

INSPECTION REPORT

BRISCOE LANE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105398

Headteacher: Ms. S Campbell

Reporting inspector: Mrs. J E Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th October 2001

Inspection number: 196860

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Briscoe Lane Newton Heath Manchester
Postcode:	M40 2TB
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. K Duckworth
Date of previous inspection:	November 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11565	Mrs. J E Platt	Registered inspector	English Music Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed?
9505	Mr. D Haynes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30935	Mrs. K McArthur	Team inspector	Science Religious education History Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3191	Mr. J Curley	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized community school having 194 boys and girls on roll. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (54 per cent) is above the national average. Currently, 56 pupils (29 per cent) are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is higher than usually seen in similar schools. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a similar low number are Traveller pupils. No pupils need additional help to learn to speak English. The area the school serves includes areas of social deprivation and high unemployment. The school is involved in a Nurture Project to develop pupils' social and personal skills. Attainment on entry to the school has improved in recent years but overall remains below that expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that provides pupils with a sound education in a caring community. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and attitudes to school. Overall standards are below the national average but are gradually improving and the great majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress. The headteacher gives strong leadership and has done much to ensure the school has a clear direction with a focus on raising standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in art and design, drama and physical education.
- Good teaching in science leads to effective learning and good progress.
- The leadership of the headteacher is strong and purposeful and has been effective in bringing about good improvement in the school.
- The school's procedures to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. This leads to positive relationships in the school.
- The school gives high priority to the welfare of the pupils and this leads to a caring community with many opportunities for personal development.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.
- The attention given to history, geography and design and technology so that pupils can acquire the required skills in these subjects.
- The number of support staff to assist learning in lessons.
- Pupils' attendance, which is well below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress overall since the last inspection in November 1999. The issues from this inspection have received good attention and are having an impact on the improvements seen in the school. The curriculum has been reviewed and more attention is now given to investigation. This has had a positive impact on standards in science and mathematics. Pupils are more confident solving problems and following up their own lines of enquiry. Closer links have been established with the infant school and more developments are proposed. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science. As yet the setting of individual targets has not had an impact on standards. Systems are in now place to inform governors about the effectiveness of the school. They are fully involved in analysing the school's test results and tackling identified needs. Standards have improved although the pace has been slow. The school has struggled with staffing changes and has difficulties in employing temporary staff. This has hampered the pace of improvement in standards in the school. The school's staffing situation is now more stable and teaching has improved and is contributing to the rising standards particularly in science and numeracy.

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				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	E	E	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	E	C	
Science	E	E	C	A	

These test results for 2000 show that when pupils leave school, standards are well below the national average in English and mathematics and average in science. The results were much higher when compared with similar school results and reflected achievement by these pupils was satisfactory in English and mathematics and very good in science. This is evident in the test results since 1998 that show every year a higher proportion of pupils are reaching the level expected for their age. The rising trend has been similar to the national picture. In English and mathematics few pupils exceeded the level expected for their age and this is holding down overall standards. This is not the case in science when a good proportion of pupils reached high levels. National data on the test results in 2001 was not available at the time of the inspection. The school's results were not as high as the previous year. There is sufficient evidence to show this dip was related to an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs in the group and does not represent a fall in standards. The school has set suitably challenging targets for 2002 and the standards of work seen indicate the school is likely to come close.

Standards of work seen in Year 6 during the inspection are average in science and below average in English and mathematics. From a below average level of attainment as pupils start school these standards show achievement is good in science and satisfactory in English and mathematics. Skills in investigation have considerably improved in science. Pupils' problem solving skills are improving and standards in numeracy are satisfactory and used to support learning in other subjects. Literacy skills are below average and only a few pupils are enthusiastic readers. Writing is a weakness and pupils find it difficult to produce a sustained piece of writing.

Pupils with special educational needs and Traveller pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual programmes. Teachers endeavour to include them in all activities but their progress is hampered when support staff is not available to provide extra help.

In information and communication technology standards are below average because the school has insufficient resources to teach all of the required aspects. Similarly, standards in history, geography and design and technology are unsatisfactory as insufficient time is allocated to these subjects and so topics are not covered in sufficient depth. The school puts great emphasis on physical and creative development and standards in art and design, drama and physical education are good. In religious education and music standards are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. There are examples of good behaviour in lessons where the teaching holds the pupils' interest. On the playground and in other lessons behaviour is generally satisfactory.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Staff have caring relationships with the pupils. Pupils get on well with each other and are keen to help if a problem arises.
Attendance	Well below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory

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

Good teaching was seen in many lessons. However, considering all aspects of teaching, the overall quality throughout the school is judged to be sound. The principle strengths lie in the positive and caring relationships and effective management of pupils. Teachers also prepare well with clear learning outcomes that are shared with pupils so they know the focus of the lesson. In the best lessons teachers use a range of stimulating methods so that learning is exciting and holds the interest of the pupils. Teaching was good in science and mathematics and the emphasis on investigation and practical activities has raised standards in these subjects. Numeracy skills are taught effectively and lively mental sessions improve pupils' skills in mental calculation. Teaching of English is satisfactory although the teaching of drafting and handwriting needs further attention. The focus on speaking effectively promotes confidence in speaking in front of an audience. The literacy hour is providing structure to lessons and the overall teaching of literacy is satisfactory. Teachers do not plan sufficiently to extend pupils' literacy skills in other subjects.

Teaching of information and communication technology is often good in the computer suite but is unsatisfactory overall as the computers in class are underused to extend learning. Teachers do not teach all of the aspects of the National Curriculum. Teaching in design and technology is unsatisfactory as teachers do not give sufficient attention to teaching all of the required skills or plan a wide enough range of experiences for the pupils.

The learning needs of the Traveller pupils and those with special educational needs are well met when they receive additional support to tackle the targets in their individual educational programmes. They are not as effectively met for the pupils who do not have extra help as the school has very limited adult support. Teachers are aware of the social needs of their pupils and show great tolerance in ensuring all pupils play an active part in school life.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. A good focus on literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. There is an imbalance in the curriculum as insufficient time is given to history, geography and design and technology. The information and communication technology curriculum does not meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of these pupils but limited additional adult support is available to help them in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual development is good and pupils are encouraged to pause and appreciate the world around them. Social and moral development is good. Pupils are effectively taught right from wrong. A good range of interesting activities is provided for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The care and welfare of the pupils is good. A secure environment is created and pupils are happy in school. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science and information is being used effectively to track pupils' progress and remedy weaknesses in the curriculum.

Parents have very positive views of the school. The school encourages parents to help in school and the number is gradually improving. Information to parents is satisfactory although the prospectus omits some required items.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides strong leadership, and has successfully formed a committed senior management team and willing staff. All are united in a determination to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Close links with the school keep them fully informed about the progress the school is making. Most statutory duties are fulfilled except for omissions in the school prospectus and the information and communication technology curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is developing effective systems to analyse its own performance. Assessment information is used to check on pupils' achievements and to predict future targets.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good and spending is closely monitored. Extra funds are used effectively to the benefit of all pupils. Resources are used well except for the library and computers in the classrooms. When making spending decisions the school gives good attention to the principles of best value.

The school is adequately staffed although there are not enough support staff to help pupils in lessons. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. There are weaknesses in design and technology, geography and information and communication technology. Accommodation is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel welcome in school and find it easy to ask questions. • The school expects their children to do their best. • Their children like school and are expected to work hard. • Teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress. • The management of the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more interesting range of activities outside of lessons. • A more consistent approach to the setting of homework.

The inspection team agrees in large with the parents' positive views. Inspectors conclude the use of homework to support learning is satisfactory. They consider the school provides a range of interesting visits and visitors although the number of clubs is limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in the national tests in 2000 were well below the national average in English and mathematics and average in science. When compared with similar school results were higher. They were average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. This comparison with similar schools reflects the achievement of these pupils was satisfactory in English and mathematics and very good in science. Results were higher in science as more pupils exceeded the national average. This was not the case in the other subjects and this kept the overall results in these subjects low. National data on the test results for 2001 was not available at the time of the inspection. The school's results in English and mathematics in 2001 showed a decline when compared with the previous year. There is ample evidence to show that this cohort was not typical and presented the school with a particular challenge. Their learning was also disturbed by staffing difficulties that led to changes of temporary teachers and occasions when pupils were sent home. Given the high proportion of pupils in this group on the school's register of special educational needs, this reduction suggests that the majority were doing as well as might be expected of them. Since 1996, taking all three subjects into consideration the trend has been rising in line with the national picture. The results showed boys have not been doing as well as girls. The school has obtained new resources to tackle this and relates some of the difference to the number of boys identified as having behavioural difficulties. No inequality was seen during the inspection and boys generally are now achieving as well as girls.

2. Current standards of work have continued to rise although, overall they remain below average. In mathematics and English standards are below average and in science are average. Considering pupils' attainment as they start in Year 3 is below that expected for their age the current standard of work reflects satisfactory achievement in English and mathematics and good achievement in science. One reason for the rising standards is the better use of assessment information. This has led to more progress being made by the higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science as teachers now set more challenging tasks. However, this is not the case in English and higher attaining pupils are underachieving. The school has used assessment data to set challenging targets for 2002.

3. The previous inspection judged that pupils with special educational needs make slow progress. This has improved with the more effective assessment systems that identify the needs of these pupils. Progress is now satisfactory. A barrier to the progress of many of these pupils and other lower attaining pupils is the limited additional support despite high levels of need. This results in many pupils not receiving sufficient help when they work unsupervised in groups. The pupils who receive additional support from the local authority make better progress as the needs in their individual educational programmes receive more attention. Traveller pupils also have individual educational programmes and benefit from extra help to enable them to make sound progress. Teachers are aware of the needs of these pupils in their classes and check they are included in all activities so that self-esteem is increased as well as academic performance. The few pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are well established members of the school community and the school receives no additional support for them. Their progress is tracked through the school's assessment procedures and they make similar progress as their classmates. No pupils need extra support to learn to speak English and no pupils are identified as being gifted or talented.

