

INSPECTION REPORT

ST THOMAS' CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oldham, Lancashire

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105698

Headteacher: Mrs J M Mitchell

Reporting inspector: Mr G Brown
21060

Dates of inspection: 15 -17 October 2001

Inspection number: 196409

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: CE Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: St Thomas Street
Werneth
Oldham

Postcode: OL8 1SE
Telephone number: 0161 287 0097
Fax number: N/A

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Lees

Date of previous inspection: 14 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21060	George Brown	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19439	Doreen Shotton	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12232	Diane Atkinson	Team inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Design and technology Geography History	
31862	Julia Coop	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English Art	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES (English as an additional language is indicated throughout the report)	
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Thomas' CE Primary School is situated in the Coppice area of Oldham and is housed in a stone building erected over 120 years ago. In recent years, the school has been faced with issues of falling rolls, staff redundancies and possible closure, but is now preparing for a period of expansion due to the imminent closure of another neighbouring school. The 107 pupils on roll are from Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin and all speak English as an additional language. Pupils live mainly in an area of considerable deprivation, characterised by high rates of unemployment and low income. The area is also subject to aspects of anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, although there has been some increase in the growing sense of community in which the school plays an important role. Parents work hard in order to comply with the school's wishes on matters such as uniform. Over 50 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a well-above average figure. Some 24 pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs although none currently have a statement of educational needs. The great majority of pupils enter school with only limited play-group or nursery experience and with very low standards in English literacy. The role of the nearby St Thomas' Church is seen as one of outreach and support both to the school and to the local community.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Thomas' is a happy, effective school that continues to serve its community well. The school is well led and managed and has a committed, hard working staff. Although pupils' standards are below and sometimes well below the national average, particularly in spoken and written English, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and frequently good. The school is efficient, meets its basic aims and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- There is good general awareness of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and the staff provide good levels of support.
- The school is well led and managed and provides good educational direction for staff and pupils.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards their learning. They are enthusiastic, behave well and form very good working relationships.
- Children make a particularly good start in the reception class.
- There is strong, effective emphasis on the care and welfare of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. Good procedures exist for the assessment of standards that the pupils reach.
- The school relates well to parents and the wider community and this is having increasingly good effect on the education of the pupils.

What could be improved

- Standards in spoken and written English are well below average.
- Although improving, standards in mathematics and science could be higher.
- Whilst satisfactory overall, the quality of teaching and learning needs to be more effective in order to encourage higher achievement and create greater levels of progress among the pupils.
- The opportunities for pupils' learning (the curriculum), need to be re-assessed to ensure that pupils make the best possible use of their knowledge, understanding and basic skills.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997 when the pupils' standards, the quality of education provided by the school and the management and efficiency of the school were all in need of some improvement. Following action taken at that time, the school has made good progress in relation to the issues it had to address. While standards have remained below average overall, the school has made some improvements in relation to mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. It has also received an award for being among the most 100 improved primary schools in the country. The

quality of teaching has improved to its present levels where no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The formal assessment of pupils' work has improved considerably and has become a strength of the school. The role of the governing body has been extended, particularly in relation to financial planning and involvement. A useful school development plan has been devised that sets out clear educational priorities for the ensuing year and beyond. Other new initiatives such as the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and performance management have been implemented satisfactorily. Despite the uncertainties of the past, the school is now fully committed to its future and is setting realistic targets for growth and further development.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

very low E*

Pupils enter the school with well below average standards and, despite their good start, remain well below average by the end of their reception year. In the National Curriculum tests for 2000, pupils' results at the end of Year 6 were well below average in English, mathematics and science. This is due to relatively few pupils attaining the higher levels anticipated for some pupils of this age. In relation to similar schools, pupils' results were broadly average in all three subjects. Over the period 1998 to 2000, the overall performance of pupils in these core subjects fell well below the national average for their age-group, with boys doing considerably better than girls. Standards are beginning to improve, particularly in mathematics and science, although there are still relatively few pupils who reach the higher levels expected for some pupils of their age. The provisional results from 2001 suggest that the upward trend in Year 6 attainment is broadly continuing, although standards in English remain low. This was also confirmed by the results of the inspection. Most pupils achieve satisfactory levels in English, mathematics and science given their often very low levels of attainment on entry to the school. There are also significant difficulties with the acquisition of English as an additional language, a difficulty that is particularly noted in Muslim girls, but one which also affects the learning of many boys across much of the curriculum. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve better in those subjects that are less dependent on the acquisition of written English. Standards in other subjects, including information and communication technology, are broadly at the level anticipated for the age of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make the same satisfactory progress as most of their peers. The inspection also confirmed the below average standards of most pupils by the age of seven, although here too, there is some increase in their general attainment, particularly in mathematics. The targets set for individual groups of pupils are generally being met, although some improved aspects of teaching and learning would extend results still further. Year groups are also very small (sometimes less than 10) and any comparisons with national data have to be treated with some caution.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and try hard during their lessons.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils show respect for the rules of the school and behave well in and out of the classrooms. Older pupils are good role models for younger children in this respect.
Personal development and relationships	Good. There is strong emphasis on developing the whole child. The very good relationships also encourage secure, effective learning.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The attendance rate is well below the national average. Some pupils experience learning difficulties on returning from extended holidays in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The mainly good teaching in the reception class leads to effective learning of many early skills. This is then built on satisfactorily in all other year groups. Pupils with special educational needs are also taught satisfactorily across the school. Particular teaching strengths observed in several classes include the emphasis on teaching basic skills and the general management of the pupils. Numeracy and literacy are taught adequately. However, pupils are likely to achieve and learn more by a more accurate match of work to support their known needs, an improved marking system and raising teacher expectation as to what some pupils can and should achieve. The teaching of mathematics is good among infant pupils and is good in information and communication technology across the school. The general teaching and learning of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are among the most effective in the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. A statutory curriculum is in place and good attention is paid to ensure all pupils have equal access to a range of learning opportunities. However, there are weaknesses in the provision for some subjects such as art and music and the curriculum as a whole should be more directed towards the learning and applying of skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' difficulties are identified early and they are well supported by teachers and bilingual speakers.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall although there are strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. All teachers show good awareness of the difficulties many pupils experience and do their best to counteract these.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The attention given to the spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory and the provision for their moral, social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A strength of the school. Pupils are well known and supported by a caring, enthusiastic staff. Formal assessment is good.

Although few parents offer support in and around the classrooms, there is an effective bond between parents and the school. The values of a 'faith school' are appreciated. Parents' views are positive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is well led and managed and shows good awareness of its own strengths and weaknesses, including any priorities essential to future development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body works well as a team and meets its statutory duties. Governors could be more pro-active in relation to monitoring standards and evaluating and acting on the school's past performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has become more evaluative of late and is committed to driving up standards even more, particularly in English.
The strategic use of resources	The accommodation for learning is satisfactory although parts of the building are difficult to maintain. Learning resources are satisfactory overall and good in mathematics and in information and communication technology. The numbers and quality of support staff are good. The school targets its financial resources well set against its declared educational priorities. It also understands how it can achieve best value in its annual expenditure.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like coming to school and make good progress. Teaching is good and staff work hard to help their children and respond to their needs. The school is friendly and welcoming. Enough information is given about their child's progress. They like the school's values and ethos. The school encourages good behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents are not happy with standards in English. A greater range of after-school clubs would be appreciated and helpful to the personal development of the pupils. More information about homework would be useful, preferably given to parents in writing.

The inspection bears out many of the positive points mentioned here by parents. The written reports given to parents about their child's progress could be usefully extended to share targets for their future learning. Standards in English are rising but even more needs to be done. The provision for extra-curricular activities is actually good, particularly in view of the need for many pupils to attend Muslim school and worship so promptly after day school. As parents may not be aware of what exact homework is given to their children, the school should consider setting this out in writing afresh, making use as necessary of different translations.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most pupils enter school with standards in English literacy that are well below average for their age. The opening on site of the play-group is helping to prepare children better for formal schooling. Where teaching is good, pupils make satisfactory and frequently good progress during their time in school. Most achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their previous learning including those with special educational needs. All pupils learn English as an additional language and the difficulties many of them encounter should not be underestimated.
2. At the time of transfer to the high school, pupils' overall attainment appears well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Although most pupils achieve the basic level expected for their age in these subjects, few go on to achieve the higher levels and this keeps the school's average scores down. This pattern of attainment was well illustrated in the results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests given to pupils at the end of Year 6. Overall results were well below average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science when taking into account the few higher levels actually achieved. In comparison to schools in similar contexts in the same year, pupils at the school scored broadly average results in all three subjects. The provisional results from similar tests given in 2001 suggest that standards are improving in all core subjects, but less so in English than in mathematics and science. Additionally, the number of pupils taking the tests is usually very small (sometimes less than ten), so great care has to be taken when comparing the pupils' results with those of the national average.
3. The school has received an award for being among the country's most improved 100 schools in relation to recent standards achieved by 11 year-olds. Although this is from a low starting point, the award reflects the generally upward spiral in standards achieved since the previous inspection, as well as the good efforts made by staff and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make similar levels of progress set against their previous learning. Between 1996 and 2000, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects was above the national trend. There has been a particularly steady improvement in standards within mathematics and science, where the problems associated with poor language acquisition have been less marked. However, standards in English have fluctuated in the same period and continue to be an area for improvement. Girls in particular have shown some signs of under performing and the school is monitoring this situation very carefully. The results of the inspection confirm that standards remain well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science.
4. By the end of the reception class (the Foundation Stage) children have made good progress, but their overall standards are well below average for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Some do significantly better in physical development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world has also made considerable strides, mainly because of a carefully planned curriculum and some effective teaching and learning. The levels of classroom support, including the skills of bilingual speakers, are also highly influential.
5. By the age of seven, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and many achieve well in much of the curriculum, given their very low starting point. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven year-olds, pupils at the school scored well below the national average in reading and writing, but broadly in line with the national average in mathematics. In comparison to similar schools, standards were broadly average in writing and reading and well above average in mathematics. Ten pupils took the tests including only one boy so, as with 11 year-olds, comparisons to national scores have to be made with caution. Relatively few pupils attained the higher standard in reading and writing, but pupils generally did much better in mathematics, where reading standards are less imperative. The provisional results from 2001 suggest continuing improvement in mathematics, but with less progress being made in reading

and writing. Over time, the trend in attainment is upwards, particularly in mathematics, with no significant differences between girls and boys. Based on teachers' assessments, pupils in Year 2 were below average in most aspects of their science work. The current inspection judged standards in English to be well below average and those in mathematics and science to be below average overall.

6. There are some fundamental areas of pupil weakness in English that the school has identified and is attempting to improve. Some of this improvement has come about due to the clear focus on expressive and structured language experienced in the Literacy Strategy. However, speaking skills remain weak and pupils find it difficult to express themselves in clear, well formed English. Reading skills have improved but reading for understanding remains a weakness. Teachers have introduced good strategies for spelling among the younger pupils, and with practise, many are beginning to master the basic conventions of English spelling. By the end of Year 6, speaking skills remain weak and teachers give insufficient time to practising oral language and debate. Reading for pleasure has improved but pupils continue to struggle to make sense of reading for information across the curriculum. Some of the worksheets they use are also too difficult and lead to copying without the fundamentals of understanding. Writing tends to be short and contains many inaccuracies in spelling and grammar. Significant numbers of even older pupils find it difficult to write at length and in different styles. The computer is not used widely enough to encourage drafting and re-drafting of work.
7. Pupils across the school continue to make at least satisfactory progress in the development of their mathematical skills. Higher attaining pupils are quick to grasp the relationships between numbers and the various processes such as addition and subtraction. The Numeracy Strategy has helped increase the speed and accuracy of pupils' mental skills and by the end of Year 6, most have a sound grasp of shape and basic measurements. The quality of presentation among younger and some older pupils is fundamentally poor and leads to errors. A further weakness is in the use and application of mathematics, whereby many pupils fail to grasp the logic of a question, particularly when it is expressed in words that require careful thought and interpretation.
8. Standards in science have improved among both infant and junior pupils mainly as the result of more focused teaching and an increase in investigative work. By the end of Year 6, pupils show signs of confidence when predicting scientific outcomes and many learn to evaluate the results of simple experiments. Some of these basic skills are now being more securely laid in Years 1 and 2. The recording of scientific work remains a weakness in the subject across the school. Too much is completed on worksheets and this fails to give adequate practise in writing scientifically, using a range of subject specific language that is being taught and learnt on a daily basis.
9. Standards in other subjects are broadly at the levels expected for the age of the pupils. Some particularly good teaching and the introduction of specialised resources have helped standards to rise of late in information and communication technology. Although weaknesses exist in the control and modelling elements of the subject, this is a curriculum area in which pupils learn basic skills at an early age. These are then well consolidated and developed higher up the school.
10. Standards in subjects such as music and physical education are affected by some reluctance within many homes for pupils to play instruments on a regular basis, or for pupils to practise dance using many forms of free expression. Standards in art are barely satisfactory and teachers find it difficult to develop high levels of creativity within the pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes are good and have been maintained well since the previous inspection. Pupils are eager to come to school and enjoy the activities offered to them. They usually concentrate well and show interest in their learning, particularly when teaching is stimulating and well structured. This was seen frequently in Years 5 and 6 in particular.

