosphere. Pupils are praised for their efforts and reassured if they give a wrong answer. They respond well to the positive comments

made in their books by teachers, and are motivated by the prospect of team points for their best efforts. Marking, however, is inconsistent and is generally not sufficiently constructive to move pupils on.

88. Teachers ensure that pupils use their mathematics in other subjects. Pupils in Year 2, for example, used a simple time line to show key events of the twentieth century, while pupils in Year 5 used a block graph to show the amounts of water used for different purposes in the home. The school is aware of the need to develop the use of ICT in mathematics and there are plans to increase teachers' expertise in, for instance, the use of spreadsheets. Although homework is given, it is on a fortnightly basis and not enough to consolidate or extend current work or to prepare older pupils to study at home on a regular basis in preparation for their secondary education.
89. Management of the subject is good. Although new to the post, the co-ordinator makes good use of tests and assessments to check whether pupils are learning at a fast enough rate and to predict the levels they will achieve by the time they leave school. This is fairly new to the school but is already helping teachers to see which pupils are not doing as well as they should be. As a result of monitoring the quality of teaching, improvements were made to mental starter sessions at the beginning of lessons and these are now of good quality. The co-ordinator is firmly committed to raising standards and has produced a comprehensive action plan to do so. This puts the school in a good position to raise standards in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

90. Standards of attainment for pupils at the ages of seven and 11 are at the national average. This is not as high as was found at the time of the last inspection, although test results for pupils aged 11 immediately following that inspection were below the national average. Inspection findings are, however, similar to the test results for 11-year-olds in 2000 and for the two previous years. Compared with similar schools, test results for pupils aged 11 in 2000 were above the average. The school exceeded its targets for pupils aged 11 in 2000 and although no comparative results are yet available for 2001, it seems likely that standards will be similar to last year. Current inspection findings show that the attainments of seven-year-old pupils have improved since 2000 when they were well below the average for pupils reaching the national average (level 2) and below the average for pupils reaching the higher level 3. This is as a result of good teaching, which is having a good effect on the rate at which pupils learn. Assessments for 2001 show an improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving at the national average.
91. Pupils show good attitudes and interest in science at both key stages, although the best teaching occurs in Years 1 and 2, where scientific enquiry is taught well. In these classes, pupils have good opportunities to make investigations and to ask questions. For instance, in a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher used simple games to provide a stimulating and motivating start to the lesson. This was followed by several different activities for groups of pupils, which had been carefully planned to meet their ability to explore sounds. The teacher encouraged pupils by helping them focus their thinking through good questioning. Pupils became increasingly confident and independent during the lesson and all received help to improve their learning, including those with special educational needs and a pupil with English as an additional language. Teachers usually make good use of resources to help pupils learn. In Year 2, the teacher gave pupils good opportunities to examine and explore wooden materials and objects. They learned to use hand lenses to examine cross-

sections of tree trunks, fir cones, wood shavings, and wooden objects such as turned, shaped and painted ornaments. They could explain the differences between the way other objects had been treated by shaping, smoothing and painting. A strength in this lesson was the way that the teacher organised the time available and used a support assistant well to help pupils learn. This is not always the case in the juniors where, although teaching is mainly satisfactory, in some lessons, tasks are not challenging enough, and time and support assistants are not used well enough. This happened when the introduction to the lesson was too long and, as a result, pupils became restless and began to lose interest. In Years 3 and 6, the best use was not made of support assistants for major parts of the lessons. Although pupils in Years 5 and 6 make satisfactory progress, tasks are not matched consistently to their different abilities. For instance, in Year 6, a new topic and the planning of a fair test was introduced for *How Plants Grow*. All pupils were set the same task of devising a concept map and supported by a prompt sheet. This did not sufficiently challenge higher attaining pupils. Better teaching occurs when pupils are brought together at the end of lessons to discuss their learning. For instance, following a Year 5 investigation on vibration, pupils said that they noticed that, *the rubber band carried on for a while and then got slower and slower* and that *the cymbal moved faster and then went slower and slower*. They showed confidence in discussion and used new scientific vocabulary such as *vibrations* assuredly.

