

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LEWIS STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Patricroft, Eccles

LEA area: Salford

Unique reference number: 105903

Headteacher: Mrs V Ruddy

Reporting inspector: Mr C D Taylor  
23004

Dates of inspection: 26 -29 November 2001

Inspection number: 196593

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and junior
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lewis Street Patricroft Eccles Greater Manchester
Postcode:	M30 0PU
Telephone number:	0161 789 4400
Fax number:	0161 288 1125
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Morse
Date of previous inspection:	15 - 18 April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23004	Christopher Taylor	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music The Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What the school should do to improve How high standards are How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
9895	Roger Williams	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good curricular and other opportunities are How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents / carers
30834	Ann Lowson	Team inspector	English Design and technology History Physical education Special educational needs	
31012	Ann Welch	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Geography Religious education Equal opportunities	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Lewis Street Primary School caters for boys and girls aged three to 11 years. The school is smaller than most junior and infant schools with 182 full-time pupils of compulsory school age and 23 children who attend full-time in the nursery. The school serves an area of local authority, rented and privately owned terraced housing in the Patricroft area of Eccles. Numbers have fallen since 1996 as families have moved away from the area. Most pupils join the nursery class with levels of attainment below those expected for their age. Forty eight per cent of pupils - well above the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Forty seven pupils - broadly in line with the national average - are on the special educational needs register. Three of these pupils - close to the national average - have statements of special educational needs. Most pupils with statements have specific learning difficulties (for example, dyslexia), moderate learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Twenty four pupils (13 per cent) are from ethnic minorities and speak English as an additional language; a third of these are at an early stage of learning English.

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

Lewis Street Primary School is an effective school with very good relationships between staff, children and parents. Standards are in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. They are improving generally in line with national upward trends. Teaching is sound, overall, with much good teaching. Attendance is satisfactory, but punctuality could be improved. The school benefits from very good leadership and management. Expenditure per pupil is well above the national average and the school provides sound value for money.

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

- Very good leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff ensure that the aims and values of the school are clearly reflected in its work.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes, very good relationships and good behaviour help them to learn effectively.
- Very good provision for extra-curricular activities helps pupils to broaden their interests.
- The school's provision for moral and social education is very effective in assisting pupils' personal development.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good
- The school's links with parents are very effective and the contribution made to children's learning by parents and the community is good.

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

- Teachers do not use assessment of pupils' skills consistently enough to ensure that work set matches all pupils' needs closely, especially higher-attaining pupils in mathematics and science.
- Standards in ICT are below the national average and ICT is not used sufficiently to assist teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn on their own, including research from information books, CD ROMs and the Internet, especially for higher-attaining pupils.
- Spelling and handwriting are not developed consistently, and teachers do not use writing sufficiently to reinforce pupils' literacy skills across different subjects of the curriculum.
- Punctuality is unsatisfactory; too many pupils arrive late in the mornings.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since the last inspection in April 1997, the school has made good progress in improving the logical order in which pupils are taught skills in each subject and the governors have improved their systems for setting and monitoring the school's budget. The school has raised the attainment of the most able pupils, especially in English, and has reduced the difference in attainment between boys and girls. Standards have improved broadly in line with the national upward trend, and better than this in writing in Years 1 and 2. While spelling has improved due to regular learning of spellings for homework, there is room for further improvement in this area. Teaching has improved, and the quality of teaching and learning is now good in the reception class and in Years 3 - 6. Pupils' attitudes and relationships have improved from good to very good. Leadership and management were good, and are now very good. The school has identified appropriate areas for development and has a very good shared commitment and capacity to make further improvements.

## 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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	D	E	C
mathematics	E	E	C	A
science	E	E	D	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In English, the school's results in 2001 were well below the national average for all schools in the country, but in line with standards in schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In mathematics, standards were close to the national average and well above the average in similar schools. In science, standards were below the national average, but above the average in similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment in the current Year 6 is close to the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects except ICT, where they are below national expectations. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is close to the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The school achieved its target in English in 2001, and exceeded it comfortably in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make progress as good as other pupils because of the helpful support they receive from classroom assistants and bilingual assistants. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2002. To meet these targets, the school has focused its attention on raising the standards of higher-attaining pupils in English, booster classes in English and mathematics, and providing support for pupils with special educational needs.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to learn and are very well motivated. They are very interested and involved in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in class and around school. They are polite and helpful. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships among pupils and with members of staff are very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to take initiative and to

Aspect	Comment
	carry out responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance has improved and is now much closer to the national average. Punctuality is unsatisfactory and too many pupils arrive late in the mornings.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the reception class. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good, overall, in Years 3 - 6. The teaching of reading and writing is satisfactory, but the school does not pay sufficient attention to spelling and handwriting, or make good use of other subjects to give pupils' practice in reading and writing. The teaching of numeracy is good throughout the school. Strengths of teaching include very good management of pupils and very good use of time. The school meets the needs of average and lower-attaining pupils well, but teachers do not always use assessment of pupils' work consistently to match written tasks accurately to the needs of all pupils. As a result, while higher-attaining pupils maintain their levels of concentration well, they do not always make such good progress as they might in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers use homework effectively to raise standards. In ICT, pupils are currently learning an appropriate range of skills, but they have not yet caught up with what they missed before the recent opening of the computer suite. In addition, pupils are not given enough opportunities to use computers to assist their learning in other subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with good emphasis on English and mathematics. The school meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum in all subjects except ICT, and there is not enough use of ICT to assist teaching and learning across the curriculum. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils receive suitable help and make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Because of the deficit budget, however, the school cannot employ sufficient classroom assistants to meet the needs of all pupils in all lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress across the school and attain standards similar to those of other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, with clear teaching of right and wrong. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares	Good. The school cares for pupils well. Action taken to improve

for its pupils	attendance has worked well but efforts to improve punctuality are not yet effective enough. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, but teachers do not use assessments consistently enough to ensure that work set is appropriate to the needs of all pupils, especially higher-attaining ones.
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The school's links with parents are very good. Parents and the community make a good contribution to children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership of the school and ensure that the school is moving forward with a clear sense of educational direction. Subject co-ordinators play an important role in monitoring planning, teaching and pupils' work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors carry out virtually all their statutory duties well, with the exception of the omission of Year 6 pupils' targets in the annual report to parents. They play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher, staff and governors monitor and evaluate the school's performance well and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Sound. The school supports educational priorities well through sound financial planning. Specific grants are used effectively and all major spending decisions take into account the principles of best value. The large budget deficit has restricted the school's spending in some important areas.

The teachers are well qualified to teach the National Curriculum, but there are not enough classroom support staff. The accommodation is attractive and well maintained, and is suitable for pupils to learn effectively. Resources for teaching and learning are generally satisfactory, but there are not enough computer programs and CD ROMs to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy school.</li> <li>• The school enables children to make good progress in their work.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents are comfortable about approaching the school with a problem.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Most parents feel the school helps their children become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tenth of the parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children do not get the right amount of homework.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings support all the parents' very positive views. It is the inspectors' judgement that teachers generally set sufficient homework that is appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children join the nursery class, most have levels of attainment below the average for their age. Their personal and social development, communication and language skills and mathematical understanding are particularly poorly developed. They make rapid strides in their personal and social development in the nursery and satisfactory progress in all other areas as a result of sound teaching. Children join the reception class at the start of the autumn term in the school year in which they become five. Due to good teaching, most children achieve the early learning goals in language and literacy, and in mathematical understanding, during their time in reception. By the end of the reception year, the attainment of most pupils is also in line with what is expected nationally in physical development and creative development, in personal and social development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This represents good progress in all these areas since the children started school. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language also make good progress in the nursery and reception classes.
2. By the age of seven, inspection findings show that the overall attainment of pupils is broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. It is close to the standards expected nationally in all other subjects except in ICT, where standards are below national expectations. Standards for seven-year-olds were also in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests in 2001, and in line with the national average in assessments in science. This is similar to the previous inspection. Most pupils of average ability, and those learning English as an additional language or who have special educational needs, make sound progress during Years 1 and 2. Higher-attaining pupils make good progress in English as special 'Express' lessons are provided for the most able pupils in Year 2. In mathematics and science, however, the brightest pupils do not always make progress as rapidly as they could, as work is often not matched closely enough to their needs.
3. In English, inspection findings indicate that attainment in the current Year 2 is broadly in line with the national average and is similar to the previous inspection. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are typical of those expected for their age. Most pupils make sound progress in developing their confidence when speaking and have sufficient opportunities to practise and consolidate their language skills. In reading and in writing, standards are close to those of most seven-year-olds. Pupils make sound progress in reading. Most pupils read simple texts reasonably accurately and with some expression by the age of seven. In writing, standards in writing are close to the national average, but pupils achieve well when compared to those in similar schools. Most pupils use simple punctuation in their sentences, and most are beginning to use capital letters and full stops consistently. Standards in handwriting, however, are inconsistent, and this is a weakness. The extra support provided for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language helps them to make sound progress.
4. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment by the age of seven is in line with the national average. There is a good focus on developing basic numeracy skills, and mental mathematics skills have improved since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment by the age of seven is in line with national expectations. Pupils develop their scientific

enquiry skills by examining the bones of the human skeleton, and carry out simple investigations into the effectiveness of different materials for ear defenders. Pupils with English as an additional language make as good progress as other pupils in mathematics and science.

5. Pupils' attainment in ICT is below the standard expected nationally for seven-year-olds because the ICT suite has only recently been opened, and pupils are still catching up on developing their computer skills. Teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT to assist teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
6. Pupils' standards at the age of 11 are currently in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science due to good teaching in Years 3 - 6. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve standards similar to other pupils. In English, the school's results in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were well below the national average for all schools in the country, but in line with standards in schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In mathematics, the results were in line with the national average, and well above the standard in similar schools, while in science, standards were below the national average, but above the standard in similar schools. Overall, pupils made less than average progress compared with schools who had similar results when the children were aged seven. This is because, while children who remained at the school since Year 2 have made good progress, many pupils joining the school after Year 2 had lower than average standards when they came, and have had an adverse effect on overall results at the end of Year 6. Over the past four years, standards have risen broadly in line with the national upward trend.
7. Inspection findings indicate that, in English, pupils make satisfactory progress in listening and speaking as teachers make a conscious effort to include every pupil in discussions. Pupils make sound progress in reading. Higher-attaining pupils read fluently and with expression although average and lower-attaining pupils sometimes lack sufficient understanding of what they have read. Progress in writing is satisfactory for most pupils, and higher-attaining pupils make very good progress during 'Express' lessons for the most able.
8. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in the current Year 6 is close to what is expected nationally. Most average pupils make satisfactory progress and have benefited from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, although higher-attaining pupils are not always stretched sufficiently. Pupils are becoming more confident with written methods of calculation, and teachers have made a good effort to develop and use mental methods of calculation. In science, attainment is in line with the national average in Year 6. This is better than the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2001. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress, but the higher-attaining pupils are not stretched sufficiently to achieve the higher standards of which they are capable. Practical investigations are used effectively. Pupils study the function of pollen in the fertilisation of plants, for example, and carry out practical investigations to construct electrical circuits. They understand the principles of fair testing, and generally record and explain their results clearly.
9. Pupils' attainment in ICT is below the standard expected nationally for 11-year-olds. Pupils are currently making sound progress in developing computing skills, but they have not yet caught up on the skills they missed before the setting up of the computer suite. Teachers make insufficient use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum. The overall attainment of pupils is close to national expectations in all other subjects. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender or by ethnic background. Pupils

with special educational needs, and those speaking English as an additional language, make sound progress.