4. In the work seen in English, standards are average in speaking and listening and below average in reading and writing. The standards identified in the previous report have been maintained. The school places great emphasis on speaking in drama and by the end of Year 6 many are confident sharing their ideas in discussions. Many pupils have the basic skills to read but are not enthusiastic readers and do not read confidently. Writing is the weakest aspect of

English. The great majority of pupils can write stories and reports but many lack the awareness of how to use language to create particular effects and also refine and improve their work. Although literacy skills are below average most pupils can read and write sufficiently well to support learning in other subjects. For examples, letters are written in history and prayers in religious education. These skills could be further promoted in other subjects to increase pupils' confidence.

5. The overall standard of work in mathematics is below average. Since the previous inspection teachers have given more attention to the opening of their lessons. Quick questions have sharpened pupils' skills and their ability to solve problems has improved. More attention needs to be given to multiplication tables so that calculations can be quicker. In response to good teaching numeracy skills are now satisfactory but are only used occasionally to support learning in other subjects. For example, in physical education when pupils count the numbers of points scored and in science when they record their results in a graph.

6. Standards in science have improved and are now average. This represents good achievement and very good achievement for the few pupils who exceed the target expected for their age. The emphasis on investigation has been successful in raising standards and pupils are confident planning their own experiments and then recording their results in a variety of ways.

7. The school has not managed to keep up with the pace of change in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are below average. Most pupils acquire early word processing skills but there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of data handling, e-mailing, modelling and elements of control.

8. Standards in history, geography and design and technology are below average as insufficient time is allocated to these subjects. This means pupils do not have in-depth knowledge about the topics they are taught. In design and technology insufficient attention is given to teaching pupils how to plan and design their models. Standards in religious education meet the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers give emphasis to creative and physical development and standards in art and design and physical education are good and in music are satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and contribute to the positive learning environment that exists within the school. Pupils are keen to enter school and settle quickly into the daily routine without undue intervention from the class teacher. During lessons the majority of pupils concentrate well and show enthusiasm when the quality of teaching makes the lessons interesting. Pupils contribute well in lessons and particularly enjoy drama. This was evident with Year 6 pupils when playing both powerful and submissive roles and then reflecting on the feelings each other experienced.

10. Parents rate highly the values the school offers their children and consider behaviour has improved. Behaviour overall is satisfactory. The head teacher's expectations of good behaviour are high. Application of the behaviour policy is consistent across the school and there have been nine fixed term exclusions involving five pupils in support of maintaining high standards of behaviour. In lessons the majority of pupils exhibit good behaviour and concentrate for the duration of the lesson but the behaviour and lack of concentration of a minority of pupils was distracting and required intervention from the class teacher. No bullying, racial or sexual harassment was observed in the classrooms or when the children were at play but a number of pupils were seen confiding to adults that they were upset about inappropriate behaviour in the playground. Overall the school is an orderly community, there is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti inside the school and learning resources and property are treated with respect. Pupils demonstrate a natural courtesy to adults without prompt and they relate well to each other and to all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils are at ease expressing their feelings to the class teacher and in front of their fellow pupils.

11. Personal development is good and the great majority of pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with their teachers. The school offers a good range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for the day to day running of the school. Pupils are identified as class helpers and undertake tasks for the teacher in the classroom that include taking the register to the office after each registration and

the issuing and collection of various items required during lessons. For the older pupils, there is the opportunity to become a 'Buddy' and assist the infant children during the staggered lunch breaks as well as being a contact point for other pupils when at play. There is a newly formed school council and the pupils that have taken on this responsibility find it both rewarding and challenging.

12. Overall, attendance is well below the national average. The school is aware of the situation and has a number of strategies in place in an attempt to improve the situation.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This is similar to the previous inspection although there have been improvements and no lessons seen were less than satisfactory. The previous inspection identified a need to further improve skills in managing pupils. This has been successfully accomplished and learning is now rarely disturbed by misbehaviour. Some difficulties have been caused by problems in recruiting temporary staff. This was a problem last year when the staffing situation was less stable and disturbed the learning of the pupils in Year 6. Currently, the school has a stable staffing situation. During the inspection 47 lessons were seen and in 53 per cent of these the teaching was good or better. In 6 per cent of lessons teaching was very good. In the other lessons seen teaching was satisfactory. However, the overall quality of teaching in ICT and design and technology is unsatisfactory as teachers do not give enough attention to teaching the required skills in the subjects and so standards are below average.

14. Good teaching was seen in most years and subjects. It was best in mathematics, science, drama, art and design and physical education and learning is good in these subjects. Teaching was often good in Years 5 and 6 and much is achieved in these classes.

15. Teachers have secure knowledge of most of the subjects they teach. The review of pupils' artwork shows a good knowledge of artistic skills that are shared effectively with pupils so their acquisition of a range of techniques is good. This is not the case in design and technology when teachers are less confident and pupils are unsure of different methods to use when constructing models. Teachers have been involved in training for ICT and more is planned to increase teachers' knowledge of all aspects of the ICT curriculum. In ICT lessons where teachers have expert support teaching is satisfactory and often good.

16. The teaching of numeracy skills is good. Lessons start with a lively activity that promotes pupils to carry out mental calculations and pupils are eager to be part of these sessions. Literacy skills are taught satisfactorily. Teachers use a range of interesting books to develop pupils' skills in reading but do not always make it clear to pupils the different strategies to tackle new words. Spelling is taught more effectively and pupils use their knowledge of sounds effectively in their writing. ICT skills are now being taught more effectively in the ICT suite but overall the teaching is unsatisfactory as insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils practising these skills and this hampers their learning. Teachers do not plan for their pupils to use their numeracy, literacy and ICT skills in other subjects and so opportunities to consolidate and extend the acquisition of new skills are missed.

17. Planning of lessons is good. Teachers make good reference to the detailed planning guidelines when preparing lessons. This ensures lessons have clear learning outcomes and in the best lessons these are shared with pupils. Teachers are usually very clear about what they want different groups of pupils to learn in lessons. This is effective when planning for pupils with special educational needs and Traveller pupils. These pupils have individual educational plans with clear targets set to tackle identified needs. Teaching for these pupils is satisfactory overall. It is hampered by the lack of support staff to help these pupils in group tasks and so teachers cannot give as much attention to their needs as they would like. A few pupils with special educational needs and the Traveller pupils receive additional support from the local authority. These sessions focus on the targets set in the pupils' individual programmes and a variety of activities leads to good learning. A concern is the amount of time these pupils are away from their

own classes. This often clashes with literacy and numeracy lessons and means teachers have to give extra time to ensuring the pupils have not missed any important new learning.

18. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work are satisfactory. They are higher in science and numeracy when tasks are set that challenge pupils and so extend their learning. This is effective in investigation and problem solving when teachers ask demanding questions that lead pupils on to a deeper understanding of topics. In English, expectations in reading and writing are not high enough. This leads to some teachers setting undemanding activities particularly for the higher attaining pupils who are often underachieving.

19. In the best lessons teachers use stimulating activities that capture pupils' interest and enhance their learning. This was very effective in Years 5 and 6 when photographs and music were used as a stimulus for writing and pupils responded with some imaginative vocabulary. Lessons often include partner and group work and this is effective in ensuring pupils of all abilities and needs are included in activities. The teaching of drama is a strength in the school because of the focus on including all and the variety of methods used to make learning great fun. A problem in the teaching of ICT was observed when the organisation of the lesson restricted the use of the computers. During the inspection organisation was adjusted and led to more pupils having access to the computers to learn new skills.

20. The management of pupils is good and leads to pupils learning in an orderly atmosphere. Teachers consistently apply the school's rewards and sanctions so pupils are clear about what is acceptable behaviour in lessons. A few pupils are identified as having behavioural difficulties and teachers are patient and insistent in their management of these pupils so that disruptions are kept to a minimum. Teachers often take time to have a quiet word with pupils over any identified concerns and this effectively helps pupils to understand how their behaviour and attitudes can upset others.

21. Time is often used very well. Lessons are often brisk and teachers set time constraints for the completion of tasks. This is effective in keeping pupils involved in their work and most try hard to finish it. In a few lessons time was wasted, as pupils had to copy out the learning objective for the lesson. This activity was unsuitable for the younger pupils, as the words used were too difficult for them. When support staff is available in lessons this is generally used effectively to support learning in class and particularly to clarify tasks for the lower attaining pupils. Resources are used effectively in many lessons. In art and design a stimulating range of resources has been used. Many of the pupils who talked to inspectors declared art was their favourite lesson because they did exciting activities. A contributory factor to the weakness in design and technology is insufficient resources to teach the required skills. Computers are available in classrooms as well as the ICT suite but they are not always used often enough to support other subjects of the curriculum or consolidate the skills learnt in the computer suite.

22. Teachers are quick to spot when pupils have not understood something in a lesson and make adjustments. They often record areas that require more attention on their lesson plans. The use of this information is variable. It is more of a problem in English when identified weaknesses is not always followed up and this leads to tasks being set that do not always build on prior learning. Written work is marked and helpful comments, which indicate how pupils can improve are often included. In Years 5 and 6 reference is often made to pupils' individual targets and this is proving effective in helping pupils know how to improve their work.

23. Parents expressed a concern about the amount of homework. Inspectors feel it is satisfactory and helps to promote learning.