92. Pupils learn about all the recommended areas of science in accordance with national guidelines. They learn to record their work systematically in both key stages. This makes a good contribution to their skills in literacy. Work and diagrams are labelled well and presented very neatly although pupils have few opportunities to use ICT in the presentation of their results or in lessons. This restricts the range of information sources they access and affects their understanding and ability to interpret a variety of data. Science contributes well to pupils' health education. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a good understanding of the need for a good diet and that calcium in milk leads to healthy teeth and bones. By Year 6, pupils are able to explain accurately all the needs of a growing child.
93. In all classes there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The school has recently made a study of girls' involvement in lessons and teachers ensure that both boys and girls are fully involved in questioning, discussions and practical activities. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour, are guided and supported sensitively by teachers and support staff.
94. The curriculum receives an appropriate amount of time. Some lessons lose their continuity when taught in sections to fit in with lunchtimes and break. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson, which was separated into two parts by a games lesson and in a Year 6 lesson, which took place either side of the lunch break. This inefficient use of time slowed the rate of pupils' progress and hindered the way that teachers checked on what had been learned previously.
95. The co-ordinator, who has very recently taken up the management of the subject, leads it well. An appropriate action plan is in place for the current year and pupils' performance at both key stages in the most recent tests has been analysed. Assessment procedures are in place and monitoring of science was recently begun by the headteacher prior to the appointment of the new co-ordinator. However, it is too recent to have had an effect on raising standards.

## ART AND DESIGN

96. The school has maintained its standards in art since the previous inspection and attainment is typical of that expected for pupils at the ages of seven and 11. Art contributes well to pupils' cultural development. It helps them appreciate and understand the local environment as well as learning about well-known Western artists such as Dali and Miro.
97. Teachers give pupils frequent and regular experiences in art helping them to learn at a steady rate through the infants and the juniors. They use the nationally recommended programme of work and this ensures that pupils develop their skills sequentially. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build well on their experiences in the Foundation Stage. Sound teaching encourages pupils to explore different techniques and skills and to develop an awareness of contrasts in textures and colours. For instance, pupils in Year 2 produced carefully crafted pictures on a natural theme of *Where the forest meets the sea*. They learned to choose and use a variety of textured paper ranging from wallpaper to tissue paper and coloured foil to gain a good effect. Pupils draw and paint lively, colourful portraits of their friends. From Year 1 onwards, they make observational drawings of objects such as musical instruments. Teachers give good guidance and opportunities for pupils to work in three dimensions using clay. Pupils in Year 2 successfully completed a mural using clay tiles. They learnt how to improve their work and give it an interesting finish with the ingenious use of brushing with shoe polish.
98. Teaching was satisfactory overall in the juniors although it was very good in Year 4. In this lesson, a strong feature was the teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm about surrealist painters and providing pupils with a good starting point for their own work. As a result, they created interesting pictures in the style of Miro or Magritte. Pupils made good steps in understanding *Surrealism* which built well on a previous lesson. In this very good lesson, the teacher's planning and organisation was thorough and time was used very well. The teacher had high expectations of pupils' behaviour and reinforced this with praise and positive comments on pupils' work. The choice and use of resources were good and maintained the interest of all pupils. Teachers generally give good explanations in art lessons. For instance, in a sound lesson in Year 5, the teacher ensured that pupils used their skills of observation carefully to draw, paint and mix colours when making a portrait of their friends. Sometimes explanations and evaluations take too long and limit the time that pupils have for practical activities to develop their skills. Support assistants are deployed well and help and advise pupils confidently in lessons.
99. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the post this term but is building well on the previous good management of the subject. An action plan is in place for the current year. Pupils visit local galleries and take part in local exhibitions.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils at the ages of seven and 11. Since the previous inspection, standards have been maintained in the infants but have declined in the juniors and are no longer above the national expectations.
101. In the juniors, pupils improve and extend their skills in joining materials using a range of techniques such as gluing and sewing. For instance, in Year 4, pupils have sound understanding of joining techniques and they make effective use of them

when designing and making purses. Pupils in the infants and juniors draw their ideas clearly and explain why certain materials are used. Even the youngest pupils are beginning to understand how the properties of materials make them suitable for specific uses. For example, pupils in a Year 1 lesson designing a park, suggest that swings should have metal frames so that they are strong. Pupils in Year 5 explore a range of mechanisms to find out the best way of making toys move, and succeed in making their toys move by using cams. Pupils enjoy their work and, as a result of listening attentively to instructions, concentrate well and persevere with their designs with success. When working in a group, most pupils co-operate, listen to each other's ideas and discuss tasks sensibly. As a result, they make satisfactory progress in their learning and build on it successfully. Pupils with special educational needs participate in lessons fully. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons and over a longer time.

