

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RACK HOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wythenshawe

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105448

Headteacher: Mr A T Barrand

Reporting inspector: Mr D Byrne  
28076

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> –17<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 196331  
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address Yarmouth Drive  
Northern Moor  
Wythenshawe  
Manchester

Postcode: M23 0BT

Telephone number: 0161 998 2544

Fax number: 0161 945 8735

E-mail address [head.rackhouse@mecgrid.org.uk](mailto:head.rackhouse@mecgrid.org.uk)

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor Glynn Evans

Date of previous inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
28076	Mr D Byrne	Registered Inspector	Science English as an Additional Language Equal Opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What should the school do to improve?
	Mr D Russell	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17767	Mrs S Power	Team Inspector	English Art and design Geography Special educational needs	How well does the school care for pupils?
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
17543	Mr R Coupe	Team Inspector	Mathematics History Physical education Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Lynrose Marketing Limited  
Bungalow Farmhouse  
Six Mile Bottom  
Newmarket  
Suffolk  
CB8 0TU

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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is in the middle of a large South Manchester housing estate of mainly Local Authority Housing. There are 188 pupils on roll, aged 3-11, which is fewer than at the time of the previous inspection. The school serves a community with very high levels of social deprivation and a very high percentage of pupils is eligible for free school meals (over 70%). The vast majority of pupils are of white UK heritage with a small number from other ethnic groups. Three pupils are identified as having English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is slightly above the national average at 25% with a high percentage (2.6%) requiring a statement of special educational needs. A high percentage of pupils have emotional and behavioural disabilities. A higher than average number of pupils leave or start at the school during the school year. The attainment of children when they start school in the Nursery class is well below the standards expected for their age. The school is in receipt of grants for Excellence in Cities and is part of a small Education Action Zone. The school has experienced high levels of disruption in the last two or three years. Some classes have had many temporary teachers, one had nine teachers last year, and the head teacher has been in post since September 2001 following the resignation of the previous head teacher.

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

The school is rapidly improving after a period of uncertainty in the continuity of leadership and teaching. It now provides an effective quality of education for its pupils but standards in some subjects could be better. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with a strength in the teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs. The new head teacher provides very good leadership. Behaviour is now good but many initiatives to raise standards have only just been implemented and their impact is yet to be fully felt. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The children in the Nursery and Reception classes are taught well and receive a good start to their education.
- Good behaviour and relationships are successfully promoted.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school works closely with the community to support the pupils' education.
- Pupils are well cared for and good procedures exist to monitor attendance, promote good behaviour and remove oppressive behaviour.
- There are good links with parents.
- Inspirational leadership by the head teacher, who is supported by a good governing body and a hard working staff is improving the school.
- Good use is made of grants for improving standards.

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

- Pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, geography, information and communication technology and religious education across the school, and in design and technology in Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- The role of subject co-ordinators in identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning in each subject.
- The use of assessment and record keeping to inform planning.
- The expectations for pupils to work independently.
- Attendance and punctuality.
- Resources for aspects of some subjects

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in May 1997, disruptions arising from high levels of staff illness and a significant turnover of teachers have reduced the rate of the school's development. Since the appointment of the new head teacher significant improvements have occurred and most of the areas for development in the last report have been addressed. Behaviour throughout the school is now much better, the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has improved significantly and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is now good. The curriculum for religious education now matches the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus, although standards need to be better. The school now has a clear educational direction and the governing body is fully involved in school life. Links with parents are now good. Some improvements have been made to the management and co-ordination of subjects but not enough has been done. There are still gaps in meeting National Curriculum requirements for information and communication technology and standards are not as good as they were judged to be in the previous inspection report in English, mathematics and science. However, the current quality of leadership and educational direction means that the school is well placed for improvement in the future.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	C	D	A
mathematics	B	E	D	B
science	B	E	E	C

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

There are variations in the natural ability of each year group with a high percentage of pupils in most classes having special educational needs. This factor, coupled with the high proportion of pupils who join and leave school other than at the normal times, means that all assessment data need to be treated with caution. Inspection findings are that pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but by the end of Year 6 standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science. The table above shows that in 2001 the school's results at the end of Year 6 were below the national average in English and mathematics and well below the national average in science. In comparison with schools deemed similar on the basis of the number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals the results were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. Taking the school's results over the last five years, the percentage of pupils at the end of Year 6 achieving the nationally expected standard of level 4 has improved at a rate that is similar to the national trend. The school is committed to achieving higher standards and has taken steps recently to boost the standards of both lower and higher attaining pupils. The targets for pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics were too low in the past reflecting low expectations, but recent targets have been increased and are now realistic but challenging. Too few pupils however achieve standards that are above the national expectations in English, mathematics and science at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

The results of the Year 2 National Curriculum tests have risen from very low levels since 1998 in writing and mathematics but have remained broadly the same in reading. The results achieved in the National Curriculum end of Year 2 tests in 2001 in writing were in the bottom 5% nationally and were well below average compared with similar schools. In mathematics standards in 2001 were well below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools. In science, standards were slightly better but were still below average. The low results for 2001 are explained by a very high percentage of pupils within the Year 2 class (50%) with special educational needs.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in art and design, history, music and physical education and they achieve national expectations by the end of both Year 2 and 6. In geography, pupils make unsatisfactory progress across the school and pupils' attainment is below national expectations by the end of both key stages. In design and technology, progress and attainment is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils in both key stages make unsatisfactory progress in information and communication technology and pupils' attainment is well below national expectations across the school. In religious education, the standards achieved by pupils are below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2.

Children start school in the Nursery class with attainment that is well below average. As a result of good teaching, children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn at a good rate and achieve the early learning goals in creative and physical development. Despite making good progress, most children still have not reached the expected standards in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, their mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the Reception class.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Attitudes vary significantly between year groups. Pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Years 1 to 4 are mostly enthusiastic and willing to learn but in Year 5 and 6 a significant number of pupils display apathy to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well both in lessons and outside during lunchtimes and play.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good but many pupils are not used to using their initiative and find it difficult to learn on their own.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Rates of attendance are below the national average and a significant number of pupils, particularly those in Years 1 and 2 start school late in the morning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
39 lessons seen	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.*

Teaching and support staff throughout the school work closely as a team and they are responding to the inspirational leadership of the head teacher. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. In the Nursery and Reception classes teaching is good. Good teamwork between qualified nursery assistants and teaching staff ensures that a good balance is struck between providing children with structured activities and



giving them opportunities to play and learn on their own. The children make good progress in the development of early reading and writing skills but not enough time is given to mathematical development or to the use of the computer.

The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall although during the inspection it was good in Years 1 to 4. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall. Lessons are usually well planned although not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop and apply their skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in all subjects. Lessons are well-managed and good relationships between teachers and support staff ensure good behaviour, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. There is a tendency to teach in a direct instructional style and this reduces opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. With the exception of computers, good use is made of resources to bring learning alive. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory but a weakness in library provision reduces opportunities for pupils to develop their personal research skills. Throughout the school, teachers and support staff provide good levels of support for pupils with special educational needs and recently introduced initiatives for supporting higher attaining pupils are improving their progress. Good use is made of homework to boost standards.

Teachers throughout the school provide good levels of support for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers recognise the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and ensure that they are given effective guidance and support in lessons.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall with good provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for music across the school. Until recently not enough time has been given to design and technology in Key Stage 2 and to geography or information and communication technology across the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision overall. Pupils are well supported and this ensures pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported effectively in lessons and are successfully included in all elements of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The school makes good provision for promoting pupils' social and moral development and satisfactory provision in developing pupils' sense of spirituality and awareness of their own and other cultures. The provision for promoting pupils' personal development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall with good procedures for ensuring child protection, pupils' welfare and for monitoring attendance and promoting good behaviour. Procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils are adequate in English and mathematics but procedures are unsatisfactory in other subjects.
How well the school works with parents and carers.	Parents have very positive views of the school and effective links have been established with them. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home and are increasingly getting involved in the day-to-day life of the school. The level of communication with the school is generally good but annual reports lack details and could be better.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall with inspirational leadership from the head teacher. Because of recent staff changes, the role of key staff lacks clarity in particular with regard to monitoring the standards and progress of teaching and learning. The school successfully operates a good inclusion policy
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is very supportive of the head teacher and it has established good systems for ensuring that standards are improved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The head teacher staff and governors openly evaluate how well the school is doing by making good use of assessment data and information from observing lessons. Any areas of strength and weakness are highlighted for inclusion in the school's action plan.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory procedures are established to ensure that all spending provides best value for money. All grants are used effectively and the head teacher and governing body make sure that finances are now directed to raising standards across the school. Grants to support pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are Gifted and Talented are spent effectively.

Although satisfactory, there are some weaknesses in the school's accommodation, both inside and outside. The quality of the school library is poor and the range and number of fiction and non-fiction books throughout the school are inadequate. There are weaknesses in the resources for mathematics, science, geography and physical education.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The leadership of the head teacher and the support and commitment of the teaching and support staff</p> <p>The recently improved behaviour and levels of enthusiasm.</p> <p>The way in which the school welcomes parents and if there is a need to discuss issues of concern.</p> <p>The improvement of extra-curricular activities such as the homework clubs and the Saturday club.</p> <p>The support given to parents and the quality of information provided by the school.</p>	<p>No significant concerns were mentioned at the pre-inspection meeting or in the pre-inspection questionnaires.</p>

The inspection findings are that the parents positive views are accurate and justified but there are some areas for further improvement as identified in the inspection report.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children start school with very low levels of attainment but during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes, they make good progress overall. In spite of this good progress, a significant number of children do not achieve the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy in their mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start Year 1. Children do achieve the early learning goals in their creative and physical development by the time they start Year 1.
2. In Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall with pupils with special educational needs making satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Because the quality of teaching is better in Years 1 to 4 the progress of pupils in these years is better than in Years 5 and 6. Over time, the progress of the older pupils in Years 5 and 6 has been seriously disrupted because of frequent staff illness and over time, the progress of these pupils could and should have been better. Throughout the school, there are times when the progress of higher attaining pupils could be better, although recent measures taken to improve provision for Gifted and Talented pupils is starting to address this issue. Disruptions in staffing and in the leadership and management of the school in recent years have adversely affected the progress and attainment of pupils in some subjects since the last inspection. In information and communication technology, geography and religious education across the school and in design and technology in Key stage 2, progress has not been good enough. Under the strong leadership of the new head teacher, significant improvements in many aspects of management have occurred, staffing difficulties have been improved resulting in improving standards, but there is still a lot of work to do to ensure that every pupil achieves his or her potential.
3. The National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001 show that in comparison with similar schools, standards were well below the national average in reading and writing and below the average in mathematics and science. When results are compared with all schools nationally, the school's performance at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001 was very low in both reading and writing, being in the bottom 5% nationally and in mathematics and science, standards were well below the national average. A significant factor in the low results is the very high percentage of pupils in the year group with special educational needs (50%) coupled with the very low level of attainment with which the pupils started school. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. In recent years, the percentage of pupils who reached the higher standard of level 3 has been too low.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Year 2 standards are well below the national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. There is a particular weakness in the standard of writing produced by pupils and their progress in this area of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Many find it hard to write and although basic skills are being developed, the ability of pupils to produce extended pieces of writing for a variety of purposes is below what is expected for their age. In all subjects pupils lack the confidence to work with reasonable independence and this reduces their progress.
5. The head teacher, staff and governing body recognise that despite the particularly high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the 2001 Year 2 class, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 could still be higher. A detailed analysis of the end of key

stage National Curriculum test results has been undertaken and steps have been taken to improve the level of support for pupils with special educational needs and also for higher attaining pupils. The head teacher has increased the expectations of staff in Years 1 and 2 so that more challenging work is provided for all pupils. The implementation of many of these changes has been very recent and has not yet had time to make a significant impact on the pupils' performance in end of key stage National Curriculum tests.