12. The behaviour of pupils has been maintained as good since the previous inspection. Pupils are lively and friendly, yet polite and courteous. A few are prone to become over excited in some lessons, but most respond willingly to good teacher management. The few incidents of bullying reported by parents have not been serious and have been dealt with fairly, consistently and promptly. No harassment or oppression was seen during the inspection and only 2 fixed period exclusions have been necessary in recent times.
13. The relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and are even better and more effective as a means to good learning than at the previous inspection. Pupils form very constructive relationships with the staff and with one another. They are keen to help each other and co-operate both in the classroom and in the playground. The school creates an effective, inclusive atmosphere and there is a high degree of racial harmony throughout the school. Pupils show respect for adults, including their teachers, and are keen to please. Parents rightly mention that the school's mission statement and everyday values are important in this respect.
14. When opportunities occur, pupils are happy to take on responsibilities such as acting as monitors in the classroom and organising equipment for assemblies. Older pupils support and care for younger pupils, since they often have younger siblings or cousins in the school. In Year six, pupils have debated the possibility of having a school uniform and have also been given the opportunity to discuss the design of the new school and the community play area. This has enhanced their awareness of the contribution they can make to the wider school community.
15. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory, but there are too few opportunities for them to take the initiative in their own learning. Teachers do not always share the targets for individual pupils with the pupils themselves. Pupils' self-assessment is at a starting point, but taking constructive responsibility for their own learning remains under developed.

Attendance

16. The rate of attendance has shown a tendency to increase since the previous inspection, but it remained unsatisfactory at 91.2 per cent in 2000/2001, a figure well below the national average. No unauthorised absence is recorded, although over half the pupils take extended holidays to visit relatives in Asia. Fewer pupils in Key Stage 2 have long absences and there is less absence when National Curriculum tests are taken. However, friendship bonds are broken and pupils' learning is adversely affected as well as teaching being interrupted, when any pupil is absent for more than two weeks. Registers are marked accurately and in an orderly way according to instructions. There is little lateness and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and there were no examples of unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection period. Some 55 per cent of lessons were good or very good. This represents considerable improvement over the previous inspection, when some 20 per cent of all lessons were judged unsatisfactory. The school has begun to analyse the current strengths and weaknesses of its approach to teaching and learning and this is beginning to have real impact on what pupils achieve and the progress that they make. The quality of teaching is inclusive in that it meets the needs of pupils to at least a satisfactory level, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
18. Teaching in the reception class (the Foundation Stage) is good. The teacher plans carefully to ensure all areas of learning for young children are well covered on a regular basis. Support staff are included in this and there is a clear expectation as to the roles and responsibilities of all those who work in the reception class. The management of the children is good and the teacher ensures that children build on their previous learning well. There is particularly good emphasis on the teaching and learning of basic skills and this is vital as many children enter

school with significant weaknesses in important areas. This was illustrated in a good language lesson when the teacher gave adequate opportunities for children to discuss the content of a 'big book' before they attempted some short written exercises that were well matched to their needs. The results of any assessments carried out with children are used satisfactorily to determine the stage of learning they are at and what should be attempted next.

19. Teachers across the school know the needs of their pupils well and build up very good relationships with them. This is used effectively as a means of motivating their learning and is a consistent teaching strength across the school. Pupils are keen to do their best, anxious to please their teacher and to match the expectations placed on them. This is a particular strength of the teaching and learning occurring in Years 5 and 6 where there is a calm, relaxed atmosphere, but where the expectation on pupils' working practices is high. In almost all lessons across the school, the management of the pupils is a strength, ensuring that pupils remain on task and make good use of the time available for learning.
20. The school has spent much time, training and resources on ensuring that the teaching and learning of basic skills becomes fundamental to the everyday practice of teachers and pupils. The teaching of literacy and numeracy to pupils with English as an additional language has therefore become the most significant part of school life. Most staff are very experienced with working in such a setting and try to ensure that the work planned and undertaken meets the basic needs of the pupils. The planning of lessons in these areas is satisfactory and frequently good. In a literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher ensured that pupils knew what it was they were about to learn and was successful in teaching the pupils about the place of poetry in writing. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory overall although some weaknesses do exist, including a lack of teaching emphasis on good oral language. Most teachers under plan for this important aspect of learning, a skill that many pupils need constant practice and consolidation with. Some teachers are also rather heavily tied to the laid out structure of the literacy hour and do not use the teaching material in a flexible way to ensure that the needs of pupils are more securely met.
21. The teaching of numeracy is good among infant pupils and satisfactory overall in the junior classes. In a lesson involving addition and subtraction with Year 2 pupils, the teacher made effective use of attractive resources such as number games and abacus. The higher attaining pupils were taught by another experienced teacher, who set some challenging exercises on the same theme, in order to ensure the pupils' good progress was maintained. This is not always the case. In several classes, the work set was seen to be very similar for all groups of pupils, regardless of their abilities, and this slowed rather than enhanced their progress. The teaching of numeracy is also weakened by the frequent over use of worksheets which, in some classes, leads to pupils having insufficient practice in setting out their work in an extended way.
22. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in all other subjects observed, although it was not possible to make a judgement on teaching standards in geography, design and technology and art and design. The teaching of information and communication technology is good across the school. Teachers' knowledge and understanding in subject areas are generally satisfactory and this ensures pupils' learning is well directed. Pupils gain knowledge and understanding in a uniform way when this occurs. Teaching methods are satisfactory in the main, although lessons could be made even more interesting and effective for the pupils, by using a greater variety of approaches. Some lessons are very teacher directed and too little is left to pupils to find out for themselves. The teaching of science is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. There has been some good, renewed emphasis on practical investigations for pupils and this has led to more effective learning. However, sometimes the recording of pupils' work is rather shallow and they have too little experience of using scientific language and writing about their experiments in a logical way. The teaching of information and communication technology is usually effective. Teachers have grown in confidence in their use of computers, and the teaching of small groups in the small computer suite has been largely successful. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils practised their language skills when composing an email to send to another school, while others used spreadsheets to assist with a mathematics project. The use made of homework is satisfactory, particularly in the consolidation and extension of literacy and numeracy activities.
23. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is somewhat under documented in the school, although clearly this is the real substance of much of the teachers' everyday work. Planning and assessment, however, reflect a sound knowledge of what is required. The use of time, support staff and resources is satisfactory to this end. Some of the pupils are 'set' for English and mathematics allowing teachers to work more successfully with smaller groups of pupils having broadly similar needs and abilities. Some good use of teachers' marking was

observed in several areas of the curriculum, but this is not consistent. Teachers do not always make it clear, for example, what a pupil must do next in order to improve their learning. Apart from Years 5 and 6, targets for pupils' learning are not shared sufficiently with the pupils themselves and this detracts from their own knowledge of what is expected of them. While expectations of pupils are satisfactory, these could be raised in the case of higher attaining pupils in particular, as a means of raising their standards still further. The monitoring of teaching and learning is an essential element in gauging the success or otherwise of teaching methods and the school has still much to do in this important area. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in that pupils' needs are well documented and there is effective adult support given in the classroom. Where individual educational plans are required, these are satisfactory and form the basis of sound learning. The progress made by some pupils could be further heightened by the introduction of more sharply focused targets.

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

24. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are broadly satisfactory. The curriculum is appropriately linked to the National Curriculum and, as was found during the previous inspection, a high proportion of the total curriculum time is allocated to the teaching of English. The national guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum has been developed well to ensure that the provision for children in the reception class has improved since the last inspection. For Years 1 to 6, there remain some weaknesses, particularly in the amount of time spent teaching some subjects, which although broadly following the Programmes of Study, are not sufficiently well balanced. For example, the skills of speaking and listening are not well developed in English. Art, physical education, geography, and music are not taught in depth. As a consequence, pupils' skills in these subjects are not always developed systematically. Pupils are only aware of the basic facts and have limited opportunities to study some topics in more detail. The school is aware of this and has identified these subjects for further development. This is urgently required, not only in terms of improving the quality and range of learning, but to ensure that pupils benefit from a suitably varied and rich curriculum.
25. A very high proportion of the curriculum time is spent on developing pupils' literacy skills. This is rightly considered necessary because all pupils learn English as an additional language and enter school with very low levels of attainment. As a consequence, pupils spend a lot of time on basic skills such as handwriting exercises which are not particularly motivating for pupils, while too little emphasis is placed on developing the 'key skills' of literacy in other subjects. For example, drama is seldom used in history to extend pupils' speaking skills, and opportunities for pupils to write in their own words are not sufficiently developed in subjects such as geography. However, a lot of quality time is spent on reading and writing, enabling at least satisfactory progress to be made. The curriculum is still giving insufficient opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and this is also impacting on their ability to express themselves well when writing across a wide range of subjects.
26. The Numeracy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. Sufficient emphasis is given to work on number as can be seen in the results gained in national tests. However, the balance between the many aspects of the mathematics curriculum does require further consideration. In some classes, pupils spend insufficient time learning how to use and apply these skills, while work in data handling and shapes and measures is under developed. More able pupils in Year 6 do have appropriate opportunities to participate in additional 'Booster' classes. In science as in other subjects, the policy and scheme of work are in need of review so as to support non-specialist teachers and broaden pupils' opportunities to investigate and develop their emerging practical skills. As at the previous inspection, planning for the continuation and progression of skills in some subjects requires further consideration.
27. The school has maintained the good special educational needs provision found to be a strength during the previous inspection. For example, good use is made of outside agencies to advise and support pupils. The special educational needs policy is good and is a useful working document. The administration of special educational needs is good and ensures that pupils' needs are reviewed regularly and parents fully informed. The curriculum that pupils

receive is satisfactory overall. However, although the targets on pupils' individual education plans are satisfactory, teachers do not make sufficient use of these in their weekly plans as a key element in providing specific activities.