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

24. The quality of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. The school meets the statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education

although in ICT not all aspects of the curriculum are taught. Religious education is based on the locally agreed syllabus.

25. A key issue at the previous inspection was the limited amount of investigative work. This has now been fully resolved and investigation activities in science and mathematics help pupils to develop their skills and understanding.

26. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum that supports the school's stated aim of meeting the needs of all pupils. Most subjects have suitable planning guidelines. A structured system of lesson planning is firmly linked to the National Curriculum and covers long term, medium and short-term plans. The weakness in ICT is linked to lack of resources to teach the full curriculum.

27. The curriculum has a suitable emphasis on English and mathematics. Some additional time is allocated for the teaching of reading and writing skills. The school has fully implemented the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy, and the overall effectiveness of these strategies is satisfactory. The school rightly allocates time to the pupils' personal, social and emotional development. However, this has led to an imbalance of the amount of time and attention given to other subjects. In history, geography and design and technology the relevant topics are not covered to sufficient depth and standards are below average. The planning and evaluation skills essential for design and technology are not fully covered.

28. Equal access to the curriculum is a strong element in the ethos of the school, and the Nurture Project underlines the school's commitment to the inclusion of all pupils. Resources, time and effort have led to an attractive classroom for the use of pupils identified as needing extra help with personal and social development. The personal, health, social and citizenship policy aims to prepare pupils for life in a diverse, multi-cultural society. A sex education policy is in place, and is taught in Year 6. Although there is no policy for drugs awareness, local police and Manchester City Football Club contribute to this aspect of the pupils' education. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs and Traveller pupils is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff check closely to see these pupils play a full part in all activities. It is unsatisfactory that much of the additional support provided means pupils have to miss parts of the literacy and numeracy hour on a regular basis. Teachers do their best to fill in the gaps as the pupils return to class but this is not always effective and leads to pupils' learning in these lessons being disturbed.

29. A good range of activities outside lesson time broadens the curriculum, and extends the skills of those who participate. The school places strong emphasis on the arts and drama and participates in the annual Manchester Arts Education Festival. Artwork is exhibited and the drama adviser from the Arts Festival regularly works in the school. Year 6 pupils performed in the drama 'Caliban' and preparations are already under way for the next festival, a Nigerian version of Macbeth. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the steel drums. Many pupils enjoy the football club, but participation in competitive matches is restricted by lack of transport. A Study Support Grant funds the ICT club. Pupils and parents may attend the breakfast club, run by parent volunteers. A number of educational visits are arranged to enhance the curriculum. Pupils visited Manchester City Football Club to participate in the 'Learn through Sport' scheme. Other visits include the Whitworth Art Gallery, The Lowry and the Contact Theatre, Chester Zoo and the Jewish Museum.

30. The school has good links with the local community. Working with the infant school, pupils made a colourful mural featuring the planets for the local library. They visit the local train station, the open area at Clayton Vale and the canal side. There are well established links with the local Church of England church, and the vicar and the Salvation Army officer are regular and welcome visitors to the school. Pupils enjoy working with the PAIS team, an evangelical outreach group, which organises a lunchtime club and provides workshops on issues such as bullying. The school has taken part in drama and arts festivals, which has included the school's steel band. There is limited contact with local firms.

31. The school has satisfactory links with other schools. Partnership with the adjoining infant school has improved. Joint meetings are regularly held for all staff and a number of joint policies have been produced, a good example being the behaviour policy. The school shares resources in the form of the newly created nurture room and shares both the room and resources for music. Other policies, notably involving assessment, need further collaboration. Most pupils transfer to one secondary school situated in another education authority. Links are limited to 'taster' sessions and open days, and pupils visit for an induction day before transferring.

32. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when spiritual, moral and social development was satisfactory, and cultural development was improving.

33. Spiritual development is promoted through the daily act of collective worship, which is mainly Christian, when pupils are given time for personal prayer and reflection. In one assembly, pupils and staff reflected on precious things in their lives, and showed how much they care for their families and pets. Music creates a calm, peaceful atmosphere, pupils enjoy singing and this often develops into a spiritual feeling. Visits out of school to Clayton Vale and pupils' pictures of natural objects help them to reflect on the beauty of nature. Every class has a weekly religious education lesson and pupils learn about major world faiths. They study Christianity and write thoughtful and sensitive prayers. During the inspection, there was a moment of appreciation of nature when a live spider found in some equipment was used in a science lesson. Pupils were amazed by the intricacies of its body. Also, in a history lesson, two pupils exclaimed with excitement when they saw the beautiful decorations on ancient Egyptian mummies.

34. The provision for pupils' moral development is good, and is promoted through all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils are taught to be responsible for their own actions, to have a clear understanding of the consequences of their actions on other people, and to know the difference between right and wrong. Behaviour and bullying are discussed, and pupils learn to write letters of apology. Pupils are encouraged to write their expectations for the coming year, and hope there will be 'no name calling', 'no racist remarks' and 'no falling out'. Notices around the school promote a range of desirable behaviours, including 'Be a good listener'.

35. The provision for pupils' social development is good. There is a 'buddy' system at lunchtimes where older pupils play with those who feel they have no friends. A boy from Year 6 politely showed a new pupil round the school on his first day. Pupils try hard to gain house points for their team, by working hard, sitting well in assembly or by being helpful and each class chooses a pupil as 'star of the week'. Older pupils fulfil their roles as monitors well, for example escorting infant pupils to and from the dining room, or setting up the music for assembly. There is a school council that meets regularly. Good relations between all members of the school community promote good behaviour in an atmosphere of trust, and staff provide good role models for pupils' to base their own manners and attitudes. Participation in the Healthy Schools Award scheme shows pupils how to choose foods that are good for them for snacks and meals.

36. The provision for cultural development is good. Pupils learn about other cultures in religious education when they study how Jews and Muslims live. They appreciate the importance of respecting the values and beliefs of other faiths and cultures. In art, they learn about famous painters, and visit galleries. Pupils make African masks and pots, and appreciate the beauty of the colourful Islamic patterns. Staff select music for assembly, and the pupils try to identify the music during the week. Stories from literature are used in literacy and drama lessons. Pupils produced work of high quality as part of their involvement with the Manchester Art Educational Festival. They performed 'Caliban', which effectively introduced them to Shakespeare's 'The Tempest'. To learn more about their own culture, visits are made to the canal, the railway and Clayton Vale. Year 6 pupils study local history and learn about changes in the roads, the buildings and the different occupations, and enjoy visiting the Museum of Science and Industry.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school provides good levels of support and guidance for its pupils.

38. Procedures for child protection are good. The head teacher has overall responsibility and her detailed knowledge of all pupils, together with that of the teaching staff, provides a good level of protection. Daily, teaching and non-teaching staff were observed providing good and effective comfort and support to particularly the younger pupils. First aid provision is good and the children know what to do should the need arise and the school is aware of any pupil requiring particular care. The school is a safe environment and the school's approach to health and safety is satisfactory. The building is maintained to a very high level of cleanliness and any aspect of maintenance is attended to promptly. This helps create a safe learning environment and also instils high values in the pupils that are reflected in their respect for property and learning resources. The caretaker, a governor and a member of staff have performed safety inspections. Risk assessments are carried out for any new environment or product and records are maintained and passed to the head teacher for action. These procedures are not as rigorous for normal daily activities in the school. Supervision at playtime and lunchtime is satisfactory and the lunchtime supervisors control the pupils well and keep a close eye for any pupils who appear to be unhappy.

39. Measures to eliminate harassment and bullying are good. These aspects are covered in personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils were at ease expressing themselves in front of other pupils and to their class teacher; the few comments made in subject books were equally frank. The aim of the Nurture Project is to support in personal and social skills and enhance their ability to establish good relationships. A private 'suggestion box' is available for pupils where they can leave details of anything they do not wish to discuss face to face with an adult. Comments in the box are assessed and some addressed informally by the lunchtime supervisor while the pupils are at play. Discussion with pupils revealed a good understanding of the school's stance on any forms of harassment. They were confident that if they had any concerns the school would act promptly to resolve them.

40. The procedures to monitor and promote pupils' good behaviour are good. The school has a detailed behaviour policy and pupils are aware of the rewards and sanctions. As a result they understand what is acceptable behaviour in the school. In lessons and in assemblies behaviour is often good as the behaviour policy is consistently applied. A system of rewards is in place for many aspects of school life and recognition is made with the award of certificates and prizes in a whole school assembly.

41. Systems for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. The school secretary is confident at handling the absence statistics and the effects of current initiatives are being monitored. These include a daily display of attendance figure so that pupils and parents are aware of how close they are to achieving the school's attendance targets. More needs to be done and the school is involved with the education welfare officer to follow up any identified concerns.

42. Procedures to assess pupils' academic performance have improved and are now good. As well as using the national tests for eleven year olds the school has introduced recognised tests linked to the National Curriculum for eight, nine, and ten year olds in English, mathematics and science. Each test is given three times each year and these tests give an accurate indication of pupils' attainment at each age level. These assessments are recorded on a tracking sheet at the beginning of each term together with a forecast target for the end of the term and also one for the end of the academic year. Consequently, throughout the year progress made towards the ultimate target can be easily gauged. These systems are also effective in tracking the progress of different groups of pupils within the school. The procedures for assessing the standards of attainment in other subjects are unsatisfactory. Assessment systems are not in place and this is a factor in the low standards in some subjects as teachers have no systems to check on the progress pupils are making.