6. When the performance of pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2001 is compared with pupils in similar schools, the pupils performed well overall. Standards were well above average in English, above the average in mathematics and average in science. When the results are compared with all schools nationally, however, standards were below the national average in both English and mathematics and well below the national average in science. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. In recent years, the percentage of pupils who reached the higher standard of level 5 has been too low.
7. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are below the national expectations although between Years 3 and 6, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils have particular difficulties with writing and do so reluctantly, although they speak well enough and read satisfactorily. In mathematics and science, pupils' skills of performing investigations independently are unsatisfactory overall.
8. The test results need to be treated with caution because some year groups have a high percentage of pupils with learning difficulties. When the results at the end of Key Stage 2 over the last few years are taken together, standards by the end of Year 6 have fluctuated from year to year depending upon the percentage of pupils in each year with special educational needs. Overall, the percentage of pupils achieving the standards expected for their age of level 4 has improved at a rate that is broadly in line with the national trend but with the exception of 1998, standards have been below the national average.
9. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, standards vary from subject to subject. Disruptions to the teaching staff have adversely affected the management of some subjects and as a result, standards and progress in these subjects have not been good enough. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages in art and design, history, music and physical education. In each of these subjects, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. There are strengths in the quality of performance of pupils in music. In information and communication technology and geography, attainment is below the expectations for their age by the end of both key stages and progress is unsatisfactory. In design and technology, standards and progress are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2 they are poor. In religious education, despite recent improvements in the quality of the curriculum, pupils' attainment is below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both Year 2 and 6.
10. There is a commitment amongst all teaching and support staff to raise standards and as result of the very good leadership of the head teacher improvements are being implemented. Staff training is imminent to improve teachers' knowledge and skills of using computers. The role of subject co-ordinators is being reviewed and strengthened so that more effective monitoring is made of the standards the pupils achieve, the quality of teaching and the impact of the planned curriculum. The head teacher has reviewed existing grants and funds received by the school to ensure that best value is given with

regard to raising standards. A number of initiatives have been introduced that are starting to improve standards. Funding from Excellence in Cities is used to identify and support pupils who are gifted and talented, and lead teachers in literacy and numeracy are funded by the small Education Action Zone to work with pupils and staff. The grant for boosting the achievement of pupils prior to the Year 6 tests is now effectively used and pupils struggling with aspects of literacy are regularly given additional literacy support. All funds for supporting pupils with special educational needs are effectively deployed so that these pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils flock to the Friday evening homework club established during this academic year and this enhances pupils' progress.

11. In the past the school has set targets that were too low for 11 year olds in English and mathematics, reflecting low expectations of pupils. The new head teacher and his staff are in the process of raising expectations and part of this involves increasing the targets set for pupils. There is recognition of the need to improve the percentage of pupils exceeding the nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of both key stages. The systems for assessing pupils' progress and attainment and using the information to identify areas for improvement are improving in English and mathematics, but in other subjects, procedures could be much better.

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

12. There is a noticeable improvement in behaviour and relationships since the last inspection. These improvements are due to the very good leadership of the head teacher who has implemented a Co-operative Discipline Policy. The new approach means that pupils show more respect towards property and towards one another. Throughout the school there is a caring and supportive atmosphere in which pupils feel valued and respected and this has contributed to the improvement in pupils' behaviour and relationships. This is conducive to learning and encourages pupils to work harder.
13. Children in Nursery and Reception quickly develop a sense of belonging to the school community and staff promote good attitudes to learning from the start. Children develop a caring attitude to one another and become increasingly independent. Attitudes to school continue to be satisfactory but significant variation between year groups is evident. For example, pupils in the Nursery, Reception and in classes up to Year 4 are mostly enthusiastic whereas those in Years 5 and 6 show definite signs of apathy to learning. Initiatives introduced at the beginning of this term are revolutionising the school's overall philosophy towards learning in a happy and secure environment. Pupils on the School Council are keen to point out that pupils now want to come to school and enjoy the working atmosphere.
14. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show great interest and involvement in activities and work well in groups. All show a willingness to share and to co-operate with their classmates. However, during lessons in some of the Year 5 and 6 classes pupils show little sign of using initiative and taking responsibility for independent learning. Most of the time they wait to be told what to do and how to approach solving difficulties. The attitude of these older pupils hinders their learning and reduces the progress they make and the standards they achieve.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life. They are supported very well in lessons and often make better progress than other pupils because of the good quality of guidance and help provided by support staff. Pupils with physical disabilities are very well integrated into all aspects of school life and other pupils display very good levels of care and concern towards them. Pupils with English as

an additional language are included in all aspects of school life and relate well to other pupils.

16. Behaviour in and around the school is good. The school's approach to discipline is very clearly conveyed to pupils and parents. The school takes disciplinary matters very seriously and has a no-nonsense approach to behaviour around the school. This approach is built on respect and trust throughout the school community. Pupils with emotional and behavioural disabilities are also integrated well into the life of the school and classmates are generally tolerant on the rare occasions when unsociable behaviour is exhibited. In the last academic year two boys were given fixed period exclusions but none were permanently excluded. All parents and carers are sent a copy of the Co-operative Discipline Policy and the route towards exclusion is very clearly mapped out.
17. Prior to the beginning of this school year there were a lot of entries in the poor behaviour and bullying incident books. The need to enter behavioural incidents into monitoring books is dropping significantly and the proactive policy of introducing robust classroom management strategies and building disciplinary requirements within the School Rules is having the desired effect in controlling behaviour. Poor behaviour is not tolerated at the school.
18. Improved behaviour is directly affecting pupils' progress and is greatly improving the quality of school life and pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs, relating to emotional and behavioural disorder, can sometimes disrupt this behavioural balance. This invariably happens in Years 5 and 6 even though the specific pupils are well supported within the classroom. Most pupils are polite and behave well when moving around the school. They acknowledge visitors and hold doors open for colleagues. They are always willing to help with life at school and several pupils assist in organising furniture before and after assemblies or operate the overhead projectors.
19. The school has recently improved the 'buddy' lunchtime arrangements. At lunchtime pupils are now actively encouraged to take a leading role with groups of younger pupils and this is closely monitored and co-ordinated by a Learning Mentor. Pupils are assigned duties of bringing equipment out from the stock room and signing these out to pupils allocated to play with selected groups of pupils at lunchtime. These activities help to improve behaviour and give the younger pupils an opportunity to ask for assistance at times of need. There is a mutual understanding between pupils and every opportunity is given to pupils to improve their social interaction with others. For example, the introduction of the breakfast and Saturday morning clubs gives pupils the chance to make friends and to develop social skills. These, and many other opportunities, are directly impacting on personal development and relationships and creating a better environment for learning. Good relationships exist amongst pupils and between pupils and adults during lessons. The relationships are built on trust, openness and the willingness to learn.
20. There are limited opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and to exercise personal responsibility. The expectations for pupils to work on their own during lessons are too few and pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their ability to work on their own. Pupils' capacity for personal study is severely marred by an under-resourced library and the lack of quiet areas where pupils can sit and read books undisturbed. The introduction of the School Council, with representatives from Years 4, 5 and 6, is a good initiative to improve and develop pupils' sense of citizenship.
21. The attendance levels at the school, in relation to the national average, are unsatisfactory even though there is an upward trend over the last three years. The rates of unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality

continues to be a cause for concern, in spite of several initiatives to improve the situation. The highest incidence of lateness occurs in Years 1 and 2 where a relatively high proportion of pupils experience a degree of lateness. The latecomers do not significantly impact on the learning of others as classes start promptly because of the efficient registration procedures.

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

22. Teaching and support staff throughout the school are responding to the high expectations and inspirational leadership of the head teacher by demonstrating a shared commitment to providing the best possible quality of teaching and opportunities for learning for all pupils. Teachers are determined to overcome the difficulties of recent years and are totally committed to the concept of inclusion. Although there is still a need to improve the quality of teaching and learning in some subjects, this is recognised by staff and a good staff development programme has started to tackle areas of weakness for example, in information and communication technology.
23. The quality of teaching and learning in the school is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and 2, although during the inspection it was good in Years 1 to 4. In the lessons observed during the inspection many good examples of teaching were seen. During the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory or better in 100% of the lessons observed. This is considerable improvement since the inspection of 1997 when 19% of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Of the 39 lessons observed during the inspection, thirteen per cent were very good, fifty nine per cent were good and the remaining twenty eight per cent were satisfactory. There were particular strengths in the teaching of pupils in Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4. Disruptions in recent years to the leadership and management of the school coupled with a significant turnover of teaching staff have affected the quality of teaching and learning in some subjects, in particular information and communication technology, geography and religious education across the school and design and technology in Key Stage 2.
24. Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception class are good overall. Good planning ensures that the Foundation Stage curriculum is taught well by providing children with a wide range of appropriate and well-organised activities. Children develop good attitudes to learning and develop the ability to listen, concentrate and persevere with tasks. A very good relationship between the class teacher and the qualified Nursery staff ensures that all aspects of the early learning goals are taught well although more time could be spent on developing pupils' mathematical development and on introducing children to the computer. A good range of activities successfully promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development and ensures good progress in improving their communication, language and literacy skills. Early writing skills are developed well through a well-structured programme. Although the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall, there is a restricted range of mathematical activities available to children. A wide range of exciting and stimulating activities are provided to develop children's physical and creative development with some particularly good teaching of music. Pupils are given many good opportunities to develop their imagination for example when acting in the 'shoe shop'. Regular, daily access to the large, secure outdoor area enables pupils to develop good levels of co-ordination.
25. In Key Stage 1 and 2, teachers plan lessons adequately for each subject and this ensures that in the majority of lessons, pupils learn at a satisfactory rate or better. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are recognised and met although the needs of higher attaining pupils are not always planned for. Teachers generally have

clear objectives for each lesson that are shared with their pupils. The majority of lessons are well managed so that behaviour is good and there are no disruptions to learning but there is an over reliance upon instructing pupils rather than expecting pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. This reduces the ability of pupils to develop satisfactory levels of independence by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. Although there are occasions when the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are used to support learning in all subjects, this is often incidental and as yet teachers are not planning enough opportunities for pupils to apply these basic skills to their learning across the curriculum. Expectations for pupils to develop their writing and computer skills have been low which has depressed the standards and progress of pupils especially in Years 5 and 6.

26. Relationships between teachers and pupils during lessons are good and teachers and support staff work together very effectively so that the needs of all pupils are met. In spite of weaknesses in some resources, teachers make good use of what is available in order to bring learning alive for the pupils. For example, during a science lesson in Year 5/6, pupils explored the school grounds to collect soil samples to investigate in class. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall although the school policy for marking is not yet fully implemented. Opportunities to link marking to the setting of individual targets for pupils to improve are not yet consistently provided. The recently increased expectations for pupils to supplement their school work with work at home is welcomed by pupils and parents, and teachers make good use of homework to improve the performance of pupils.
27. The teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school is satisfactory overall although weaknesses in some aspects of attainment in English and mathematics indicate that there have been weaknesses in the past that are still in the process of being rectified. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and they enthuse pupils with the good use of texts and books. The school's strategies for teaching reading are beginning to have an impact upon the levels of interest shown by pupils in books. Good use is made of group reading activities in literacy lessons but pupils' library skills are poor due in part to lack of opportunities for pupils to use the library. In writing, whilst the quality of teaching is currently satisfactory, there are variations in teachers' expectations across the school and too often not enough attention is given to standards of presentation and expectations for extended pieces of writing are too low. In mathematics and numeracy the quality of teaching is satisfactory and during the inspection it was good overall. The wide range of needs of pupils is generally well planned for so that pupils are usually challenged sufficiently. Not enough attention, however, is given to promoting pupils' skills of independence.
28. In science, teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the content of the National Curriculum but most teachers are unsure of how to deal with the teaching of scientific investigations and do not make enough use of science to apply basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. In other subjects teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of art and design, history, and physical education and this contributes to satisfactory progress in these subjects. In music good links with the local education authority music service add to the subject knowledge of teachers which results in pupils having good standards of performance. In information and communication technology and geography across the school, and in design and technology in Key Stage 2, weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge adversely affect the quality of teaching and the attainment and progress of pupils. Good initiatives are being implemented to improve these weaknesses but the impact on standards is not yet being fully felt.