28. The school has improved the range of its extra-curricular activities since the last inspection and there is now a good range of activities on offer especially for pupils from Year 3 onwards. These activities are popular and some take place after school. Among the most popular are sporting activities, computer club, first aid, gardening, reading and an English games club. In addition, pupils in Year 6 attend 30 sessions at a local comprehensive school where they are able to experience additional lessons in French, science and art. A wide range of visits and visitors provide good opportunities to develop the pupils' social skills as well as enriching the general curriculum.
29. All pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and any additional experiences offered by the school are open equally to girls and boys. There are disabled facilities should these be required. However, some pupils are occasionally withdrawn from subjects such as music and physical education for additional English lessons. Although every effort is made to ensure all pupils have opportunities to benefit from subjects such as music, there is a need to reconsider the best time in the school day for such withdrawal to occur and to adapt timetables accordingly. In addition, although more able pupils and less able pupils benefit from additional lessons in general, the match of tasks to ability in lessons is not well developed. This results in some more able pupils not being sufficiently challenged while less able pupils struggle with tasks that are too difficult.
30. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory and has been developed satisfactorily since the previous inspection. The subject is mainly taught through science but the school is in the process of reviewing its procedures. Pupils talk and share experiences informally while sitting in a circle and this approach is used well in some classes to enhance pupils' social and moral development. However, there is not yet a coherent and structured approach to personal, social and health education. The school deals sensitively with the teaching of sex and drugs education and takes due consideration of parents' views.
31. Links to the community are good and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are taking part in a 'unity in the community' project. This is financing a range of activities over each term such as poetry and art by providing poets and artists to visit and develop pupils' skills. In addition, all Year 6 pupils will attend an artist in residence course later this year. In addition to a strong link to the church and other church schools, three teachers have benefited from a visit to the United States of America where they worked alongside teachers in a similar school to their own in order to develop new approaches to teaching and learning. Projects such as these ensure that the school continues to develop good links with other institutions that benefit teachers and pupils alike. A local technology project, for example, has provided the school with computers and a specialist teaching programme to support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils benefit from additional sports coaching and many of the school's past pupils return to support the teachers in their work.
32. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development was considered a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection. The findings of this inspection confirm that, while provision for social, moral and cultural development remains good, the provision for spiritual development could be strengthened. This is because opportunities for spiritual enhancement are often missed and not well developed in many curriculum areas.
33. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory overall. However, assemblies do not always promote the right atmosphere in which pupils can reflect on the theme of the day. Music is not always used effectively to help lift the pupils' emotions. Times for reflection can be very brief and do not always have a point of focus to help the pupils to think for themselves. The opportunities for pupils to share in such occasions are therefore not developed well. When pupils are invited to participate, such as when helping the headteacher to put stones in a jar of water, to illustrate the moral that 'hard work gains success,' pupils watch in awe as the water rises. In line with school policy, teachers do not plan specific opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness and sensitivity, but many pupils do express delight when joining in

songs and there can be a real sense of joy on these occasions. When teachers do plan for such opportunities, as in a Year 6 English lesson, when pupils were asked to close their eyes and reflect upon 'How they would feel to be suddenly alone,' this developed a thoughtful awareness of how to appreciate the feelings of others. When talking to pupils they express a simple pleasure and excitement when recounting favourite stories and speak enthusiastically about artists they have studied. However, the use of displays to support pupils' spiritual development is weak. Although wall space is limited, teachers have not made the best use of displays in order to encourage pupils to dwell more deeply on their finished work.

34. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils have thought about the tragedy in America and written some sensitive and mature comments. They are given opportunities to consider how to improve the local area and their work is praised in regular assemblies. The school works hard to develop appropriate behaviour and moral tales in assemblies encourage pupils to consider each other and to work hard. The rewards given encourage pupils to do their best, although teachers do not always sufficiently value the work pupils produce when they fail to mark work or when superficial comments are made. Circle time is also not developed in all classes to enable pupils to discuss and explore moral dilemmas, although older pupils do have opportunities to discuss their feelings and share their concerns with each other.
35. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils have actively been involved in a community project charged with improving the local area. Pupils in all classes have jobs to do to ensure the smooth running of their class routines. Older pupils help younger pupils at break times and take messages around the school. Teachers know their pupils well and show a high level of concern and care for them. They encourage pupils to develop good relationships and to co-operate in tasks. For example in a Year 6 science lesson, pupils of all abilities helped and supported each other in an experiment to dissolve sugar. Each year, pupils take part in a community lunch, when they sit with visitors and family members in a well thought out social occasion. Extra-curricular activities also provide further social interaction. Although pupils have a variety of opportunities to develop social skills and to take initiative, for example in tidying their classrooms, there are limited planned strategies to promote this aspect of the pupils' social development, such as an opportunity to participate in a school council.
36. The provision for cultural development is good. The school celebrates the pupils' own religious festivals as well as those of Christian and other faith groups. The school makes good use of visitors and visits, for example to the theatre, to enhance this aspect of the curriculum. Participation in Book Week and visiting artists and actors enrich and widen pupils' cultural experiences. Pupils have the opportunity to cook English food and to learn about the British culture through stories, art and songs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school cares for its pupils well and this is one of several strengths, as it was during the previous inspection. The policies and procedures relating to child protection matters are fully in place and work well with good support from the headteacher who is responsible for this aspect. All members of staff are aware of their responsibilities and know the pupils and their individual needs very well. There are good procedures for first aid with suitably qualified staff in charge and fire precautions and drills are adequately attended to. Health and safety checks and risk assessments are regularly carried out. In spite of the difficulties of working in a very old building, the school does its best to provide a clean, safe and secure environment for all the pupils.
38. The school has improved its measures for promoting good attendance. Any extended holidays that are required must be notified to the headteacher and are actively discouraged, particularly when annual tests are due. There is now a '95 club' for pupils who attain more than 95 per cent attendance and they are rewarded in different ways. Weekly certificates are awarded to individuals and a shield is awarded for the best class attendance. The school finds it difficult to raise its annual attendance to the national average of almost 95 per cent for all its pupils. The home school liaison officers respond well to any absence and make sure that support is offered and any reasons for absence are recorded accurately.

39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are effective. There are classroom rules posted in every classroom and these are applied consistently across the school. Good behaviour is praised and there are meaningful rewards such as stickers, merit badges and a courtesy shield, with certificates to take home. There is a system of sanctions for minor offences using yellow and red cards. Parents are very happy with these procedures and they are widely understood by pupils and their parents. Teachers are good role models and encourage very good harmony within the school.
40. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The school relies on informal methods that are backed by knowing the potential and capability of each pupil. Recording of this information is under developed and pupils are not provided with many opportunities to increase their self-motivation for learning.
41. Educational and personal support and guidance for pupils is satisfactory. There is an open door policy for parents to talk to teachers about their child's progress at any time. Entry into the school at the Foundation Stage is helped for those children who attend the pre-school playgroup. The arrangements for transfer to secondary school are well supported by exchange visits by both staff and pupils. The annual written reports to parents about their child's progress are not as helpful as they could be. It is useful that there is an opportunity for parents and pupils to comment on the reports. However, the reports describe what pupils have studied and how they enjoy subjects, but do not explain in enough detail what pupils can do, what they have achieved or give useful targets for the future. Parents are given an opportunity to talk to teachers about these reports, but this is limited because targets and future needs are not specified.
42. The school has worked hard to improve its approach to monitoring of pupils' academic performance and this has led to a significant improvement since the last inspection. It now has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These include assessments on entry to the reception class both to ascertain children's level of language acquisition as well as attainment in the required six areas of learning. These are then regularly monitored and linked to the 'stepping stones to learning'. Subsequently, from Years 1 to 6 in the core subjects of English mathematics and science, and in some other subjects, samples of pupils' work are carefully matched to National Curriculum levels and new targets set. In addition, whole school targets are set and the progress of individual pupils is tracked using a wide range of other assessments. The school has made considerable strides in the way it uses the results of assessments to inform teachers' planning.
43. Sound use is made of this information and that gained from further tests to assess pupils' 'non verbal reasoning' skills to identify 'more able' or 'less able' pupils who then benefit from work in specially arranged 'booster' or 'support' groups. Careful analysis is made of all assessments undertaken in order to monitor the progress of different groups within the school; for example, assessment is used well to monitor attainment by gender and previous ability.
44. In Years 5 and 6, the school is trialling the setting of individual targets in English for all pupils using information from available assessment data. This is a relevant and appropriate development but currently the targets set for each term are not easily understood by pupils and often seem unattainable. There is a similar weakness in the individual education targets for pupils with special educational needs. The assessment co-ordinator is currently reviewing this procedure in order to make these targets more individual and personal to pupils and to develop more informed practice throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents' views of the school are very favourable and their support has been maintained since the previous inspection. Although there were only seven questionnaires returned and 14 parents present at the parents' meeting, all those who spoke praised the school highly for the care it takes of their children. They are very satisfied, for example, with the quality of teaching and the help that their children receive from hard working and committed teachers. They are particularly pleased that no matter what standard their children achieve, they are keen to come

to school. Parents believe that behaviour is good and the values that the school promotes are as they would wish themselves. They feel that the school does enough to promote their own culture. In general, parents think the school supports and encourages the children well and provides a caring atmosphere in which they and their children feel welcome and secure.

46. The school arranges curriculum meetings to inform parents of the work undertaken by the school but these are poorly attended, except for one on the mathematics curriculum. However, the annual meeting, when the school reports are discussed, is very well attended. The reports describe the work covered by the pupils and, if these were developed better to include details of achievements and targets to be aimed for, it would make better use of parents' time and opportunities to help.
47. Newsletters are circulated regularly to keep parents well informed of events and the prospectus provides good, accurate information about the school. The annual report to parents from the governors is comprehensive and the meeting arranged to discuss this is sometimes well attended. It has not been possible to appoint a parent governor and there is no parents association, but parents support events such as outside visits.
48. The provision of two bilingual home school liaison officers is very helpful in making contact and ensuring parents are fully aware of their responsibilities, particularly in respect of attendance. A few parents come in to the school to help in classrooms, but many have younger children to care for or do not speak English themselves. The school has a satisfactory homework policy and encourages pupils to take library books home, but many parents, because of language difficulties, are unable to help their children in everyday reading and writing. Consequently, the contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home can be very limited.
49. The effectiveness of the school's link with parents and the impact of parental involvement is satisfactory overall considering the context in which the school must work. These links have been maintained since the previous inspection but the school is rightly looking at additional ways in which parents and carers can be involved in further partnership.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management of the school have made considerable strides in recent times and their impact and influence on the life of the school are currently good. Following the previous inspection, there has been renewed emphasis on the need to raise pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science and this has been largely successful, although less so in English. Improving the quality of teaching and learning has also been an important consideration. This has again been largely successful, although further improvements must be made to ensure a more consistent and effective level of provision for pupils with English as an additional language. The role of the governors has been strengthened to good effect and the school now operates a useful development plan within a specific time cycle that helps keep school priorities to the fore.
51. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is central to the good working ethos and educational direction taken by the school. There is an enthusiastic commitment to the needs of minority ethnic groups and staff have built up a vast experience in this field. All those in senior posts ensure that the needs of individual pupils are well known and met. Matters of inclusion are carefully followed through and areas such as the management of special educational needs are good. The school has a clear mission statement and a set of aims designed to ensure that all pupils are developed to the full. These are well pursued under the leadership of the headteacher. There has been continuous and effective leadership offered to the school during a period of great uncertainty and there is now a clear, purposeful statement as to where the next set of priorities must lie.
52. Governors form an influential and experienced group, loyal to the school and committed to growth and further development. The regular meetings of governors and related committees ensure that school business is well conducted and that statutory requirements are met. Since

the previous inspection governors have become more precise in their contributions and now act from a well-informed basis. Their involvement in buildings and financial matters is particularly beneficial and there is now a growing awareness of the need to be involved in monitoring exercises aimed at trying to raise pupils' standards. Some governors have made particularly effective links with the curriculum. Although governors monitor and evaluate the school development plan on a regular basis, they are less involved in forward strategic planning and this is something for them to work on. The monitoring of teaching and learning also needs to be more systematic and far reaching in its effects and governors are insufficiently involved in this important process. This is an area in which all those with management roles could improve.