10. Pupils' literacy skills are generally in line with those expected nationally throughout the school. Teachers have introduced the literacy hour effectively in all classes, although they do not pay sufficient attention to spelling and handwriting, and there is not enough use of different subjects of the curriculum to practice pupils' writing.
11. Standards in numeracy are generally close to those expected nationally throughout the school. The National Numeracy Strategy is taught effectively in all classes, and most pupils make sound progress, although higher-attaining pupils are not always stretched sufficiently. Pupils are carrying out mental calculations with increasing agility and are showing more confidence in manipulating numbers and using multiplication tables. Numeracy skills are used well in other subjects, such as geography, history, and science.
12. Realistic targets have been set for English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2002. To achieve these targets, the school has focused on raising standards for higher-attaining pupils in English and providing good support for those with special educational needs. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well so that they achieve standards as good as other pupils.

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

13. Since the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning have become even better than they were, and are now very good. Pupils have a genuine enthusiasm for school and enjoy their time there. Significant numbers of pupils take part in the very wide range of clubs and extra activities the school provides, and they join in discussions in lessons enthusiastically. They are very proud of their completed work, and this is recognised and applauded through attractive displays of pupils' work throughout the school buildings. In an ICT lesson in Year 6, all pupils contributed by joining in enthusiastically in the introduction to the lesson. They took turns operating the interactive whiteboard and laptop computer, and listened carefully to the teacher's instructions for their next activity in the computer suite.
14. Pupils' behaviour is good. The school has maintained this high standard since the previous inspection, and good behaviour is seen as one of the school's main priorities. Every member of staff is involved with rewards and sanctions, and all pupils know that the school has high expectations for their behaviour. During a trip to the swimming baths and local library, the bus driver made an unsolicited comment that these were the best-behaved pupils he carried. Very little unacceptable or inattentive behaviour occurs in lessons, and when moving around the school and in the playground, pupils are generally polite and considerate. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.
15. The school fosters high standards of personal development and relationships for its pupils. Both areas have improved since the previous inspection, and are now very good. Politeness and courtesy, both to adults, and to each other, is a marked feature of pupils' relationships while at school. Children from different cultural backgrounds get on well together. From their very first year, and throughout their time there, pupils are expected to take on extra responsibilities as a matter of course. By the time they reach Year 6, they are key members of the school community, and perform tasks as monitors, ensuring good behaviour in the playground and corridors. They also answer the telephone at lunchtimes and help to run after school activities for younger children

such as the toy library. Older pupils participate in the school council as class delegates, and they discuss real issues affecting school life, such as playground equipment, the 'Friendship Stop', and 'Healthy School' initiatives. They write their own minutes, and circulate them to their classmates.

16. Pupils co-operate well in lessons, and this is encouraged as soon as they join the school. In a lesson in the reception class, pupils helped each other to make magic wands that they had just read about in a story. They shared their ideas and suggestions for using the materials to make their wands well, and understood why they had to wait for others to finish before they could take the wands home.
17. Although the rate of attendance at the school has improved, there is still persistent lateness by a significant number of pupils despite the school's efforts to encourage parental co-operation in ensuring that pupils arrive promptly. Punctuality has deteriorated since the previous inspection. Procedures for dealing with lateness are lax, and the need to cater for latecomers often hinders the effectiveness of the start to the school day. On occasions, teachers delay calling the register for the morning session until latecomers have arrived and the register is not closed early enough. In contrast, the school encourages and rewards good attendance, and has been successful in increasing pupil attendance from well below the national average, to a rate below, but much closer to the average. Unauthorised absence is now below the national average, although authorised absence, including some pupils who take long family holidays to visit relatives abroad, is above the average.

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

18. Teaching is sound, overall, with much good teaching. It was satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of the lessons, and unsatisfactory in only one lesson. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teaching is satisfactory in the nursery class and good in the reception class. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 - 6. Where teaching is good, this often involves very good class management and good use of time. Where teaching is generally sound, expectations of higher-attaining pupils are not always high enough and teachers do not make enough use of assessments of knowledge and skills to match written tasks accurately to their needs. Consequently, while higher-attaining pupils maintain their levels of concentration well, they sometimes do not make as much progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding as they could. In some classes, marking is not consistent in helping pupils to identify how their work can be improved. Teachers use homework well to reinforce pupils' learning in class. In ICT, pupils do not yet have a satisfactory range of skills, and teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use computers to assist their learning in other subjects.
19. Teaching is sound in the nursery and good in the reception class. The teachers and classroom assistants have a good understanding of how young children learn, and succeed in making learning enjoyable. Children talk excitedly about the pictures they have painted and the stories they had heard, and have fun playing in the water when learning that some objects float while others sink. The teachers place great emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills, and encourage them to make choices and to take decisions. As a result, pupils make rapid progress in developing their social skills in the nursery. Planning for lessons is detailed and includes a good range of interesting activities for children at different stages of learning. Children are very well managed and activities change frequently so that children maintain their concentration well. Staff pay particular attention to developing children's speaking and

communication skills, and to introducing them to numbers in a wide range of everyday situations.

20. Teaching is sound in Years 1 and 2, and is good, overall, in Year 3 - 6. It is good in English, mathematics and science in the junior classes and satisfactory in the infant classes. It is satisfactory, overall, in all other subjects throughout the school. Teaching that is good or better (in nearly half of all lessons) is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress in many lessons and make at least satisfactory progress during their time at the school.
21. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in Years 3 - 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. This ensures that pupils acquire sound techniques and accurate information. The teaching of reading, writing and numeracy is sound, overall, at both key stages, although handwriting and spelling require more attention. Opportunities for developing and consolidating writing are not always taken up in subjects such as science, religious education and history. The teaching of numeracy involves a wide variety of activities for pupils to practise and consolidate their learning, and this helps to retain pupils' interest. Teachers use mental mathematics sessions well to develop pupils' analytical thinking and mathematical vocabulary. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, the teacher used a series of quick-fire questions effectively to test pupils' knowledge of number pairs that add up to 20. Numeracy is reinforced appropriately in other subjects, for example, in geography, where pupils in Year 6 used their measuring skills to calculate distances.
22. Teachers' planning benefits from following the guidelines in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In other subjects, planning usually follows national guidelines and shows a clear progression of knowledge and understanding. This helps pupils to acquire skills in a logical order. In all subjects, however, there is insufficient planning to ensure that higher-attaining pupils are stretched sufficiently. There are not enough opportunities for independent learning and for pupils to use reference books, CD ROMs and the Internet for individual research.
23. A good variety of teaching methods is used effectively, especially with older pupils. Teachers often start their lessons by referring back to the previous lesson in order to reinforce pupils' learning. This was done effectively, for example, in a Year 6 science lesson when the teacher used searching questions to get pupils to recall the components necessary to construct a working electrical circuit. Most teachers make the learning objectives clear at the start of lessons and review what pupils have learned at the end. This helps pupils to consolidate their learning. Teachers frequently use questioning well, and often encourage pupils to improve their vocabulary by using correct musical or scientific terms. The teacher used subject-specific vocabulary well, for example, in a Year 4 music lesson, when pupils were encouraged to use words such as *pitch*, *timbre* and *ostinato* correctly, although in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher missed the opportunity to explain the terms *mezzo piano* and *mezzo forte*. In science and mathematics, teachers give good emphasis to developing investigative skills. In other subjects such as geography and religious education, they make good use of visiting speakers and of visits in the local area.
24. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a pleasant, hard-working and creative atmosphere. Very good class management is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and very positive attitudes to work. As a result, most pupils are eager to learn.
25. Teachers use time and resources well. In literacy and numeracy, for instance, teachers time the activities well and lessons generally move at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils

work productively and maintain a sound pace of learning. Classroom assistants are used appropriately, and teachers and support staff work closely together. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources and this helps to maintain pupils' interest. Teachers produce many stimulating displays in classrooms and around the school to encourage pupils' thinking. They display pupils' work attractively, and this reflects the appreciation that teachers show for pupils' efforts.

26. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science but do not always make sufficient use of the results in mathematics and science to ensure that work is matched closely enough to the needs of higher-attaining pupils. In other subjects, informal assessments are used to check pupils' learning and to plan for subsequent lessons. The day-to-day use of homework to reinforce and extend learning is good, especially in literacy and numeracy. Pupils take reading books home regularly and are set a suitable amount of work to do at home. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and praise is often used to encourage pupils. The best marking includes helpful written comments on how pupils can improve their work, but some of the marking does not indicate how the work could be better.
27. The good support given by bilingual assistants to pupils with English as an additional language ensures that these pupils always make at least satisfactory progress. In a history lesson in Year 5, for example, the bilingual assistant explained the Greek architectural terms clearly to pupils so that they were able to understand fully the impact of Greek ideas on contemporary architecture. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils are often placed in ability groups during lessons and helpful support is given where needed. In some instances, a lack of sufficient classroom assistants results in these pupils learning at a slower pace in both literacy and numeracy lessons. Occasionally, in numeracy lessons, for example, some lower-attaining pupils have tasks set which are too difficult for them to do, particularly without assistance. Overall, however, teachers give sound support where they can, so the progress made by pupils with special educational needs generally matches that of other pupils.

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

28. The curriculum is broad and well balanced, with satisfactory emphasis on English, mathematics and science. Teachers make a good effort to reflect the cultural diversity of the pupils in the variety of resources used. The quality and range of opportunities for learning are satisfactory overall, and the whole of the National Curriculum is in place, except in ICT, where the areas of control technology, remote sensing and the use of simulations has not yet been covered by older pupils. There is a good allocation of time to all subjects throughout the school, and the total time spent in lessons is well above the minimum recommended. The previous inspection found that there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently, or to take decisions about how they might organise their work. This still applies, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, although the school now organises more difficult work for these pupils in the English 'Express' classes. Religious education is taught according to the local Agreed Syllabus. Two visiting music specialists teach flute, guitar and keyboard. The school has an appropriate sex education policy, and pupils learn about drugs and alcohol misuse through personal, social and health education lessons.
29. Strategies for teaching reading, writing and numeracy are satisfactory, overall, although teachers do not make enough use of opportunities for reinforcing writing skills across other subjects of the curriculum. There is a determined effort to ensure that all pupils

receive equal opportunities to benefit from the activities in school. The curriculum is designed to appeal to children from a whole range of different backgrounds and actively promotes equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds who are still learning English, are well integrated into the life of the school. The school has maintained the satisfactory level of provision for pupils with special educational needs which was found at the previous inspection. The school's policy complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice. There are individual education plans (IEPs) for each pupil on the register of special needs containing targets that reflect their areas of special need. Targets on these plans are more specific than at the previous inspection as the school has recently adopted a more effective strategy for writing pupils' IEPs. Teachers now describe learning in smaller steps, and review pupils' progress more often in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator and parents.

30. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities which improve pupils' education and their quality of life. These include football, volleyball, infant and junior games clubs, a gym club, science club, lunchtime club, toy library, a Tae Kwan Do club and a breakfast club. All these activities are well attended and pupils, parents and carers all value the commitment of the staff.
31. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Teachers plan lessons in this subject well and lessons meet the needs of each age group. The school works hard to build pupils' self-esteem, and is generally successful in developing their confidence as they mature at school. This leads to a good level of responsibility and self-discipline being evident in most of the older pupils. Assemblies are used well to contribute to pupils' personal and social development, and teachers encourage pupils to participate in competitions and events with other schools. Pupils in Year 5 were justly proud when they came second in a fire safety quiz during the inspection week.
32. Links with the local community are strong, and the school benefits considerably from local contacts. Local residents use the school for further education, and courses are run in English, numeracy, ICT skills and assertiveness, for parents and other members of the local community. Other groups use the premises after school, and the school is currently used on four evenings each week by various organisations. There are good links with the Cornerstone Church, which runs a regular after-school club for pupils. The community garden development at the school was made possible by the support of local residents. Teachers make good use of the local library to encourage reading and writing and to teach library skills. The school contributes to the Eccles Community Newsletter when advertising events, and pupils' links with Barton Brook Nursing Home have led to residents making soft toys for the schools' story sacks. The Eccles Rotary Club sponsors book token awards for good attendance.
33. The school has a good range of visitors, including fire and police officers, an artist, a puppeteer, a local pastor and the school nurse. Pupils in Year 5 attend a residential course on the North Wales coast during the summer to develop their social skills. Although the school arranges educational visits during the year, some parents feel that there are not enough of these. Because of the costs involved, visits are relatively infrequent and limited in their scope. The school is aware that more frequent visits would benefit pupils in different areas of the curriculum.
34. The school has a good working relationship with the two secondary schools to which most pupils transfer, and they use the art and computer facilities at one of these schools. Participation in a mini Education Action Zone has led to even closer co-

operation, including the funding of a shared computer technician. A local pharmaceuticals company recently sponsored staff training and a science workshop at the school. There are constructive relationships with other partner institutions. Both Pendleton and Eccles Colleges run adult education courses at the school, for example, and the school offers placements for work experience students and trainee teachers.