102. Teaching and learning is satisfactory with evidence of good teaching in the infants. Teachers' planning is well-linked to the National Curriculum and pupils are taught an appropriate range of skills. Teachers show sound subject knowledge and often challenge pupils to think about their tasks through skilful questioning. Planned activities have clear objectives and are well-supported by a range of materials that provide pupils with opportunities to make and choose from a selection. Pupils in Year 6 designed and made interesting slippers using a variety of materials and artwork to suitably embellish them. They consider carefully the need for strength, comfort and appeal to the wearer as they plan and design their slippers.
103. The curriculum is broad and offers pupils experiences in the use of a wide range of materials including food and textiles. Teachers use pupils' achievements well to demonstrate good practice at the end of lessons to raise their confidence and motivation. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher boosted pupils' self esteem when she examined their stitching and praised them on the strength and accuracy. Management of the subject is satisfactory and work is effectively linked to work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 made a design for playground equipment following a visit and exploration of the local park in a geography lesson.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

104. Standards have been maintained at the expected level for seven-year-olds. However, this is not the case for 11-year-olds where standards are below those expected nationally. At the end of the juniors, not all pupils are sure of what geography is about. When asked to explain what they understand the subject to involve, they talked about bullying, smoking and Islam. The use of one exercise book for several subjects may contribute to this misunderstanding. Over their time in school, pupils in Year 6 have not learnt as much geography as expected.
105. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 visited a park and successfully noted features along the route. On their return to school they made a plan of the layout of the playground area. Subsequently, they studied an aerial photograph of the locality. They made satisfactory progress in their learning and, as a result of good teaching, recognised important features such as their school and a nearby road. Pupils in Year 2 learn about deserts, hot and cold climates and record the differences successfully. In the juniors, pupils develop understanding of how human and physical processes can change the environment and how such changes affect the lives of local inhabitants. For instance, as part of a previous study of a village in India, pupils in Year 4 wrote to a child in India. They are helping support her education. Pupils have good attitudes to lessons. They show interest in their work

and respond to questions and discussions keenly. In a very good lesson in Year 5, pupils carried out a homework survey about the possible development of a supermarket on a local site. They successfully devised questionnaires, asked friends and relations to answer them and used the information for a lively discussion in class. They articulated their own feelings well but also empathised with the opinions of other generations such as parents and grandparents.

106. Teachers plan the work using the guidance of the nationally recommended scheme of work, but do not apply it consistently across the school. In Years 3 and 4, the curriculum is planned in a two-year cycle of topics and these are studied in blocks of work which alternate with history in different terms. This results in learning lacking continuity for some pupils. In some classes where the teaching is good, there are good links with English. For instance, older pupils write arguments and reports about environmental issues or significant events such as last year's floods.
107. Teachers' subject knowledge is not consistent. Pupils of different ability are set a significant amount of repetitive tasks with very limited differences between them. This hinders the progress made by more able pupils. Some teachers use questioning and explanations well in the infants and the juniors to develop understanding and give pace to lessons but this is not always the case. They manage pupils very well and have good relationships with them. Teaching assistants work appropriately with pupils who find it difficult to learn or manage their behaviour. All staff deal with them sensitively and this helps all pupils to learn.
108. Geography is added to in the infants and the juniors by well-planned visits in the locality, such as to a nearby river, and to places further afield like Manchester Airport. The school is also closely involved with the Stockport recycling scheme as part of work on environmental issues. However, as no recent monitoring has taken place the co-ordinator was unaware that teachers did not match work to pupils' ability or that many tasks are repetitive. Until recently, resources have been limited but are now updated. The action plan for the current year is beginning to be implemented. Monitoring of the curriculum is due to take place shortly.