53. The role of subject leaders (co-ordinators) has also been strengthened since the previous inspection. Teachers have a considerable workload in this respect, often co-ordinating the need of several subjects simultaneously. Subject leaders generally show good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their subject, but most rightly point to a lack of opportunity to actively monitor standards as something of a drawback. The monitoring of teaching and learning, particularly in the foundation subjects, is not rigorous enough and some co-ordinators need to devise improved systems that would provide a more accurate picture as to what is happening in their subjects and why.
54. School management has introduced successfully several local and national initiatives into the curriculum and life of the school. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been developed satisfactorily although these are yet to be fully evaluated to decide whether or not greater flexibility in their use will benefit more of the pupils. The drive to further improve standards is satisfactory although the introduction of a basic school aim to this effect would be helpful. The recent emphasis on improving the provision for information and communication technology has been successful in terms of the amount of equipment now available to staff and pupils as well as to the standards being achieved. The school is also making effective use of some national initiatives such as booster classes for literacy, and 'Springboard' for Year 3. In these and other areas of school life, the headteacher, staff and governors have made a satisfactory start in the evaluation of the school's present and past performance. However, the diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses needs to be more rigorous and incisive. Future targets, aimed at raising standards and improving still further the quality of education, need to be challenging and helpful to the school and its pupils. The action taken to meet the school's current targets and priorities is good. The school development plan is now a much more effective document but could usefully reflect a little more on how targets and initiatives will be evaluated.
55. The school is an efficient unit. The finance and specific grants made available to it on an annual basis are well targeted and educational priorities are very well supported through the school's financial planning. Good procedures are in place to establish and review the financial budget on a regular basis and these involve governors as well as staff and administrators. The school is well aware of the importance of giving best value and understands and follows the main principles involved.
56. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. This includes good levels of support for pupils with English as an additional language and also for any pupils with special educational needs. The use made of bilingual support staff is particularly effective. The accommodation is old and some areas are in need of refurbishment, but is overall satisfactory for the needs of staff and pupils. Staff are being involved in the planning for the new extensions and this is welcome. Learning resources are satisfactory across all subjects, with those for information and communication technology being good. Some resources could be used more effectively to enable staff to deliver the curriculum in a greater variety of ways.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Raise standards in English by:

- Encouraging pupils of all ages to practise and develop their speaking skills;
- Ensuring pupils read as widely and accurately as possible both at school and at home;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum;
- Developing a whole-school approach to spelling. Ensure that pupils learn and apply basic spelling rules that build up their confidence and levels of accuracy during written work;
- Adopting an agreed approach to teachers' marking. Ensuring that pupils have clear writing targets and that marking refers to these on a regular basis. Making it clear to pupils what it is they have to do next in order to improve their work.
(paragraphs 2, 5, 6, 20, 23, 24, 25, 34 and 73-91)

(2) Raise standards in mathematics and science by:

- Giving pupils adequate practise in applying their mathematical skills and scientific knowledge to solving problems in these subjects;
- Placing more emphasis on the neat presentation of work, avoiding an over reliance on worksheets;
- Ensuring that all pupils' work is pitched at a level that will challenge their understanding and help them progress in short, well-defined steps;
- Examining the current schemes of work attached to both subjects and reviewing these in the light of any difficulties faced by pupils using English as an additional language.
(paragraphs 2, 5, 7, 8, 21, 22, 92-103 and 104-110)

(3) Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:

- Ensuring that the work given to pupils targets accurately their different needs;
- Raising expectations as to what higher attaining pupils in particular can and should achieve;
- Developing a more rigorous system for monitoring teaching, ensuring that the best of practice is more widely known and developed across the school.
(paragraphs 20,21,22,52,91,101,108 and 109)

(4) Improve the quality of learning opportunities (the curriculum) given to the pupils by:

- Developing a more significant skills base to learning in general;
- Ensuring that the teaching of literacy and numeracy is flexible enough to meet the needs of all pupils who are learning English as an additional language;
- Ensuring that art, music and physical education play a full part in the wider education of the pupils.
(paragraphs 24-29, 115, 143 and 148)

(5) As well as the above, the school should consider including the following, lesser area of weakness to its post-inspection action plan.

- Improve the quality of the written reports to parents concerning their child's progress. Ensure they are more specific as to the standards reached by the pupils and give more precise targets as to what they should aim to improve during the next school year.
(paragraph 46)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	12	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	16	39	45	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three 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)	0	107
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	24

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	107

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	1	9	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	6	6	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (19)	60 (25)	90 (63)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	6	6	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (19)	90 (75)	80 (56)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. **Separate totals for girls and boys are not given as only 1 boy took the tests in 2000 and his individual performance could be recognised.**

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	8	8	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	5	6
	Girls	6	5	7
	Total	8	10	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (23)	63 (41)	81 (50)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	1	5	6
	Girls	5	5	7
	Total	6	10	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (41)	63 (27)	81 (50)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	32
Bangladeshi	75
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	2	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	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: Y R – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.3
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y R – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	339,241
Total expenditure	348,229
Expenditure per pupil	3,627
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,640

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years (fte)	0.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Only 7 questionnaires were returned. These were very positive. The views expressed were similar to those comments received during the parents' meeting of 20 September 2001 when 13 parents expressed their views helped by 2 translators.

The summary of what pleases parents most and what they feel could be improved appears on page 10 of this report.

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

Foundation Stage

58. Children start full time in the reception class in the September prior to their fifth birthday. For many of them this is their first experience of being in a group outside the home. Some attend the private playgroup that meets in the adjoining classroom. At the moment there is relatively little contact between the reception and playgroup. There are 20 children on roll, all of whom are at a very early stage of learning English, a language not spoken regularly in any of their homes.
59. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class varies widely. The need for children to learn English means that most start from a very low base, as assessed by the local authority's assessment scheme. Most children achieve very well given their very low starting point. Those who staff feel show clear signs of having special educational needs are well supported. Understandably, by the end of the reception year, a significant number of last year's children did not achieve the 'early learning goals,' (the description of what children are expected to achieve in each area of learning) in language and literacy, mathematics, some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In spite of the good progress that is made, the pattern of children's attainment is likely to be very similar this year.
60. The teacher plans carefully around all six areas of learning with opportunities wherever possible for children to explore and investigate. She is constantly trying out a range of alternative forms of organisations and carefully evaluating the needs and responses of the children. This involves working out the most effective way to use a bilingual assistant, a classroom assistant and other trainees, none of whom are with her all of the time. She places good emphasis on developing children's personal and social development in a secure and relaxed atmosphere, working hard and consistently to develop their understanding of routines. Many children need a lot of encouragement to show initiative and independence. All this has to be done much of the time in a language in which they have extremely limited familiarity. As a result, much has to be communicated by facial expression and gesture. Elements of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are incorporated very effectively into the overall organisation although there is even more scope for flexibility. The children enjoy the mental mathematics element, which involves playing with numbers and the shared big books. They are obviously comfortable and more confident when contributing ideas as part of a bigger group. The Foundation Stage prepares the children well for the next stage of their education.
61. The quality of teaching in these whole class sessions and some of the directed adult activities is good or very good when it does not last too long with any one group. The class teacher is a very good role model. At times some group activities and free choice play need more structure or interactive support. Very good relationships have quickly been established and underpin the successful start to the children's education.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. The quality of teaching and learning is usually very good and it is evident that all the children already have a clear idea of what is expected of them. This area of learning pervades all the activities and the basic organisation of the reception base. When children are asked to clear up, it is done quickly, efficiently and the routine of moving to the carpet for a shared session is eagerly anticipated. They already sit quietly, entirely focused on the teacher whose use of voice, expression, carefully planned silences and gesture communicate meaning very well. They listen carefully to stories watching the illustrations intently. This attentiveness enables the teacher to select and use language very clearly with plenty of repetition of key words and the children pick it up. When they are altogether, they have the confidence to try and use it themselves. Within a few weeks of starting in the class they have established very good relationships, managing to collaborate well together. For example, three boys worked

amicably to create an elaborate pattern with the larger wooden bricks and then were gratified at being able to use the new cars. They used their home language with an occasional single word to the English observer. Any slight rivalries over a particular vehicle were quickly sorted out between them without the need for adult intervention. On the rare occasions where disappointment or frustration end in brief tears, adults are quick to provide support, distract or 'act as umpire.' The teacher is consistent in developing good behaviour and makes it clear to a child when their behaviour oversteps the mark. She also ensures that it is the behaviour and not the child who is being held to account.

63. At the start of the morning and at different times of the day, children have free or limited choice. Most are quick to select an activity and the class teacher has noted individual preferences. Some children are able to sustain their concentration whilst others move around quickly. They manage their own needs well. Some were quick to point out to a friend that although he had removed the paint from his hands it was still all over his face! Children respond to the trust of the adults and manage their affairs very well for themselves. Likewise, with tactful support, they change quickly for physical education and move sensibly through the school. This marks a very good beginning.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Teaching and learning is good. Every opportunity in all areas of learning is taken to help children focus on particular words and phrases in contexts that supply meaning. The interaction between class teacher and home language support staff is good, encouraging appropriate and sensitive interventions when it is clear that some children do not fully understand. This occurred when the class was sharing a book. In small group activities the two languages are used continually which allows much fuller participation in the curriculum and more effective use of resources than could be managed if only English were used. Many of the children were observed to use their home language effectively to negotiate and structure their imaginative play. Children love the listening centre and in one instance happily had the tape of one book running whilst they shared a deep interest and conversation in their home language about a totally separate book.
65. They delight in the shared book sessions with the class teacher whose talented presentation enables the children to hear the language and think carefully about the illustrations. She helps children to begin to anticipate what is going to happen extremely effectively. This understanding of how a book works and the enjoyment that can be obtained from this is developing soundly. The class teacher takes the opportunity to help children hear sounds in words and devises interesting practical activities that have a wide appeal and at the same time helps them learn and recall the visual form of letters. Children learn quickly and many are already showing some ability to match words, although an understanding of the word's meaning is far less secure. Sometimes the choice of words does not match the children's level of understanding. The interest in letters carries over into the very first attempts at writing. Pencil control is surprisingly good with most children making good attempts at copying adults' writing. Particular delight and pleasure in their accomplishment was expressed after drawing over and copying attractive, clear, bold versions of their own names. They knew they had achieved something significant.

Mathematical development

66. Teaching and learning is satisfactory with some very good elements. The whole class sessions are vibrant, clearly focused and designed to involve as many children as possible in making an active contribution if they wish. They enjoy participating in number rhymes and songs and are beginning to respond with appropriate gestures. Children volunteered successfully to order numbers watched carefully by the rest of the class. The chosen organisation ensured that the class teacher had many opportunities to use the names of the numbers and encourage the class to join together to repeat them. This provided a secure context for those that were less confident. The follow up activities were all practical and of potential worth. However, they did not all work equally well. This was partly a result of group size. For example, waiting your turn in a group of six meant a rather passive activity and loss of interest and motivation in spite of great efforts made by the bilingual assistant. Each group

of children would in turn undertake the same carousel of activities but with varying amounts of help from adults. As the range of numbers used were to be the same for all, the result was that those with greater understanding were unlikely to be sufficiently challenged and those who needed simpler examples would struggle. This appeared to be a pattern in last year's work and, as result, in spite of elements of good teaching, progress was not as rapid as it could have been. Number language and positional language are the focuses early on in this academic year. Last year's work shows that children explore shape and investigate aspects of measurement as well as continuing with their number work. During the observations, there was little evidence of adults helping children use their simple understanding of numbers to count during their free play.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features. Children were very keen to handle, explore and taste a range of fruit and vegetables. It was so popular that many children gravitated to this activity and stayed for a second turn. The teacher made a quick assessment that her overall organisation of the room needed a radical review. As a result, she accommodated a far larger group than initially intended, ensuring that each child took time to feel or smell the fruit. She repeated simple phrases highlighting key descriptive words and encouraged them to use these themselves thus ensuring that every opportunity to model English effectively was taken.
68. Children are competent at managing the mechanics of the listening centre. They confidently switched earphones from the computer to the tape according to their need. They manage the mouse well and enjoy the computer, changing the images by clicking. The children demonstrated good manual dexterity as they used a range of construction materials and worked together using their home language to agree a purpose for their building. Other aspects of this area of learning are dependent on greater language facility and are addressed later in the year. The potential of this area of learning is not yet fully developed, as a number of activities are insufficiently structured to provide children with a clear focus.