43. The school makes effective use of assessment information in English, mathematics and science to identify any weaknesses in the curriculum. For example, in mathematics analysis of test results showed a weakness in the interpretation of data and probability. The school gives these aspects more attention and the pupils are now more confident in extracting information

from graphs and solving problems involving probability. Reading tests are also given at regular intervals so that progress in reading can be monitored throughout the year. However, detailed, regular monitoring of reading is not carried out and this leads to a few pupils reading books that are too hard or, in the case of the higher attaining pupils, too easy. This hampers pupils' progress in reading.

44. Assessment information is being used to set pupils individual targets in English and mathematics. This is beginning to have an impact on pupils' learning as in Year 6 they have a clearer understanding about what they need to do to improve. Some targets are not specific enough or the language used is too difficult especially for the lower attaining and younger pupils and so as yet have limited effect on their progress. The assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs and Traveller pupils are good. Their progress is tracked from year to year so that an overall picture of their progress through the school can be monitored. Individual educational programmes are drawn up for all pupils on the special educational needs register and for traveller pupils. These are detailed and well drawn-up documents. Pupils who receive additional support have their progress towards their targets more closely checked and new targets set that enable good progress to be made. However, the lack of adult support in school means at least a half of the pupils do not receive additional help and their monitoring is not as meticulous. This hampers their progress although overall it remains satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents' and carers' views of the school are very positive. All of the parents who responded to the parent questionnaire thought that teaching was good and that their child was making good progress. Areas of concern to parents centred on the standards of behaviour and the right amount of homework. Evidence from the inspection supports the parents' positive views and found that behaviour is satisfactory and the amount of homework is appropriate. Since the previous inspection parents have been consulted and actively involved in the formation of the school behaviour policy

46. Links with parents are good and the school has strengthened its partnership with parents by consulting with them on new developments. This was effective when the decision to introduce a school uniform was made and parents have fully supported this action. A detailed home/school agreement was drawn up using the information from a parents' survey. The great majority indicated they would find it easy to approach the school with any concerns.

47. Information provided to parents is satisfactory. The school prospectus is a joint publication with the infant school; it is out of date and does not meet statutory requirements because it does not give details of absence statistics or details of the governing body and the means of contacting them. The annual governors' report is comprehensive and fully meets the statutory requirements. The current report is not particularly parent friendly, a point accepted by the governors, and is being changed for the next report. Parents are informed of their child's progress by two parent evening each year. The annual report to parents is satisfactory. It is hand written and personal to the pupil. Details of achievement in all curriculum subjects and individual pupil absence levels are included. However, there is no provision for pupils' comments on the report or a consistent approach to identifying areas for improvement. Newsletters are informative and published termly. They tell parents about general events in the school. Other letters are provided to publicise other special events. A termly booklet gives parents information about children's targets, topics and themes to be covered.

48. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed about the progress their children are making. They are invited to review meetings and contribute to the educational plans drawn up for their children.

49. Taken as a whole the contribution of parents and carers to children's learning is satisfactory. A small number of parents actively help in the classroom and the class teachers value their assistance. Many parents make an effective contribution to pupils' skills in reading by hearing them read at home. More parents support other events like the nail art session and the computer club. These activities are a series of planned sessions to increase parents' involvement in school. They are beneficial in extending parents' skills to offer more support at home and in school. There is no longer an active Parent Teacher Association but the school has recently

appointed a parent co-ordinator to raise the profile of the school in the local area and to increase parent involvement in the life of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The overall quality of leadership and management by the governors, headteacher and key staff has improved and is now good. Parents are extremely positive about the leadership and management of the school. A strength is the leadership from the headteacher who has a clear vision for the school. She is highly committed to improving the quality of education provided and has put in place many procedures to lead the school forward. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team who show equal commitment to raising standards. They are now effectively assuming accountability for different aspects of the school. The deputy headteacher has made a significant contribution to the improvements by the introduction of the new assessment procedures.

51. The role of subject co-ordinators is good for English, mathematics and science. In these subjects staff have carried out detailed analysis of test results and drawn up action plans to resolve any identified areas of weakness. Action plans clearly address the raising of standards and are shared with the rest of the school. In English and mathematics a joint report is drawn up with the governor linked to the subject and this has been effective in increasing the governors' involvement in the school as well as raising their awareness of what is happening. In other subjects co-ordination is generally satisfactory although a common weakness is lack of focus on standards and the lack of assessment procedures. Management of special educational needs is good and has been extended to include the monitoring of social inclusion in the school. This is a good example of the school putting their equal opportunities policy into practice.

52. The contribution of the governing body to the work of the school is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, procedures have been put in place to keep governors fully informed about the school's effectiveness. The links with English and mathematics co-ordinators have been strengthened and the joint writing of reports has led to a more informed understanding of the standards being achieved in the school. Discussions with governors revealed a good understanding of the reasons for the drop in the results of national tests in 2001. Through its committee structure, the governing body fulfils most of its legal requirements. There are omissions in the school prospectus and the curriculum for ICT does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

53. The school development plan is a well-planned document and identifies relevant priorities for the school. It includes specific targets for success and these effectively link with areas for development from the previous inspection. Clear success criteria are identified and so it is easy for governors to check that the school is moving forward. Rightly the main priorities are to raise achievement. Staff training is linked to identified need although records shows training in reading and writing has not received as much attention as science, mathematics and ICT. The school has effective procedures to support newly qualified teachers and this includes training as well as opportunities to observe lessons.

54. The arrangements for monitoring and developing teaching are satisfactory. Current observations have focused on numeracy and literacy and have been effective in identifying areas that require attention. There is still a way to go in the sharing of good practice seen in a few lessons. The school has plans to extend this role to other subjects and to involve subject co-ordinators so they will have a more informed picture of what is happening in their subjects. Although governors often help in the school they rely on the headteacher for advice and information about teaching in the school. The school is now making effective use of information from national tests to check on standards being achieved and also to predict future targets. Targets are challenging and this is a good step forward in raising standards.

55. The school puts a strong emphasis on including all pupils in every aspect of school life. This is evident in the school's aims that include 'valuing our community and the roles we play in striving to achieve higher standards.' Aims can be seen in practice. For example, the school's new

Nurture Project that is designed to help pupils with social and personal difficulties have full access to the curriculum.

56. Financial administration and control are good. The headteacher and governors have had a long struggle to reduce the large deficit that had accrued at the time of the previous inspection. Prompt action was taken to rectify the situation and the school now has a balanced budget and has drastically reduced the overspend. A close watch is now kept on spending through regular reports from the headteacher. She works closely with the school administrative staff and monitors on-going spending. Specific grants and additional funding are linked to educational priorities. The school actively seeks out additional funding to meet the needs of the school. For example, the additional funding awarded for the Nurture Project. The school now applies the principle of best value in obtaining goods and services. For example, the expenditure on an anti-vandal roof was high but in the long term should lead to savings in repairs. Parents are consulted about decisions and effective consultation is a feature in many major decisions.

57. The necessary prudent spending has led to a few inadequacies in staffing and learning resources. The number of teachers is satisfactory and they are suitably experienced and qualified to teach the required range of subjects. A weakness that can be linked to lack of funds is the low number of support staff. This has an adverse effect on standards as the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs do not always get the support they require. Resources to support learning are satisfactory. There are weaknesses in design and technology. Tools and materials have not been kept up to the required level. ICT resources have improved with the ICT suite and the school has plans to extend these, as funding becomes available. Currently, they are insufficient in number to enable all pupils to have enough practice to reach the required standard. The accommodation is satisfactory and the school has made many improvements to make the school more attractive. It is kept meticulously clean. The music room is a benefit to the subject as pupils can sing and play instruments without disturbing the learning in other classrooms. The ICT suite is enabling groups of pupils to be taught new skills and this is already having a positive impact on improving standards. Unfortunately the library is in the same room and this makes it difficult to access during ICT lessons. During the inspection it was not used as a resource for independent learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to continue the improvement and raise standards the headteacher and staff with the support of the governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in reading and writing by:
 - using the information from assessing pupils' attainment in lessons to plan tasks more closely matched to the needs of all pupils particularly the higher attaining pupils;
 - ensuring the school's handwriting policy is implemented;
 - teaching the skills of drafting more thoroughly and checking pupils transfer the skills learnt in the literacy hour to their independent writing in other lessons;
 - introducing a more rigorous approach to assessing and recording pupils' reading.

Discussed in paragraphs 2, 4, 16, 18, 22, 43, 53, 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66, 77, 93, 111.

Raising standards in English is a priority in the school's development plan.

- (2) Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for learning multiplication tables;
 - giving even more attention to problem solving and extending the use of these skills to other subjects;
 - making the individual targets now set for pupils more specific, particularly in relation to the needs of the lower attaining pupils.

Discussed in paragraphs 2, 5, 16, 67, 70, 71, 72.

Raising standards in mathematics is a priority in the school's development plan.

- (3) Raise standards in ICT by:
- continuing to extend the use of the ICT suite to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are taught;
 - using ICT to support learning in other subjects;
 - continuing to provide training to raise the expertise of teachers;
 - improving resources.

Discussed in paragraphs 7, 13, 15, 16, 21, 24, 26, 52, 57, 65, 70, 79, 82, 86, 95, 96, 97.

ICT is an identified priority in the school's development plan.

- (4) Realign the curriculum to ensure that sufficient attention is given to history, geography and design and technology. Give more attention to the teaching of skills and the planning of a wider range of experiences in design and technology.

Discussed in paragraphs 8, 13, 15, 21, 27, 57, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93.

- (5) Provide more classroom support to improve the progress being made by the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

Discussed in paragraphs 3, 17, 44, 57, 60, 61, 69, 76.

- (6) Look for even more ways of impressing on parents that they are responsible for the regular attendance of their children.

Discussed in paragraphs 12, 41.

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

- introduce assessment systems in subjects other than English, mathematics and science

Discussed in paragraphs 42, 84, 89, 98, 103, 107, 112.