35. The high quality of relationships and the very positive attitudes of staff and pupils contribute very effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils' moral and social development has improved since the previous inspection and is now a strength of the school. Provision for spiritual development remains satisfactory, while provision for cultural development is still good.
36. Teachers plan assemblies with great care to cover all four aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attractive displays of religious artefacts from Christianity and Islam, together with pupils' own prayers written in English and Arabic, create a helpful atmosphere for collective worship. The headteacher and staff use assemblies to raise spiritual awareness by telling relevant stories about themes such as friendship. Old Testament events such as the story of Ruth and Naomi help pupils to reflect on values such as loyalty. Teachers and visiting speakers encourage pupils to take part in discussions and activities, including being 'tied' together to illustrate the concept of the invisible bonds of friendship. Time is allocated for listening to a variety of music and for singing modern worship songs, including the school hymn *I'm very glad of God*. The local pastor's regular assemblies provide pupils with an uplifting experience and sound spiritual teaching. With the exception of religious education, however, teachers do not plan opportunities for the development of spirituality systematically into the curriculum, although they take advantage of opportunities when they arise. Pupils in Year 3, for instance, were spellbound by the sight of their school on a large aerial photograph during a geography lesson, while pupils in Year 5 were enthralled by the process of pollination as they discovered pollen on the stamen of a lily.
37. Teachers provide a very strong moral code. By setting clear guidelines, they promote moral values very effectively and pupils are left in no doubt about the difference between right and wrong. Staff spend time talking with pupils about unacceptable behaviour and pupils are confident that their version of events will be listened to with care by their teachers. The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils taking responsibility for their own actions and teachers encourage pupils to see the point of view of others. Regular opportunities are provided to discuss moral issues during assemblies, lessons, 'circle' times and in personal, social and health education.
38. The school's provision for social development is linked closely to how the school promotes moral development. The very caring relationships in the school contribute strongly to pupils' very good attitudes to social development and self-discipline. Teachers encourage pupils to work together responsibly and in a co-operative way and provide many opportunities for them to practise and develop their social skills during class discussions. Because teachers respect the culture and traditions of others and pass their positive attitudes on to pupils, there is very good racial harmony within the school. One Year 4 pupil wrote, *It is important to know about other religious faiths. If you are tolerant it means you respect other people and don't hurt their feelings*. Pupils look forward to the weekly assembly when their achievements are celebrated. This raises their self-esteem when the school shows how much it values their efforts. Pupils who are elected to the school council take their role very seriously as they report back to their class about social issues discussed at the council meetings. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are committed to a variety of duties, including operating the *friendship stop* and being *playtime buddies* to keep an eye open for lonely or unhappy

pupils. Monitorial duties include helping in the dining room, organising the book and toy libraries and watering the plants. Raising money for charities such as Oxfam and Barnardo's makes an important contribution to pupils' understanding of citizenship. Year 5 pupils also take part in an annual residential visit, which helps them to develop social skills in an unfamiliar setting. The school has moved some way towards addressing the criticism in the previous report that it does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to work independently and to take on responsibilities. However, this is an aspect of social development that still requires some attention, as few opportunities are currently provided within the curriculum for independent study.

39. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. In subjects such as history, geography, religious education, music and art, teachers plan work to enable pupils to learn about other cultures and traditions. Fieldwork in geography, for example, and visits to museums and places of historic interest such as Tatton Park, develop pupils' knowledge of their own culture and the wider world. Pupils learn of the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society when they study living faiths such as Islam and Judaism. Pupils in Years 1 and 3 visit a local church, while pupils in Year 5 visit the local mosque. In Year 4, pupils visit the Jewish museum in Manchester as part of their history and religious education studies. Pupils have opportunities to listen to music from different cultures during assemblies. They study famous artists from a number of cultures and appreciate the richness of the techniques used by native Australian and African artists. Musicians, artists, dance groups and local clergy are among an interesting range of visitors to the school.

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

40. The school provides a safe and welcoming environment for its pupils. Provision for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare is good. The school has maintained this high quality provision since the previous inspection. The headteacher is the designated child protection officer for the school. All staff are well-trained and knowledgeable about appropriate procedures. The school has a well-written, comprehensive policy for child protection that is available for staff to consult, and there is good liaison with social services and other relevant agencies.
41. Fire safety is an important part of the school's welfare provision and equipment is tested regularly. Fire drills are held each term. The school carries out health and safety risk assessments annually. These are detailed and comply with safety requirements. First aid provision is very good. All staff have had training and the school secretary administers first aid. The school keeps records of accidents, including those of a minor nature.
42. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Teachers keep an up-to-date record of individual pupils' attendance. A cup is awarded to the best-attending class each week, and pupils value this recognition. Attendance statistics for each class are displayed in the hall, parents are informed of good attendance, and the school awards certificates and book tokens to pupils for outstanding attendance. While lateness, however, is usually recorded in attendance registers, the records do not always show the real extent of the problem. Currently, the school does not keep a late book for pupils and parents to sign and to explain why they are late. The recent departure of the learning mentor, who had special responsibility for welfare and attendance issues, has not helped the school in its efforts to deal with the problem of unsatisfactory punctuality.

43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. This has been maintained and developed further since the previous inspection. All staff are trained in behaviour management, and the positive behaviour policy is implemented effectively. All staff are fully involved in monitoring behaviour, which relies on teachers, classroom assistants, midday assistants, and pupils. All staff apply the behaviour policy consistently when awarding merits, stickers and other rewards, and when using sanctions. Pupil monitors in Year 6 supervise behaviour in corridors and stairways, and they enter any breaches of discipline in a special book. This book, together with the record of teachers' detentions, is reviewed carefully by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Parents are contacted if there are serious breaches of the school rules, such as violence or bullying. All pupils are aware of the school rules and the high expectations that the school has of their behaviour. The school is clearly successful in aiming at high standards of good behaviour, and has achieved an orderly and civilised community that greatly assists pupils' education.
44. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development. Personal, social and health education lessons and 'circle' time, as well as teachers' intimate knowledge of their pupils, help to identify areas of concern, which the school addresses sensitively. Midday welfare staff have termly meetings with the headteacher to discuss pupils' welfare and appropriate social behaviour during the lunch break. Classroom assistants also contribute observations on pupils' personal development. Good relationships between teachers and pupils build up mutual respect, and pupils have confidence and trust in their teachers as a result. This mutual respect allows them to discuss any personal problems.
45. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' academic progress. The school uses a range of standardised tests to track individual progress and to set realistic targets, particularly in English and mathematics. Procedures in English have enabled specific problems to be highlighted and tackled. Teachers have addressed weaknesses in spelling, for example, by looking at spelling patterns when giving spelling tests. Similarly, teachers have identified poor comprehension skills when pupils read, and those in Year 6 now have a separate reading comprehension book, which is used in conjunction with their reading book. Assessment of pupils' skills within science is less well developed and the school is planning to purchase objective science tests to improve the assessment of knowledge and understanding, particularly for younger pupils. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the school. Some teachers add helpful comments to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding, but too often, teachers do not indicate how pupils can improve their work. The marking of handwriting, for example, is not rigorous and often does not offer enough assistance to help pupils raise their standards.
46. The use of assessment to plan future work is effective in English, but is not done as well in mathematics and science. There are no agreed procedures for measuring pupils' understanding in the other subjects and as a result, teachers do not have a clear enough picture of what pupils know, understand and can do. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection, where assessment was not used well enough to plan the next stage of work. In lessons, there is still not always a close enough match of learning activities to the needs of *all* pupils and as a result, the work is often too easy for higher-attaining pupils, and occasionally too difficult for lower-attaining ones.
47. The school places great emphasis on building the confidence and self-esteem of pupils with special educational needs and is successful in using a good range of rewards and sanctions for those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school tracks the progress of individual pupils well and, as a result, most pupils with special needs

make sound progress. All staff have very positive relationships with pupils and use this well to encourage, guide and support pupils' academic and personal development. The support given to pupils with more profound learning or behavioural problems is limited, however, as specialist help from outside agencies is very difficult to obtain. This inevitably affects the progress these pupils make.

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

48. Nearly all parents have very positive views of the school. The previous inspection found that the school's relationship with parents was particularly strong, and these very good links are still thriving.
49. Parents have a very good relationship with the school, and this has a positive impact on pupils' education and welfare. Many parents help the school in a variety of ways. One parent helps to run the early morning breakfast club, while others organise, or assist in the running of after-school clubs and activities. Other parents help in lessons, hear readers, assist teachers, and help in supervising school visits and trips. In a good lesson in the reception class, one parent helped children to make and taste porridge to illustrate the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, much to the pupils' enjoyment. The involvement of parents who have children with special educational needs is particularly good. The school invites parents to review meetings, keeps them informed of what is being done to assist their child and, on occasions, helps parents to support their child at home with special tasks and activities.
50. The school also provides assistance to parents by providing suitable accommodation for further education courses run by local colleges, and it organises its own parent workshops in science, mathematics, literacy, art, and ICT. Parents make good use of a community room in the school. Another group of parents and staff organises fund-raising and social events, and has been instrumental in providing much needed equipment for the school while strengthening existing community links. The wide variety of parental and community involvement has a positive impact on the work of the school.
51. The school provides parents with high quality information about the school and about their children's progress. There is a very good 'early years' information booklet which explains clearly to new parents exactly what is needed and what will happen when their child arrives in the nursery. Newsletters are sent out regularly to all parents, and advance information is distributed each half term to explain what will be happening during lessons. The school organises open evenings twice a year to discuss pupils' progress, and there are frequent opportunities to make informal contact with staff at other times if required. Pupils' annual reports are informative and are written in plain English. They explain what pupils need to do to improve, and give information on pupils' absence from school.
52. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning both at school and at home. A good number of parents write constructive comments, at some length, when asked to do so on receipt of their child's annual report, or when the school requests their views in a newsletter. Good use is made of reading diaries to encourage communication between the school and parents, and these diaries are still in active use in Year 6. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement and take their responsibilities seriously. They are very satisfied with the standards the school expects from pupils, and are sufficiently involved to give their views either informally or in writing when they see fit. They feel welcome at school and are confident that their views are listened to and respected. The school has recently installed a suggestion box in order to develop the very good home-school relationship further at the parents' request.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management of the school were good at the previous inspection and are now very good. The effectiveness of the school is underpinned by the very good leadership of the headteacher. She has clear aims and appropriate plans for the future, and is ably assisted by an experienced deputy headteacher. As a result, the school is moving forward with clear educational direction. During her 10 years in post, the headteacher has established excellent relationships with parents and has gained the admiration and respect of her pupils. She is strongly committed to raising standards and has developed good aims and firm values to support effective teaching and learning throughout the school.
54. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning and provides verbal and written comments to staff. This ensures that standards of teaching are constantly improving. She visits classrooms regularly and feeds back observations to individual teachers, making suggestions for raising pupils' attainment. These visits form part of the performance management programme that has been operating successfully in the school for the past four years. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators check the standard of pupils' written work by evaluating samples of work each half term. Together with governors, they analyse National Curriculum test results, optional tests and baseline assessments to identify and address weaker areas of the curriculum and to raise standards.
55. The aims and values of the school are reflected very clearly in all areas of its work. The school aims to cultivate the right attitude for learning and to provide a challenging curriculum to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of every child. It does this well. It also seeks to encourage independence and self-control, and to develop a caring atmosphere where each individual feels valued. It is largely successful in these aims.
56. Teachers have sound expectations of pupils, and ensure that each child has an equal opportunity to succeed. The staff and governors have a very good, shared commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning and the capacity to succeed. Appropriate targets have been set for standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests in 2002. To meet these targets, the school has focused successfully on raising the standards of higher-attaining pupils in literacy, booster classes in English and numeracy, and on better help for pupils with special needs.
57. Responsibility for subject areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators who manage spending on resources and feed back information to other staff after attending training courses. This helps all teachers to keep up-to-date with the latest developments in every subject. Non-teaching time is allocated to all co-ordinators so they can monitor teachers' planning, observe lessons and evaluate pupils' work. This helps to raise standards of teaching by sharing the expertise of the co-ordinators. All staff have detailed job descriptions which specify their roles clearly.
58. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has developed effective procedures for identifying pupils' needs and for ensuring that each individual education plan has clear targets that meet pupils' specific needs. She liaises well with teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. She gives good assistance to newly qualified teachers. The co-ordinator monitors the work of teachers and pupils in the classroom satisfactorily, and has regular non-teaching time to fulfil all the requirements of her role.