Physical development

69. Teaching and learning are very good and make effective use of support staff. Working together, all staff encourage children to listen effectively and to respond to instructions to move around the room 'like wobbly jellies and jump like kangaroos'. Children showed a good understanding of how to use space without collisions. They were equally skilful when playing with a range of push and pull toys later in the week. The skill of the teacher in using such sessions as a natural opportunity to develop language was very evident and enhanced rather than detracted from the children's delight in the activity itself. Simple instructions and reference to fingers, knees and other parts of the body reinforced the current topic. The pace was brisk and the children already understood the importance of listening carefully. As a result, the children were highly motivated, achieved a high standard of movement and constantly heard common words used in a real context.
70. Children have the opportunity to use and experiment with simple balancing and climbing equipment, which the teacher is keen they should use imaginatively. In the classroom they are shown how to use tools safely and correctly and are already making good progress in this aspect.

Creative development

71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. At first, many children were reluctant to experiment with paint and the teacher had to demonstrate the fun of painting. However, once one child had the confidence to dip a finger in the paint and make marks, most others were willing to do so. There was no anxiety about getting 'painty hands' when children were engaged in printing with sponge shapes. They were really excited at the prospect of using the end of the pineapple with which to print once every one had enjoyed a taste. Some of the work on display shows little originality. The teacher takes care to show children the skills and techniques to use with a

particular media and then provides an open-ended opportunity to explore it further on their own but such opportunities are often not available throughout the day. There is some exploration of texture.

72. Overall, the room does not provide a rich aesthetic environment that will stimulate and encourage appreciation and experimentation or establish a wide experience of music. The children are creative and imaginative in their play with the construction materials. In the home corner role-play area the girls went for the hats and bags whilst the boys preferred 'Bob the Builder' and policeman's hats and gloves. The impact of this area of learning and the range of activities on offer to the children could be far more dramatic.

ENGLISH

73. All pupils in the school are learning English as an additional language and the great majority of them start with very low levels of understanding and experience. Spoken and written forms of English are used infrequently at home and, understandably, this has a significant impact on overall standards and progress. Standards are, however, rising faster than the national average due to improved teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Current inspection findings confirm that, despite the improvements shown in the results from National tests described elsewhere in this report, standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 remain well below the national average in all aspects of the subject. This is due in part to limited opportunities for pupils to develop spoken language and some over emphasis on the teaching of discrete skills, without sufficient planned opportunities to develop and use these skills in other subjects. In addition, the wide variation in abilities in each year group, combined with high levels of extended holidays taken during term time, continue to have significant impact on standards. A similar position existed at the time of the previous inspection.
74. When pupils start school they possess very low levels of ability when speaking and listening to the English language. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress and gradually become a little more confident when expressing their ideas, as they progress through the school. By the end of Year 6, although standards in English remain well below those expected for their age, most pupils achieve well and make significant progress. Pupils listen carefully to their teacher and to each other. Many, however, still lack confidence to participate in discussions and while the majority of pupils are able to discuss familiar topics, their use of varied vocabulary remains limited. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
75. Pupils' speaking skills are effectively developed when teachers use interesting resources that encourage pupils to want to share their ideas. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson, when the teacher based a discussion about 'being lost' on a simple story and used outlines of 'sad and happy faces' as a stimulus for discussion and writing. Pupils were obviously interested and began to talk about their own experiences, mainly because of the sensitive use of questions deployed by the teacher. In this way, one pupil who began explaining in simple terms that 'he had got lost in a shop', developed the idea further and stated that "I was sad when I looked round and no one was there". Similarly, in a Year 6 Science lesson, pupils begin to develop their skills of inference and deduction and use appropriate technical vocabulary when investigating setting up a 'fair test' to dissolve sugar. The teacher used questions and statements effectively in order to challenge pupils to use relevant information to reinforce their views. The debate motivated pupils who became increasingly confident to express their opinions about the outcome of such tests.
76. However, although pupils are encouraged to discuss issues of relevance in lessons, and older pupils participate in 'planned sessions,' there are generally too few opportunities in most subjects to enable pupils to develop their speaking skills in a range of creative, formal and informal settings. In many lessons, teachers do not sufficiently stimulate pupils' imaginations to develop spoken language skills through the use of interesting resources or language games and in general, teachers lack the confidence to fully develop opportunities for informal drama. In addition, some teachers are too ready to accept the pupils' first attempts at answering and do not always use 'open questions' well to challenge and extend the oral responses of the pupils.

77. Pupils increasingly listen to staff and usually to each other, as they move through the school. Many pupils, however, due to a lack of understanding, have more limited concentration spans. Some find it particularly difficult to stay focused in whole class aspects of the literacy hour, which although starting briskly, often last too long for pupils learning English as an additional language. Teachers do not use the material flexibly enough in such a context. In addition, the ends of lessons (the plenary) are often not well developed and, as a result, lessons that start well fail to sustain pupils' interest and their learning can be compromised. When teaching is brisk with frequent opportunities for discussion and debate, as in a Year 3 lesson about library skills, the pupils made very good progress. The teacher correctly modelled answers and carefully developed their oral skills.
78. Given that pupils have very limited English language skills when they start school, they make satisfactory progress in reading, although overall pupils are attaining below average standards. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop an appropriate sight vocabulary for their background with a few more able pupils broadly attaining standards expected for their age. For example, they are using letter sounds to read simple unfamiliar words. Pupils' comprehension is, as the school acknowledges, the weakest part of their reading. Although the Literacy Strategy provides pupils with opportunities to read in groups with the teacher in order to develop their understanding, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to read individually to staff. This is a significant factor in the low standards, as pupils are often unable to practise their reading at home. Pupils are interested in books and enjoy sharing these with adults and benefit from such experiences. For example, one boy did not understand the word 'magic' but when this was explained to him, he eagerly found a picture in another book showing a magic key to demonstrate that he had understood a new word. However, when reading alone, many pupils still make basic mistakes in decoding words which they do not notice without adult intervention. This prevents better, more even progress being made and sustained. Less able pupils do benefit from small group reading and read individually to a member of staff and this ensures that they make at least similar progress to their peers. However, there is a lack of a range of interesting games and resources that make the learning of new words into a fun activity.
79. Older pupils, although able to read more difficult texts, do not often readily understand the meaning of some of the words. Some lack confidence in using a variety of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words and do not realise the lack of meaning in the text as they interpret it. Although all pupils in Year 6 were aware of the value of a dictionary to aid understanding, most do not automatically seek one out and dictionaries are not available on each desk as a matter of course. One girl for example thought that 'soggy shoes' meant that the shoes 'did not fit'. Mistakes such as this impact on pupils' comprehension of the books they are reading. In addition, the lack of opportunities to share books with adults, other than in literacy lessons, impacts on the progress pupils make and is a significant factor in the limited vocabulary pupils use when both speaking and writing. Many pupils, although making significant progress as they move through the school, do not attain the expected standard in their reading by the age of 11. This is partly because they do not develop higher order reading skills, such as being able to predict and infer events after reading the text. Pupils at this level would also benefit from individual reading opportunities in order to develop such skills.
80. Pupils with special educational needs, particularly those in Years 3 to 6, often lack sufficient strategies to read unfamiliar words. This prevents them reading texts fluently and with expression. As they struggle with the words, they lose confidence and as a consequence lose interest in reading books. In addition, the lack of a suitable range of texts that would interest older pupils, but based at an appropriate level of understanding, limits opportunities to develop their skills and interest. Unfortunately, some of the more specialised reading resources available in the school are currently under used. Pupils' difficulties also impact on their ability to read lesson materials across other subjects which are not always well matched to their reading ability. This effects in turn their written work as they do not always understand what they are expected to write, resulting in unfinished work.
81. Across the curriculum reading for research is not developed, nor are the approaches of the Literacy Strategy used often or flexibly enough to develop pupils' competence as readers in subjects such as history. While generally, teachers give all pupils opportunities to read before school starts and many read interesting stories to their class, the lack of opportunities to hear a

wide range of fiction or to read a range of books in a quiet environment does not develop pupils' interest in books in general. The library for example, although large and airy, is part of a thoroughfare to a classroom and has not been sufficiently developed as an inviting, quiet place to enjoy looking at books or magazines.

82. Writing is the weakest element of the subject and this can be expected with so many pupils having a relatively impoverished English background. In general, the majority of pupils lack skills in writing. As in some other areas of the curriculum, girls do generally less well than boys. Teachers are aware of this trend and seek ways to overcome any difficulties, some of which are caused by traditional expectations concerning Muslim girls. Difficulties with writing are frequently common to both girls and boys and reflect limited imagination and the ability to express themselves. As previously indicated, teachers do not use a sufficient variety of stimulating approaches, resources and activities that would develop pupils' imagination or extend their experiences. This not only impacts on pupils' spoken vocabulary but also prevents pupils from using more interesting words and phrases in their written work.
83. The quality of handwriting, in general, has improved since the last inspection and all pupils from Year 3 onwards now use a 'joined up' style. However, despite all pupils completing neatly additional and copious handwriting exercises during handwriting lessons, these efforts are not always transferred successfully into their daily work. Written presentation in some classes is often untidy across all subjects and is frequently unfinished. Teachers do not always comment on this untidiness which suggests that all teachers do not expect similarly high standards. Because work is often untidy it is difficult to read and this makes it difficult for the pupils themselves to edit and improve their work. In some books, however, notably in Years 5 and 6, pupils have made good progress in the presentation of their work. Marking is very clear by the class teacher who, because she expects high standards, gets pupils to respond, improve their work and make better progress as a result. Standards in writing have not improved since the last inspection. Pupils' planning, drafting and editing remain under developed. As a result, pupils have limited opportunities to evaluate and improve their own work.
84. By the end of Year 2, more able pupils can write simple sentences using full stops and capital letters appropriately. By the end of Year 6, some pupils are beginning to use a range of interesting words when writing, but most are unable to sustain their ideas long enough to write them down fully, or to extend their meaning into more complex sentences. In addition, pupils' grammatical skills, which they practise regularly in short written exercises, are not transferred when writing at length. This is due in part to pupils' weak language skills, insufficient opportunities to plan and draft work, and an over emphasis on a narrow range of teaching skills in other subjects, all of which can restrict progress. Opportunities to write at length and in a range of styles, are, for example, limited in all subjects. When these are given, as in Year 6, when pupils compared schools in Tudor times to now, pupils respond with some interesting comments.
85. Spelling remains weak and pupils in general have not developed appropriate strategies to improve their standards. This is because there is no structured spelling strategy that is taught as part of a whole school approach. Pupils become confused, not only with the variations in the English spelling code, but also with the varied ways teachers approach this aspect. Teachers in general lack confidence and training to develop a consistent approach that better supports the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. A better approach was seen during a Year 6 lesson when the teacher used individual white boards and interesting resources to examine patterns of word endings. This resulted in all pupils beginning to recognise the variety of spelling patterns that represent the 'ul' sound.
86. The quality of teaching and learning varies across the school, although overall it is now satisfactory, with some very good teaching seen, particularly in the upper school. This represents an improvement from the last inspection. Although teachers follow the format of the Literacy Strategy rather too strictly, they develop very positive relationships with their pupils and ensure that learning objectives are clear, which pupils recognise. However, insufficient attention is paid to the wide variety of abilities within classes. Although teachers' planning follows the Literacy Strategy for each year group, this is not always appropriate to the ability of the pupils, many of whom lack the language skills to work at that level. As a result, some pupils struggle to complete work at a level that is too difficult for them to achieve. In addition, the ends of lessons are not sufficiently developed in order to review with pupils whether the original objectives have been achieved and so pupils have an unsatisfactory knowledge of their own learning.