- ensure the school prospectus contains all the required information

Discussed in paragraphs 47, 52.

- further develop the use of the library.

Discussed in paragraphs 57, 64.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	22	22	0	0	0
Percentage	0	6	47	47	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 2 percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	194
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	104
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	53
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	17	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	22
	Girls	11	11	14
	Total	26	26	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (50)	60 (58)	84 (63)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	15	17
	Girls	11	9	10
	Total	24	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (54)	56 (60)	63 (62)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	186
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	9	0
Other minority ethnic groups	9	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	28

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	41

Financial information

Financial year	2000/ 01
	£
Total income	423253
Total expenditure	387100
Expenditure per pupil	1986
Balance brought forward from previous year	-32347

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Balance carried forward to next year	- 4633
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Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	194
Number of questionnaires returned	39

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	28	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	41	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	49	13	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	46	13	3	3
The teaching is good.	67	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	26	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	21	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	22	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	54	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	59	36	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	31	13	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	42	11	0	11

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

ENGLISH

59. By the end of Year 6 standards of work in English are below those expected for pupils of this age in reading and writing and satisfactory in speaking and listening. Since the previous inspection, there has been a slow but satisfactory improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level. Considering pupils start in Year 3 with below average standards the current standard of work reflects satisfactory achievement overall. The school places great emphasis on extending pupils' communication skills through drama and planned debates and achievement is good.

60. In the national 2000 tests at the end of Year 6, results were well below the national average. However, when compared with similar school results were average and this shows many pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In 2001, test results dropped as this group included more pupils identified as having special educational needs. In their final year in school this group also had their learning disturbed by staffing difficulties. These results do not represent a fall in school standards but reflect the differences in ability between the separate year groups. The school has worked hard to raise standards and the subject is a priority in the school's development plan. The National Literacy Strategy is now providing teachers with a clearer framework and assessment information is being used more effectively to track pupils' progress. These initiatives have gone some way towards improving standards. An analysis of the results shows a positive trend of rising standards. Every year a higher proportion of pupils has reached the level expected for their age but few exceed this level. In lessons teachers do not set tasks to challenge the higher attaining pupils and they are underachieving. Pupils with special educational needs and traveller children make satisfactory progress. The school identifies their needs and many have detailed individual programmes, which identify clear targets for improvement. However, limited support is available in lessons and this hampers their progress. The 2002 targets set by the school are ambitious and show a determination to continue the improving picture.

61. By the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. The great majority of pupils listen satisfactorily to the teacher and to each other. They show understanding of the main points of what is being said and the explanations for the tasks they are set. However, a few do not retain a clear understanding of the purpose of their tasks and they lack regular support during group work to reinforce their learning. Most pupils are confident speaking out in front of the class and enjoy sharing their ideas at the end of lessons. When pupils start school in Year 3 they have not got an established understanding of taking turns in discussions and many call out and disrupt the thoughts of others. Teachers consistently remind pupils of the need to listen and not call out. Drama is a weekly lesson and pupils achieve a high standard. This makes a significant contribution to extending confidence in speaking as well as in raising pupils' self-esteem. Teaching and learning in these lessons are good. As a result in Year 6 most pupils talk animatedly about subjects that interest them and many are eager to make spoken contributions to lessons. They have an established understanding of acceptable conversation skills. The higher attaining pupils use relevant subject terms to support their learning in other subjects. However, many lower attaining pupils have a narrow vocabulary and this hampers their reading as well as their ability to explain their investigations in science.

62. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average in reading. The great majority of pupils can read independently but only the higher attaining pupils read challenging texts appropriate to their age. They make effective use of their knowledge of sounds to tackle difficult words. However, few pupils are enthusiastic readers and their knowledge of authors is limited to a small number of authors of children's popular fiction. Most pupils cannot read between the lines of stories to help them understand about the characters and events. The great majority have a good understanding of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They are confident using the index to locate information. The higher attaining pupils can read silently and then explain the main parts in their own words. Other pupils struggle to fully understand the main points of the text. As well as the literacy hour classes have time allocated to reading. This time is not always

used for the maximum benefit of all pupils as they all read the same text. This does not encourage the higher attaining pupils to read at speed and similarly lower attaining pupils cannot always follow the text. Teachers maintain reading records and parents also record comments when children read at home. However, reading records lack sufficient detail of the progress pupils are making and this leads to pupils having reading books that do not match their prior attainment.

63. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are below average but the achievement of the great majority is satisfactory from a low starting point. The higher attaining pupils do not make the progress of which they are able due to tasks being set that do not sufficiently challenge them. Few pupils can sustain a piece of factual or narrative writing at any length. Drafting and planning of work is not thoroughly taught and so few pupils understand the relationship between planning and their final piece of writing. Although in lessons many pupils show an understanding of punctuation they do not transfer this knowledge to their writing. Many pupils find it difficult to include imaginative vocabulary and often rely heavily on their spoken language when writing. This improves when teachers focus on vocabulary. For example, in Year 6 in response to input of music and photographs the higher attaining pupils write, 'birds tweeting and soldiers stamping made one nervous.' Spelling is taught regularly and new words are set to learn as homework. When marking work teachers identify errors and pupils have to copy out the correct spelling. As a result the spelling of the great majority is satisfactory. Handwriting of many is unsatisfactory and the well-formed style identified in the previous inspection has not developed. Although handwriting lessons demonstrate how to join up letters teachers do not insist on this in writing. Consequently, few pupils in Year 6 have a neat, legible joined up style of handwriting.

64. Standards in other subjects are not depressed by lack of literacy skills. However, teachers do not always give enough attention to promoting these skills. There are examples in religious education where pupils retell the story of the Gurus but other activities included colouring and labelling a picture of a mosque and the chance for extending writing was missed. In science, pupils use books to research information about the heart and most cope but the lower attaining pupils lack confidence and need extra help. The library is in the same room as the ICT suite and this makes it difficult to access for independent research.

65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In 33 per cent of the lessons seen teaching was good and in one lesson it was very good. Teaching was satisfactory in all other lessons. Lesson plans follow the structure recommended in the National Literacy Strategy and teachers have a clear understanding of what they expect pupils to learn in lessons. Most teachers share these outcomes with the pupils so that they have a good understanding of the focus of their work. However, the words used to explain these outcomes are often too complex for pupils and the insistence on writing these down has little relevance for many pupils. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory and teachers have a secure understanding of teaching reading and writing. However, in practice, some opportunities are missed to remind pupils how to tackle difficult words. Books are chosen that capture pupils' interest and this increases their enthusiasm. For example, 'The Jolly Witch' by Dick King-Smith in Year 4 was a wise choice to identify the main features of a character and pupils quickly grasped the idea of using adjectives to describe people. Management of pupils is good and teachers are extremely patient with the pupils who have difficulties maintaining concentration for a length of time. It is unusual for lessons to be disturbed by misbehaviour. In general the use of ICT to support learning is underdeveloped. In the best lessons teachers use a range of interesting activities to make learning exciting. For example, in Year 6 the teacher used tick lists and a pupil demonstration of passive and active verbs and learning was good. This was less effective in Year 3 when too much sitting and listening led to pupils losing interest and learning was slow. The pace of lessons is usually brisk. Teachers often set a time for a task to be completed and this keeps pupils involved in their learning. Marking is effective and often informs pupils how to improve. Lesson plans include an opportunity to record on-going progress. Comments do not always record identified concerns and as yet are not closely linked to the needs of individual pupils. This leads to a weakness in many lessons when teachers' expectations of the pupils are too low, particularly for more able pupils. This results in a lack of challenge in tasks planned and restricts progress.

66. Management of the subject is good. The school's tracking system for monitoring the progress of pupils of individual pupils and setting individual targets is newly established and has not had time to have an impact on standards. Older pupils now have an understanding of what they need to do to raise their standards. The results of national tests are scrutinised and priorities identified in the school's development plan. As yet the action to meet these areas of development is not always rigorously implemented. For example, the school is fully aware of the weaknesses in handwriting and yet in practice teachers do not always insist on joined-up handwriting. Some monitoring of teaching has taken place and has led to a sharing of good practice and improved teaching.

MATHEMATICS

67. The standard of work at the end of Year 6 is below average. This is similar to that reported at the last inspection. Taking into consideration pupils' below average attainment on entry to the school these standards reflect satisfactory achievement. The previous report indicated that good progress was being made in the basic skills and this is still the case although pupils do not have quick recall of their multiplication tables. However it was also noted that the pupils were not as successful in investigative work or problem solving. This has improved and is now satisfactory. For example, in Year 6 the pupils investigate the life expectancy of people and in doing so apply their skills in multiplying and dividing.

68. Results in the 2000 national tests for pupils in Year 6 were well below average when compared to all schools but average when compared to schools with a similar background. The number of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age was below average when compared to all schools but average when compared to similar schools. These results show a steady improvement year on year broadly in line with the national trend. At the time of the inspection the national averages for the year 2001 were not available but the school's results were lower than the previous year and did not reach the school target. This is because there were a higher number of pupils on the register of special educational needs in the group and the education of the pupils encountered some disruption due to staff absences.

69. By its policy and in practice the school promotes inclusive education and there is full access for all pupils to the curriculum. The topics being taught in each class include all pupils and the work is always planned to cater for the varying abilities in the class. For example, during the daily mental mathematics session less challenging questions are directed to the lower ability groups so that they are fully involved in the lesson. The school only has limited extra classroom support and so extra support is not always available when pupils work in small groups. However, the overall progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This shows improvement since the previous inspection that judged the progress of pupils with special educational needs to be slow. The school is aware of the needs of the Traveller pupils in the school and additional adult help is provided by the local authority. This enables sound progress to be made. Similarly, higher attaining pupils are challenged with harder work being set for them and additional work is available when tasks have been finished.