59. The governors provide good support for the headteacher. They have a good working knowledge of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept fully up-to-date by detailed reports from the headteacher and by regular presentations from subject co-ordinators. Several governors visit the school regularly, assist in the classroom, look at pupils' work and talk to teachers and pupils. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs liaises regularly with the special needs co-ordinator. Another governor regularly attends swimming lessons and assists pupils in learning how to swim. The full governing body meets termly, and committees meet regularly to discuss staffing, the curriculum, buildings and finance. They debate curricular and budget issues, and play an effective role in helping to shape the future direction of the school. The governors fulfil virtually all of their statutory responsibilities well, with the exception of the omission of Year 6 pupils' targets in English and mathematics in the annual report to parents.
60. The school supports educational priorities as well as it is able through its financial planning. The detailed school development plan identifies appropriate targets and ensures that the resources available are directed towards raising pupils' attainment. The personnel, resources and timings are identified clearly, and there are specific criteria by which the impact of these developments can be evaluated. There are approximate costs that link new developments to the annual budget. Unfortunately, the school has a large deficit budget due to the previous long-term illness of several members of staff, and this has restricted the school's spending on important issues such as the number of classroom assistants. The school makes the best use, however, of funding that is allocated to support specific areas such as special educational needs. It has used funds from special initiatives such as the mini Educational Action Zone to pay for valuable services such as the part-time support of an ICT technician. All members of the governing body monitor the school's budget on a monthly basis and satisfactory financial controls are in place. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The principles of best value are applied to all major spending decisions to ensure that the school receives sound value for money. Day-to-day administration is efficient and computers are used for placing orders and for keeping pupils' records.
61. The school employs a suitable number of well-qualified teachers and there is a good balance of experience and expertise. This ensures that all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught effectively. Good procedures are in place to support the professional growth and confidence of new teachers, particularly in the management of pupils and in the writing of individual education plans for pupils who have special educational needs. The school does its best to support pupils with special needs, but it has insufficient funds to employ enough classroom assistants to cater for the needs of every pupil at all times. Teachers and classroom assistants have a clear understanding of their roles and work together closely as a team. Several bilingual teachers provide good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language and, as a result, these pupils make sound progress similar to other pupils. The school has received the prestigious 'Investors in People' award in recognition that all staff, including midday supervisors, receive regular training, linked to the school improvement plan, to update their skills and knowledge. Midday supervisory staff make a good contribution to the wellbeing and good behaviour of pupils at lunchtimes. Staff morale is high and reflects the good team spirit that is evident in the school.
62. Accommodation is good, with large, well-organised classrooms that are clean and well maintained. The school uses the lower hall for assemblies and lunch, but it is rather cramped for physical education lessons, and is somewhat under-used in the mornings

during literacy and numeracy lessons. The upper hall provides an attractive computer suite, a library and an additional meeting area, enabling assemblies for infants and juniors to be held at the same time. Teachers use every part of the school accommodation to show off pupils' work imaginatively and to provide stimulating and informative displays. This provides an attractive, vibrant environment for learning, which reflects the way that all staff respect and celebrate pupils' work. The nursery and reception classrooms are in a separate building, and this provides spacious accommodation for the young children. Outdoors, the school has worked hard, with the help of parents and the local community, to provide an attractive garden area and painted murals on the playground walls. The lack of a grassed playing field hampers what the school can provide in physical education lessons and during extra-curricular sports activities, but the school does its best under the circumstances, and standards are satisfactory.

63. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall, and are good for religious education. Resources are good in the reception class and satisfactory in the nursery. The school has good computing facilities for ICT, but there are too few CD ROMs and too few Internet links to assist teaching and learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to improve the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) improve standards in mathematics and science by ensuring that teachers use assessments of pupils' work to match written tasks accurately to the needs of all pupils, especially the higher-attaining ones. (see paragraphs 2, 8, 10, 18, 22, 26, 46, 86, 95)
  - (2) introduce the use of simulations, control technology and remote sensing when teaching ICT skills to older pupils, and make more use of computers to assist all pupils' learning across different subjects of the curriculum. (see paragraphs 5, 9, 28, 63, 80, 92, 97, 101, 111, 115, 117, 118, 121, 125, 134)  
*(The school is aware of this issue and already has plans to introduce these skills to older pupils.)*
  - (3) develop more opportunities for pupils to learn independently through the wider use of information books, CD ROMs and the Internet for personal research. (see paragraphs 22, 28, 95, 97, 111, 115, 116, 134)
  - (4) improve pupils' spelling and handwriting, and create more opportunities to develop and reinforce pupils' writing across all the subjects of the curriculum. (see paragraphs 3, 10, 21, 29, 79, 81, 134)
  - (5) take suitable steps to improve the punctuality of pupils when arriving at school in the morning. (see paragraph 42)  
*(The school is aware of this issue and already has plans to introduce a learning mentor to monitor and encourage better punctuality.)*

In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issues in its action plan:

- (1) Marking should be more consistent in helping pupils to identify how their work can be improved. (see paragraphs 26, 45, 91, 97)
- (2) The governing body should ensure that it fulfils all statutory requirements relating to the annual report to parents. (see paragraph 59)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	18	27	1	0	0
Percentage	0%	10%	35%	53%	2%	0%	0%

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents approximately two 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)	23	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	24

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.4
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	17	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (76)	90 (82)	90 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	26	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (76)	87 (91)	90 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	17	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	12	16
	Girls	10	11	13
	Total	18	23	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (68)	74 (54)	94 (61)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	14
	Girls	11	13	12
	Total	23	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (68)	84 (54)	84 (61)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	0
White	164
Any other minority ethnic group	7

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.2
Average class size	26.0

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

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	507,907
Total expenditure	564,453
Expenditure per pupil	2,423
Balance brought forward from previous year	-14,166
Balance carried forward to next year	-68,368

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	205
Number of questionnaires returned	87 (42%)

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	34	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	37	2	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	37	9	2	6
The teaching is good.	76	21	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	36	5	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	29	0	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	57	34	7	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	63	32	3	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	34	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	39	1	1	7

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

65. The school has continued to make good provision for children in the nursery and reception classes since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching, as at the last inspection, is always at least satisfactory and is often good, especially in the reception class. Together with the broad curriculum, this has a positive impact on children's learning. Children enjoy their time in the nursery and reception classes. They are enthusiastic, sit still and listen carefully to their teachers. They work well and co-operate sensibly when acting out a story or when playing together in the 'supermarket'. Their behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good because they are managed well and teachers provide a wide variety of interesting activities that ensure that the children never become bored. Teachers make frequent assessments of children's skills and understanding, and use these to provide suitable tasks and to track the progress of individual children. Lessons are planned with clear objectives, expectations of pupils' behaviour are high, and work is well matched to the needs of individual children. The teachers and classroom assistants provide excellent role models and have very good relationships with the children, and this helps children to develop their confidence and social skills. Children with special educational needs receive helpful advice and guidance, often from the classroom assistants, and they make good progress. Several parents regularly provide additional help, and this assistance is invaluable. Reading and counting activities set for homework effectively consolidate and extend children's learning in class.
66. Most children join the nursery when they are aged three, and move into the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term of the school year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were 28 children in the reception class and 23 children attending full-time in the nursery. When children join the nursery, their skills are less well developed than is usual for their age, especially in the key areas of language development and mathematical understanding. All children, including those who have special educational needs, make sound progress in the nursery and good progress in the reception class. By the time they leave the reception class, most achieve the levels expected for their age in communication, language and literacy skills, in mathematical understanding, physical and creative development, personal and social development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

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

67. Teachers place great emphasis on developing children's social skills in the nursery and reception classes. Most children enter the classrooms eagerly in the mornings and are keen to share their 'news' and to listen to the views of other children. Teaching of social skills is good in both classes and children in the nursery soon learn what is expected of them. In both classes, the teachers provide a range of 'free-choice' activities so children are helped to take decisions. This helps children to organise their own time and builds their confidence. In one session in the reception class, some children chose to 'make breakfast' in the home area, while others served in the 'supermarket', listened to a talking story on the computer, or used a magnetic card reader to re-tell a story in the correct order. Children joining the nursery quickly become familiar with the classroom routines. Most put their hand up to answer questions and know they have to take turns when telling 'news' or using equipment. Children sit quietly while they eat their morning snack, and drink their milk sensibly. They are well trained to eat their

lunch politely and to treat staff and other children with respect. Teachers encourage children to be kind and considerate, and to care for each other. The atmosphere in both classes is very positive and children respond well to this by being enthusiastic and helpful. As a result, most children make good progress in developing their social skills and reach the level of personal, social and emotional development expected nationally by the end of the reception year before they leave the nursery.

### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

68. Most children have poorly developed speech and language skills when they join the nursery class. Many responses are limited to single words, and children often mispronounce words when answering questions. The teachers encourage children to develop their vocabulary by talking with them about the work they have done during lessons, and this helps them to develop their confidence and reinforces their speaking. Teaching is always at least satisfactory in the nursery class and is often good in reception. During a lesson in the nursery, for example, the teacher showed a lemon-shaped kitchen timer and invited the children to talk about it. One boy correctly identified the colour as yellow, but could not describe the shape or the numbers on the dial. The teacher went on to explain the timer's function clearly, although she missed the opportunity to count up to five with the children when explaining the dial. Children are encouraged to speak confidently about themselves, and to express their likes and dislikes. They discuss the books they have been reading together, and talk about the weather before filling in the daily weather chart. Teachers use play acting well to encourage language and speech development. In a series of lessons in the reception class, for instance, different groups of children acted out the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. In one re-enactment of the story, a girl taking the part of *Goldilocks* accurately described the three beds as "too hard", "too soft" and "just right", while a boy acting out the role of *Baby Bear* confidently announced "someone's been sitting in my chair and it's all broken". In the 'home' area, boys and girls prepare 'meals', while in the 'supermarket', they talk with each other about the items on display. Constant questioning by the teachers and the classroom assistants helps children to develop their vocabulary and speech, and most will reach the level of language development that is usually expected by the end of the reception year.
69. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. Children in the nursery, for example, listened attentively when the classroom assistant read a story about the *Red, Ripe Strawberry*. They followed the pictures and the text in the 'big book' well, and later used picture cards sensibly to re-tell the story in the correct sequence. Teachers encourage children to take 'story sacks' home and to share the stories, soft toys and games inside with their parents or carers. Children in the reception class listen independently to recorded stories in the listening area and look through books in the reading corner, holding the books correctly and turning the pages with care. Children of reception age are taught the sounds and the names of letters, and begin to identify the initial sounds of common words. Most pupils recognise simple words that occur frequently, and some higher-attaining children identify most of the initial letter sounds correctly and read simple books. Most children make good progress and are able to read simple sentences confidently. The majority will reach the standard of reading expected nationally by the end of the reception year.
70. Teachers in both classes give children ample opportunities to develop their writing. Children in the nursery make early attempts at writing, and learn to recognise letter shapes by assembling alphabet jigsaws. In the reception class, children learn to identify and write the letters of the alphabet correctly. Initially they trace over letters, but most can write the letters without assistance and copy simple words and short phrases

correctly by the end of the reception year. Most children write their own name unaided, while some higher-attaining children write complete sentences such as *At the weekend I went to the circus*, using capital letters and full stops. While spelling is not always correct, it is usually plausible. Overall, pupils make good progress and levels of attainment in speaking, reading and writing are in line with those expected nationally for children of their age.