## **HISTORY**

109. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach standards in history that are typical for their age and are similar to those at the previous inspection. By the time they are seven years old they understand aspects of the past well beyond living memory, including the Great Fire of London. By the age of 11, pupils have gained good knowledge of different aspects of British history as well as of life in ancient Egypt and Greece. They understand some of the characteristics of societies as different from those existing at the time of the Indus valley civilisation, the Roman, Saxon and Viking eras, and Tudor and Victorian Britain. They develop empathy with ordinary people during the Second World War and begin to appreciate the impact of past generations on their own lives.
110. Teachers use their good knowledge of history and resources imaginatively to motivate and interest pupils. They show pupils how to find information from sources such as videos, books and objects from the past. A strength of the teaching is the way educational visits bring the subject to life. For example, pupils in the infants and reception classes used their visit to the local hat factory as a stimulus for a hat museum in school; this enabled them to see for themselves how clothing changes over time. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed the experience of a Tudor Christmas at Bramall Hall. They gained good understanding of life in ancient Egypt as they handled

cooking pots and other objects during a visit to the Manchester Museum. When pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited air-raid shelters from World War 2, it clearly had a positive impact on their understanding of what it meant to live through the war. Pupils' empathy is developed as they describe their feelings on leaving home, being evacuated to the country and fear and panic at wearing a gas mask and going into shelters. This work is of a high standard and better than expected nationally for their age. Pupils in Year 5 see for themselves the changes made to the local area during the Industrial Revolution, as part of their study of the Victorian era.

111. Teaching is satisfactory overall with good teaching in Year 5. Pupils in Year 1 begin to understand the passage of time as they use objects, and facts about their families, as an introduction to the past. As they compare their own toys with those of their parents and grandparents they make the distinction between the simple wooden and metal toys of the past and their own plastic, and often sophisticated toys. Pupils in Year 2 were enthralled as their teacher told them the story of the Great Fire of London, emphasising the importance of Samuel Pepys' diary as a source of information. This enabled most pupils to sequence the events, giving reasons for their choices. A less successful feature of the lesson was a lack of activities to meet the needs of lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs who did not benefit from using the same worksheet as more able pupils in the class. In Year 5, the teacher's good knowledge of the Victorian era, and her effective questioning, prompting and explanations, gave pupils a good introduction to this period and an insight into the harsh life experienced by many children. The Year 6 teacher used a variety of resources to encourage pupils to express their opinions about changes in leisure activities since the 1950s. However, the accompanying worksheet did not meet the needs of different pupils in the class and lacked challenge for the brightest pupils, who learned little that was new.
112. A good feature of the teaching is the high standard of presentation expected from pupils. Topic books are extremely neat with many detailed illustrations of objects from the past. Pupils are given opportunities to express their opinions and feelings about the past although there are times when work is too prescribed and all pupils complete the same worksheet. This is unsatisfactory. Pupils use their skills in ICT using the Internet to find information, for example, about the wives of Henry VIII.
113. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has improved the range of resources and made them more accessible to teachers since the last inspection. The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines and there are plans for the co-ordinator to observe how well it is working in the classroom. This, together with the new procedures in place for checking pupils' progress, puts the school in a satisfactory position to improve standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

114. Due to funding not being available to develop the subject until relatively recently, the school has not kept pace with developments in ICT. As a result, standards at the age of 11 are below those reported at the time of the previous inspection and pupils' attainment is below that expected for their age. Pupils' attainment at the age of seven is in line with that normally expected. All pupils are presently making sound progress although in the juniors, progress over time has been insufficient.
115. In the area of communicating information, pupils display sound skills because of effective teaching by adults with secure subject knowledge and recent training. Most pupils have satisfactory word processing skills. For example, they confidently

change the colour, size and style of their print to suit the purpose of their writing. They successfully emphasise parts of their work by using the bold, italic and underline functions, and they combine text and graphics by importing clip art images. Pupils' skills in handling information are below the standard expected for their age. They make insufficient use of databases and consequently they are unable to add to, amend and interrogate stored information. Limited use is being made of ICT to control events and measure physical data. Lack of staff expertise has prevented pupils from being taught to create instructions which can be followed at a later date such as a set of commands to draw a shape on the computer screen. Pupils do not use temperature sensors linked to a computer, for example, when carrying out science investigations. The school has the resources to enable pupils to use technology to sense physical data but, presently, staff do not have sufficient knowledge to teach them how. Pupils also make little use of information based models or simulations although they do create graphs from data contained in a spreadsheet.