29. Teachers throughout the school provide good levels of support for pupils with special educational needs. The pupils with statements of special educational need receive high quality support from support assistants who are fully conversant with the individual needs of the pupils and as a result, they are enabled to take a full part in lessons according to their specific needs. Pupils with different levels of special need are frequently given good quality, focused support from learning support assistants during lessons. The support assistants work closely with class teachers and are fully informed of the pupils' targets. This enables them to make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning and progress. In other lessons, most teachers provide tasks that take account of the needs of the pupils and give them appropriate support in lessons. Teachers are particularly good at taking swift and appropriate action when the responses of pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties are inappropriate and, teachers use appropriate strategies to ensure that these pupils are profitably involved in lessons. Pupils withdrawn from lessons are given very good quality teaching to meet the targets set for them and very thorough use is made of assessment to monitor the progress they make. Teachers recognise the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and ensure that they are given effective guidance and support in lessons.
30. Recent improvements in the use of assessment data in English and mathematics are starting to improve the overall provision for the wide range of abilities in each class but not enough use is made of assessment data to devise targets for individual improvement that involves pupils and their parents.

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

31. The curriculum is broad and balanced overall and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. It is organised so that all pupils are included and have equal entitlement. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and recently improved measures for providing for Gifted and Talented pupils have strengthened the curriculum of the school.
32. There have been weaknesses in the curriculum provided for information and communication technology, geography and religious education across the school and in design and technology in Years 3 to 6 but recent measures taken by staff have ensured that the curricula for these subjects now meet requirements. Opportunities for pupils to extend their learning through practical and investigational activities are restricted. A strength of the curriculum is the good range of opportunities given to pupils throughout the school to sing or to play a musical instrument.
33. The curriculum is good for the children in the Foundation Stage and is suitably planned to provide an appropriate range of practical learning experiences in accordance with the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals. A strong emphasis is placed on developing social skills and on language development with a good effect on children's learning, though the range of mathematical activities is less extensive. There has been a good improvement in the Foundation Stage curriculum since the last inspection when it was reported that opportunities for children to learn through play were limited. This is due to an improvement in planning to provide a balance between direct teaching and the freedom for children to learn through play.
34. The pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive a suitably adapted curriculum to meet their needs. Teachers make satisfactory provision for including these pupils fully in all lessons. An effective system operates to identify

pupils' special educational needs at an early stage and the coordinator for special needs is fully involved in deciding the appropriate learning steps for the pupils, in consultation with class teachers and external support agencies. At present there is no formal arrangement for her to monitor the appropriateness of the work planned in lessons for pupils with special educational needs. The Code of Practice is fully implemented and the school has already incorporated the modified procedures of the new document into its practice. Pupils with special educational needs have individual learning plans that accurately target their learning needs in appropriate steps. The regular statutory reviews of each pupil's progress involve all relevant personnel and assessment information is used effectively to decide what the next steps should be.

35. Literacy and numeracy lessons are taught in accordance with the national strategies. However, strategies for promoting and developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum are not sufficiently effective and this prevents pupils' learning from being stronger in English and mathematics. Similarly, whilst information and communication technology lessons take place weekly in the computer suite, insufficient use is made of the computers in the classrooms to enhance learning in other subjects and pupils do not view computers as an integral part of their every day learning. All subjects are planned to take account of national or local guidelines, though in some subjects, such as design and technology and geography there is no overview of what is to be taught in each class to ensure skills are taught systematically and this adversely affects the progress pupils make.
36. The provision for extra-curricular activities for a school of this size and nature is good. After school activities are arranged for gifted and talented pupils and there is coaching for football, tuition for a steel band, an art club, and a homework club and each Saturday morning there is a mathematics club for pupils in Years 5 and 6. During the week, all pupils, with the exception of those in Year 1, can participate in a lunchtime Games Club held in the Adult Education sports hall organised by a number of a local football team coaches. Each Monday lunchtime there is a Music club. Every lunchtime the head teacher supervises a large group of children for football and during several lunchtimes, there is additional steel pans tuition support. Suggestions made by members of the School Council resulted in a trip to Blackpool Pleasure Beach which was well supported by staff. Fund raising activities, such as school discos, contribute to the overall income. Pupils respond well to the organised weekly activities. The extra-curricular activities have a positive impact upon pupils' standards, progress and social development.
37. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. However, there is no co-ordinator for this important area and therefore not a consistent and reviewed approach to the aspect. However, the school has taken steps to rectify the situation through the appointment of a co-ordinator to ensure a more consistent and reviewed approach to this area of work. The school is extremely fortunate in having a good, committed School Nurse who systematically makes invaluable inputs into health assessments, sex education sessions, covering hygiene and puberty for Year 6 pupils, and forming links between the school and health and education authorities.
38. In the past Year 6 pupils have been involved in the 'Injury Minimisation Project' at the Manchester Royal Infirmary Accident and Emergency Department. The visits covered various scenarios involving the use of electrical equipment, basic life support and the need to be safe at home. The community police visit to give talks to the pupils on 'Stranger Danger' initiatives and talks on drug abuse. The school canteen puts a lot of emphasis on fitness by supporting a 'Fit for Life' initiative by providing well balanced meals.

39. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. For example, the school is situated adjacent to an Adult Education Centre. Manchester Adult Education Services organise several courses for parents covering assertiveness, childcare, counselling, computers for parents, numeracy, literacy and languages. Slowly, the attendance of parents on these courses is increasing and parents attending these courses are becoming aware of the ways in which they can help their children at home. They are gaining an appreciation of the strategies being following by class teachers at the school in teaching mathematics and English. These initiatives are having a positive impact on children's learning. The pupils also benefit from a full range of education visits to local facilities such as Wythenshawe Park and the Lowry Centre. Constructive relationships exist with other institutions for example the school is involved in initial teacher training. Several Initial Teacher Training students from the Manchester Metropolitan University benefit by spending time at the school and this broadens the experiences of pupils in the school.
40. The school cultivates pupils' personal development satisfactorily. A strong feature of the school is the provision of a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour, which is applied consistently across the school. The school also promotes pupils' social development well, fostering a good sense of community, which promotes respect for individuals. However, opportunities for pupils' to develop spiritual and cultural awareness are less well developed.
41. Spiritual development is provided for satisfactorily, through daily assemblies and through specific occasions such as Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter. In assemblies pupils celebrate by singing hymns and always join hands as the teacher or a pupil says a prayer and to offer their own thoughts or take time for quiet reflection. There is a good emphasis on boosting pupils' self esteem through the use of praise and the awarding of certificates. Respect for all members of the school community is fostered as teachers, lunchtime supervisors and administrative staff all recommend pupils for awards.
42. Through its clear moral code and consistent approach, the school promotes pupils' moral development well. The clear leadership and charismatic presence of the head teacher about the school, giving timely reminders and encouragement to the pupils, emphasises the difference between right and wrong. Opportunities are taken to discuss moral issues as they arise, such as when Reception children point out that going into the Three Bears house to steal the porridge is wrong. Improvements in behaviour and consideration are rewarded in assemblies, for example the site manager commended one pupil for improved behaviour outside lessons. The sense of common purpose and co-operation amongst all adults in the school provides a good model for pupils as does the care and consideration shown by the pupils to those with physical disabilities. Pupils are given the opportunity to discuss moral issues in class, for example Year4 pupils examine the cause and effect of war when studying World War 2 in history and older pupils consider the compassion shown by the Good Samaritan.
43. The school promotes pupils' social development well and there is a strong sense of community within the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to work together, in pairs in the computer suite, in team games and in practising and playing together in the orchestra and recorder groups. Pupils have the opportunity to take responsibility from the earliest age by tidying away their equipment and taking the register to the office. In some classes pupils are given jobs for the week and older pupils act as lunchtime buddies to give out play equipment. At the request of pupils, a school council has recently been introduced. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 gained experience of the democratic process by voting for two council representatives from each class. Pupils have the opportunity to contribute to the local community and consider the needs of others as they distribute harvest gifts and also raise funds for the local children's hospice.

44. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. A good range of opportunities is given to pupils to listen to and play music. This was seen in an assembly when almost 30 pupils played for the school. The very skilled and enthusiastic contribution from the peripatetic teacher not only ensured the high level of performance but also involved the whole school as they moved and clapped in time to the music. Pupils experience a wide range of music from Vivaldi to playing with obvious enjoyment in the steel band. Pupils have the opportunity to appreciate the local culture through visiting Styal Mill where they learn about the industrial heritage of the region. There are examples of Aboriginal art and of the work of great artists such as Picasso' about the school. However, the children do not have the opportunity to study the cultures and beliefs represented in our culturally diverse society in sufficient depth.

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

45. The school has improved its provision since the last inspection. The school is a caring school that places good emphasis upon ensuring pupils' welfare. Staff know the pupils very well. There has been an improvement in the manner in which health and safety risks are assessed since the last inspection and an improvement in the overall procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Teachers receive termly training in child protection know the measures to take to ensure the safety and well being of the pupils.
46. Health and safety at the school are good. Pupils are able to learn in a safe and secure environment. Governors involved in the premises committee are very proactive in ensuring that the school is maintained properly and kept in good decorative order. All doors have finger safe devices and corridors are kept clear at all times. The school site plan clearly shows the positioning of fire exits and fire alarms. Fire drills are regularly carried out and evacuation times recorded and areas for improvement noted. Fire alarms are systematically tested.
47. There is a well-structured approach to risk assessment and an action plan is being drawn up for the assessment conducted last December. Most of the hazards identified were of low to medium risk. The school has identified slippery and muddy areas in the Key Stage 1 play area. Pupils are not allowed to use it during wet weather and remedial work to make better use of the space is planned.
48. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Many procedures have only been in place since the start of the school year and are only just starting to make a direct impact on attendance levels. The school has set a target of 95% attendance for 2001/2002. Computer records allow the school to generate reports of levels of attendance and lateness for individual pupils or year groups. The registers are recorded by optical marking systems which enables all teachers to be provided with weekly attendance figures for each child in their class, so that they are aware of pupils who are good attenders and those who need to be closely monitored. This information assists teachers in providing any additional support for pupils who are absent for periods of time. There are very good reward systems for pupils who achieve 100% attendance. They are praised in assemblies and their photographs are proudly displayed near the entrance to the school. These rewards coupled with close monitoring of absence are starting to improve attendance and to reduce lateness. The school's referrals on absences or punctuality are monitored through the fortnightly visits of the school Educational Welfare Officer.

49. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. The Co-operative Discipline Policy issued to all parents highlights the six key rules of the school. It defines both negative and positive actions to enforce the rules. Children choosing to observe the rules receive badges, stickers and treats. Children not following the rules are submitted to warnings that could eventually progress to exclusions if poor behaviour continues. Parents are responding positively to these procedures and agree to support the scheme. Communications with parents about behaviour issues are effective. The majority of parents respect what the school is endeavouring to do with respect to controlling and improving behaviour. There is a past history of disruptive behaviour at the school, but the vast majority of parents responding to the inspection questionnaire agree that behaviour is now good in the school.
50. The school makes good provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Staff employed by the school work closely with the local education authority special educational needs support services to ensure that each pupil on the school's special educational needs register is provided with a relevant individual education plan. Pupils are given appropriate support in lessons by support staff and work planned by class teachers. Good working relationships also exist between the school and other external agencies that contribute to the good support of pupils with significant difficulties with learning or behaviour as well supporting those with physical disabilities. The few pupils with English as an additional language are provided with suitably adapted work that enables them to participate fully in lessons. Gifted and talented pupils are identified across the school and the school has recently introduced good strategies to challenge and extend these pupils further.
51. The acting assessment co-ordinator has done much to move the school forward but there are still many shortcomings in the arrangements for assessing, recording and tracking the progress of the pupils. Baseline testing is carried out in the reception year and there are now some formal procedures in place for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and English from year 2 to year 6, using the national statutory and optional tests. Verbal reasoning and reading skills are also tested annually. The school makes effective use of this information to set targets for improvement. The individual results provide a profile of pupils' performance and are a useful tool for tracking attainment and progress. The procedures for assessing and tracking progress in the other subjects of the curriculum are unsatisfactory. There is no agreed system for recording the progress of pupils in these subjects against National Curriculum expectations. The teachers have no means of checking on the progress pupils are making or identifying areas requiring additional attention. The information about pupils that is passed on from teacher to teacher is inconsistent in its quality and usefulness.
52. The school's use of assessment information to adjust the curriculum is satisfactory in English and mathematics. Formal analysis of the test results yields useful information that identifies weaker areas in the teaching and curriculum planning. As yet the impact on standards is limited, due to a lack of whole school awareness of the issues that emerge. The use made of assessment information to inform planning could be better so that work in lessons can be more closely matched to pupils' abilities.
53. The marking of pupils' work has recently been identified as an assessment tool. Where it is used well it is helping pupils to know what they must do to improve their work. The school is beginning to set individual targets for improvement in English and mathematics and this is helping pupils and parents to focus on what the pupils need to do to improve. However, the pupils are not sufficiently aware of how they are doing in other curriculum areas. Satisfactory use is made of information from baseline assessment in the Reception year to identify the learning needs of the pupils. The school makes good use

of assessment information to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and to review their progress.