## Mathematical Development

71. Sound teaching in the nursery and good teaching in the reception class ensures that children are given many opportunities to recall numbers and to understand shape and size. Children in the nursery sing a range of counting songs such as *Five little men in a flying saucer*, and some children already count to five accurately. In the reception class, children make good use of a 'washing line' to sort numbers up to ten into the correct sequence. They name numbers *more* or *less* than others and identify the *biggest* and *smallest* accurately. In one lesson, children used number cards sensibly to show the number *between 4 and 6* and *the neighbours of 6*. The teacher made good use of items including pyjamas and breakfast cereals to introduce vocabulary such as *lunchtime* and *bedtime*, and used a series of photographs well to help the children place different events into a correct time sequence. Children sort objects by shape and colour. In the reception class, they recognise *squares*, *circles* and *triangles*, and name *cubes*, *cones* and *spheres* correctly. Classroom assistants help children with special needs and children who are learning English as a second language effectively to ensure that all children are fully involved and make good progress. By the end of the reception year, most children use numbers up to ten confidently, and most achieve the level of skills and knowledge expected for their age.

## Knowledge and Understanding of the World

72. Children's knowledge and understanding are very restricted when they start in the nursery. Many children have little experience of common objects and most only recognise music or characters that they have seen on television. The teachers provide many opportunities for children to learn about everyday items in the classroom, during outdoor activities and on visits in the local neighbourhood. In a nursery session, for example, the teacher explained how to play chosen musical tracks on a CD player. One boy had difficulty in locating the 'T' for *Thunderbirds* on the CD index, but gradually learnt how to use the *Play* and *Eject* controls. Children examine a range of materials and begin to recognise different textures, colours and patterns. They develop their understanding of historical time by placing pictures of babies lying and sitting up, toddlers and children in the correct order. Children develop scientific concepts as they examine leaves and fruits they have collected on a visit to Tatton Park. They identify the main body parts accurately by sticking labels onto a person's head, neck and foot, and investigate the five senses by, for example, tasting different foods. By experimenting with objects in the water tray, children learn that some *sink* while others *float*. Children are taught how to use a computer, and develop simple control of a computer mouse. Children learn about different religions and cultures by celebrating Harvest, Rosh Hashana, Divali and other religious festivals. Due to the sound teaching in the nursery and good teaching in the reception class, most children make good progress and reach the levels of knowledge and understanding expected for their age by the end of the reception year.

## Physical Development

73. When children join the nursery, they have poor manipulative skills and low levels of co-ordination, but most children make good progress and their physical development is in line with what is expected nationally by the end of the reception year. Teachers provide many opportunities in both the nursery and reception classrooms for children to handle construction equipment, to play in the sand and water trays and to use scissors, crayons and paintbrushes. Children knead and roll out dough, assemble jigsaws, and learn how to use scissors correctly. As a result, they develop better control and co-ordination. During break times in the school playground, children played on the slide, constructed a building using plastic milk crates and rode wheeled vehicles round a car track, taking care not to collide with other children. At all times, children co-operate well, learn to take turns and share resources sensibly.

### **Creative Development**

74. Children make good progress in developing their creative skills. Children have access to a wide range of tools and materials, and they work sensibly, concentrate well and use the resources sensibly. Children in the nursery make handprints in paint, and learn how to hold a paintbrush to draw circles and rudimentary faces. They stick seeds, coloured shapes and felt onto paper and create firework patterns using glitter sprinkled onto glue. They make snakes and spiders out of dough and use jelly moulds to form different shapes in the wet sand. During one lesson in the nursery, children made jellies with the assistance of a parent helper, and discovered that they could create an orange jelly by mixing the yellow and red jellies. The school makes good use of the Salford peripatetic music service, and a visiting teacher regularly introduces children to classical music such as *The Carnival of the Animals* and *The Nutcracker Suite*. In the reception class, children paint self-portraits and colourful scenes from nursery rhymes such as *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Billy Goats Gruff*. They use tissue paper and paper plates to create collages of the *Three Little Pigs* and use two-dimensional shapes such as squares, rectangles, triangles and circles to create pictures of people. Children make attractive mobiles of water scenes, spiders' webs and the *Three Gingerbread Men* using a variety of materials. Their understanding of the Hindu festival of Divali is enriched by making clay candle holders and by decorating them with paint and glitter. During a lesson in the reception class, children designed and created a wand in response to a story about *Walter's Wand*. The teacher gave them plenty of freedom to express their own ideas and provided a good range of materials to use freely. This encouraged the children's creativity well. Children use construction toys to make bridges and buildings, and use 'saws' and 'power drills' in exciting role-play. They sing nursery rhymes and songs, play percussion instruments and join in the actions that accompany the songs. As a result of sound teaching in the nursery and good teaching in the reception class, most children achieve skills broadly in line with those expected for their age when they leave the reception class.

### **ENGLISH**

75. Standards in English in the tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 were in line with the national average and well above average when compared with similar schools. Standards achieved by 11-year-olds were well below the levels expected nationally for their age, but were in line with the average in similar schools. A significant number of pupils who took the tests in 2001 had moved into the school during Years 3 - 6 and their attainment on joining the school was not as good as that of pupils who had been in the school from the age of seven. The school has tracked the progress of individual pupils and has clear evidence that those who joined the school in the infants achieved significantly higher grades than those who entered the school later. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional

language, make sound progress. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in the average ability groups in Year 6, although there are far more girls than boys in the higher-attaining 'Express' group. The school was successful in reaching the target set for its English results in 2001 and is on track to reach the more challenging target it has set for 2002. Overall, standards in English represent a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection.

### **Speaking and listening**

76. Standards in speaking and listening are close to the national average for pupils aged seven and 11. In the previous inspection, standards in listening were better than those found in speaking, but this is no longer the case. Teachers use the first part of literacy lessons well to develop and extend the way pupils' answer questions. Good use of correct vocabulary, carefully framed questions and allowing pupils time to answer questions by using an extended sentence are proving successful in developing pupils' speech. Teachers are observant and know their pupils well. As a result, they give sensitive support to encourage shy pupils, or to assist those pupils who have English as an additional language. Relationships are good in lessons and pupils listen to the views and opinions of others. This gives them confidence when explaining their thoughts in more detail. In Year 6, the teacher asked pupils to talk about their response to the story of an abandoned puppy. Pupils answered the question thoughtfully, writing *It makes me aware that some people in the world would do this to an animal and How can you leave a puppy in the bin as a load of rubbish?* Their careful responses indicate not only an understanding of the power of persuasive writing within newspaper articles, but also shows how they can express their thoughts and indicate their depth of feeling about the issue.

### **Reading**

77. Standards in reading are similar to those typically found among seven-year-olds. By the age of 11, higher-attaining pupils are fluent and expressive readers. Standards are similar to those found in the previous inspection. Since then, the school has focused on testing pupils regularly, which has given a clear picture of the individual progress of pupils and has indicated areas of weakness that could be addressed. As a result, the school found weaknesses in pupils' understanding of the passages they were reading and subsequently, opportunities have been introduced to practise comprehension during weekly lessons. To increase pupils' library and research skills, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taken to the local library in Eccles each week. This is an effective use of a valuable local resource and is having a positive effect not only on pupils' confidence and competence in locating books in the library, but also on extending their knowledge of authors and their overall interest and enthusiasm for reading.
78. Year 6 pupils used a visit to the library well to focus their study on a number of established authors. Most pupils have developed a good knowledge of a variety of authors and are able to express preferences on their styles of writing. Pupils of all abilities made good progress with their reading during this lesson because the activities had been well matched to their interest and competence as readers, and a high level of adult assistance ensured that all pupils were fully occupied during the visit. The teacher ensured that two pupils with English as an additional language were fully included in the library activity, and they were able to express their preference for the books of Roald Dahl. When reading independently, higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 read fluently and are beginning to use the punctuation in the text to add expression. Lower-attaining pupils can locate the index and contents pages in a non-fiction book and use a range of successful strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. Older pupils in Year 6 show their

knowledge of a wide range of authors and enjoy reading biographies and anthologies of poetry. The school encourages the participation of parents and carers by the regular use of home-school reading diaries, which act as a useful means of communication between home and school. Many older pupils act as school library monitors and take their duties very seriously, checking that the library is tidy and correctly organised each lunchtime. The school library is attractive and is used well both to promote reading and to enable pupils to locate information that will assist their work in other subject areas.

## Writing

79. Standards of writing are in line with the national average when pupils are aged seven and 11, but pupils achieve well above the average found in similar schools. Teachers display pupils' written work very attractively and, as a result, pupils are able to read and learn from good examples of work by children of all ages. Standards of handwriting are inconsistent through the school and this is a weakness in the teaching. Some good examples of a joined fluent style occur in the handwriting books of older pupils, but this is not found in their other writing. Consequently, a range of printing, writing in pencil and incorrectly formed letters is evident throughout the school. Younger pupils are not taught the correct formation and orientation of letters well enough and, in some cases, the marking of work, both during lessons and in books, indicates that not all teachers have a rigorous enough approach to correct letter formation. As a result, pupils form bad habits that are much harder to correct at a later stage. This problem was raised at the previous inspection and the school still has to address it successfully. Overall, however, the standard of presentation of pupils' work is satisfactory, and this represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards of spelling are better in younger pupils than older ones. This is because adoption of the Literacy Hour format for lesson planning has been successful in establishing good spelling strategies. Older pupils often make careless spelling errors in their work, but many are making sound progress in developing suitable techniques and spelling strategies because teachers are giving regular spelling homework and this helps pupils to develop their skills. The teaching of punctuation is good throughout the school and, as a result, pupils use a good range of punctuation to add interest in their written work. Pupils with English as an additional language are given plenty of help by teachers and bilingual assistants and consequently achieve standards similar to other pupils by the age of 11.
80. All pupils are given a wide range of experiences to develop their writing and a recent initiative by the school is to focus on re-writing and improving their work. This is proving effective in developing the use of interesting words and phrases to enliven a story. After an initial draft, for example, one pupil in Year 2 wrote: *Mrs Jolly is a chubby witch. She is friendly, nice and cuddly.* Older pupils in Year 4 are beginning to take careful notice of the teacher's comments on their first draft, and their second or final drafts show reference to their teacher's remarks. By Year 6, higher-attaining pupils write fluently, using adjectives appropriately to describe settings, atmosphere and characters. One higher-attaining pupil wrote *One day when he was in an antique shop, a colourful, sparkly shape caught his eye.* During literacy lessons, the progress of lower-attaining pupils is sometimes slow because there are not enough classroom assistants to monitor their work and to provide individual assistance. In addition to this, teachers do not always plan activities that are well matched to the needs of all pupils. Sometimes work is too difficult and, as a result, progress is sometimes slower if insufficient adult help is available. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 benefit from teaching within small 'Express' groups. These sessions are very effective in extending the writing ability of the most able pupils and examples of their work are used throughout the school to provide good models for all pupils. Teachers do not use pupils' ICT skills well enough to develop and extend their writing. Initial drafts and final versions of pupils'

writing are usually written by hand, for example, without using computers to draft, edit and re-draft work. More often than not, computers are used only for pupils to copy a final draft to improve the presentation.