116. The purchase of up-to-date technology combined with recent staff training has begun to raise the knowledge and expertise of staff and this has started to make a significant impact on standards. While those pupils at the end of their primary school career have considerable gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding, those in other classes have fewer gaps and are performing more closely to the level expected.
117. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well. For instance, in Year 1 they build upon the skills they have learned in the Foundation Stage by beginning to use a word processing program. They progressively develop their use of the keyboard functions including the space bar and delete key. By Year 2, they are confidently incorporating capital letters into their work through the use of the shift key and they begin to change the colour, size and style of their text. When using a paint program, they create colourful pictures and patterns by selecting shapes from a menu and using the mouse to drag and drop them into the required position. Pupils develop a wide range of skills including control as they give simple instructions to operate a floor turtle, and communication and data collection as they explore the Internet to find out about places in geography. Throughout the school, teaching assistants who are well briefed and given relevant training carry out much of the teaching. Lessons are carefully planned with a clear purpose. Teachers and assistants organise pupils and resources well and the tasks generally provide an appropriate amount of challenge. This helps pupils to build effectively on what they already know and can do to increase their skills. Pupils develop their skills further in Year 3 when they use the Stockport web site to research their history topic and download pictures which are then combined with their text. By this time, pupils are able to recall and print saved work independently. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 achieve at a similar level and have mainly similar skills to those in Year 3 because the computers and software required to support the curriculum have only been in place for a little over a year. Staff have only recently been able to undertake the training necessary to deliver the ICT curriculum effectively. Consequently, older pupils have a backlog of skills to catch up with.
118. Management of the subject is good. There is a clear commitment by the school to provide a high quality curriculum for ICT and this is a high priority within the school's development plan and the action plan for the subject. The recent addition of a computer suite has enabled pupils to be taught appropriate skills in a group where they work individually or in pairs and as a result, they are now making effective progress. The computer suite is put to good use with all classes spending some

time there each week. To support the new resources, staff are undertaking training to develop their skills and expertise in all of the areas of the ICT curriculum. While this is having an impact on standards, further essential training is required and has already been planned by the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They show good levels of respect for the resources, concentrate hard and behave well. Standards of attainment are clearly rising as a result of all these factors.

## MUSIC

119. As at the time of the last inspection, music continues to have a high profile in the school. Activities outside of lessons, such as a choir, singing club, early music group and recorder groups, play a major part in contributing to many pupils' musical experiences. All pupils' musical knowledge is developed very well in assemblies, hymn practice in the juniors and in some lessons.
120. Overall standards of pupils' attainment at the age of seven and 11 are in line with those expected for their age. This is not as high as at the time of the previous inspection. At the time of the previous inspection, all pupils benefited from a weekly lesson with an outside specialist teacher and pupils worked with percussion and classroom instruments to develop their skills. This is no longer the case and has not been so for some time. However, the school has recently begun to make good use of its music advisory service for staff training. During the inspection all music lessons in the juniors were taken by visiting staff as a part of a programme of staff training. These lessons contributed well to pupils' musical experiences and enjoyment of music and to increasing staff knowledge of teaching music. All pupils and teachers were fully involved in working together and became visibly more confident as the lessons progressed. Teaching was good in these lessons and, as a result pupils developed their understanding of rhythm patterns, as well as an understanding of how music can convey different moods and create different effects. This was taught well with the use of the score of *Peter and the Wolf*. Teaching included good explanations and use of questioning to probe pupils' thinking such as *Is Peter walking? Do you think he is skipping?*
121. Pupils' singing in the juniors during assemblies is good. It is a strength within the curriculum and is as a result of the enthusiasm and good quality teaching in hymn practices and choir practices by the co-ordinator. In the juniors, pupils sing hymns and songs confidently in two parts, with some pupils singing a descant above the others. Singing is tuneful and pupils' diction is good. In assemblies, pupils have the opportunity to listen to and discuss a variety of different music together. Music for listening is well chosen from a variety of classical Western orchestral music and music from different cultures such as African unaccompanied singing. Management of the subject is satisfactory and pupils are given frequent opportunities to perform locally and in school concerts.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. At the last inspection pupils attained above the national expectations at the age of seven and in line with them at the age of 11. They are now in line with expectations at the end of the infants and the juniors in gymnastics and dance. No lessons in games were seen during the course of the inspection.
123. Most pupils by the end of the juniors sustain vigorous activity over time in their warm up activities. They also demonstrate good standards of co-ordination but the quality of control and pupils' confidence during movement and sustaining balance is not as