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

54. Parents have very positive views of the school and there are effective links with them. This is an enormous improvement since the last inspection. The improvement can be attributed to the overall approach and open door policy adopted by the new head teacher and staff since the beginning of this school year. The number of returned inspection questionnaires has doubled since the last inspection which indicates higher levels of commitment and involvement amongst parents.
55. The partnership with parents and the community is good. Most parents are most pleased that their children like school. They agree that their children are making good progress in school; that behaviour is improving; that teaching is good at the school and the school is well led and managed. The range of courses now offered to parents is starting to develop. Parents are forming stronger links with the school in order to help in their children's development, but as yet these have not had sufficient time to make a significant impact on standards and progress of the pupils.
56. The level of communication with parents is generally satisfactory but annual reports on children's progress lack detail and could be better. The School Prospectus and the Annual Report from governors are informative and well presented. They give a clear picture of the events in the school and are user-friendly and meet statutory requirements. The school effectively use the notice boards strategically positioned around the school to communicate key information about events and courses available to parents at the Adult Education Centre.
57. In general, parents are supportive of the homework set for the children. Booklets are available for parents that provide targets for pupils in the Reception class. These are very effective and extremely helpful for parents. Several parents are involved in helping at the school in listening to children read. The parent teacher association is now raising funds for the school
58. Parents of pupils identified as having special educational needs are invited to be involved with the school from an early stage. Parents are invited to attend the regular reviews of their child's individual learning plan and they are given information about how their child is progressing in relation to the targets set for them. However, the contact with parents who are unable to attend reviews is often on an informal basis and parents are not told in writing about the results of the review, the new targets set or how they can help. Good levels of communication exist with parents of pupils requiring English as an additional language.

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

59. The overall quality of leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. The very good leadership of the new head teacher, appointed at the start of the school year is inspirational and provides a clear educational direction for the school. The leadership of the school shows a strong commitment to providing a fully inclusive education for all. The school is emerging from a time of considerable disruption during which some aspects of the school's provision declined for example, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils and the morale of staff and standards in some subjects.

60. The head teacher has gained the total respect of pupils, staff, parents and governors and through the effective monitoring of teaching and learning, he has rapidly assessed the needs of the school. He has successfully established high expectations for academic standards as well as developing clear, daily routines that have created a safe and secure environment for pupils. The introduction of initiatives to improve behaviour, to make better provision for pupils with special educational needs and for gifted and talented pupils and to raise the morale of staff by strengthening staff development are combining to raise standards. Everyone in the school is now working hard and with a common purpose to provide the best possible education for all pupils. The school effectively applies its policy of providing a fully inclusive quality of education.
61. There are, however, still some weaknesses in aspects of management in the school. Although there is a well organised, supportive and energetic senior management team that maintains an overview of developments within the school, the role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring the standards of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. At the moment, strengths and weaknesses in subjects are not always identified and in some subjects, for example, geography, the curriculum is not always taught even though it is planned. The procedures for performance management are in the early stages of development and are starting to be used to monitor and direct the quality of subject management.
62. The management of special educational needs is much improved since the time of the last inspection. The acting coordinator makes good use of the one day a week release time to perform her role very well. There is a good overview of the school's provision and much is being done to improve the management of special educational needs. The co-ordinator provides good guidance and leadership to colleagues, particularly in the identification of pupils with special educational needs. The school has already adapted its special educational needs policy and practice to match the very recently changed Code of Practice recommendations. The governing body ensures that a good level of classroom assistance is maintained to meet the needs of pupils. The governor appointed to have an overview of special educational needs is particularly well qualified and makes a valuable contribution to the management of this area.
63. The role of the governing body has improved since the last inspection. A highly motivated, committed and caring Chair of Governors effectively leads a very supportive governing body. There is recognition of the need to improve standards in the school and the governing body is fully behind the changes being implemented by the head teacher and staff. A well organised and managed range of committees enables the governing body to fulfil all statutory requirements. Governors keep abreast of what is going on in the school through visits to school during the school day and through regular meetings to consider the quality of the curriculum. Governors are made aware of the implications of the National Curriculum end of key stage tests by working with the head teacher to analyse the results. The targets for attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics are set in accordance with national guidance so that they include a degree of challenge.
64. Financial management of the school is good overall. All available funds from Excellence in Cities and the small Education Action Zone are spent to benefit pupils and the budget is maintained with a sensible level of surplus. The decision to place an emphasis upon maintaining a high level of support staff is justified by the good quality of support given to pupils with special educational needs. The recent receipt of grant funding for supporting Gifted and Talented pupils has improved the quality of education for higher attaining pupils and booster funds are starting to raise standards achieved by pupils in the end of key stage National Curriculum tests. The governing body, under the guidance of the head teacher, has established good procedures for reviewing and monitoring the

value for money of all expenditure in terms of the quality and standard of education given to pupils.

65. The school administrator very effectively manages the school office. She is very skilled at her job and not only successfully maintains all aspects of the office administration but also helps to monitor attendance and act as an excellent first point of call for parents and visitors. Good use is made of information and communication technology in supporting office administration but some teachers lack training in using computers to support aspects of school management. For example, very little use is yet made of computer software to create individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs or to interpret assessment data to monitor and predict the progress of pupils across the school.
66. Staffing is now suitable for the needs of the pupils and, since the new head teacher was appointed, there is less staff absence thereby providing greater continuity in the education of pupils. The number of support staff is high, and contributes to the good overall provision for the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The new head teacher has increased the expectation for teaching and support staff to attend relevant and appropriate training courses and this is already starting to benefit the education of pupils. The accommodation is spacious but spread out. Internally, the site manager maintains high standards of cleanliness and maintenance and this adds to the good quality of the school environment. Externally, pupils have access to a suitably sized hard play area and large grassed playing field but some of the play areas have poor drainage and consequently cannot be used whenever it rains. There are also poor levels of ventilation and heating in the predominantly glass corridors linking the different parts of the building. A weakness of the provision within the school is the poor quality of the school library. The existing library is not welcoming for pupils and the range and number of books throughout the school, both fiction and non-fiction, is inadequate. There are also weaknesses in the resources for mathematics, science, geography and physical education which hinder pupils' learning in these subjects.
67. The school is currently providing an acceptable standard of education and the resources available to it are well managed and directed to benefit pupils. The very good leadership and management of the head teacher and the committed and supportive nature of the governing body, staff and parents gives the school a good capacity for improvement in the future. The school provides satisfactory value for money.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governing body, head teacher and staff should:

- 1) **raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:**
  - developing and implementing a clear policy for widening opportunities for pupils' writing in all aspects of the curriculum;
  - improving opportunities for promoting reading and the use of books by improving the quality of the library and increasing the range and quality of both fiction and non-fiction books.  
*(paragraphs 82-91)*
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop the ability to apply their knowledge to mathematical investigations and to record their work independently in a variety of ways;
  - improving opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of numeracy to subjects across the curriculum
  - improving resources for mathematics.  
*(paragraphs 92-99)*
  - improving the knowledge and confidence of staff to teach investigative and experimental science by pursuing existing plans for staff training
  - improving resources for science  
*( paragraphs 100-107)*
- 2) **raise standards in information and communication technology, geography, religious education across the school and in design and technology in Key Stage 2 by improving**
  - the knowledge and understanding of staff in each subject so that the taught curriculum meets curriculum requirements;
  - the resources in each subject.  
*(paragraphs 22, 116,117,12, 123,132, 133, 150)*
- 3) **increase the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning by:**
  - implementing existing plans to develop a clear policy that guides the way in which co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school and
  - providing co-ordinators with sufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.  
*(paragraphs 61, 91, 99, 107, 112, 117, 123 127, 133, 145, 151)*
- 4) **make better use of assessment and record keeping by:**
  - ensuring that there is a manageable system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in all subjects.  
*(paragraphs 51, 52, 107, 112, 117, 123 127, 133, 145, 151)*
- 5) **improve attendance and punctuality by pursuing the existing good procedures.**  
*(paragraph 21)*

**Minor issues that may be included in the action plan:**

- raise the expectations for pupils to work independently.
- improve the quality of annual reports to parents.
- make better use of computers to support some aspects of school management.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	23	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	13	59	28	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two point five percentage points.

### 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)	35	153
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	126

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0-	47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	46
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	7	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	9
	Girls	4	3	5
	Total	10	10	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (62)	63 (67)	88 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	9
	Girls	4	4	5
	Total	10	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (81)	69 (76)	88 (81)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	12
	Girls	13	11	14
	Total	21	22	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (73)	73 (50)	87 (65)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	12
	Girls	12	13	11
	Total	21	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (52)	80 (58)	77 (62)
	National	72(70)	74(72)	82 (79)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	143
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*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)	9.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.81
Average class size	21.85

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	152

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.66
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	529,285
Total expenditure	494,240
Expenditure per pupil	2496
Balance brought forward from previous year	-14842
Balance carried forward to next year	<b>20,203</b>

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

188

Number of questionnaires returned

72

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	21	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	75	21	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	28	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	36	5	3	0
The teaching is good.	80	18	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	80	18	1	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	12	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	20	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	71	26	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	87	12	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	32	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	64	24	1	3	8

## **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.**

68. Children start in the Nursery class when they are three years old. Initially they attend part-time and progress to attending full time when they are three and a half. Children transfer to the Reception class in the September or January in the year they have their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 25 children in the Nursery, 4 of whom attend part-time, and 24 children in the Reception class, split equally between children who started in Reception in September and in January. Children are taught in the Early Years Unit, which comprises a small Reception room, a larger Nursery which is also used by Reception children for activities during part of the day, and a large, secure outdoor play area which is well used throughout the day to promote children's physical and social development. The unit is staffed by a trained teacher who co-ordinates the Foundation Stage and three qualified Nursery Nurses. The Reception class is taught literacy, numeracy and music by the teacher in their classroom and for the rest of the day they join the Nursery for structured play and outdoor activities. In the autumn term good efforts are made to ensure that those children who will enter the Reception class in January have similar activities for literacy and numeracy as those who entered Reception in September.
69. The quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was reported. This is due to an improvement in planning to provide a balance between direct teaching and the freedom for children to learn through play. There are very good relationships between the adults in the nursery and whilst the teacher has responsibility for planning, all staff contribute through discussion in the weekly planning meeting and so children have the security of a common approach to their learning, enhancing their progress. Adults have a good understanding of the needs of young children and this was seen with the very newest children in the Nursery who are integrated gently to Nursery routines. After initial reluctance the children chose to leave their game and to join in with the rest without any pressure. Children respond well to the high expectations of the staff and tasks are suitably challenging for all of the children. Whilst many of the activities in teaching groups are based on age, higher attaining children join an older group to discuss the story in the big book. There is a strong emphasis on the development of language and literacy and social skills which take good account of children's low level of attainment when they start school. However, activities related to mathematical development have a lower profile, particularly those related to development of shape, space and measurement. Children are given considerable scope to choose their own activities in choosing time, though there is no mechanism for tracking which activities children have undertaken to ensure that each child experiences a full range of learning opportunities.
70. Attainment varies widely, but overall, children start school in the Nursery with skills, which are well below those of most children of this age, particularly in their language development. Whilst they make good progress, school assessments show that their attainment is still well below average when they start the Reception year. The school's assessments, together with inspection evidence indicate that pupils are unlikely to reach the expected Early Learning Goals in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start in Year 1. However, the very good opportunities for regular access to the outdoor area, and good teaching of skills such as holding a pencil enable pupils to reach the expected level in physical development. Similarly, the high emphasis placed on music and on creative arts, enables pupils to attain the Early Learning Goals in creative development.

71. Clear records of progress are kept, and regular assessments indicate those children whose progress is causing concern. However whilst these children are monitored carefully, they are not always placed on the special educational needs register. Nevertheless, they receive good support individually or in small groups, enabling them to make good progress alongside their peers.