81. Teachers do not make enough use of other subjects to develop and reinforce pupils' reading and writing skills, although some teachers use longer pieces of writing in other subjects more than others. There are some good examples of written work in history and religious education in Years 3 - 6, but too often, excessive emphasis is placed on using work-sheets, where pupils have to write only one word or a short sentence. This does little to develop report writing or to encourage writing in a variety of styles. Teachers often use correct subject-specific or technical vocabulary in other subjects, and this ensures that pupils' vocabulary is suitably enriched.
82. The quality of teaching is good, overall, with satisfactory teaching in the infant classes and some good teaching in the junior classes. This is better than at the previous inspection when there was some unsatisfactory teaching. Common features of good lessons include a brisk pace, the sharing of learning objectives with pupils before the lesson, and good teaching of basic skills, particularly in handwriting and spelling. There was some very good teaching in lessons involving higher-attaining pupils Years 2 and Year 6. This included very good questioning, clear explanations of technical vocabulary and effective strategies for involving pupils in the brainstorming of ideas prior to writing. These led to very good progress during the course of the lessons. Weaknesses in teaching occurred when teachers did not plan writing activities well enough to take into account different levels of ability within a class. This occasionally led to lower-attaining pupils struggling with their work. Added to this, there are not enough classroom assistants to provide individual support within all lessons, and this makes the task of teachers more difficult as they try to support all groups within a class. The assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is good in English and teachers use it well to track the progress of individual pupils and to set realistic targets. Bilingual assistants ensure that pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils by the time they leave the school. All teachers manage pupils well and have very good relationships with them. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and behaviour is usually good.
83. Leadership and management of the subject are good, and the school has a good capacity to raise standards further. The co-ordinator is well established and has a clear view of what the priorities are for the further development of English throughout the school. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. Support for newly qualified teachers is good and the emphasis on attractive displays of pupils' written work ensures an attractive, vibrant environment for learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. Standards in mathematics are similar to those expected nationally for 11-year-olds. This is a considerable improvement on the national tests in 2000 when standards were well below the national average. It is similar to the tests in 2001 when results were in line with the national average and well above standards in schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Although the school exceeded its target for raising standards in 2001, the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was below the national average. This is because over a third of the year group joined the school part way through the juniors and did not benefit from going through the complete four-year course. Of the pupils who completed over four years in the school, 20 per cent achieved the higher level compared to nine per cent of those who joined at a later date. Although, at the time of the previous inspection, most 11-year-olds were working

at the expected level, this was not reflected in their performance in national tests which was well below expectations. However, after three years of using the new approaches of the National Numeracy Strategy, standards for pupils in Year 6 are similar to those achieved nationally. Standards for seven-year-olds are also similar to those achieved nationally. Fewer pupils reached the expected level than in the previous year, but the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was well above the national average.

85. Inspection findings show that standards remain in line with national expectations for both seven and 11-year-olds. The quality of teaching in the infants is satisfactory, overall, and is good in the juniors. There is some very good teaching in Years 4 and 6. The co-ordinator has checked the effectiveness of teaching, ensuring that teachers are made aware of their strengths and recognise what they need to do to improve their teaching. A common problem was that teachers were not making sufficient use of mathematical language in their teaching. This has now been addressed satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 3, for example, use terms including *minute hand* and *hour hand* as they work out times such as *twenty to six*, while pupils in Year 5 use *analogue* and *digital* as they discuss morning and afternoon times. Pupils in Year 6 use terms like *consecutive*, *operation* and *inverse* accurately as they complete their calculations.
86. Although pupils made good or very good progress in some lessons during the inspection, progress over time is only satisfactory throughout the school. This is because, at times, pupils of very differing abilities have been set the same work. This has been particularly so for higher-attaining and average pupils who have often been given the same activities. As a result, some more able pupils do not make fast enough progress because the work lacks challenge while others are sometimes unable to keep up with most able. Even when teachers plan different work to suit the abilities and attainment of all pupils, it is not always matched closely enough to their needs. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, higher-attaining pupils were not stretched sufficiently by counting up to ten 10p coins when they could already count in multiples of ten beyond a hundred. In Year 3, on the other hand, lower-attaining pupils were unable to point out *quarter past* or *quarter to* because they were still unsure of *half past*.
87. The co-ordinator and senior management team have made a thorough analysis of test results and identified several gaps in pupils' learning. This has highlighted, for example, weaknesses in pupils' ability to choose the appropriate number operations to solve mathematical problems presented in narrative form. The school has worked hard to improve this aspect of mathematics and pupils now use a range of strategies to solve such problems. Teachers stress the need to read each question carefully and to look for key words and numbers in problems. This has enabled higher-attaining pupils in Year 3 to work out arrival times of journeys taking several hours and half hours, while average pupils calculated the amount of time taken for the lunch time break. Because their teacher stressed the need to be methodical when solving problems involving bus and train time-tables, average pupils in Year 5 were able to select the appropriate bus to arrive at the destination at a given time. Lower-attaining pupils calculated the amount of time between several bus stops in ten-minute intervals. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils quickly became adept at solving problems by choosing the correct number operation to use as they worked through the logical steps for solving problems on their wipe-clean *frame*. A very good feature of the lesson was the way in which the teacher planned the work to match the attainment and abilities of all pupils. This meant that each pupil was stretched, and, because of the very good teaching and support during the lesson, they all achieved success as they worked methodically to solve a considerable number of problems. As a result, higher-attaining pupils solved problems involving up to five operations while lower-attaining pupils used key words such as *total* and *change* to decide which number operation to use.

88. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 know how to teach the basic skills of numeracy, and recognise the importance of practical activities and the use of a variety of resources in helping pupils to understand mathematical concepts. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher used number squares and lines as pupils ordered numbers to 20 with the result that pupils identified, for example, numbers smaller than 20 but bigger than 15. By using a clock face with moving hands, higher-attaining pupils became proficient at showing *half past*. By giving each pupil a card with a 10 on it, the teacher in Year 2 ensured that pupils could count in multiples of ten, and she used both pupils and cards well to show how to record the multiplication table for ten.
89. An improvement in teaching since the previous inspection is the way that teachers, particularly in the juniors, teach pupils a range of strategies to use in their calculations. In a very good lesson in Year 4, the teacher asked pupils to explain their strategies to find a number to add to 28 to make a 100. By using the pupils' explanations as teaching points, she encouraged pupils to develop their own strategies to solve problems mentally, by rounding the units to the nearest ten, for example, and the tens to the nearest hundred. The teacher also encouraged pupils to develop a range of strategies for written calculations including *decomposition* and number line methods for subtraction. This enabled lower-attaining pupils to calculate  $100 - 59$  using the number line method while higher-attaining pupils used both methods for calculations such as  $248 - 157$ . A further improvement since the last inspection is that pupils have plenty of opportunities to carry out investigative activities. Pupils in Year 6 investigated, with some success, why the difference between consecutive square numbers is 3, 5, 7, 9 etc.
90. Teachers give satisfactory help to bilingual pupils and to those with special educational needs. Teachers ensure that they are included in all activities whether completing an example on the board or sharing their work during the discussion sessions at the end of the lesson. They respond well to the positive comments made by their teachers. They benefit from the extra support they are given during numeracy lessons when their work is planned to match the targets on their individual education plans. This is particularly evident when sufficient classroom assistants are available to sit with them and give them assistance throughout the session. This was the case in Year 2, for example, when the classroom assistant enabled bilingual pupils and those with special education needs to use multi-link cubes to count in tens to 50. Pupils recognised as being more able in mathematics have the opportunity to work occasionally with pupils of a similar ability in a group of children from several schools, brought together by the local education authority, and this helps them to improve their standards further.
91. Very good relationships with teachers ensure that pupils take part in lessons without fear of getting an answer wrong. Teachers thank pupils for their contributions and praise them for their efforts. Pupils look forward to reading their teachers' comments in their mathematics books and are keen to win team points for their work. Marking, however, is inconsistent and generally is not constructive enough to move pupils on. Pupils often do not correct work and some untidy work is accepted from the junior class teachers, particularly in Year 5.
92. Teachers ensure that pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils in Year 4 used their measuring skills in their work on magnets, while pupils in Year 6 used them in geography to calculate distances using a scale where one centimetre represented, for example, 80 metres. In history, pupils in Year 4 use a time line to show important eras from Roman Britain in 55BC to Modern Britain from 1901 onwards. In geography, they show the results of their noise pollution survey using

a bar chart. However, pupils' ability to use ICT to assist their learning in mathematics is under-utilised in all year groups. This should be remedied now that the new computer suite is available for use.

93. The management of the subject is good. The school has moved forward since the last inspection mainly because of the co-ordinator's work on checking the effectiveness of teaching and her analysis of test results which has highlighted areas for development. She has raised the profile of mathematics in the community by organising two workshops for parents to attend. With the support provided by the co-ordinator, the improvement in the quality of teaching and plans to develop the use of ICT in mathematics, the school is in a good position to improve standards further.

## **SCIENCE**

94. Standards in science in the current Year 6 are broadly in line with those expected nationally for 11-year-olds. This is similar to the previous inspection and better than the national tests in 2001 when standards were below the national average. Standards are in line with national expectations for seven-year-olds. This is similar to the teachers' assessments in 2001 when standards were close to national expectations, and similar to the previous inspection when standards were in line with national expectations. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve standards similar to other pupils. There is a more logical progression to the teaching of scientific knowledge since the previous inspection as the school has adopted a new scheme of work based on national guidelines.
95. The quality of teaching, as at the previous inspection, is satisfactory, overall, and good at times, especially in junior classes. This enables most pupils of average and below average ability to achieve as well as they should. Assessment of pupils' skills in science is satisfactory, but the school is aiming to introduce tests to improve assessment, particularly for younger pupils. Assessments of pupils' knowledge and skills are not used effectively, however, to ensure that the work closely matches all pupils' individual needs. In particular, teachers often do not target the higher-attaining pupils well enough and consequently they do not always learn at the speed of which they are capable. In a lesson in Year 6, for instance, the teacher pitched the task of creating two circuits, one which caused a bulb to be brighter or an electric motor to operate faster, at the right level for most pupils, but there was no suitable challenge to stretch the brightest pupils. In a Year 5 lesson, all pupils carried out an interesting investigation to collect pollen from a plant. The extension activity, however, was aimed at the whole class, and there were no reference books, CD ROMs or Internet sites available for the most able pupils to do further individual research into the role of pollen in the reproduction of plants. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils of similar ability worked together to investigate the best material to use when making ear defenders. The task for higher-attaining pupils, however, was no more difficult than that for the less able and did not give them any greater understanding of why materials provide noise insulation. There was no extension work provided, and the brightest pupils achieved very little during the last 15 minutes of the lesson. As a result, they did not learn any more than the others.
96. Although teachers fail to provide adequately for the needs of the brightest pupils, the teaching has a number of good features. There is a strong emphasis on practical and investigative work, often in small groups, and this ensures that pupils both of average and below average ability generally make sound progress. All teachers show pupils clearly how to predict, plan for a fair test, carry it out and record their findings scientifically. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively. They keep any pupils who occasionally misbehave well under control by consistently following the school's

strategy for managing pupils' behaviour. Consequently, pupils concentrate well and have good attitudes towards their work. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject and this helps them to put it across in an interesting way that pupils can understand. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, the teacher introduced a short play about a bee to maintain pupils' attention when discussing the pollination of plants. This helped pupils to learn the names of the *stigma* and *stamen* more easily, although, at the end of the lesson, many pupils were still uncertain about the role of pollen in the fertilisation of plants. Teachers often encourage pupils to use correct scientific vocabulary. In Year 4, for instance, the teacher repeatedly used scientific terms such as *attraction*, *bar magnet* and *horseshoe magnet* and required pupils to use them, so they all became familiar with them. In a Year 6 lesson, however, pupils could not understand why their circuit would not light the bulb when they lined the terminals of two batteries up incorrectly, as the teacher had not introduced and explained the terms *positive* and *negative terminals*. Teachers generally lead discussions well. They ask lots of questions to make pupils think and give them opportunities to explain their ideas. This promotes pupils' scientific thinking and helps them to gain confidence in expressing themselves clearly. Teachers often make good use of a variety of visual aids, ranging from ear defenders and lily flowers to labelled drawings and circuit diagrams. These resources stimulate pupils' interest and help to maintain their concentration.