well developed as is expected at this age. For instance, in a lesson at Year 6 several pupils who were asked by the teacher to demonstrate their skills for others were unused to this and embarrassed when asked to do so. However, pupils' skills in dance are developing better in the younger junior classes and pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and pupils' good attitudes. For instance, in dance in Year 4, pupils responded imaginatively and with variety when expressing anger to music and controlled their movements well. Pupils show the capacity to plan a short sequence of contrasting movements in both gymnastics and dance, but do not have enough opportunities to perform it for others. In some lessons teachers do not always give opportunities for pupils to evaluate and constructively feedback on each other's work to help them improve their skills. One group of pupils showed an understanding of the need for exercise and its effects upon the body. At the end of the infants, a significant number of pupils find it hard to follow instructions and do not yet understand how to use the space they work in and how to control their movements and balance.

124. Although teachers have high expectations of behaviour, a significant number of pupils in Years 2 and 6 find it difficult to manage their own behaviour in physical education lessons which hinders their progress and slows the pace of some lessons. Pupils throughout the school show enthusiasm for these aspects of the physical education curriculum. They dress appropriately and many pupils organise themselves efficiently and apply themselves with energy and concentration to most classes. In some lessons teachers missed opportunities to involve pupils sitting out of the lesson by not asking them to observe, evaluate or comment upon the performance of others.
125. Teaching varies from unsatisfactory to good. However, in all lessons there was insufficient teaching of skills to improve body control and movement. This resulted in pupils not receiving the information they needed in order to improve. Teachers establish safe practice and set good role models to the pupils through their dress and enthusiastic presentation of lessons although this is not consistently the case.
126. The co-ordinator has very recently taken responsibility for the subject. Assessment procedures are in place and provide a guide to pupils' progress. The school uses nationally recommended guidelines and supports them with a commercially produced scheme. These provide a sound framework from which to proceed. There are adequate resources that are well cared for and stored tidily.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

127. In both key stages, pupils reach standards that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have fallen since the last inspection because pupils do not know enough about world religions other than Christianity.
128. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages although good teaching was seen in Year 1 and Year 4. Teachers in the infant classes are good at using the pupils' own experiences as a starting point in religious education. They use questions well and, as a result, the quality of learning is enhanced and ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 1 learn about the value of friendship as they hear the story of how Zacchaeus's life was affected by his friendship with Jesus. As their teacher encourages them to share their thoughts about their friendships in the school community, they develop an awareness of *belonging*, one of the basic concepts necessary to the understanding of religions.

129. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have studied the main beliefs, festivals and celebrations of Christianity in sufficient detail. In a lesson in Year 4, the teacher used good subject knowledge and a wide range of resources to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of a traditional *Harvest Festival* as a way for Christians to thank God for providing food for the coming year. Pupils in Year 6 visited the local Anglican Church where they learned about the main features and objects inside the church and their significance for worship. Visits to school by the Anglican minister further develop pupils' knowledge of the local church and its place in the community. However, pupils do not have opportunities to visit places of worship, such as mosques, temples and synagogues, from the other world faiths. Although pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory knowledge of Islam, their knowledge of other religions is patchy. They do, however, know most of the features common to all religions.
130. A good feature of teaching lies in the way pupils are given opportunities to consider religious, moral and social issues and to link them to their own views and actions. Pupils in Year 6, for example, considered the relevance of the Ten Commandments in the modern world. Although they agreed that most of them still apply, one pupil did not agree with the first commandment and expressed the view that, *you should have a choice who you believe in*. Another pupil added his own commandment, *give everyone equal rights*. Pupils in Year 5 took a mature approach to personal responsibility as they considered their own relationships and their attitudes to other people. One pupil wrote, *I think people trust me because they tell me their secrets*.
131. Teachers give pupils opportunities to use and develop their writing in religious education. Pupils take an obvious pride in their work which is neatly presented and enhanced by detailed drawings of, for example, religious objects. When written work is too prescribed and pupils are not given the opportunity to write their own thoughts or feelings about a religious topic, teaching is unsatisfactory.
132. The management of religious education is satisfactory. The co-ordinator gives practical advice and support to other teachers. Satisfactory procedures are in place to check pupils' progress. Resources are adequate, with sufficient to represent major world faiths with the exception of Judaism. With a new scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus, and plans to visit places of worship representative of the major world faiths, the school is in a satisfactory position to improve pupils' attainment.