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

72. Teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception classes and reflects the considerable emphasis given to the children's personal, social and emotional development. Considering their very low attainment on entry, children achieve well. Staff are aware of children's needs and there is a common approach in promoting their personal development through all aspects of school life. Daily routines are established consistently so that children come to learn what is expected of them, for example in putting on aprons before playing in the water or in tidying up at the end of an activity. Staff have an encouraging manner and this gives the children confidence. The judicious use of praise and the awarding of stickers promote self-esteem.
73. Children in Nursery and Reception classes quickly develop a sense of belonging to the school community as they join in assemblies. They enter the hall quietly in a line and listen carefully. They go up to the head teacher with confidence to receive their certificate for good work. This promotes a good attitude to learning from the start. Children concentrate for increasing amounts of time and by the time they are in Reception they concentrate well in whole class literacy and numeracy sessions and know to put up their hands to ask or answer a question. Following the good example of the staff, children develop a caring attitude to each other, as when one child left her own computer in the computer room to help another who was having difficulty. Through the high expectations of the teachers children develop increasing independence in taking care of their own needs. By the time they are in Reception most children can get changed for physical education, though help is at hand if needed. They show excitement in new learning. Good eating habits are encouraged as fruit is provided for the morning snack. However, there are missed opportunities to develop social skills as children have their snack individually rather than sitting together at a table. Whilst they have an understanding of celebrations such as Christmas and Easter, they have little understanding of their meaning or of the celebrations from a wider range of cultures. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children have made good progress in their personal, social and emotional development but the majority have still not achieved the early learning goals when they start Year 1.

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

74. Teaching is good overall resulting in good progress across the Foundation Stage but by the time the children start Year 1, the majority have still not reached the early learning goals. Many children start in the Nursery with very poorly developed language and literacy skills and some children are reluctant to speak at all. Priority is rightly given to developing speaking and listening skills. Good use is made of stories and rhymes to extend the children's vocabulary and good questioning encourages them to use their imagination and to speak. This was seen in the Nursery when the teacher asked children to suggest what might be in the big box and they suggested large animals and toys. Good reference is also made to previous experiences with questions such as "Do you remember when we had a big box?" One boy remembers making a house and can describe in detail how the rain runs off the sloping roof. The teacher is aware of any children who have not spoken and addresses them directly in a sensitive manner, encouraging them to make a contribution. Good use of open questions continues in the Reception class when children give suggestions as to how they know that someone had

eaten some of the porridge. Speaking and listening are also encouraged in the role play areas between the children themselves, and with very marked effect when an adult joins children in the shoe shop.

75. Good use is made of big books in the focussed reading activities in the Nursery and Reception classes to develop an understanding of the importance of the cover to indicate what might be inside and older children can join in with familiar phrases. In the Reception class, daily language and literacy lessons are more formal and successfully incorporate appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy. The whole class part of the lesson is well taught and the teacher takes every opportunity to point out capital letters and full stops, and letter sounds are practised regularly. Group activities are interesting and take account of children's previous work, enabling all children to achieve well. Reception children take home books from the reading scheme to read with their parents. There is good communication between home and school with both teacher and parents writing comments in the reading record. Inspection evidence indicates that the high emphasis placed on developing a love of reading, the regular practice of letter sounds and the good opportunities for reading to adults mean that most children are likely to achieve the required level in reading as they enter Year 1, with higher attaining pupils already working within the National Curriculum.
76. Examination of children's writing indicates that good progress is made, particularly in Reception. There is a well-structured programme from making marks to overwriting, copying and using words displayed on the wall to write their own sentences. As a result of regular practice letters are generally well formed and higher attaining pupils show imagination in their writing. However, the range of writing is limited, for example there was little evidence of children making lists or noting what had happened in other activities. Children's work is well annotated to show the level of support given and this indicates that appropriate individual help is given to help children achieve as well as they can. Nevertheless, the number of children likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in writing as they enter Year 1 is below average.

### **Mathematical development**

77. Teaching is satisfactory overall and examples of good teaching were seen in focussed activities with the whole class. Teachers use a good range of nursery rhymes to promote counting skills throughout the Foundation Stage. The majority of children in the Nursery can hold up five fingers and can recognise one less when counting '5 Buns in the Baker's Shop'. However, there is a restricted range of mathematical activities available to children during choosing time, which forms a large part of the day. For example amongst the extensive choosing activities seen during inspection week the only one with a specific mathematical focus was a floor jigsaw. There is no large number line at children's height for the children to sequence, nor any sorting activity on offer.
78. In the Reception class appropriate elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are incorporated into the daily mathematical sessions. Good use is made of games to promote understanding, for example using dice and a number line to find one more or one less than. Number work in groups is well matched to the level of development of the children and helps them achieve well in lessons. The majority of children can use their number fans to show numbers to 5 and most can recognise numbers to 9. Higher attaining pupils are quite confident in finding 1 more or less than numbers to 6 when using the dice and go beyond this when prompted by the teacher. Most children can recognise common two-dimensional shapes when printing patterns with the teacher. Good use is made of creative activities for developing an understanding of pattern, for example children made hand prints in alternate colours. The teacher took the opportunity to compare size when talking about the Three Bears, but little evidence was



seen of children measuring to compare heavier or lighter than, and there are few opportunities for children to solve simple, practical problems. Overall the number of pupils likely to reach the Early Learning Goals as they start in Year 1 is below average.

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

79. Teaching is good overall and pupils make good progress but despite this, by the time the children start Year 1, the majority have not achieved the early learning goals. There is a good range of ongoing, practical activities such as water play and sand for children to use their senses to compare wet and dry sand. In the Nursery the teacher makes good reference to children's own experiences, as they discuss why a house of cardboard would not be suitable for outside. The children investigate the environment around school as they walk to Wythenshawe Park to look at the trees in winter. In Reception there is a good range of planned activities to promote children's understanding, such as comparing photographs of themselves now and as babies to see the differences, with children noticing that they used to crawl but now they can walk. They also look carefully at what happens when they blow bubbles, and notice that they rise before popping. Children are also encouraged to gain an awareness of the way people have different religious beliefs. Children in Nursery and Reception classes have daily opportunities to use a range of construction toys and also to make junk models. However there are insufficient opportunities for children to use information and communication technology to enhance their learning. Whilst Reception children have recently begun to use the computer suite, with good teaching from the skilled Nursery Nurse, this time is limited and their skills in using the mouse are well below average. Whilst there is a computer in the Nursery, available also for Reception, the range of suitable programs is very limited and so children are not motivated to use it. The school is aware of the need to improve the resources for technology to enhance learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy and also to improve teachers' confidence through training.

### **Physical development**

80. The quality of teaching is good overall. The children make good progress and by the time they start Year 1 the majority have reached the early learning goals. The regular, daily access to the large, secure outdoor play area for all children in the Foundation Stage and the good direct teaching of skills, including running and jumping games, and practice at using a bat and ball, enable children to achieve well. Children steer and pedal the wheeled toys with increasing control. They show a good awareness of space and of body shape as they move along the large climbing frame or negotiate their way through the tunnel. A good range of activities is planned in the Nursery to improve children's manipulative skills. These include cutting accurately and using play dough as well as a good range of jigsaws and construction toys. In Reception, children are shown how to hold a pencil correctly and have good opportunities to practise pencil control as they join up dots and copy the teacher's writing.

### **Creative development**

81. Teaching is good overall with a particular strength in musical activities. The children make good progress and by the time they start Year 1 the majority have reached the early learning goals. Throughout the Foundation Stage children experience a good range of painting activities, including printing and free painting and in Reception children look closely at their reflection to produce good self- portraits. Children in Nursery co-operate well to produce a bright collage of 'Elmer the Elephant'. Music plays an important part in the Nursery and Reception classes. In the Nursery children sing tunefully and use their imagination as they act out the songs. In a class music lesson in

Reception, good loosening up exercises, with children throwing their voices up to the ceiling or down to the floor, form good points for discussion as well as helping children to project their voices. Children develop their singing well as they respond individually in song as the teacher asks their name. The teacher uses the singing session well to explore emotions as children sing in a happy, sad or grumpy voice. Children have good opportunities to use their imagination in the shoe shop, particularly when an adult joins in the game. Whilst there is a home corner to encourage role-play, some of the furniture needs replacing to make it more appealing.

## ENGLISH

82. Inspection evidence indicates that by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, standards in reading and writing are below the national average but given the very low level of attainment when pupils start school, pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with those expected nationally. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual learning plans due to good quality support in lessons. The judgements of the last inspection were that standards were close to the national average at the end of Year 6 and standards have declined since then as a result of the disturbances in leadership in the school and high levels of staff changes.
83. The performance of pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 was below the national average but was above average when compared to similar schools. A significant proportion of pupils at this stage are achieving standards that are in line with those expected for their ages but only a small minority exceed this level. Inspection evidence shows that the pupils make good progress in years 3 and 4 but progress in Years 5 and 6, although satisfactory now, has been unsatisfactory over recent years. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in reading but progress in writing is unsatisfactory due to insufficient opportunity to practise writing skills across the curriculum. There is no difference between the performance of boys or girls.
84. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 the results showed that the performance of pupils in writing was in the bottom 5% when compared to all schools nationally and in reading was well below the national average. When standards in reading and writing in 2001 are compared to the results of similar schools, attainment is well below average. The majority of pupils, however, reached the level expected for their ages but too few exceeded it. The proportion of pupils who do not achieve the expected levels includes a very high number with special educational needs. In 2001, over half of the pupils taking the end of key stage National Curriculum tests in Year 2 had learning difficulties. Inspection evidence confirms the low test results but indicates that most pupils are making satisfactory progress overall from a low starting point, but their progress in reading is better than in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in relation to the targets set for them. There is no difference between the performance of boys or girls.
85. The pupils' speaking and listening skills develop to a satisfactory level by the end of Year 6 through opportunities to ask and answer questions posed by their teachers and to discuss and express opinions about the topics they are studying. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 are good at listening to stories and to explanations and instructions given by their teachers. They listen carefully to views and opinions voiced by their classmates and express their own views clearly and confidently. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher provided a good opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills by asking the pupils to discuss in pairs the traditional stories they could remember. Most pupils tackled this task with confidence and showed that they are able to take part in productive discussion.

In Key Stage 2 the pupils make satisfactory progress in extending their speaking and listening skills, mainly in class discussion with their teachers. When the teachers ask the pupils to explain or justify their answers to questions, a significant proportion of pupils can provide articulate and thoughtful views and explanations using appropriate vocabulary. In a lesson about formulating an argument, some older pupils were articulate and confident in expressing arguments for and against keeping snakes as pets. The majority of pupils listen well to their teachers and other adults and respect the views of their classmates. During the inspection, there were too few opportunities for the older pupils to extend their skills in speaking, although pupils are regularly encouraged to speak in front of others during the whole school assemblies and when commenting upon their work in the weekly good work assemblies and as part of school presentations to parents and the community.