87. Teachers try hard to motivate pupils to use more interesting vocabulary when speaking and to select descriptive words carefully when writing. However, in general they do not use a range of varied and interesting approaches or resources to develop these skills. On occasions, in an attempt to encourage discussion, teachers do not leave enough time to write and do not use a variety of visual stimuli to aid writing. When asked to write a list of things to take home at the end of the school day, for example, less able pupils in Year 1 struggled to recall the names of everyday items. Without simple pictures for example, to support learning, pupils struggled to write a list, became bored, choosing to draw pictures rather than attempt to write. In other lessons, that used resources such as matching games and activities that asked pupils to follow written instructions to make a simple book, pupils were motivated much better and sustained their interest, learning and supporting each other. Dictionaries and thesauruses although available in the classes are not used regularly by pupils, to extend their choice of words when writing.
88. Marking does not always support learning, although this is developing in some classes. In Years 1 and 2 for example, the teacher is beginning to use a simple 'smiley face' grid to inform pupils of how well they have done. In Years 5 and 6 the teacher has recently introduced individual termly targets and relates her marking to this. In this way, pupils are becoming more aware of what they have to do to improve and are motivated to achieve their target. This is not sufficiently developed across the school but is an appropriate strategy that enables pupils to be actively involved in their own learning. Pupils would benefit from being given even more specific short-term targets which pupils could easily work towards, thus recognising their improvement and boosting their confidence. In addition, the recently purchased new resources in Year 4 to support guided writing, using writing frames and colourful texts, is also having a positive impact on standards in that class.
89. Pupils have inadequate opportunities to use their literacy skills in subjects other than English and the use of other subjects as a source for the texts in literacy is also insufficiently developed. However, the use of information and technology skills is developed better and generally used well to support pupils' written skills. In addition, pupils with special educational needs are now benefiting from a computer aided teaching programme. Although only recently introduced, pupils are interested and beginning to make more rapid progress. Learning support staff and the support given by specialist bilingual staff are used well by the teachers and pupils. Their presence and support in lessons are invaluable aids to both teachers and pupils. This ensures that all pupils, whatever their ability and levels of understanding, can fully participate in lessons and represents a good example of the school's approach towards ensuring good levels of inclusion.
90. The management of English is satisfactory. Teachers' plans have been monitored but insufficient monitoring of pupils' books and teaching has meant that weaknesses have not been identified. The National Literacy Strategy has been appropriately introduced, but teaching approaches and the Literacy Strategy have not been adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of pupils who are all learning English as an additional language. In general, teachers lack confidence and training to develop a wider use of teaching approaches to support learning. The school has started to monitor and evaluate its performance in national tests and has used this to identify areas of development and set more sharply defined class and individual targets. These would now benefit from being developed further.
91. Much work remains to be undertaken if standards are to continue to rise. These include developing the use of literacy across the curriculum to enable pupils to write for a range of purposes and styles and using a wider variety of teaching approaches and resources to develop language skills. The development of a structured approach to the teaching of spelling and improved opportunities to develop speaking skills in a variety of situations are also essential. In addition, there is a need to further develop the range of resources available especially in reading.

MATHEMATICS

92. Standards in mathematics have steadily improved since 1996 although standards remain below the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The latest results, discussed elsewhere in the report, indicate good progress from the standards achieved when these pupils were in Year 2. Inspection evidence supports the belief that standards are continuing to improve and that considerable gains are made in the final two years in the school, primarily due to the quality of teaching and learning that occurs in these age groups. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and in Years 5 and 6, pupils achieve well. There is a very wide range in the levels of understanding at the beginning of Year 5 but inspection evidence suggests that there is currently the potential for a greater number of pupils to achieve the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6. This would represent further improvement since the previous inspection.
93. The gradual improvement in standards is the result of good teaching, detailed planning based on the National Numeracy Strategy and more effective use of time and tasks well matched to pupils' needs, particularly in Years 5 and 6. These factors have led to a marked improvement in pupils' mental skills and a better understanding of the range of strategies to use when faced with an oral or written problem. This latter aspect, however, remains a weakness in the attainment of the pupils. Inspection evidence supports the breakdown of test results that show pupils' work with number is strongest, and that the elements of mathematics that require more linguistic dexterity are in fact the weakest. This is a reflection, in part, of the pupils' ongoing difficulties when working with English as a second language. Because of this, the teachers pay good attention to educational inclusion, ensuring that all pupils have good access to the full mathematics curriculum. In recent years, girls have done marginally better than boys in many aspects of mathematics, particularly in their annual tests. The school has begun to closely screen the relative results of girls and boys to ensure its approach is fully inclusive and equally stimulating to both.
94. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below that expected for the age-group. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress overall, but when a group of pupils with similar levels of understanding work together with a teacher on well focused, challenging tasks, they invariably make good progress. Most pupils are still consolidating their number facts and many are heavily reliant on apparatus. They are slowly acquiring the appropriate language such as 'total', 'more than' and 'less than.' Where questions are well directed to specific individuals the learning is good, but when questions are more generally directed the pupils do not always respond. Listening skills are not well developed and there is a tendency towards restlessness or making noisy or inappropriate responses. Clear expectations of behaviour have not been fully established and as a result the impact of the lesson is reduced and progress is slower than it could be. Even the more able Year 2 pupils need a considerable degree of guidance and reassurance about how to respond to mathematics worksheets, which in themselves, may not be well matched to individual needs. This reflects the strengths and weaknesses identified in previous curriculum tests. Overall, a large percentage of the year groups find it difficult to recall their mathematical knowledge and in general struggle with accuracy, often born of poor levels of English comprehension.
95. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make satisfactory progress overall. Listening skills remain under developed. When all pupils could participate in demonstrating their knowledge of polygons through the use of white boards and when questioning was brisk and directed at specific individuals, the resulting attention and progress were good. When pupils were required to listen to and watch the efforts of others, Year 4 boys in particular, became detached from the lesson. Too often the teacher's statements about how to respond and what to use or not use were inconsistently reinforced. This limited progress because pupils did not feel it necessary to follow directions. When pupils were carefully paired to undertake small investigations into the arrangement of squares that would fold to make a cube, the focus on the task was good and the teacher was able to monitor and help individuals more effectively. This task also provided the opportunity for pupils to move easily between home language and English, thus exploring more fully the implications of what they were discovering. However, those who had a good grasp of the task could have been challenged further. The work in books over the previous year shows that an appropriate range of mathematical concepts are covered, although there is limited evidence of expectations being matched to the quite wide range of mathematical

understanding within each year group. This results in limited progress. In general, presentation in exercise books is poor, a reflection, in part, of some excessive use of worksheets.

96. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 make good progress. The work in their books shows wide and appropriate coverage. The teacher has enabled pupils to explore systematically concepts including fractions, decimal and percentages, calculate areas and perimeters, explore triangles and identify types of angles. Work is very well presented and shows a high degree of accuracy. Where there is evidence of misunderstanding in these year groups, the marking has picked this up. In class, the teaching of mixed ages is handled reasonably well. In a lesson focussing on investigating probability, the teacher used white boards effectively to quickly review, check and consolidate understanding of the examples explored the previous day. New vocabulary was introduced and practical and visual approaches used effectively to ensure complete understanding. This new knowledge was then used in the context of simple investigations in the form of games, carefully selected to be an appropriate challenge to the mathematical abilities of different groups. It worked well because the levels of each group were based on an analysis of scores on the optional tests. The class room assistant was used to good effect to support pupils with either particular language needs or special educational needs. This ensured that all pupils could participate with understanding in the lessons and expectations were well placed so that all responded well to the challenge. The pace was brisk and in drawing together the work undertaken, pupils were enabled to present their findings and comment on the way that they had used evidence, demonstrating an understanding of how to use number facts to arrive at answers.
97. The standard of work on number is the best element in all classes across the school. The higher attainers have number facts such as a command of 'tables' at their fingertips. Others are still reliant on working out simple answers. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge and skills in other curriculum areas, for example using coordinates in geography and measuring time accurately in science. The computer is relatively under used, though work with spreadsheets and logo is planned.
98. Pupils enjoy the strong investigative thrust in their mathematics. They work very well together and boys and girls equally express enjoyment. When the teacher's management skills are good and the expectations of how to respond are clearly stated and consistently reinforced, concentration is good and pupils share and explain ideas as confidently as their command of English will allow. The generally positive attitudes to learning have a beneficial effect on both attainment and progress.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some strengths in Years 1 and 2, satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and good in Years 5 and 6. In general, expectations are higher, the pace brisker and greater attention is given to mental manipulation of number than at the time of the last inspection. There is also far more emphasis on exploring strategies and finding quick routes to solving problems. Since the previous inspection, far greater use has been placed on investigations, but in spite of a concerted effort to help pupils to understand how to understand 'written problems' this remains a major difficulty, very closely associated with their overall command of English.
100. In the more effective lessons, teachers use carefully worked out questions, often targeted at specific individuals, maintain a brisk pace and give clear explanations with examples, when they note areas of slight confusion. Tasks are imaginatively designed and carefully graded to meet individual needs whilst ensuring adequate challenge. The format of the Numeracy Strategy is used to very good effect with particular attention in the final part of the lesson, which focuses on a reconsideration of strategies and a pulling together of what the pupils have found to be effective. The plans are very detailed and the column for evaluation is filled in with precision. As a result, teaching points and individual needs can be appropriately addressed later in the week.
101. Teaching and the resulting learning is less effective when teachers are less forthright about how they expect pupils to respond and when they allow a series of minor infringements to pass with little effective comment. As a result, the pace slows and the focus of the work is lost. If

the tasks are not well matched to the different needs of groups of pupils, concentration and attention fall away and progress is limited.

102. All teachers make effective use of their classroom assistants and adult helpers whether it be in the classroom or with a withdrawal group. In the upper school, the teacher has the opportunity to work on specifically targeted material with Year 6 alone for one lesson a week while Year 5 goes swimming. This is an effective form of organisation.

103. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Mathematics has been identified as a priority in the school development plan. The implementation of the Numeracy Strategy has been beneficial to the school in raising expectations and providing a good structure for all staff. The co-ordinator has taken advantage of a number of local authority initiatives to further her own professional development and has fed this information back to the advantage of the school as a whole. She monitors the teaching plans for all classes and has managed some systematic observation of individual lessons for which a simple but effective schedule is used. Assessment is well-planned and straightforward to use. The National Curriculum test data is analysed well together with that from the optional tests. These data are used to group pupils and to set targets. She understands the need to increase the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels at the end of Years 2 and 6 and has pride in the way in which the school has managed to move mathematics forward. Resources are adequate for teaching the subject which fully meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

104. Since 1996, standards in science have steadily improved. Although pupils' attainment remains below the national average by the time they are seven and eleven years old, there have been some significant improvements in standards since the previous inspection. Results in the National Curriculum tests underline this trend with the provisional results for 2001 likely to show another small rise in science attainment over the previous year. The results from the inspection also confirm this trend and illustrate that, while standards remain below the national average overall, the great majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in their science learning, including pupils with special educational needs. This is mainly due to improved provision including an increase in investigative work as well as pupils making useful gains in knowledge and understanding. However, weaknesses still occur in the ways pupils fail to think scientifically and also in the nature and accuracy of their recorded work. The performance of girls in science, relative to boys, has also given rise to some concern and the school is closely monitoring its approach to ensure girls feel fully involved in all aspects of science learning.
105. By the end of Year 2, pupils cover several important science topics including simple forces, electric circuits, magnetism and materials. These topics are taught in considerable depth and pupils make many useful gains in their knowledge and understanding. Teachers ensure that pupils build up a satisfactory range of science vocabulary and begin to recognise and apply this in their discussions and scientific recordings. Before moving on to Year 3, most pupils know something about how to make a scientific prediction based on previous knowledge and understanding. Lessons usually contain short periods of oral questioning that give pupils the opportunity to show the depth of their understanding, but many still show a reluctance to discuss what they know or cannot find the right words to express themselves.
106. Pupils in Year 4 undertake a major study of 'the earth and beyond' and show satisfactory understanding of the nature of our nearest planets. They also know of the major influence of the sun and how night and day are caused. Although not able to write down a great deal, they make satisfactory attempts to explain the tilting of the earth's axis and how the seasons occur in different parts of the world. Their understanding and use of written vocabulary such as 'orbit, tilting and rotating' are below that expected for their age. In Year 5, pupils re-visit some earlier work on forces and, although they enjoy creating ramps for toy cars to travel down, many are unable to find accurate explanations of the forces involved in stopping and starting them. Unless guided very carefully by the teacher, most pupils are unable to set up and carry out such experiments for themselves and many have not fully grasped the idea of a fair test and altering only one variable at a time.
107. By the end of Year 6, pupils have covered a satisfactory range of science topics but some of these are incomplete, or finished and recorded at a superficial level. One very well taught lesson showed that pupils were capable of setting up an experiment to help solids dissolve more quickly. Pupils worked together effectively, supporting each other's ideas. By the end of the lesson, pupils had achieved well and the accuracy of their investigative work had clearly improved. However, as they move through the school, their understanding of scientific principles and use of language in science contexts remain below average overall.

108. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are planned well but tend to place rather too much emphasis on content and the acquisition of knowledge rather than the pupils building up enquiry and research skills. This results in pupils knowing lots of facts, but unable to think scientifically for themselves. Lessons tend to be too weighted towards the teacher imparting facts and rather less on pupils exploring science for themselves. There are some exceptions to this but the balance is still not right. Teachers show satisfactory levels of scientific knowledge and understanding themselves and help build up a good store of information for the pupils to explore. This was seen during a lesson on the causes of day and night when pupils listened well to a lot of information but did little enquiry based science for themselves. More practical work would also have helped their wider understanding. Science lessons use a satisfactory range of resources but the essential 'hands on' element in teaching and learning requires more imaginative use of what is available. Good use is made of support staff to help with the management of pupils and to increase the levels of adult intervention into pupils' learning at critical times. This includes effective use of bilingual speakers and makes science a good subject that all pupils can participate in equally and enjoy.
109. The nature of pupils' difficulties in using spoken language effectively to describe what they see happening is not helped by teachers using questions which ask too little thought and explanation on the part of pupils. More opportunities for debate and general class or group discussion would be helpful. A further weakness in some year groups is in the nature of written work offered to many pupils. On occasions, the same worksheet is given to all pupils, even though many are clearly operating at different levels of language, fluency and understanding. Although support is given to all pupils, progress would be enhanced if pupils were challenged in different ways and undertook tasks more suited to their individual ability. Rather too many sessions centre on commercial worksheets that, whilst covering the broad content and theme of the lesson, give too little opportunity for pupils to explore and use scientific findings in their own way. A lack of written fluency in the English language is clearly a problem for many pupils in several subjects and teachers have yet to find how best pupils can explore science without their control of English being a major stumbling block. Teachers use assessments at the end of topics well enough to record what pupils have understood and what needs to be done next. However, their marking of pupils' work does not always help them to understand where they are going wrong and what must be done next to make improvements. The response of pupils to science learning is never less than satisfactory. Their own interests and enthusiasm to new topics can be very marked and clearly add impetus to their learning.
110. The co-ordinator for science is relatively new but she already has a firm grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and what priorities have to be addressed before standards improve. The leadership of the subject is therefore satisfactory overall. However, the lack of monitoring of teaching and learning leads to few changes in the style and content of lessons, particularly the ways in which pupils record their findings. This is a problem that has not yet been addressed. The current policy is outdated and is currently being re-written in the light of the latest statutory requirements for the subject. Resources are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very much aware of the need to ensure that the subject embraces the needs and abilities of all pupils. She has begun to study the impact of teaching and learning on the standards reached by different attaining groups, as well as improving the approaches to pupils with language difficulties.

ART AND DESIGN

111. During the week of the inspection it was possible to observe only a very few art lessons, all of which were supervised by an experienced and talented learning support assistant. However, evidence from teachers' planning, examples of past work, and discussions with pupils all indicate that standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly as expected for pupils in these year groups. Standards since the previous inspection have been maintained. There is no difference in the standards of girls or boys or within different groups in the school.
112. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach broadly the standards anticipated for their age. Their pictures are carefully drawn. Good paint control and appropriate use of colour are evident in their paintings of the 'Three Bears' and simple landscape pictures using brushes and sponges.

They are proud of their work and talk about them in simple terms discussing, for example, their choice and use of colour.

113. Art linked to topic work is continued throughout the school and by the end of Year 6, most pupils increasingly use colour appropriately to depict shade and tone in their pictures. Pupils in Year 3, for example, use simple colour mixing techniques to depict autumn colours in their paintings and paint with confidence using broad, bold strokes. By year 6, this technique has been refined and portraits in the style of Holbein show well-developed use of tone to depict facial features. The use of different mediums such as charcoal and pastels for 'self portraits' in the style of Peter Bruegel, show an increasing awareness of proportion and an eye for detail. In a good lesson in Year 6, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, worked carefully on observational drawings in the style of Bonaventure Peters. Because of careful support and encouragement by staff, pupils began to appreciate how different artists work to create special effects, some of which are their individual trade mark.
114. Pupils have positive attitudes to work and more able pupils in Year 6 can discuss the different techniques of artists that they have studied and express simple preferences for and against their work. They persevere with tasks well. Although no direct teaching by teachers was observed, lessons planned with teachers and supervised by the learning support assistant developed pupils' skills and interest appropriately. A weakness is that pupils do not have experience of working with a wide range of materials in school. Nor do they always have sufficient opportunity to use skills they have learned to express their individual ideas and feelings. Opportunities for spiritual development are present but not dwelt on sufficiently by staff. Pupils do not have sketch books in which to explore different techniques, skills and starting points, in order to plan their designs before producing final pieces of work.
115. The curriculum leader is new to her post and has made a positive start towards raising the profile of the subject in the school. Artists have been booked to enrich the subject in the coming year and older pupils are able to explore a wider range of media when they visit the local comprehensive school. She is aware of weaknesses in display, the inadequate use of sketchbooks and the need for a greater range of media to be used. In particular, there is the need to develop a skills based scheme of work and a levelled portfolio of pupils' work, that will better support non-specialist teachers. She has not, however, been in post long enough to have an impact on teaching and learning and pupils' standards in general. The subject has too low a profile in school and whilst the Muslim community does not always give its full backing to creativity, the school has to find ways to provide pupils with greater enrichment in the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. Design and technology is now a more effective subject than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils across the school achieve satisfactorily and now reach the standards expected of their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is largely due to a coherent scheme, which ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered systematically, with proper attention given to the development of essential skills. This planning makes good provision for the mixed age classes. Standards and achievements are further improved as a result of the greater use of national guidelines in the subject and also through participation in a range of local projects. The latter have increased the range of opportunities open to pupils, by providing access to more sophisticated equipment and the opportunity to work with a range of people beyond the school.
117. Design and technology alternates with other foundation subjects on the timetable. No direct teaching was observed but work retained from the previous year, discussions with staff, planning, photographs of pupils at work and their own comments on the displays, all helped to provide evidence. There was no tangible evidence indicating differences in attainment between girls and boys.
118. By the end of Year 6, the emphasis that teachers throughout the school place on the importance of helping pupils to think carefully about the purpose and design of a product, is clear. This is well illustrated in the well-drawn designs for clocks, which acted as templates for

the models. Teachers encourage and value originality and difference. In collaboration with the secondary school, the designs were transformed into attractive and original wooden clocks. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to work together in small groups on joint ventures. The successful development of this is well illustrated by photographs of pupils from Year 6 working with a community team on the model of the regeneration of the Coppice area.

119. Years 1 and 2 examine the designs and layout of several cards. The teacher's plans indicate how carefully selected questions enabled her to help them consider how the arrangement of the pictures and patterns make for an effective design. Teachers take care to create meaningful contexts for using and applying knowledge and skills. In one instance, pupils enthusiastically worked at the challenge to produce a design for a school bookmark. The teacher encouraged reflection and developed an understanding that in the technology process there was often a need to modify a design. Work across the classes completed towards the end of last year included incorporating switches and electric circuits into three-dimensional models and exploring aspects of food technology closely linked with healthy eating as part of their work on science.
120. From the limited evidence available, the quality of teaching and learning is now deemed satisfactory. Teachers and classroom assistants use the national subject guidance to develop a systematic approach to each unit of work and now have a workable method of assessing pupils' progress. They plan effectively to maximise the enthusiasm of the pupils and their willingness to work well together. Photographs of all four classes demonstrate good collaborative work. Teachers help younger pupils to use effectively a simple structure to record their design and identify suitable materials. However, there is limited evidence of the teachers in the older junior classes extending this skill still further. Opportunities to write evaluations and record succinct modifications in a written form are missed. Teachers are effective in helping pupils make links between subjects and encourage them to suggest opportunities for applying their science or technological skills in a cross-curricular manner. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy equal access to the subject and have the satisfaction of working together to produce work of an acceptable standard in the limited time available.
121. Design and technology resources have very recently been considerably enhanced by a sophisticated information and communication/resource package. The computer set up to service this material specifically is ready. The co-ordinator has not yet been able to investigate the potential of the package as a whole or consider how to integrate it into the school's recently established programme of work. She is enthusiastic about the subject but as yet keeps only a limited amount of photographic evidence and this needs to be rectified. The evidence that is to hand ably illustrates the interest and motivation of the pupils, which contributes significantly to their learning and achievements. The photographs do not as yet present a well-documented record of the progress made in skill, design and presentation as the pupils move through the school.

GEOGRAPHY

122. Satisfactory advances have been achieved in this subject since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is also satisfactory across the school and most now reach the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 6. This is partly due to a useful scheme of work, which ensures that pupils in mixed-age classes address all the required elements of the subject at an appropriate depth. Teachers are using nationally produced guidance, which is further improving their choice of strategies and sharpening expectations. This has resulted in an improvement in standards in most classes. Boys and girls achieve broadly similar standards.
123. Very little geography teaching was seen, but teachers' plans, work in books and pupils' comments provided supportive evidence. Geography alternates with history on the timetable and whilst this is an acceptable form of time allocation, the school should be aware of the need to make the subject less fragmented and to increase pupils' skills in a more uniform way.

124. By the end of Year 6, some effective teaching enables pupils to recall and apply a range of geographic skills and to use their previous knowledge about places, weather and the relationship between people and the environment, in new contexts. They have explored mountainous landscapes and responded to the teacher's challenge to extend their work with some individual research using computers. This work is well presented and completed with obvious pride reflecting the high expectations held by the teacher. The pace of lessons has been maintained and, as a result, the pupils have covered a lot of ground and done it well, as is evidenced by the accuracy of their search for data using atlases as a source.
125. Last year, pupils in Years 3 and 4 concentrated on their local environment. The teacher made effective use of local field trips, helping the pupils to observe carefully and then enabling them to reflect on what they had seen. Currently the pupils are making comparisons between their own area of Oldham and a small village in southern India. The teacher is keen for pupils to be actively involved in their learning. She is effectively teaching them to examine and collate information gleaned from high quality photographs. Specific questions are intended to keep the pupils focused and as a result they are encouraged to provide specific evidence to suggest what life and experiences are like in the Indian village, comparing these with their own experiences in Oldham. Mapping skills are incorporated into most of the topics. Much of the work is oral, which, whilst ensuring that all pupils have good access to the curriculum, limits the opportunity for pupils to write independently with structured support at an appropriate level.
126. Years 1 and 2 also focus on their local area and through discussion, supported by well-planned questions, begin to comment on their environment, identifying aspects that they liked and those for improvement. Simple mapping skills based on the local streets were of interest and relevance to the pupils who were encouraged to undertake some independent writing about what they could see when they came out of the church.
127. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is now satisfactory with some good features. Staff are making effective use of information technology as a source for teaching strategies and plan sensibly for pupils to use it systematically to access data, for example when collecting weather statistics. The pupils are enthusiastic about their learning, especially when tasks are presented as investigations. Teachers use the good relationships well to encourage collaborative work. This ensures considerable debate between small groups and allows both the use of English and the home tongue. As a result, all pupils are enabled to participate in geography on an equal footing. Teachers also encourage initiative and independence when suggesting that groups work out for themselves who is to be scribe and the spokesperson for the later class feedback. The teaching does not always maintain sufficient pace and as a result insufficient work is achieved or the data collected is not brought into sufficiently sharp focus to match the original challenge.
128. The resources for teaching geography are satisfactory. The school makes good use of the local area and field trips to give pupils the chance to use first hand sources. Year 6 pupils benefit from several outside visits, enjoying the chance to work with high quality equipment on weather studies in contrast to managing with homemade versions at school. The ongoing work on regenerating the local area, which pupils have participated in, has provided a most valuable contribution to environmental studies. Growing access to computers is proving a great asset, particularly for the study of contrasting places and general data collection. The potential of the digital camera is under developed. The recently appointed co-ordinator feels that the subject still needs considerable development and this is a fair assessment set against its current status. The quality of work in books varies considerably and assessment of understanding at the end of a unit's work has not yet been effectively established.