97. The school does not enable pupils to become independent learners effectively enough. It does not make enough use of reference books and does not enable pupils to make full use of ICT facilities to assist individual research or to record the results of investigations as graphs or charts. This holds back learning, especially for higher-attaining pupils. The way teachers mark pupils' work is better in some classes than others, but generally, comments are not developed sufficiently to help pupils understand how to do better next time. In Year 5, there is an over-dependence on worksheets when covering some topics. Teachers make use of a sound range of resources, but there is a need for more software to enable ICT to be used more effectively for teaching and independent research. Good use was made of a visit to a local chemical works by pupils and of staff training provided by a pharmaceutical company. The school has successfully raised interest in the subject by providing a weekly after-school club for pupils and occasional science workshops for parents. The co-ordinator for science monitors pupils' work and the results of national tests effectively to identify areas requiring further development. She has begun to evaluate teaching in the subject in order to raise standards. As a result, the school has the capacity to improve further.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

98. Standards are typical for seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds and they have been maintained since the previous inspection.
99. As a result of working through a new scheme of work based on national recommendations, all pupils have suitable skills in drawing, painting and creating objects in two and three dimensions. Art and design contributes well to pupils' cultural development. Pupils in Years 1, 3 and 6 study well-known artists, while pupils in Year 2 use native Australian art as a stimulus for their work. Pupils in Year 4 use similar techniques to those used in native African art.
100. Sketchbooks, begun during the reception year, show how pupils improve and develop their drawing skills as they move through the school. Observational drawings of pencil pots and shoes in Year 6, for example, show good attention to detail and appropriate use of shading techniques. However, with the exception of Year 4, pupils make

insufficient use of these sketchbooks as most only use them very occasionally during the year. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 develop their pupils' eye for colour as they mix paints for self-portraits in Year 1 and for autumn pictures in Year 2. These skills are developed through the junior classes with the result that pupils in Year 6 mix paints with a very fine distinction between tones and shades as they illustrate their own poems on colour.

101. Although pupils produce a considerable amount of artwork for its own sake, teachers are proficient at using art as an extension to pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils in Year 4, for instance, incorporate accurate architectural features in their drawings of Tudor houses, while pupils in Year 5 use card and paper to make three-dimensional Greek theatre masks. Pupils in Year 3 use paint and paper to illustrate their poems about *Ferocious Dinosaurs* while pupils in Year 5 use ink pens to produce vibrant pictures of the *Aliens* in their newspaper reports produced in literacy lessons. Pupils in Year 1 use a variety of materials for a classroom collage when studying roads in the local area in geography. All pupils use 'paint' programs on the computer to produce colourful and imaginative pictures. The school is aware, however, that using more links with ICT is an area for development.
102. Attractive and carefully planned displays of pupils' work are prolific in classrooms and around the school. Visitors are greeted by a vibrant display of colour in the three-dimensional *Magic Garden* in the entrance hall. All pupils took part in creating this display under the guidance of a local artist, whose expertise injected new ideas, techniques and materials into teachers' regular practice. Visits made by pupils in Year 5 to work with teachers at the local high school help them to experience new three-dimensional techniques as they produce Greek vases and columns to support their history topic. An art and design club, organised by a local church group, is a popular lunchtime activity.
103. Management of the subject by the co-ordinator is satisfactory. She monitors the effectiveness of teachers' planning but has not yet had time allocated to work alongside colleagues in order to influence their teaching. Good procedures are in place to check the progress of pupils' drawing skills by adding three drawings annually to a collection of each pupil's work. However, this good practice is not used to check progress in other aspects of the art curriculum. The co-ordinator plans to check the effectiveness of the new scheme of work, to develop pupils' art profiles further and to strengthen links with ICT. This plan of action places the school in a good position to improve standards in art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. Standards in design and technology when pupils are aged seven and eleven match those expected nationally, and pupils make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of the design, making and evaluation processes. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Improvements have been made in the range of learning experiences provided as a new scheme of work based on national guidance has ensured that all elements of the curriculum are covered.
105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the infant classes, teachers used a visit to Tatton Park to enable pupils to observe large playground equipment. Photographs of the visit provided pupils with recollections and ideas as they made models of swings and slides back in school. Pupils used a range of large and small construction kits to model playground equipment after making a simple design. Pupils spent some time experimenting with the degree of tilt required to make a slide work successfully, prior to

completing their models. Older pupils in Year 5 produce ideas for making a pair of slippers and their initial designs are suitably labelled, with materials and tools listed. However, most teachers do not place enough emphasis on this initial design stage. Many of the designs for slippers, for example, are not realistic and pupils do not refer to them during the making process. This was also a feature of Year 6 pupils' work. They had begun an initial design to make a soft toy, but in the ensuing discussion, had not adequately considered for whom the toy was to be designed, or what constraints there might be on the finished product, including safety features and price restraints. Pupils are given clear instructions and are managed well, and this ensures that the pace of lessons is appropriate to the activities. Relationships are good and pupils listen carefully when teachers frequently pause during lessons to give specific teaching tips, for example, to remind pupils to leave a seam allowance when they transfer initial designs onto a pattern. This is an effective strategy and the pupils' use these tips positively to develop and refine their work. Teachers use correct technical vocabulary well and provide a good variety of experiences in lessons. This ensures that pupils make sound progress in their construction skills during lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are given good support, and this ensures that they make progress as good as other pupils. While teachers evaluate lessons at the end of each week as a form of assessment, this does not enable activities to be matched closely enough to the needs of higher and lower-attaining pupils, and this slows the progress of some groups. Despite this limitation, pupils behave well in lessons and show good attitudes to their work.

106. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership in the subject. She monitors the quality of teacher's planning throughout the school, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching. There are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' understanding and as a result, teachers do not have a secure view of what pupils already know and can do well, and the co-ordinator does not have a clear grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in the design, making and evaluation processes. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and the co-ordinator ensures that pupils of higher and lower ability receive suitable resources. Special resources include a selection of left-handed scissors and larger needles.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds are in line with national expectations. This is similar to the previous inspection.
108. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 use the local environment and what pupils already know about Eccles as a starting point for many lessons. Teachers begin to develop the mapping skills of the youngest pupils by looking at how they get to school. Pupils record their knowledge by drawing the sequence of features they pass. They look at how the journey is made safer by the use of speed restrictions, traffic lights, zebra crossings and the 'lollipop' person. Pupils in Year 2 begin to gain an insight into real-life environmental problems when their teacher takes them to study the amount of traffic at different times of the day. A good feature of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is the effective use of *Barnaby Bear*, a teddy bear used to help pupils develop their understanding of the physical features of countries 'visited' by him as he holidays abroad. They learn of the wider world as he 'travels' to Brittany and Canada. In the infant hall, an attractive display, with a map of the world showing the routes taken by Barnaby and backed up by photographs and postcards of the areas visited, generates much interest and assists pupils' learning well.

109. Year 3 pupils also made good use of the local environment. In a good lesson, pupils were enthralled by an aerial photograph of the school, taken ten years ago. The teacher's good questioning skills enabled pupils not only to look at how the school has changed but also to see how the area around the school has been used. Pupils develop their mapping skills as they study street maps of Eccles and make comparisons between the human and physical features of the area. A good feature of the lesson was the teacher's emphasis on the use of geographical language such as *residential* and *commercial*, and pupils were encouraged to use these terms as they reported back their findings. In a lesson concerning the amount of waste generated at home by everyone in the class, pupils in Year 4 quickly gained an understanding of the need to re-cycle as much waste as possible. As they sorted their own household rubbish into glass, plastic, card and paper items, they became aware of the enormity of the task of disposing of such a variety and amount of household waste, and how this may affect the quality of life. They gained a useful insight into how household rubbish is re-cycled from a visitor from *Salford Pride*, the local re-cycling unit.
110. Teachers use fieldwork effectively to give pupils first-hand experiences both in their own locality and further afield. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, visit Tatton Park to investigate recreational facilities while pupils in Year 4 practise orienteering in Clifton Country Park. Teachers take pupils in Year 5 on an annual visit to a residential field study centre in Prestatyn, and this helps to improve their understanding of different environments as well as helping to develop their social skills.
111. The development of numeracy is aided in geography as pupils use tally charts in Year 2 to record information about traffic, and pupils in Year 4 record the results of a survey about noise pollution on bar graphs. Pupils in Year 6 use their numeracy skills to calculate distances on maps using a variety of scales. Links with ICT, however, have not yet been developed, but this should be addressed now that the new computer suite is in place. Although pupils have some opportunities to practise their writing skills in geography, they do not have sufficient opportunities to carry out independent research by using reference books, CD ROMs or the Internet. Pupils often attempt the same activities regardless of their ability. Lower-attaining pupils in a Year 4 lesson, for example, struggled to complete their recording sheet because of their poorer reading and writing skills.
112. The co-ordinator, who is new to the post, already has a clear overview of the provision for geography. She checks teachers' planning regularly to ensure that skills are taught in a logical order, although she has not yet been allocated time to check the quality of teaching. Her plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the new scheme of work, to build up resources for each unit of work and to develop ICT in the subject, place the school in a good position to raise standards further.

## **HISTORY**

113. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in history is typical of that expected nationally. The school has maintained the same standards since the previous inspection. All pupils make sound progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding of history as they move through the school. In some lessons, where their interest and imagination is fired by the use of interesting local resources, pupils' learning is good. In Year 5, for example, pupils compared the architectural styles of the local Trafford Centre with those of Ancient Greece. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons are always good.