86. The school's strategies for teaching reading are beginning to have an impact on the levels of interest shown by pupils in books and are encouraging the pupils to take an interest in reading. Regular sessions of group reading are used effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding about books and to encourage confidence and expression when reading aloud. The use of good quality texts is having a beneficial influence on the way pupils respond to books and is effective in stimulating many pupils to explore the texts further for themselves. In Key Stage 1 the pupils were captivated by the story and illustrations in 'Anancy and Mr Drybone' and were highly stimulated by 'Can't You Sleep Little Bear?' In Key Stage 2 an extract from 'Alice in Wonderland' provoked a very good response and pupils showed a high level of interest in the story. By the end of Key Stage 1 many pupils can recognise frequently used words on sight and can apply phonic strategies with reasonable success to read unfamiliar words. They are beginning to respond well to stories and can talk about the main events and characters in the books they read. By the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils have become more independent in their reading and have developed satisfactory levels of literal understanding of the books they read. However, the pupils' ability to interpret and draw inference from texts is not sufficiently well developed for their age. Independent research skills are not well developed and library skills are poor, due in part to the absence of a good quality range of texts in the school library.
87. Progress in writing throughout the school is unsatisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 1 many pupils are still unable to sustain correct spelling and punctuation in their independent work. There is little evidence of the use of interesting or ambitious vocabulary and the structure of stories or accounts is usually in short, simple sentences with little awareness of the reader. However, most pupils are able to communicate meaning in writing at a simple level, especially when they are asked to write about their own lives and experiences. They are able to spell many short, common words correctly and know the appropriate spelling conventions to represent longer words so that they are recognisable. Most pupils know how to use capital letters and full stops to demarcate sentences but few apply this knowledge consistently in their writing. Handwriting is generally legible but very variable in presentation. Most pupils form their letters correctly but many do not have secure control over letter size. Capital letters are sometimes used inappropriately in the middle of words and sentences.
88. Progress in writing continues to be slow in Years 3 to 6 although it improves considerably in Year 4 where it is good overall. By the end of Year 6 many pupils are still unable to sustain the effort and independence required to write more extended pieces of work and their written work does not always do justice to the knowledge and understanding they display in discussion. The presentation of written work in Year 5 and 6 is very variable. Handwriting is often untidy, not joined and inconsistent in size. Punctuation and spelling are often careless, although many pupils can recognise and correct errors when required to review their work. The more able pupils can

communicate at an appropriate level in writing, using substantially correct spelling and punctuation in complex sentences and formal language patterns. This was evident in written responses to an emotive poem about the First World War when some pupils wrote movingly about the horrors of war experienced by the poet. However, many pupils still write in short, simple sentences and there is little use of ambitious vocabulary or planned structure in their work. Written work for other subjects reflects the unsatisfactory standards in writing and often fails to reflect the knowledge and understanding displayed by many pupils in their spoken communication.

89. The quality of teaching and learning in English is currently satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed during the inspection some examples of good teaching were observed across the school but over time there have been some unsatisfactory aspects in the teaching that have contributed to the slow progress made by pupils in writing, particularly in Year 3 to 6. The current teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the National Literacy Strategy and they enthuse their pupils about different reading texts and writing forms. Basic skills, such as matching letters to their sounds, are taught carefully so that pupils become increasingly independent in their reading. Most teachers use questions well to promote thoughtful responses and some teachers are particularly adept at encouraging pupils to extend and explain their thinking. Planning for lessons follows the guidance in the National Literacy Strategy and usually contains well-focused learning objectives. Teaching is most effective when these objectives are shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson and used to help the pupils evaluate the progress they have made. The best teaching has high expectations of what the pupils can do and makes constant demands of their productivity levels. The teaching methods used are imaginative and are successful in engaging the pupils' interest. For example, a lesson about 'Alice in Wonderland' made effective use of props such as a chessboard to stimulate the pupils and extend their understanding. When teaching is less effective, work is not sufficiently well matched to the abilities of the pupils and provides insufficient challenge for the more able pupils. The expectations of what the pupils can do in the time available are too low and the teaching fails to inject pace and urgency into the learning. The range of work set for the pupils is restricted and limits the progress the pupils are able to make across the English curriculum, particularly in writing. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length, in English lessons and in other areas of the curriculum. This restricts the progress they are able to make in developing their skills in writing for different purposes. Information and communication technology has insufficient emphasis in lessons although there is occasional use of word processing to redraft and edit the pupils' work.
90. Full provision is made for pupils of all abilities to have access to the English curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and in withdrawal groups. They make good progress towards the targets in their individual learning programmes. Additional withdrawal groups, such as those for the more able pupils and for pupils in need of extra literacy support, provide good opportunities to accelerate progress in learning.
91. The school has recently taken good steps to improve the standards of work in English. These include the use of individual writing targets for pupils, standardised handwriting and the development of vocabulary, spelling and comprehension. The writing targets have not yet had an impact on standards but have already had some success in helping pupils to know what they must do to improve their performance. The subject leader has a good grasp of the developmental needs for the subject and has already taken steps to analyse test results and establish a system for tracking the pupils' progress in English. However, the use of assessment to raise standards is not consistent throughout the school. The subject leader's role in monitoring standards and teaching in English is not

sufficiently developed. The senior management team has identified the library as a priority for development. The school has an adequate range of big books and sets of group readers to support the teaching of reading. However, the present library has an insufficient number and range of good quality fiction and non-fiction books. It is housed in an area that fails to generate in the pupils an excitement and love of reading, both for pleasure and for finding out about their world. The lack of a high quality library environment and good quality books is a major factor in the below average standards achieved by the pupils in English, particularly in reading.

## **MATHEMATICS**

92. The 2001 end of key stage National Curriculum test results indicate that the pupils' performance in mathematics was above the average for similar schools but below the national average at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, attainment was below the average for similar schools and well below the national average. When the results between 1997 and 2001 are taken together, the percentage of pupils achieving the standard expected of pupils at the end of Year 6 (level 4) has increased over that time but has been consistently below the national average. Between 1999 and 2001, girls performed better than boys. Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of both Years 2 and 6 are below the national average but, given the very low level of attainment when children start school, pupils are making satisfactory progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual education plans and pupils with English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils are making satisfactory progress overall.
93. The inspection findings are not as good as those of the last inspection in 1997, which then identified average attainment at the end of both key stages. Encouragingly, however, the school has taken a number of useful steps to raise standards. It has stabilised the previously very high turnover of teaching staff. Appointments include that of a new head teacher who, along with the governors, has a clear vision for the school's future. Better teaching has been successfully encouraged and a more rigorous approach to National Numeracy Strategy established. Grants have been used to target specific groups of pupils. Ability sets have been arranged for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Furthermore, the use of information gathered from the school's assessment procedures are beginning to have a positive effect on curriculum planning, and for the setting of future attainment targets for individuals and groups of pupils to achieve.
94. As already indicated, standards are improving, and many of the good initiatives and practices have made a significant contribution. As a result, all pupils throughout the school, including a larger than average number of pupils with special educational needs, are making at least satisfactory progress in lessons. However, it is clear from discussions with pupils and through a scrutiny of their work that standards are not yet as high as they should be, and that over a period of time, pupils have under-achieved because their progress has been too slow. The school itself has identified problem solving as an area for pupils' development and is working to improve these skills for its pupils. However, its work has not yet resulted in pupils applying and adapting the skills they have learned with confidence, as they select an appropriate method or strategy or as they seek to reach a conclusion, independently of the teacher.
95. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the value of tens and units. They can correctly count to a hundred in twos and tens using a number line and can add on in threes, fours and fives. They are beginning to understand mathematical language. For example, they realise that 'add', 'the sum of', and 'total' have similar meanings, but their overall range of mathematical vocabulary is weak. Generally, pupils are confident at reaching mental conclusions to sums involving numbers up to thirty and when adding a

two-digit number to a single-digit number up to one hundred. A few higher attainers can add together three numbers, but low attainers struggle to complete many of the tasks without help. Whilst addition and subtraction are appropriately developed, other processes are not so advanced, so that they are not called upon in practical activities. When shopping, for instance, pupils will add three four-penny cakes rather than saying  $3 \times 4\text{p.} = 12\text{p.}$  Pupils can identify an appropriate number of flat and three-dimensional shapes, tell the time to half an hour and complete activities using various measures. However, their knowledge is not well founded and there are too few opportunities for them to investigate shape, measures and capacity through estimation and practical activities.

96. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a basic knowledge of the four rules of number. They add and subtract numbers up to one thousand confidently; they can multiply by a two-digit number and some of the higher attainers can divide by two-digit numbers up to twenty. When asked to estimate a problem out of context, for example,  $98 \times 52$ , they take some time to recall an 'easy' method. Some higher attaining pupils (10% of the Year group) understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages and can often convert one to another. The mental recall skills of most pupils are slow and the strategies they use to arrive at answers are too narrow. Pupils have limited access to practical investigation and exploration of mathematics because of unsatisfactory resources. These are significant factors in the pupils' below average skills when using and applying their knowledge and understanding in real life situations. Data handling is developing appropriately, although the range of work in this aspect is once again rather narrow and constrained. Pupils' knowledge of three-dimensional shapes and their properties is below average, but their knowledge of triangles and angles is good.
97. In almost every lesson seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is indicative of the school's action plan for improvement. Generally lessons are well prepared and resources are well used. A good example of this was in Year 2 where number cards were used in mental activities, ensuring all pupils arrived at speedy answers in healthy competition with their friends. Teachers work hard to provide appropriate challenges for their pupils, for example, when measuring angles in Year 6. Mostly they plan and provide different activities for groups of pupils at different levels of attainment. Just occasionally, teachers do not provide sufficient extension work for pupils who complete tasks quickly. Sometimes, therefore, progress for these pupils is delayed because they complete additional similar work, rather than moving forward to a more difficult challenge. A particular strength is the good collaboration among classroom assistants and teachers leading to the effective learning and good progress of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers have good classroom management skills and relationships are good. Consequently, pupils respond by listening well, working hard and collaborating with their teachers and peers. Those pupils with particular behavioural or physical difficulties are well assimilated into classroom activities and are supported not only by staff, but also often through the appropriate response of other pupils.
98. Although the quality of teaching and learning is now good, the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding indicate that over time, teaching has been unsatisfactory. Because of the high turnover of staff and staff absences, pupils have not had the continuity of regular teachers and this has resulted in gaps in their learning. Whilst work is now often well matched to pupils' attainment, a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that this has not always been so, and, therefore, has prevented pupils' from making better progress. A particular weakness still evident is the lack of information and communication technology opportunities in mathematics.

99. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory. However, a useful action plan has identified areas for development and many effective responses have already been taken to address many of the issues. Most of these have not been established long enough to have the desired impact upon pupils' learning and progress. The school is aware of the need to evaluate, consolidate and strenuously implement the identified strategies to further raise standards. The appointment of a new co-ordinator is imminent, but he or she will require a detailed job description and the opportunity, time and authority to carry out the defined duties. This is particularly important in relation to the evaluation of the quality, range, teaching and effectiveness of the curriculum. There is also a need to further develop the planned application of numeracy across the curriculum and to develop the range and quality of resources, in particular the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' development.

## **SCIENCE**

100. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 6, pupils' achieve standards that are below the national average and that they could be higher. As a result of improved leadership in the school and for the subject, progress is now improving. Over recent years, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not made satisfactory progress because of a rapid turn over of staff and lack of leadership in the subject. The result is that there are gaps in pupils' scientific knowledge and in their ability to perform scientific investigations and experiments. The results of the 2001 end of key stage National Curriculum tests showed that the school's performance in science was well below the national average but recent improvement is evident because standards were about average for similar schools. Standards have declined since the time of the last inspection when pupils in Year 6 were judged to be achieving as well as expected for their age.
101. By the end of Year 2, inspection evidence supports the teacher assessments of 2001 that showed that standards are below the national expectations for the age of the pupils. This is partly because the curriculum is narrow and does not always challenge pupils enough, partly because expectations for pupils to develop independent investigational skills are too low and partly because pupils have a limited vocabulary and this restricts their ability to communicate what they know and understand. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 could be better but are similar to the findings of the last inspection.
102. The rate of learning in science varies across the school and depends upon the quality of teaching. In Years 1, 2, 3 and 4, pupils acquire knowledge at a satisfactory rate but higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough and, therefore, do not learn as well as they could. In Years 5 and 6, the rate of learning has dipped in recent years but is now improving rapidly and during the inspection was satisfactory. The teachers in Years 5 and 6 have recently increased their expectations of pupils and are introducing measures that are starting to increase pupils' work rate. It will be some time, however, before the attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is as good as it should be because of the time needed to effectively implement the science scheme and to develop strategies for teaching and learning investigational skills. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language matches that of other pupils in their class.
103. Across the school, pupils find it difficult to understand basic ideas associated with physical sciences. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic ideas related to force, movement, light and sound are weak. Pupils in Year 2 know that a force is a push or pull but by the end of Year 6 pupils struggle with the more advanced ideas about friction and gravity usually known by eleven year olds. This is because until recently the school has lacked a coherently planned and systematically taught science curriculum. In other

aspects of science, pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials appropriate for their age and know basic ideas about plants and animals and the processes within them that ensure their survival. However, many pupils are unsure of key scientific vocabulary and this holds back the pupils' ability to say what they think.