HISTORY

129. This is an increasingly effective subject that has made good progress since the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in history and there appear to be few tangible differences between the attainment of girls and boys. All pupils have to acquire a great deal of new English vocabulary and terminology over a relatively short time. Now most reach the standards expected of them by the end of Year 6. This is partly due to a revised, careful planning cycle

that ensures comprehensive coverage of the syllabus over a two-year cycle designed to meet the demands of mixed-age classes. It is also a result of the sensible use of national guidance material, a continued focus on the skills associated with history, linked to well- focused teaching and outside visits.

130. Little teaching was seen during the inspection, but plans were available and pupils were keen to talk about their former history investigations. The work in books also provides variable evidence of range and standards.
131. By the end of Year 6, the good teaching leads pupils to develop a sound understanding of historical enquiry. Year 5 and 6 pupils were fascinated by their work on Tudor portraits. They eagerly told others what they had deduced from a careful examination of the clothes and fabrics in the pictures. The emphasis on using evidence starts with the youngest pupils. Teachers are conscientious in encouraging them to observe carefully and look for similarities and differences in order to help them work out why things change. Carefully planned questions focus their thinking and as a result they try to express what the effects might be on people's lives. For example, Years 1 and 2 were eager to look at, explore and classify everyday articles common to life some 50 to 100 years ago as well as more modern examples. Initially, the pupils were almost too excited to listen and reflect, but in a further lesson a different, well-planned organisation enabled the teacher and pupils to arrange articles systematically. They sorted these into those that were 'very old, old, fairly new and new'. As a result, pupils were then able to concentrate on the historical enquiry questions being asked. The teacher's careful repetition of key questions and the introduction of significant vocabulary ensured that those pupils who had only limited English skills had a linguistic framework in which to work.
132. In Years 3 and 4, pupils explore aspects of life in ancient Egypt, the ancient Greeks and undertake a case study on the Anglo-Saxons. Much of this work develops through the use of worksheets and there is limited evidence of pupils communicating their understanding in their own independent work.
133. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory across the school. There are also examples of consistently good teaching, which in turn produce good learning. Teachers make good use of oral work, using classroom assistants to support those who need greater help. This is particularly effective where support in the home language enables an individual to contribute on an equal footing with more confident classmates. Boys and girls and those with special educational needs enjoy equal access to the history curriculum and attain broadly similar standards of historical understanding. However, although there is evidence of pupils writing to record information in most classes, teachers have not yet maximised the opportunities to encourage pupils to write to convey empathy, present a point of view, an argument or illustrate bias.
134. Resources for history are satisfactory. They are most effective when real artefacts, good quality illustrations such as paintings by Tudor painters or the history trail of Victorian buildings around the school are used. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, is enthusiastic and provides clear leadership. She has ensured that all staff are supported by a pack of useful material focusing on the development of historical skills together with useful addresses. She makes good use of the Internet as a source of information and ideas for teaching. The pupils benefit from the judicious use of videos and increasingly their developing computer skills ensure a wider access to good quality resource material. The co-ordinator has made good use of her own professional development opportunities. This has led to the development of an approach to assessment to be used on the completion of each unit of work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

135. This is a subject that has made good progress since the previous inspection, both in terms of the standards achieved by the pupils but also in the overall quality of provision given by the school. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are broadly at the level anticipated for the age of the pupils. Although some gaps in learning appear among older pupils, most make at least satisfactory progress and acquire the knowledge necessary to build on existing skills and

understanding. This is largely due to improved teaching and learning techniques and more regular access to computer technology. Girls and boys enjoy equal access to computer technology but girls appear slightly less confident on the machines. Teachers are aware of such anomalies and give good levels of support as necessary.

136. The rise in pupils' standards has coincided with more regular planned access to computer programs and a widening of the curriculum that encourages the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. Following on to their basic introduction to the keyboard in the reception class, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are provided with good opportunities to give commands to the computer using the keyboard, mouse and through following simple on-screen menus. With the support of staff, most pupils are now up to speed using the keyboard and know the functions of several important keys. They are also confident in following instructions on the screen when these are largely driven by symbols rather than lots of words. The teaching lays good emphasis on the visual and the less technical, so much of the best work is undertaken with art programs, line drawings and creating a few simple sentences on the screen that can then be altered and corrected using the appropriate keys. This early attention to drafting and re-drafting written work is not developed sufficiently well higher up the school and techniques of word processing could usefully be increased. Year 2 pupils are also introduced to simplified spreadsheets where they can enter data accurately about such things as types of shoes recorded in class surveys.
137. Year 4 pupils begin to use ICT to help solve problems carefully selected by the teacher. They were observed using programs, for example, that brought greater understanding of the properties of mathematical shapes. Pupils were able to identify the shapes they were illustrating on the computer and discussed these well with each other. They were then able to use an art brush depicted on the screen in order to shade in these shapes using different coloured tones. Through careful supervision, the pupils reached satisfactory levels of accuracy in this and other work. Years 5 and 6 use their growing ICT skills in a few wider contexts. For example, they prepare emails of their own and send them to pupils in a different part of Oldham. They are very careful when copying a long email address. Others use spreadsheets to help create their own table of English adjectives, an activity that encourages skills in English acquisition as well as those in ICT. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed sound keyboard skills and knowledge and can save, print and modify their work. They also know about the growing importance of computer technology in everyday life. Although many can interrogate CD ROMS for information, their lack of fluency in the English language leads to work often being copied without true understanding. The control and modelling aspects of ICT are less well provided for and experiences are therefore limited to a few basic programs.
138. The quality of teaching and learning is currently good, enabling pupils to achieve at least satisfactory standards set against their previous learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported during ICT lessons and make similar levels of progress to their peers. A group of lower attaining pupils were observed using a new program called 'success maker' in which an experienced teacher led a small group through early reading skills including the blending of letters to aid word recognition. In the most effective lessons, teachers support their pupils well, often across a carousel of activities that encourage the development of different skills and techniques. Teachers place strong emphasis on confidence building exercises and the removal of any anxieties about possible failure helps pupils create positive attitudes towards computer learning. Where a good grasp of English is a required skill, teachers are quick to compensate any shortcomings by offering pupils more intensive support. The attitude of pupils to learning is consistently good. Pupils increase their own learning opportunities by behaving well and being compliant with the teachers' instructions.
139. The teaching of ICT has strengthened considerably since the previous inspection. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are more secure and most are confident to use several machines simultaneously in the new computer suite. The management of pupils is also a strength with learning being accelerated through the use of small group teaching and a lot of individual or paired support. Good use is made of time as well as support staff in this respect. Teachers are also using ICT more imaginatively, seeking out ways that will usefully extend pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. Computers in the classrooms are also used to

support learning in other subjects. By following a balanced programme of ICT skills, pupils are learning about ICT in a logical way, building up their skills a few steps at a time.

140. The curriculum for information and communication technology is satisfactory and is being re-checked against National Curriculum requirements to ensure that all aspects of the Programmes of Study are being covered. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who has been successful in her attempts to encourage wider use of ICT across the school. The priorities she has expressed are formed from a growing understanding of pupils' standards and requests from teachers. However, she has too few opportunities to monitor standards and her current portfolio of collected work could be usefully extended. The school has spent a considerable amount of time, finance and effort to ensure the subject has been strengthened across the whole curriculum. In this it has been successful. The quality of existing resources and pupils' access to these are both good.

MUSIC

141. As with the previous inspection, very little music was available for direct observation and was entirely based around singing and no other elements. Standards in singing are broadly the same as was reported during the previous inspection. There is satisfactory provision for other elements of the music curriculum but difficulties occur in performance and composition.
142. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' singing is satisfactory. Because of reading difficulties, many pieces are learned by heart. There is appropriate emphasis on singing with expression. Teachers also place considerable store on pupils singing for enjoyment, which in turn helps the learning process. Most of the singing occurring during the inspection week centred on pre-recorded music and accompaniments played on a tape recorder. The pupils are well used to this way of working and most join in well, ably supported by their teacher. There is a concentration on songs with a built-in refrain, which enables the pupils to join in all the familiar parts. By the end of Year 6, most pupils develop a satisfactory sense of rhythm and recognise, for example, when tempos change.
143. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory during observed lessons. There are no competent instrumentalists among existing staff so there is some understandable, but nevertheless over reliance, on taped music. In at least one session, this led to moments of unsatisfactory concentration from the pupils as they rarely appeared to listen to taped instructions as precisely they do to their own teachers. This problem was counteracted in part by careful stopping and starting of the tape in order to reinforce the learning. Teachers show good enthusiasm for singing and join in themselves, which also helps to model the learning process for the pupils. The pupils' attitude towards music is satisfactory but somewhat muted in enthusiasm. Part of the problem is caused by parents being rather reluctant for their children to play musical instruments, and this presents something of a dilemma to teachers. No instruments were used to accompany even basic singing and this is a dimension lacking in the final effect. Pupils also lack wider experience of performing in music, although occasionally a choir is established in school. Teachers have not yet fully explored the potential of music in the pupils' own culture.
144. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role but has little influence on ongoing standards, including the quality of teaching and learning. Resources for music are satisfactory in those areas where pupils and staff have become most familiar. The subject is relatively low key in school and offers little to the pupils in terms of their personal and social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. Standards in physical education are broadly at the level expected for the age of the pupils. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils have acquired the basic skills and experiences to satisfy the requirements outlined in the National Curriculum. They achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their previous learning and most make sound progress in the subject, including any

with special educational needs. The opportunities offered to pupils are satisfactory although there are some shortcomings in the overall provision of dance and adventurous, outdoor activities. Only 2 lessons were available for observation during the inspection period, making it difficult to assess standards and the quality of teaching and learning across other areas in the subject. Standards appear to be broadly at the level reported in the previous inspection.

146. Pupils in Year 2 were seen indoors developing their passing and control skills using small apparatus. They move and show the levels of skill and co-ordination anticipated for their age. Pupils in Year 6 were taught by a community worker centred on Oldham Football Club and were able to demonstrate the ball and shooting skills again anticipated for their age. Pupils understand the impact of physical activity on their heart and body and also the importance of warm-up and cooling down at the end of each session. Although no swimming was seen, the available list of certificates suggests that, by the end of Year 6, a smaller percentage of pupils than is commonly found in many primary schools can swim their prescribed length. It should be noted that very few pupils are encouraged to swim in the public pool outside of school hours, so consolidation of swimming skills at school is not followed up well in the pupils' own time.
147. The quality of teaching and learning observed was satisfactory in Year 2 and good in Year 6. A few management problems with the younger pupils led to some loss of time and periods in the lesson where the learning was less brisk than it could have been. The use of resources was good and time was given for pupils to evaluate their performance. There was also time allocated to the building up of teamwork. During a Year 6 session, the instructor showed very good knowledge and understanding of the skills under review and had a similar level of technical skill which was used well to model what the pupils were being asked to do. Lessons are well planned and there is appropriate emphasis on building up skills rather than pupils merely taking part in the final activity, such as a competitive netball or football match. Pupils show considerable enthusiasm for the subject and this lends further impetus to their general learning.
148. The curriculum for physical education can be affected at times by the staff needing to be sensitive to the views of parents and their cultural stance on activities such as dance (translated more as movement within and by the school) and swimming. Despite this, the subject as a whole is well established in school, much enjoyed by the pupils and works from a secure base in which all pupils are given every opportunity to participate in the various strands of physical education. There is little emphasis on competitive sport. Outdoor activities such as those traditionally undertaken during a residential weekend are not encouraged. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory although there is little time set aside for monitoring standards or to review the full impact of the subject on the personal development of the pupils. Resources for physical education are satisfactory. The accommodation, including outdoor provision, is satisfactory although the hardcore area and small adjoining field are unfortunately exposed to vandalism in the evenings and during weekends.