114. By the age of seven, pupils achieve a satisfactory level of factual knowledge and understanding, although they spend little time recording historical events and consequently, they are not given sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills. Teachers use artefacts well to support learning in lessons, and this was illustrated in both Years 1 and 2 as pupils examined household objects that were used long ago. Teachers encourage pupils to touch and observe the artefacts closely and, from this, pupils learn to interpret how people used these objects in the past. Pupils are delighted as they handle the objects, and this generates a lot of discussion on each table. This ensures that pupils' vocabulary is extended, as is their ability to listen to the views and opinions of others. The effective use of adult support during these lessons ensured that pupils' questions were answered quickly, therefore making learning more effective. Pupils have some understanding of chronology. Higher-attaining pupils, for instance, understand that the Victorian period was "*long ago*", but some teachers miss opportunities to assist pupils' understanding of time-scales as not all classrooms have a time-line for easy reference.
115. By the time they are 11, pupils have a more secure understanding of chronology and appreciate that artefacts are useful sources of evidence. Older pupils use writing skills more effectively as they produce booklets with written reports of life in Victorian times, written from the perspective of the child. They use non-fiction books to research the conditions enjoyed and endured by rich and poor children in Victorian times, but teachers' miss the opportunity to extend and develop ICT skills through the use of computers, CD ROMs and the Internet for independent research. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed presenting their work on Victorians in a school assembly and their oral presentation of this period of history was well received. When questioned, pupils reveal a secure knowledge of some of the social aspects of the Victorian period. They understand that at the age of ten, they would probably be working in mines, mills or factories and their lives would be considerably different from today.
116. The teaching of history is satisfactory, including some very good teaching in the infant classes and some good teaching in the junior classes. A strength of the teaching is how artefacts are used to develop pupils' understanding that objects from the past are a rich source of evidence. Teachers manage pupils well and have very good relationships, and, as a result, behaviour in lessons and pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good. A weakness in teaching is that activities for higher-attaining and lower-attaining pupils are not always suitable for the different ability levels, and this slows the rate at which some groups of pupils learn. There are no formal procedures to assess pupils' understanding, so teachers are not able to work from a secure base of knowing what each pupil can do or understand. Teachers do not extend the learning of higher-attaining pupils sufficiently by providing independent research activities for them to pursue. Support for lower-attaining pupils and pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory, but there are not enough classroom assistants in school to ensure consistent support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
117. The subject co-ordinator uses national guidelines to plan the subject and ensures that pupils' knowledge and understanding is extended in a logical order as they move through the school. Resources are adequate, but teachers do not yet use computer software enough to support teaching and learning in history throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

118. Standards in ICT are below national expectations throughout the school. This is not as good as at the previous inspection when attainment was in line with national

expectations for both seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds. While expectations have risen nationally as a result of rapid changes in ICT, the school has only recently installed a computer suite that has given it the facilities needed to teach the latest requirements. Pupils are currently being taught skills appropriate for their age, but have not yet caught up with work they have previously missed. There are a few parts of the National Curriculum that the school has not yet taught to older pupils, including control technology, remote sensing and the use of simulations. The school has adopted a comprehensive scheme of work based on national guidelines, and this ensures that pupils are now learning ICT skills in a logical order and should soon cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

119. The standard of teaching is satisfactory overall, including some good teaching. Teachers have clear expectations of what pupils should achieve, and as a result, pupils have good attitudes towards the subject. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, pupils worked hard and concentrated well when combining pictures and text in a single document. They used the mouse correctly for re-opening their files, and used the paint spray and delete tools successfully. At the end of the lesson, they saved and printed out their own work and were pleased with the results.
120. Teachers have clear objectives for each lesson and explain new ideas well, often by using the interactive whiteboard effectively to enable all pupils to see and manipulate the screen. Consequently, pupils learn new skills quickly and understand clearly what they are doing. In a Year 1 lesson, for instance, pupils worked sensibly when creating a sentence by clicking onto words on a list and dragging them into the correct part of the screen. Pupils in Year 4 quickly learned how to locate and re-size a picture when creating a poster encouraging children to 'keep the school tidy'. They adapted the text to the needs of the reader by creating different font sizes and colours, and by using bullet points, bold print and capital letters. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils quickly learned how to add formulae to the cells of a spreadsheet to perform rapid calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants, and pupils who speak English as an additional language make sound progress because of the quality of individual help.
121. The subject is well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who have a good grasp of what needs to be done to raise standards. They evaluate teachers' planning and monitor pupils' work, and are beginning to observe teaching and to assist colleagues in the classroom. Although pupils are now developing a satisfactory level of computing skills during ICT lessons, there is, as yet, little use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers have received some training in basic computer skills, but most lack sufficient training to use more advanced ICT skills and to introduce the use of computer programs across all subjects of the curriculum. The school has plans for further training to improve teachers' expertise. Resources have been developed considerably since the previous inspection. There is a new ICT suite containing 11 networked computers and an Internet link, while each classroom has a stand-alone machine. Generally, there is a satisfactory range of hardware resources, but the school recognises the need to improve software resources so pupils can use computers effectively to assist their learning across different subjects of the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

122. Standards are in line with those expected nationally for seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds. This is similar to the previous inspection. By the time they leave school, pupils have been introduced to a variety of musical styles, and are beginning to develop their

own compositions with a range of different moods and textures. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are able to join in all practical activities fully and make sound progress during lessons.

123. Teaching is sound in the infant classes. In the junior classes, it ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. Very good use is made of a visiting teacher from the Salford music service. During a lesson with Year 4 pupils, she kept up a brisk pace throughout, introducing a wide variety of musical experiences such as rhythmic chants, clapping of balanced rhythms, singing and identifying notes of different pitch, and composing an ostinato accompaniment on percussion instruments. Pupils concentrated very well during the lesson, listened carefully and joined in well. Pupils generally have good attitudes towards the subject. In a Year 6 lesson, for instance, they played tunefully and confidently and most were able to keep in time and maintain the rhythm. Most pupils understood how to read simple musical notation, though opportunities to improve the performance by varying the dynamics were hampered as the teacher allowed the pupils to sign and play too loudly throughout. Teachers' planning has benefited from the introduction of a scheme of work based on national guidelines. As a result, planning is better co-ordinated across the school, and pupils learn musical skills in a logical progression. Pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to a range of music from different times and different places. Most teachers are careful to introduce correct musical terminology, and, as a result, most pupils appreciate how changes in musical elements, such as *pitch*, *timbre* and *rhythm*, create different moods. Where teaching is occasionally unsatisfactory, teachers do not explain musical terms correctly or use them precisely enough, and pupils are given insufficient guidance on how to improve their compositions by, for instance, varying the *tempo* or *dynamics*.
124. Pupils listen to a variety of music when entering and leaving school, infant or junior assemblies, and teachers take the opportunity to discuss the mood of the music and the composer. Pupils sing a variety of hymns and songs during collective worship. They sing tunefully, with reasonably clear diction and maintain the rhythm well. This is much better than at the previous inspection when the standard of singing was unsatisfactory.
125. The subject is led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has successfully raised the profile of music in the school. By monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' performances in assemblies and concerts, she has been able to raise standards, especially in singing and playing, since the previous inspection. A number of pupils now receive weekly lessons in guitar, flute or keyboard from visiting teachers, and play regularly in assemblies and concerts. The school has a satisfactory range of percussion instruments and a sound selection of recorded music, but teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to use computer programs, CD ROMs or the Internet to assist their learning. The singing club is currently in abeyance, but pupils enjoy practising for concerts at Christmas and during the summer term. Pupils have enjoyed composing lyrics and music for the 'Voices of Promise' competition and have performed at the parish church, the Barton Brook Nursing Home and in concerts at the Arena in Manchester. Musicians from the Salford music service visit the school each year to entertain the pupils and to demonstrate a variety of musical instruments.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. Most seven-year-olds and 11-year olds achieve standards that match the levels expected nationally for their age. The school makes good provision for swimming. Pupils' attainment in swimming is good, with most pupils reaching the minimum

requirement of a 25 metre certificate, and they achieve well in lessons. Lower-attaining pupils are helped particularly well in swimming by a parent helper and this ensures that they make good progress in both their skills and confidence during the course of lessons. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The progress pupils make in their skills and understanding in physical education is consistently sound, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection when progress in some lessons was affected by an element of unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils who have special educational needs or have English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils.

127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and teachers ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. The school does not have a playing field for athletics or outdoor and adventurous activities and this hampers what the school can provide, but teachers give pupils a variety of other opportunities and as a result, standards are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4, for example, visit Clifton Country Park and in Year 5, pupils have a residential visit to Prestatyn where outdoor pursuits are a strong feature of the week. During lessons, infant pupils have a suitable range of stretching activities during the warm-up part of their lessons, but teachers do not always use these opportunities well enough to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of what happens to the body as activity increases. This is not a strong feature of lessons with older pupils either and, consequently, valuable opportunities are lost to teach the health-related aspects of physical exercise. Teachers give instructions clearly and manage pupils well. This results in most pupils being attentive and responsive, and behaviour in lessons is usually good. Pupils are taught how to put apparatus and equipment out safely and, as a result of this, pupils' work in a safe environment.
128. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular activities and physical education features strongly in the after-school clubs. Clubs are often run by parents and governors or by local authority coaches and many pupils take part. In a volleyball club, for example, good teaching by a visiting coach ensured that pupils learned ball skills and games tactics well. In the extra-curricular activities, there is a good mix of boys and girls who work well together in teams. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well represented and strong friendships are formed among different social and ethnic groups.
129. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management in the subject. She monitors teacher's planning satisfactorily to ensure that the curriculum follows recent national guidance. A positive new initiative is the monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school, which is planned to begin shortly. However, there are no formal procedures to check pupils' skills and understanding, and as a consequence of this, teachers do not have a firm grasp of what pupils can do well or where they need to improve. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and the school has good access to sports equipment through the 'Top Sports' programme, through which all staff have recently undertaken training.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

130. The school has maintained standards of achievement in religious education since the previous inspection. Throughout the school, pupils, including those who are bilingual or have special educational needs, reach standards that are in line with the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus. The school develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Islam throughout the school and also helps junior

pupils to learn about Judaism. Pupils develop their personal responses to religious, social and moral issues by reflecting on their own feelings, values and experiences.

131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory both in infant and junior classes. Teachers respect different cultures and traditions and pass this positive attitude on to pupils. This approach makes a valuable contribution to the good racial harmony that exists in the school. By celebrating some of the major festivals of different world faiths, including Christmas, Eid and Divali, pupils learn to respect and celebrate each other's beliefs and customs and this enables them in turn to reflect upon their own beliefs.
132. In Years 1 and 2, pupils gain from talking, discussing and listening. Teachers make good use of stories that focus on values, relationships or religious teachings so that pupils consider the relevance of these to their own lives. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, know that telling a parable was Jesus' way of teaching about God. After listening to the parable of *The Prodigal Son*, pupils related their own experiences of feeling sorry and regretful about things they had done in the past. Pupils in Year 1 learn about the value of thinking of others by giving presents. As they listen to the Christmas story and then describe their own choice of a gift for Jesus, they begin to understand the significance, for Christians, of giving presents at Christmas.
133. By the age of 11, most pupils have acquired a reasonable knowledge and understanding of the major world religions and the main events in the Christian calendar. In a lesson in Year 3, the teacher used good subject knowledge and a range of resources to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of ritual in worship with particular emphasis on Muslim worship. A good feature of the lesson was the way in which the teacher encouraged contributions from Muslim pupils, which helped other pupils to understand the significance, for Muslims, of using a prayer mat and of facing towards Mecca during prayer. Pupils enjoyed the discussion and remained attentive throughout. Resources were also used well in a Year 5 lesson as pupils considered the significance, for Christians, of the four advent candles. Pupils in Year 6 consider what worship means to Christians and go on to write their own prayers. One pupil wrote *Let there be happiness and kindness everywhere* while another wrote *Please take away the war and the sadness*. A Muslim pupil wrote *We have all done some bad things in our time so please forgive us*. Some prayers are written in both English and Arabic.
134. Teachers give insufficient attention to providing opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing skills. For much of the time, pupils of very different abilities are given the same activities to complete. When pupils are encouraged to use their writing skills, it is done well, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in Year 3 empathise with the *prodigal son* as they write letters to his father, asking for forgiveness, while pupils in Year 4 show a good understanding of the main events in the Jewish year including Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Hanukkah, Pesach and Purim. Pupils have not yet had the chance to use ICT in religious education, and this limits their opportunities for independent research using CD-ROMs or the Internet. This should be rectified now that the new computer suite is operational.
135. The management of religious education is satisfactory. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning for effectiveness but has not yet had opportunities to observe and evaluate teaching. Resources are good, with an ample supply of religious artefacts to support the teaching of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Pupils have opportunities to visit the local Anglican church and a local mosque, and pupils in Year 4 visit the Jewish museum in Manchester each year. With the new scheme of work in place to

supplement the locally agreed syllabus, and with plans to check the effectiveness of teaching, the school is in a good position to raise standards in religious education.