104. Over time, the quality of teaching of science has been unsatisfactory but, since the arrival of the new head teacher, the quality has improved greatly. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was satisfactory.
105. Whilst most teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of science appropriate for the age range that they teach, their expectations for pupils to plan and record their work with reasonable independence are too low. Across the school there is no clear approach to guide teachers and pupils in how pupils should record their work. This results in the quality of pupils' recorded work often being poor and pupils themselves tend not to value what they do. Improvements are being made in the monitoring of science teaching and the head teacher is setting higher expectations. The improved management by the head teacher is improving the quality of teaching in science, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Lessons are now planned with a clear purpose, pupils are expected to learn and use scientific vocabulary and the national guidelines for science are being followed across the school. There is a commitment by staff to using science for promoting literacy and numeracy skills and the use of information and communication technology in science but a lack of a clear policy that guides teachers currently means that the application of such basic skills is usually incidental rather than planned.
106. During the lessons observed, pupils generally behaved well but some lessons were rather slow in pace and this reduced the pupils' level of involvement or enthusiasm. In Year 2, pupils enjoyed discussing with each other the properties of different materials and the difference between natural and manufactured materials. A carefully planned and prepared lesson for pupils in Year 5/6 was enthusiastically and energetically presented and very well received. Pupils were highly motivated and by working in small groups they planned and performed a test to investigate the composition of soil. Everyone worked very well with each other and made accurate observations of the various soils available. During this lesson, high expectations from the class teacher for pupils to work on their own, the good pace and good relationships with pupils contributed to good behaviour and high levels of interest. As a result, all pupils made good progress, including those with special educational needs.
107. There are currently weaknesses in the impact of the subject co-ordinator in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning but the recently appointed subject co-ordinator has made a good start in her new post. She has identified many weaknesses in the subject's provision and has started to act by attending training and devising a clear action plan, set in a realistic but challenging timescale, to improve pupils' progress and standards. Positive steps are being taken to raise the profile of science in the school, including the planned launch of a science club for pupils. Improvements are being made to the existing unsatisfactory procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress so that the needs of all pupils can be better identified and planned for. The positive impact of the new co-ordinator and the commitment of staff to raise standards places the subject in a good position for further improvement.



## ART AND DESIGN

108. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and 6. Pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Appropriate provision is made for all pupils to have full access to all aspects of the curriculum. Standards have fallen since the last inspection.
109. At the end of Year 2, the pupils have experienced a satisfactory range of appropriate media. They are able to draw with pencils and crayons and can use poster paint to good effect in self-portraits that show evidence of some close observational skills. They are beginning to experiment successfully with different effects, such as wax resist techniques, which they use to good effect in bonfire night pictures. They explore the effects of natural dyes on fabric and experience the process of weaving on a simple loom. Through these activities they are developing a satisfactory awareness of the creative process and the place of art in their lives.
110. By the end of Year 6, pupils have extended their creative experiences into a wider range of media. They study the work of famous artists to good effect and attempt, with a reasonable measure of success, to imitate and adapt the styles of artists, such as Picasso and Fernand Leger in their own work. Older pupils were particularly successful in creating their own repeating designs using advertising logos, based on the work of Andy Warhol. In a lesson about the differences and similarities between changing styles of Picasso portrait studies, pupils showed good observational skills when discussing the features of the studies and their impact on the viewer. Most pupils are able to use 2B drawing pencils to good effect in self portraits and in studies of geometrical forms where they show that they can use shading successfully to create strong three-dimensional effects. The pupils explore the use of oil pastels in drawing and use paint very successfully to imitate aboriginal art forms. They explore the effects of colour in monochromatic studies in the style of Picasso and use red paint successfully to explore the expressive use of colour to represent mood. The pupils use sketchbooks appropriately to record observations and to explore effects in preparation for more finished work although they do not often annotate their work with ideas and suggestions. They show that they are able to use three-dimensional effects successfully in the creation of papier-mâché masks but do not have enough experience of using other three dimensional media, such as clay.
111. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. Most teachers have a satisfactory level of subject knowledge. They provide their pupils with a satisfactory range of creative media and use effective teaching strategies to stimulate and inspire their pupils. Lessons are carefully prepared and well organised. Tasks are carefully explained and the pupils respond well with good behaviour and positive attitudes to the subject. Teachers ensure that the subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by teaching pupils about significant artists from their own and other cultures, and by promoting opportunities to express thoughts, feelings and impressions through creativity. Younger pupils displayed awe and wonder at the effects created by natural dyes on fabric and older pupils showed great sensitivity in their own imitations of Australian aboriginal art. Links with other subjects, such as science and design technology, are appropriately emphasised.
112. The scheme of work provides adequately for the full range of the art curriculum but there are deficiencies in the way the subject is managed. At present, the subject leader does not have an overview of the way in which the subject is covered. She has recently begun to monitor the implementation of the scheme of work but there is no provision for her to monitor the standards and teaching in the subject. The progress of pupils is not

formally monitored or recorded. The use of information communication technology in the subject is under-emphasised and the school does not have sufficient appropriate software. Other resources for the subject are adequate and the school has a good range of reproduction art prints to support the study of significant artists.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. Pupils achieve standards in design and technology that are close to national expectations by the end of Year 2 and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6 the standards are well below national expectations and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. The last inspection reported that standards were below expectations at the end of Year 6 and well below expectations at the end of Year 2, with limited opportunities for all pupils throughout the school. Whilst there has been some improvement since the last inspection for pupils aged 5 to 7 following the introduction of activities based on national guidelines, progress for pupils aged 7 to 11 has been too slow, particularly for those pupils in Year 5 and Year 6.
114. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing an understanding of the need to look at different examples before planning their own design of vehicle. They draw clearly labelled diagrams from different viewpoints, which show a clear understanding of the purpose of the chassis, axle and wheels. Their finished vehicles are attractive and indicate that pupils take pride in their work, though there is no evidence of discussion as to how their work could be improved.
115. There was little evidence available of work completed by older pupils other than papier-mâché masks, which did not show any preliminary sketches or evaluation. Discussions with pupils reveal that they remember making fairground rides, powered by electric motors. They can describe how they made the different rides using discarded packets and boxes and explain that the motor has to be in the middle of the big wheel so that it is balanced and does not weigh the wheel down at the bottom. They did not have time to evaluate their work. There is a sign of improvement in the understanding of the design process in Year 3 and Year 4 as pupils in Year 3 investigate different containers and design their own for a specific purpose and pupils in Year 4 make links with their science lessons as they design and make a torch.
116. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 to Year 4 but weak in Years 5 and Year 6. A more structured approach to the design process is apparent in the Year 1 to 4, particularly in designing and making and this is resulting in work of reasonable quality, although more opportunities need to be given to pupils to consider how they might improve their designs next time. However, the absence of any examples of the design process or any recollections by older pupils of specific designs or evaluation in the recent past reveals a weakness in teaching and learning of skills in Year 5 and Year 6.
117. The subject has lacked leadership since the last inspection. A new co-ordinator was appointed very recently with a remit to update the scheme of work and to improve resources. She is aware that there are many shortcomings in the subject and is to produce an action plan to help her identify the way forward. A start has been made by most teachers to plan their work according to national guidelines. However, there is yet no overview of what is being taught in school to check that all areas are being covered. Analysis of the teachers' individual plans shows that there is no systematic teaching of skills, although they are taught in individual classes, no planned programme for older pupils to work with a range of tools and materials or to clarify their thoughts through

discussion and through modelling their ideas. The use of information and communication technology is not planned for.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. The standards achieved by the pupils at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected nationally. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, do not make satisfactory progress. The subject has had a low profile in recent years and, until recently, not enough time has been given to the subject and school plans have not been consistently taught, resulting in major gaps in pupils' experiences and in their knowledge and understanding of geography.
119. At the time of the inspection, no geography had been taught in Year 2 in the present school year because geography is planned to be taught in the Summer term. However, in Year 1, the pupils' work demonstrated some geographical awareness and knowledge of appropriate vocabulary. Pupils are able to name ways of travelling to school and can show their route to school on a simple map. They are able to order instructions on how to get from school to Wythenshawe Park and they can name some preferences for places in their locality. The more able pupils are developing satisfactory geographical study skills but other pupils need high levels of support in order to complete tasks.
120. In Years 3 to 6, progress in geography has been too slow in recent years, especially in the development of geography study skills. This is indicated by the way that many pupils have poor map reading skills and are unable to locate places on maps of different scales. The older pupils are aware of localities beyond their own, such as Llandudno and Stanton on the Peak. They are also aware of some of the differences in the human and physical aspects of these localities but few are able to carry out independent research to find answers to geographical questions. Most work is closely structured and directed by the teachers. The geographical vocabulary of many pupils is poorly developed. When given the opportunity to do so, the more able pupils are able to express independent opinions about environmental issues, for example, the effects of quarrying on the Derbyshire landscape and the impact of building houses on Wythenshawe Park. However, most pupils need help in formulating opinions about the effects of human activity on the environment.
121. Over time the quality of teaching and learning has been unsatisfactory although satisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. The curriculum has only recently been improved so that all parts of the subject will be taught for the appropriate time but, at the moment, teachers' planning does not have sufficient focus on skill development to meet the subject requirements. The tasks given to the pupils often do not build on prior learning or give them sufficient opportunity to make progress in their geography study skills to an appropriate level. In the better lessons, the pupils' geographical vocabulary is carefully extended in relevant contexts and the learning builds on their own experiences. In lessons where the teaching generates a sense of excitement and interest in finding out about their world, for example, in a lesson about environmental change in Australia, the pupils make progress at a faster rate and have more positive attitudes to the subject. In most of the lessons seen, the relationships between adults and pupils were good and the pupils were managed well.
122. The contribution of geography to developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills is limited and unsatisfactory overall. The subject policy identifies areas where links may exist but these are not yet sufficiently emphasised in lessons. Where these links are used well, they help the pupils to better

learning. In a lesson about the water cycle, pupils' recall of learning about evaporation in science helped them to a better understanding. However, across the school, little use is made of information communication technology and the pupils are seldom required to practise their literacy skills in writing extended responses to learning in geography.

123. The subject has lacked clear leadership and direction in the past and the subject leader's role in monitoring the standards and teaching is unclear. There are no formal procedures in place for monitoring and recording the progress of individual pupils. The subject leader has the necessary expertise and subject knowledge to support her colleagues but, at present, she does not have a sufficient overview of standards and teaching in the subject. The school has recently adopted the national scheme of work for geography and this provides a suitable basis for teaching the subject. The subject lacks a formal overview of when geography will be taught across the school and the development of geography study skills is under-emphasised in teachers' planning. The school has an adequate number and range of maps and atlases for the older pupils and the needs of the subject are kept under review. There are deficiencies in the stock of geography texts in the library and the range of maps available for the younger pupils is limited.

## **HISTORY**

124. Attainment at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations and this is a significant improvement on the judgements of the last inspection. The improvement is the result of better teaching, the implementation of a new subject policy and scheme of work and work that is better planned to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they pass through the school.
125. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2, teachers plan their lessons together. This means that, whilst they cover the same topics, the strategies, plans and level of work are properly suited to the ages of the pupils in their respective classes. This has a beneficial effect upon the use of shared resources. For example, both classes have just begun a new topic about toys. Pupils are shortly to benefit from the appearance of an invited visitor from the nearby Lyme Park, who will bring a variety of old toys for the pupils to see, handle, and to discuss with them how they were used in the past. Pupils' individual and collective work, associated with previous topics, is not very evident, and whilst pupils write about famous people, such as Guy Fawkes, work is prescriptive and there are insufficient opportunities to record what they have learned in a variety of ways. Nevertheless, pupils are able to recall what they studied in lessons and talk sensibly about it.
126. In Years 3 to 6, work is planned over a two-year cycle, to take into account the needs of mixed aged groups in classes. However, it not clear to all teachers how and when the cyclical topics occur. Teachers do not formally plan together although Year 3 and Year 4 pupils have recently completed the same topic - Children in World War 2. Some of the work, however, was very similar and too often the use of worksheets restricts the quality of pupils' answers and opportunities to develop their writing skills. More interesting responses were made when pupils were guided to use their imagination and express their own thoughts. For instance, pupils in Year 3 showed they could relate to the feelings and emotions of wartime children as they wrote letters home to mother as an imaginary refugee. Similarly, Year 4 pupils wrote their 'Grandfathers Diary', as they recorded their perceived ideas of his experiences. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have completed a well-planned topic about the Aztecs, but once again, despite some original work, better progress is restricted by simple responses to questions on worksheets.