70. By the end of Year 6, pupils work confidently with two and three digit numbers. Effective methods of calculation learnt in the numeracy hour are used to solve problems. Consequently one group of pupils of average ability were able to calculate mentally the cost of a car journey when given the necessary information. The various ability groups in each class work at different levels and the more able pupils were confidently calculating what must be added to a mixed number fraction to make it into a whole number and also finding fractions of numbers. On the other hand the lower ability pupils were using simpler fractions and working at a slower pace. The school has an effective assessment system and the pupils are given a formal test each term. The results of these tests are analysed to see where the difficulties are in order that steps can be taken to remedy them. For example, two of the areas of weakness revealed were the interpretation of data and probability. As a result of planned teaching the pupils are now able to extract data from bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. Similarly, the higher attaining pupils are now familiar with

probability and are able to calculate mentally the likelihood of a six showing when a dice is thrown a certain number of times. Pupils experience a wide range of mathematical experience and cover all the areas required by the national curriculum. They recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and use the correct vocabulary, for example pentagon, heptagon, isosceles triangle, triangular prism, and square based pyramid. They are able to calculate the perimeter of a shape and the area of a rectangle by counting the squares or using a simple formula. Pupils enjoy investigating mathematics and concentrate hard when working out sequences of numbers. However, pupils do not have quick recall of multiplication tables and this affects their computational skills and overall progress. At the moment the pupils do not use ICT to support and consolidate their skills and knowledge in mathematics.

71. Numeracy skills are satisfactory but are not used often enough to support other subjects. However, there are exceptions, for example in science pupils investigated the pulse rate before, during and after exercising and recorded the results on a line graph. In another instance pupils investigated insulation materials and presented the results on a chart.

72. The quality of teaching is good and the good practice seen in the previous inspection has been extended. Likewise, the quality of learning is good. The assessment system is effective and through it the teachers plan suitable work to match the needs of the pupils. This has an important impact on learning as teachers' expectations are realistic and work set challenges the various groups in the class. For example, in Year 3 in a lesson on reflective symmetry extension activities were provided and effectively increased the learning of the more able pupils. In Year 5, when investigating equivalent fractions the teacher also gave more help for the less able pupils and this led to good learning in the lesson. Assessment information is used effectively to set individual targets for pupils. This aids learning, as pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve. This is evident in Years 5 and 6 when pupils are more aware of their own ability. However, in some instances these targets are less effective as they are too general, especially for lower ability pupils. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the subject and consequently the numeracy hour is well established and ensures lessons have clear learning outcomes. These are often shared with pupils so they understand the focus of the lesson. The good teaching of numeracy is having a positive effect on the learning of number skills. For example, the mental session is generally enthusiastic and encourages the pupils to manipulate numbers quickly and this lively start sets the learning tone for the rest of the session. Teachers also encourage pupils to use correct mathematical terminology. For example, in Year 3 pupils are familiar with words like "symmetrical" and "asymmetric". Teachers have a warm relationship with their pupils and this bolsters the pupils' confidence to attempt problems that they think are difficult. Often the teachers create a working atmosphere in the classroom where the pupils concentrate, co-operate and behave well. This makes an important contribution to learning. On the infrequent occasions when there is an additional adult in the classroom the teachers use the support well for the benefit of the slow learning pupils so that they make better progress. A weakness in teaching is the lack of emphasis on learning multiplication tables and this hinders pupils' ability to manipulate numbers quickly when solving problems.

73. The management of the subject is good. In particular the effective assessment procedures enable the teachers to track progress and set targets for individuals and groups. The analysis of the termly tests also enables the teachers to see accurately where difficulties lie so that they are able to plan to resolve them. Teaching and planning are regularly monitored and this has a positive effect on learning. The work produced by the pupils is examined to see how successful the planning has been in promoting learning. Mathematics makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social development by learning to work in groups, joining in discussions and by pupils realising that good behaviour promotes sound learning.

SCIENCE

74. Standards of work are average at the end of Year 6. Pupils progress well and their achievement is good. The last inspection found that only about half of the pupils reached the standards expected for their age in science. Since then, there has been an overall improvement

because of the positive and effective way the school responded to the key issues of raising attainment and developing pupils' investigative and practical skills.

75. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2000 compared to all schools were average but were well above average when compared to schools with a similar intake. These results reflected very good achievement for many of those pupils. The number of pupils who attained the higher level was close to the national average. Results have risen in line with the national trend over the past five years. Although there was a small decline in results in 2001, the school attributes this to the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the group, combined with a number of staffing changes over the year. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

76. Pupils who have special educational needs and Traveller pupils make satisfactory progress, and often make good progress when they receive additional support in lessons. There is only a limited amount of support time available in science from classroom assistants. Increased support would further improve all pupils' progress in both practical and written activities. Students or volunteer parents sometimes provide help. One lower achieving pupil in Year 4 made good progress in her knowledge due to the good support she received from one parent helper, and gained in confidence when she could name two functions of the skeleton. Teachers make sensitive use of questions and activities planned to match different ability levels, to ensure pupils of all abilities can participate fully.

77. Standards by the end of Year 6 are satisfactory and have improved because of the way teachers develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding through a series of carefully planned investigations. Pupils are encouraged to ask why, to predict what will happen and to investigate the reasons for their results. All pupils learn the principles of a fair test. They use a scientific format when recording their experiments, including the question they are seeking to answer, the method they will use, materials and equipment they need and their prediction for the outcome. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of scientific terms. Pupils used the terms 'photosynthesis' 'herbivore' and 'omnivore' confidently in a good lesson investigating how animals are interdependent in the food chain. Their investigational work shows that they can describe the properties of materials. They know that heating or cooling may change materials, and that changes may be reversible or irreversible. Pupils often show better skills in oral work than in their recording. In one good lesson, Year 4 pupils observed a model skeleton to learn how it functions, and used the words 'vertebrate' and 'invertebrate' correctly to classify creatures. They showed confidence when discussing this orally, but records of their investigations showed limited writing skills. Limited reading skills hindered Year 5 pupils in their research using books and photographs when they investigated the circulation of the blood. Year 6 pupils showed a limited general knowledge of animals' natural environments, but their spoken responses showed that they had learned well in a challenging lesson on habitats. Some written work still shows a lack of structure, handwriting is not of a good standard, and many pupils are unable to draw inferences from their reading. However, pupils are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in science lessons, in discussions and when presenting their findings orally.

78. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good. Each classroom has a good display of phrases and vocabulary that emphasise enquiry skills, to help pupils in their investigations and recording. Teachers show good knowledge of the subject and teach pupils to use scientific vocabulary and methods in their work. Assessment has been improved, including new methods of recording pupils' progress in investigation, and in the way teachers set targets for pupils' progress. Teachers build carefully on pupils' previous knowledge, enabling them to progress and consolidate their learning. In a good lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher gave a lively, well-paced introduction that drew on pupils' learning about habitats in previous lessons to reinforce and build on pupils' knowledge of animals in their environment. Resources are chosen carefully to stimulate and develop interest. Pupils in Year 3 used a mirror to look at each other's teeth, and then used a sheep's skull to discover where different teeth were positioned in the jaw. Lessons are organised effectively and well planned, with a good blend of practical activities for the pupils to carry out. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teachers did most of the practical work.

Pupils are taught to record their work using a range of methods. By Year 6, they can use graphs, tally charts and diagrams, make models of molecules and write reports, but better use could be made of extended writing. Year 3 pupils make their reports more interesting by including samples of the materials they tested for durability. Pupils are taught to refine their conclusions, to present them in a more succinct way. They know the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence. Teachers check all are included in the lesson and pupils often work in mixed ability groups or with a partner. This gives all pupils opportunities to support and help each other. Behaviour is managed effectively and is generally good in lessons, and pupils are co-operative.

79. Management of science is good. Analysis of weaknesses in the curriculum led to more attention being given to investigation and this has successfully raised standards. Science is carefully planned to cover a two year period to avoid repetition by pupils in mixed-age classes. Training has helped to improve teachers' knowledge, with support from external specialists. At present, ICT is not used in science. To continue the good improvement made in science, older pupils need more opportunities to devise and set up their own tests.

ART AND DESIGN

80. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The reasons for these high standards are that the pupils experience a wide range of worthwhile art activities and there are beautiful displays around the school, which create an atmosphere that encourages pupils' creative talents. For example, in the school hall there is an attractive design produced by the older pupils. This is based on the work of Chagall, which was created by the pupils when they were involved in the celebration of Jewish life in the Shtetl. It is evident from the many examples of high quality work that achievement is good.

81. The achievement of all the different groups of pupils in the school is also good. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy art and their success raises their self-esteem. For example, in one class the pupils were improving their skills and techniques by using photographs to practise drawing people. They started with stick figures to capture the various standing positions. The results achieved by these pupils were good. The school promotes inclusive education through its policy and in practice, and there is full access for all pupils to the curriculum.