Better progress is also restricted by the lack of opportunity for pupils to research, analyse, gather and record information independently.

127. The subject is not satisfactorily managed because not enough time is planned for the quality of teaching and learning to be monitored. The present co-ordinator has the capacity and will to take the subject forward. She is aware of the need to develop assessment procedures, monitor the progress of pupils through the school and to improve the currently unsatisfactory range of resources. She is enthusiastic and has arranged a number of historical venues and places for pupils to visit in connection with their work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

128. Attainment is well below the national expectations for pupils at the end of both Years 2 and Year 6. Progress is unsatisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection when standards were said to be well below average at age seven and eleven with poor progress throughout the school. There has been some improvement over the last term, following the timetabling of lessons in the computer suite. Teachers are now using national guidelines to help plan lessons, though there is no overview of when topics and skills should be taught to provide continuity and progress in learning.
129. Pupils achieved well in the lessons seen, though the improvements are too recent to have had a significant impact on overall standards and, over time, pupils' achievement is below what could be expected. An encouraging innovation is that children in Reception are now receiving lessons in the computer suite, helping to establish skills from an early age. However, throughout the school, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their skills and enhance learning in other subjects. This is due in part to some teachers' lack of confidence and also a lack of suitable programs.
130. By the end of Year 2, pupils can write a sentence on the word processor to match a picture. They can prepare labels for the computer room and use the back space key to make corrections. They have also used an art programme to design a cover for a book. However, they have little experience of entering information into the computer and using this to display information as a graph or chart. When talking to pupils they show an awareness of how computers may be used, for example, in the doctor's surgery to make appointments and in the supermarket to add up the bill. However, their understanding of using resources, such as the programmable robot, is weak.
131. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a reasonable knowledge of the keyboard and can use the print icon to print their work. However, questioning by a new teacher at the start of a topic shows that no pupil can recall hearing of a spreadsheet, although they learn to complete a simple table during the course of the lesson. Pupils respond well to direct teaching and encouraging support. They show that they want to learn by asking questions when they do not understand and also help each other when they can. In discussion, they can explain how to use the internet to find information although they have no experience of finding information from CD Roms. They can word process their writing from a paper copy, but have very little experience of using the computer to draft and redraft their work. However, work in Year 3 and Year 4 shows an improving trend as pupils begin to benefit from a more structured approach to the teaching of skills. Whilst attainment is still well below that expected for their age, pupils in Year 3 are combining simple text and pictures to make labels whilst Year 4 make menus and also create and flip over their designs to make effective pictures of marine scenes.

132. Whilst teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory with some good features, the little amount of pupils' work available overall and pupils' low level of understanding show that teaching and learning over time have been unsatisfactory. Lessons in the computer suite are well organised. Teachers give clear instructions so that pupils know what to expect and then circulate well to help pupils who are experiencing difficulty. As teaching in the past has not been systematic or regular, teachers find it difficult to plan the level of activities to suit individual pupils. Consequently, some work is too difficult for some pupils and they lose interest. Teachers are now using the correct technical vocabulary in their lessons and this is helping to improve pupils' understanding. Pupils are now picking up ideas and skills quickly but still have a long way to go to reach standards expected for their age. Many teachers admit that they themselves lack confidence, but it is very apparent that they want to improve their own skills to raise the quality of lessons. Therefore, they are to attend a training course in the near future.
133. The subject has lacked clear leadership and direction in the past. However, the newly appointed co-ordinator has set out a clear action plan which includes the collating of a new scheme of work based on national guidelines which will include those areas of the curriculum, such as control and using sensing equipment, which are not currently taught. In addition, the action plan includes the introduction of simple assessment procedures, teacher training and improvement in software. This is a necessarily ambitious plan but a start has been made in using national guidelines to help plan lessons. However, there still remains a lack of opportunity for pupils to use the skills gained in the computer suite to improve learning in other areas of the curriculum by making better use of the computers in the classrooms. There has been no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the standards of teaching and learning in the classroom. Despite recent improvements in the quality and number of computers, there are still weaknesses in the range of software.

## **MUSIC**

134. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. An improvement in teaching, including a good contribution from specialist peripatetic teachers, and the implementation of a useful scheme of work based on local guidelines have resulted in a good improvement in standards, with pupils now reaching national expectations at the age of seven and eleven. A strong feature is the good opportunities for all pupils to perform music. A large proportion of pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 are learning to play an instrument, with some reaching a sufficiently high level to take external examinations. A less successful element is the limited opportunities for pupils to compose their own music or to evaluate their own performance.
135. All pupils have good opportunities to sing and to play an instrument regularly, enabling all children to achieve well. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development as they co-operate in music groups, listen to a good range of music, including Vivaldi and Beethoven, and also learn to appreciate the sound and rhythm of the steel band.
136. By the end of Year 2, through the systematic teaching of skills and good opportunities to make music, most pupils have a good understanding of the difference between pulse and rhythm and can march and clap in time to the music. They know a good range of songs by heart and sing tunefully in assembly. Pupils learn to follow an arrangement through playing their percussion instruments as the teacher holds up the appropriate colour.

137. By the age of eleven pupils are learning to recognise how music can represent ideas and feelings. For example, when they discuss the winter section of Vivaldi's Four Seasons, they identify sections which remind them of a storm or people skating on a frozen lake. They can create simple tunes based on soh-me and reproduce a pattern made by other pupils. Pupils who are learning to play an instrument make a good contribution to class lessons, helping to raise the standards for all. For example, they illustrate the meaning of piano and forte as they play their instruments loudly or quietly. Whilst pupils improve their performance at the suggestion of the teacher, they have yet to develop the skill of evaluating their own performance.
138. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with examples of very good teaching seen. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is due in large measure to the introduction of a scheme of work, which provides good support to teachers who are not music specialists. Good practical activities and simple explanations, such as comparing the pulse to pupils' heartbeat reinforces understanding of musical terms. Teachers generally manage pupils well and this increases the pupils' enjoyment and promotes a good attitude to music. In one lesson for older pupils, however, the disruptive behaviour of a small minority of pupils adversely affected the quality of learning for the whole class, as the instrumental section of the lesson was justifiably curtailed by the teacher. Teaching is enhanced by the good contributions from the peripatetic teachers. This was seen in the good direct teaching of skills to the steel band and in an assembly for the whole school, where the enthusiasm and skill of the teacher resulted in a good performance from the orchestra and recorder group and also improved understanding of technical terms, such as ostinato for the whole school.
139. The subject is managed effectively and the school is aware of the need to introduce a co-ordinated system of assessment to track pupils' progress. The school is well resourced with a good range of musical instruments so that all pupils can participate in class lessons. The school also has a full range of steel drums as well as cellos and violins so that all pupils have access to an instrument for additional specialist lessons.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

140. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. This is an improvement from the findings of the last inspection report, which showed that standards at the end of Year 6 were below national expectations. No judgement was then made about the standards at the end of Year 2. Strengths of the subject are identified in gymnastics and pupils make satisfactory progress in games and in swimming. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
141. The school's policy for physical education has been reviewed and an appropriate scheme of work is followed. All aspects of the National Curriculum are included in the teaching timetable and a sufficient amount of time is allocated to lessons. There are appropriate arrangements for swimming for pupils in Key Stage 2 and, consequently, most pupils are competent swimmers by the end of Year 6. Some teachers have particular strengths and pupils benefit from their expertise. A number of pupils enjoy a limited number of extra-curricular sporting activities. However, there are not many opportunities for pupils to benefit and participate in inter-school sporting events.
142. In a Key Stage 1 gymnastics lesson, pupils develop a good awareness of space and direction. They have a good understanding of what is meant by a sequence of movement and effectively practise this, so that they develop and link a variety of gymnastic movements in a considered way. On the balancing apparatus, they can twist and turn, demonstrating good examples of high and low shapes as they travel on, over

or under it. They are eager to learn and are able to evaluate not only their own movements but also those of others. They use their evaluations to effectively to improve their performances.

143. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in gymnastics. For example, pupils in Year 4 seamlessly link five or six movements into a smooth sequence. They show imagination and agility when jumping and rolling and a good developing sense of balance as many try to include handstands. Pupils take a pride in their work as they demonstrate the quality of their performance. Year 6 pupils have appropriately developed ball skills and they understand the meaning of ball control when practising football skills, so that they can stop, dribble, pass and control a ball. They work well together in small groups or teams through which they understand the need for co-operation and teamwork in games. Most pupils speak highly of their interest and knowledge of football. However, only a few pupils show knowledge and enthusiasm when talking about dance.
144. Teaching and learning overall is satisfactory, and good teaching was noted in some lessons seen during the inspection. The good teaching emphasised the positive aspects of pupils' performances. For example, in Year 4, the teacher used pupils' demonstrations very effectively by inviting other pupils to comment upon them, thus identifying strengths and areas for further development. From this good practice, pupils were then able to make personal comparisons and to improve their own skills. Teachers have developed good relationships with pupils so that there is a general sense of purpose, order and co-operation where pupils make sound progress. Some very good use of support staff enabled a pupil with a physical disability to be fully included in the lesson and her fellow pupils applauded her efforts as she demonstrated to the class the good progress she had made.
145. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory because there is no co-ordinator at the moment. There is, however, an appropriate and well-established curriculum that guides teaching and learning throughout the school. The school recognises the need to introduce an effective assessment system to enable pupils' progress to be monitored. Resources are unsatisfactory because there is a need to improve the quality and range of equipment.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

146. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in religious education is below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. There has been no improvement since the last inspection. In recent years, the subject has not been given a high enough priority and insufficient amount of time has been allocated to enable the subject to be properly covered through its programmes of study. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is unsatisfactory.
147. The school has now started to take measures to improve the situation. It has introduced and implemented a new locally Agreed Syllabus, thus satisfying one of the key issues of the last inspection. Teachers use the syllabus to guide their planning and an appropriate amount of time is allocated to lessons.
148. In Year 1 and 2, pupils learn about family life for Christians, Hindus and Muslims. However, whilst the extent of their learning highlights their understanding of people of different faiths, it is very basic. Their knowledge of churches and places of worship is often linked to their own limited experiences. As a result, the majority are unable to identify the main features of a mosque or temple or compare their features with a



Christian church. Pupils are able to recall one or two Bible stories, such as The Creation or Noah, but are not able to link the stories with their deeper meaning.

149. At the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is below that expected for pupils of a similar age and their progress across the school has been unsatisfactory because they have not systematically covered an appropriate curriculum in sufficient depth to acquire an acceptable level of knowledge. Since the new syllabus was published just over a year ago, the pupils have started to learn in a more constructive manner, but in general they have not been able to make up for the previous lack of opportunity. Year 6 pupils can identify between the Old and New Testaments and, although they relate to stories in them, they sometimes confuse significant features. For example, one pupil described the Good Samaritan as a Christian. They are unable to recall many features of the great faiths, nor the names of other holy books, such as the Qu'ran. However, when they now encounter topics within their programmes of study, such as Buddhism in Year 4, some are able to talk with enthusiasm about what they have learned in lessons. Visits by the local clergy support Christian teaching in school and, in the past, a visit to the temple has helped pupils become familiar with Sikhism.
150. The overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, although the lessons observed during the inspection were either satisfactory or better. There is evidence of limited teacher knowledge and lack of confidence. Together with the lack of in-service training, this has resulted in a limited range of strategies for teaching religious education. Too often, information sheets and comprehension-type worksheets are the main tools for involving pupils in their writing. In turn, this curtails pupils' opportunities to express their own individual thoughts and ideas. Where available resources are used, this is an advantage. For example, in Year 1 very good use of Muslim clothing brought a deeper meaning to the lesson, enabling one small girl to comment that her Muslim friend wears a scarf when praying. Generally, however, insufficient resources, particularly books, artefacts and information and communication technology software, restrict pupils' enriched learning occasions by limiting their access to research and investigation. In some classes, pupils' written activities are too few and they do not have displayed work to look back on, to enable them to reflect upon their successes and achievements.
151. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator's job description does not sufficiently empower her, nor does it give sufficient guidance to enable her to carry out her duties properly. There is a need to rectify this to ensure a more rigorous approach to the effective management of the subject and the way in which lessons are taught. There is also the need to implement a useful assessment procedure to provide for teachers to monitor and track the progress pupils make as they move through the school.