82. By the end of Year 6 pupils have experienced a wide range of stimulating activities. Art from other cultures is used. Pupils investigated African sculpture and made impressive observational pencil drawings from beautiful photographs. This activity was followed up by making attractive colourful masks decorated with shells, beads and buttons. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from artists come to school in order to pass on their expertise to the pupils. For example, a sculptor helped to create a huge school plaque showing the school and the local environment. This portrayed travelling by bus, car and train, the local football team and cultural aspects like musical instruments. Whenever the pupils make educational visits they make interesting observations through art. Hence, when they went to the town hall they made detailed paintings of the vaulted ceilings using pastels and made rubbings of doors and panels with wax crayons. Pupils also visit cultural centres to have more experience of art. For example, in Year 4 pupils visited the Corner House Art Centre and worked on art with the theme "Journeys". As a result, the pupils created their impression of a journey from the top of a mountain and down a waterfall. They made an imaginative collage with material that suggested different aspects of the journey like white, shiny foam for a torrent of water. Teachers make effective use of sketchbooks and this leads to high quality artwork. For example, in Year 3 pupils practised drawing faces in their sketch books and then made colourful masks. Older pupils in Year 5, arranged still life sets out of drift wood, shells and sheep horns so that they could make impressive observational drawings using soft pencils and charcoal. Pupils are also familiar with the work of famous artists and Year 3 painted flowers that reflected an understanding of the style of Van Gogh. Pupils from Year 4 painted startlingly colourful designs in the style of the famous Bulgarian artist Louba Popoua. One area that needs further development is three-dimensional art. Pupils have little experience of making pots and other items out of clay. Although a few pupils are beginning to use ICT in the art club the great majority of pupils do not have enough experience of using computers to create pictures.

83. The quality of teaching and learning are good. Skills and techniques are taught directly and this is successful in producing high standards. For example, the pupils use their sketchbooks to practise shading and experiment with tone using different quality pencils before using their acquired skills to make observational drawings. Teachers have a good knowledge of art and introduce the pupils to the work of famous artists. To stimulate the pupils' interest in art the teachers take them to cultural centres like the Whitworth Art Gallery and the Lowry Centre. Teachers also invite artists into school and this successfully extends the range of experiences for the pupils. The teachers have a good relationship with their pupils and as a result the pupils co-operate fully, enjoy their art and behave well. Teachers plan effective links with other subjects. For example, in history in Year 3 the pupils made good quality pencil drawings of farmers threshing wheat and cutting corn with sickles when studying the Egyptians.

84. Management of the subject is good. There is a good quality policy and a comprehensive scheme of work to support the subject. The overall plan makes it clear what teachers should teach and when so that a suitable range of topics required by the National Curriculum is covered. Although the work of the pupils is monitored there is no formal assessment and recording of the progress the pupils are making. The subject makes a worthwhile contribution to the pupils' cultural development and their understanding of the multicultural society in which they live.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. Standards of work by the end of Year 6 are below average. The previous inspection report included design and technology among the subjects that were generally sound and consequently there has been a decline in the standards in the subject since then. No lessons were taught during the inspection and judgements are based on examination of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff and an investigation of the resources in the school. Currently, pupils of all abilities are underachieving.

86. There are several reasons why standards are below the level generally expected. Firstly, not enough time is allocated to the subject and the subject is only taught for two half terms each year. Secondly, there is no overall plan indicating what topics each teacher will teach and when. Thirdly, there are insufficient resources to teach the subject successfully. For example, there is a very limited number of tools and rigid materials available and no equipment to enable ICT to be used to support the subject.

87. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 showed a lack of knowledge about the required skills to plan and construct models. For example, only one pupil could describe how he had made a small carton in Year 4. The overall knowledge in the group of how to set about designing and making an object was below the level expected at this age. Pupils have made a model of a hall with adult help and this was a worthwhile experience and standards of the model were satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4 built a model of an oilrig out of straws to see how high they could make it. There was limited evidence of design or evaluation to see how the model could be improved and achievement in these aspects are unsatisfactory.

88. Overall the quality of teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. After talking to the pupils in Year 6 it is clear that teaching has not resulted in successful learning. Teachers do not give sufficient attention to the design and planning aspect of the subject. For example, in a Year 3 class pupils made several drawings of faces in their art sketchbooks and chose one of them to make into a mask. However, they did not plan what to do, suggest a sequence of actions to follow or make a list of the material needed. Teachers do not plan for a wide enough experience of all the aspects of the subject. For example, pupils are not taught the necessary skills to fit wheels to models or use cams and pulleys to make objects move. The subject is not used to consolidate skills learnt in other subjects. For example, pupils do not use simple circuits to make models using their scientific knowledge or have the opportunity to use accurate measurements learned in mathematics when cutting materials.

89. Overall the management of the subject is unsatisfactory. This is because, although there is a comprehensive scheme of work, there is no overall plan so that teachers know what to teach and when. Resources are inadequate and an audit is required to ascertain what materials and equipment are needed. No training has been arranged to improve the expertise of the staff. There is no system of assessment or monitoring to enable pupils' progress to be accurately recorded in order that planning can be guided.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

90. Limited history and geography was seen being taught during the inspection. Additional evidence was gained from discussions with Year 6 pupils, and pupils' books were carefully scrutinised. Standards of work in both subjects are below average by the end of Year 6. Evidence in pupils' books shows limited coverage of the National Curriculum, particularly for the older pupils. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because the limited experiences do not enable them to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in history and particularly in geography. Pupils with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress for the same reasons.

91. In geography, pupils in Year 6 study the local area and recognise changes in the locality. They show these changes in the roads by drawing simple maps. Mapping skills are introduced in Year 3 and pupils imagine they are flying over the area in a helicopter, but most pupils, particularly lower achievers are not able to draw the scene from a 'birds' eye view' and produce pictures rather than maps. They study Bangladesh and compare it with their own locality. Year 4 pupils colour the different geographical features on a world map, but not all pupils provide a key to explain the colours. Although a range of topics are taught there is no other evidence of any breadth of study or progress in the acquisition of geographical skills in the older age range.

92. In history, by the end of Year 6 pupils understand how people lived in different periods of time. They make good use of a timeline to show the great changes that took place in education, industry and health in Victorian Britain. They write letters to their Member of Parliament, protesting about the use of child labour, making good use of persuasive skills learnt in literacy. Lower achieving pupils are unable to identify the differences between a Victorian and a modern school when using photographic evidence. This difficulty was also apparent in Year 5 when pupils study aspects of life in Tudor times. The visit to Ordsall Hall created an enthusiasm for the subject and pupils compared the lifestyles of rich and poor people, town and country and houses then and now. However, many pupils lack the ability to interpret evidence and to use it to express their opinions about changes and their effects on the way people live. In Year 3, pupils study the ancient Egyptians. Standards were higher in this class and when answering questions, pupils showed good recall of previous learning and could explain why the river Nile is important to farmers. They begin to acquire understanding of the passing of time and sequence events on a timeline.

93. In the few lessons seen the overall quality of teaching and learning in these subjects was satisfactory. Examples of good and very good teaching were seen. The use of the locality and visits makes the subjects more relevant to the pupils. In a good history lesson, the teacher made effective use of resources, books and objects to engage the pupils' interest when they researched farming methods. Pupils were encouraged to use the correct terminology, and used 'civilisation' confidently. When a pupil introduced the word 'archaeologist', the teacher made good use of this opportunity to teach pupils how knowledge and information is gained at first hand. In a very good geography lesson in Year 4, the teacher used very good subject knowledge to stimulate pupils' involvement and interest when they learnt to use co-ordinates on a map. Both geography and history have appropriate planning guidelines, designed to support teaching and learning. However, these are not fully implemented throughout the school and so teachers fail to give sufficient attention to teaching all of the required skills. For example, local studies of changes in housing are copied from a prepared text, and do not give pupils opportunities to develop skills of enquiry, or to interpret the evidence. Although pupils can write unaided, only higher achieving pupils make good use of their extended writing skills. This is because teachers do not always provide opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills. This was a weakness in Year 4

when pupils study the Vikings in Britain and map their journey from Scandinavia, but do not write at any length about the topic.

94. Overall the management of history and geography is satisfactory. There are newly drawn-up policies that emphasise a practical and investigational approach in both subjects. There is a suitable action plan for future development. In order to improve standards, the school should ensure that appropriate time is devoted to history and geography on a regular basis, and schemes of work reviewed to ensure they provide progression for pupils in the development of their knowledge and skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

95. Standards of work at the end of Year 6 are below average because they do not have sufficient experience of all the necessary aspects required by the National Curriculum. Computers in the ICT suite and in classrooms are not used often enough to support other subjects and also to consolidate ICT skills themselves. The last inspection said that standards were basic and there has been no significant improvement since then.

96. Achievement is unsatisfactory. This underachievement is linked to the lack of opportunity to develop the required computer skills. Pupils in Year 6 have a limited experience of using ICT for data handling. For example, after investigating how pupils travelled to school they presented the information on a block graph showing how many pupils walked, came by car, or on the bus. Pupils are not familiar with simulation programs in order to explore problems and make decisions. In science, pupils do not use temperature sensors or light gates connected to a computer to collect information accurately. There are no control boxes in school to use with models made in design and technology, nor are there programmable toys for which the pupils could write interesting programs in order to control their movements. A few pupils in Year 6 can connect to web sites but this is not a common activity. There are no facilities for sending e-mails and therefore the pupils cannot transmit messages to other schools and people. However, better progress has been made in word processing. In Years 5 and 6, pupils know how to log on and access a word processing program. They can write simple sentences, save their work, print it and later retrieve the work they had saved. In the computer suite the pupils are being taught word processing by the teacher supported by a person from an outside tutoring organisation. Consequently the pupils' skills are improving. For example, they can now use a spell check, cut and paste text, edit words and change the type and the size of the font. Although in one class the pupils had used word processing to write about a visit to Manchester City Football Club, in general word processing is not used to support other subjects of the curriculum. In the computer club, run after school, the pupils were learning to use an art package and were reaching a satisfactory standard. These skills have not yet been introduced to subjects taught in the classroom. The school has a policy for inclusion and this is put into practice in the computer suite but the progress of pupils with special educational needs and other special groups in the school is unsatisfactory and similar to that of the other pupils in the school.

97. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. This is because all the aspects required by the National Curriculum are not taught and therefore the pupils do not learn the range of knowledge and skills required in a balanced ICT curriculum. Teachers do not use ICT to support other subjects of the curriculum except some word processing in English and a little data handling in mathematics. Teachers do not ensure that the pupils spend enough time using the computer especially in the classrooms. Teachers' expertise is lower than that required in some areas of the curriculum. For example, some teachers are not familiar with modelling programs, or the monitoring and control aspects of the subject. This has an adverse effect on learning in these areas. The school has recently obtained a computer suite with seven stations. Each class is now using this but because there are only a limited number of computers, in some lessons not all the pupils have hands on experience. Another difficulty is that computers in the classrooms are different from the ones in the suite and this hampers the pupils' attempts to use and consolidate the skills learnt in the computer room by using them to support other subjects back in the classrooms, for example in mathematics and English. However, lessons taught in the ICT suite were satisfactory and often good due to the fact that a tutor from an external firm supports the

teaching. For example, in one Year 6 class the pupils were being taught how to use a spell check and both teaching and learning were satisfactory. The teachers have a good relationship with the pupils and manage them well. As a result their behaviour in the suite is good and this makes a valuable contribution to learning. The majority of pupils now know how to log on, select a program from the desktop, write simple sentences, save and retrieve their work and print it. This is a successful start to using the suite.

98. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There are comprehensive planning guidelines, which indicates what each class will do. An audit of the subject has taken place and a detailed action plan clearly identifies the development for the immediate future. Additional training is also being arranged through the good use of the National Opportunities Fund. A system of assessment has been put in place to track the progress of the pupils but this is at an early stage of development. A scheme has just been started to train a group of parents how to operate some of the programs used by the pupils so that they will be able to come into school to support the subject under the guidance of the teachers. Good attention has been paid to health and safety issues in order to ensure that the pupils do not have access to unsuitable web sites or be able to receive unsuitable e-mails. When the new computers for the classrooms have been connected to the system and other equipment has been acquired the school will be in a much better position to teach all the elements of ICT in order to improve learning and raise standards.

MUSIC

99. Standards of work at the end of Year 6 are average. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Achievement for pupils of all abilities is satisfactory. Music has not been a high profile subject in the curriculum for some considerable time and this has affected the composition skills of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Nevertheless, improved planning guidelines that give teachers detailed advice is now being followed and these pupils are quickly learning the required skills.

100. Pupils learn a range of songs and hymns. In assemblies, pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. They adjust the tone of their singing and 'Be still in the Presence of the Lord' is sung in a calm, sincere way respecting the spirituality of the music. In comparison other songs are at a brisk pace with actions. Pupils listen carefully to music being played as they enter and leave assemblies. Teachers take it in turn to select a piece of music and during the inspection the pupils' interest was maintained throughout the week, as they had to find out information about the music.

101. By the end of Year 6, pupils follow a rhythm and recognise this is different to the melody. They understand music can reflect different emotions. Pupils are able to maintain a difficult melody for an African lullaby recognising the gentle tone required. Using percussion instruments pupils show an understanding of basic composition. They work with a partner practising a small piece of music. Few pupils use musical terminology but the more musically talented refer to 'ostinato' as a repeating rhythm. Recording their ideas is not yet developed in Year 6 but pupils can follow musical notation. In Years 3 and 4 the impact of the new planning guidelines can be seen in pupils' ability to follow music and recognise high and low sounds. These younger pupils are also more confident with musical terms and use 'pulse' and 'pitch' correctly.

102. All teachers teach music to their own classes. The use of tapes and detailed lesson plans provide many with confidence in singing and teaching aspects of music. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The good teaching seen for pupils in Year 6 is greatly enhancing their learning. In most lessons pupils receive a good mixture of musical experiences including singing and playing instruments. Lessons are carefully managed and teachers establish clear rules when instruments are being played. Consequently, pupils practise their ideas but quickly respond to the request for silence. Most lessons are carefully matched to pupils' ability but on occasions the pace was too brisk and teachers moved on to new learning before some pupils were ready. A strength in the lessons seen was the good relationships and an enthusiasm for singing that shines through and has led to pupils throughout the school enjoying singing.

103. Overall management of the subject is satisfactory. The new guidelines have been most effectively introduced and had a positive impact on standards. The school is in the early stages of introducing assessment procedures so that progress can be more closely monitored. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities to learn the recorder, the violin and to play in the school's very popular steel band. When the school is preparing for a special performance a choir is often organised. These groups perform in the locality as well as in school and make a good contribution to the school's links with the community. Pupils' cultural development is increased in music as they learn about music from their own as well as other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Standards of work are above average and this is the same at the time of the last inspection. This represents good achievement for pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs.

105. By the end of Year 6 pupils do better than expected in many aspects. For example, in games pupils in Year 6 show an understanding of the need for rules and fair play in the simple games they make up with their classmates. They collaborate and adapt their ideas when they discover an aspect that is not working as well as their original plan. The great majority are confident catching, throwing and aiming and recognise the need to apply their skills accurately in a games situation. In gymnastics, teachers have high expectations of pupils' performances and as a result many pupils show skill and control of their movements. They successfully combine movements into short sequences and imaginatively change direction and speed. The more physically skilful pupils give good attention to the start and finish of their sequences and persevere to improve their work. Teachers throughout the school give close attention to safety and to teaching pupils how to get out the large apparatus carefully and with a minimum of fuss. Consequently, this part of the lesson is done very effectively and the collaboration between pupils is very good. Pupils use a lot of energy when performing on the apparatus. The organisation of the equipment means that pupils do not have to wait for a turn and time is used very effectively. Many pupils are agile on the apparatus and confidently try out their sequences including carefully landings. Pupils are confident in demonstrating to the rest of the class but as yet many do not carefully evaluate and adjust their own performance. Limited dance was seen during the inspection but the younger pupils in Year 3 enjoy making up short dances using basic skipping and patterns. School records show over 90 per cent of pupils can swim by the time they leave the school. Pupils develop a good understanding of the value of exercise and its effects on the body.

106. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Planning is good and lessons are organised effectively and including a warm up activity before vigorous exercise and a suitable cooling down session as a conclusion. Teachers have established effective systems for structuring their lessons and this leads to activities being carried out in an orderly atmosphere. Management is firm and teachers consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. This leads to good behaviour, as pupils understand what is acceptable. Demonstrations are used regularly to celebrate good work and this builds up pupils' self-esteem. This is very effective in ensuring pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons and know their achievements are valued. Teachers do not always allow pupils an opportunity to try out new ideas following a demonstration. As a result many pupils are not confident adjusting and improving their work. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations and remind pupils of the need to plan their work. The effect of this is apparent in the high quality sequence work in gymnastics.

107. Management of the subject is satisfactory. National planning guidelines have been integrated into a detailed plan that provide effective advice for teachers as well as ensuring good coverage of the National Curriculum. Currently, the school has no formal system for assessing performance and monitoring is based on informal comments on lesson plans.

108. The curriculum is extended by opportunities to play in the school football team that plays matches against other schools. Pupils have enjoyed a residential visit that has included several adventurous activities. These activities ensure the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils'

social skills as they learn the skills of working as a team and independence when living away from home.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. Standards of work by the end of Year 6 meet the requirements set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. From the evidence of work seen in lessons and in the pupils' books, standards have risen since the previous inspection and achievement is now satisfactory. There is a daily act of collective worship that broadens pupils' spiritual experience by giving them time to reflect on their own lives and the world around them, and to learn about prayer. The locally agreed syllabus includes studies of Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Regular visits from the local vicar, the Salvation Army Officer and the Pace team enable pupils to experience faith in action. This emphasis on visits is very relevant for pupils who have special educational needs and Traveller pupils who make satisfactory progress. They are fully included in lessons and teachers often use religious education lessons to give pupils opportunity to work co-operatively in mixed ability groups.

110. By the end of Year 6 pupils understand the way Jesus suffered when they write about the Temptations and learn about Easter week. In a very good lesson, they develop their knowledge and understanding of Islam when they study food rituals, enjoy tasting special Halal foods and learn why Muslims do not eat certain foods. Most pupils are able to use their knowledge to construct a Halal menu. This lesson has good links with their current science activities, and pupils can discuss food classification confidently. They understand Muslims pray five times each day and that a prayer mat is precious to them. The school gives good attention to other world religions and in Year 5 pupils look at symbols used by the various faiths and know that the Ohm is an important symbol for Hindus.

111. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and pupils' learning reflects this. The topics for each year group are laid down by the Locally Agreed Syllabus and are fully covered in teachers' long term planning. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are promoted when teachers encourage pupils to participate in very lively discussions, and all work is planned to build carefully on pupils' previous experience. Drama is used effectively to make lessons more interesting. For example, pupils in Year 3 act out the story of Moses and the twelve plagues of Egypt although this knowledge was not extended to an understanding of how they might feel if such disasters occurred in their lives. Teachers ensure the subject contributes to pupils' moral development and they learn about forgiveness in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Literacy skills are extended in a few lessons and pupils show sensitivity when they write prayers. On other occasions these opportunities are missed and the task set includes colouring or labelling pictures that do not extend pupils' writing skills. Teachers plan visits to extend pupils' knowledge. In Year 4, pupils broaden their knowledge through visits to the Manchester Jewish museum. Teachers bring out relevant messages in the topics covered. For example, the story of the Good Samaritan is used well to teach pupils to be a good friend, and to make a useful contribution to the community.

112. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory, and there is an appropriate action plan for future development, including further links with the infant school and training to improve teachers' knowledge. The school lacks a system to assess progress in the subject. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' overall education and personal development.