

INSPECTION REPORT

GREENHILL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

GLODWICK, OLDHAM

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number:105678

Headteacher: Dr. Conrad Chapman

Reporting inspector: Mr J G F Parsons
22546

Dates of inspection: 20 - 24 March 2000

Inspection number: 215542

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery, Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Harmony Street Glodwick Oldham
Postcode:	OL4 1RR
Telephone number:	0161 633 0483
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Andrew Marsden
Date of previous inspection:	11 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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John G F Parsons	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Robert Miller	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Richard Eaton	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music	
James Stirrup	Team inspector	Art History	
Christine Nuttall	Team inspector	Information technology Geography	
Alan Wilson	Team inspector	Under-fives Special educational needs Science	
Kenneth Hobday	Team inspector	English as an additional language Physical education	Pupils' attitudes values and personal development
Paul Roberts	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

There are 303 boys and girls on roll aged from 3 to 11. Children enter the nursery during the academic year in which they are four and they attend part-time. The vast majority of these transfer to the reception classes at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, 18 of the reception children were under five. The school is bigger than other primary schools, but it is smaller than it was at the time of the previous inspection (365 on roll). The majority of pupils who attend the school live locally in the Alexandra ward, approximately 47 per cent are from a Bengali heritage and 53 per cent from a Pakistani heritage. The school is over-subscribed as the number of classes on entry is being reduced to a one and a half from two, in preparation for the school's move into a new building in the next academic year. The general attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below average. In the new index of local deprivation, Oldham is in 16th position nationally, and Alexandra ward is 88th out of 8,414 of the most deprived wards in the country. Glodwick, part of Alexandra ward, has become part of a regeneration area with resulting monies becoming available both to the school and the community. Vandalism is high and employment in the area is very low. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 54.57 per cent, which is very high when compared to the national average. This is slightly less than the proportion of pupils on the free school meals register during the previous inspection. However, 25 per cent of pupils go home for lunch and the current statistics for eligibility for free school meals are misleading. The eligibility for the general disadvantage clothing grant of 82 per cent appears to be a more accurate reflection of disadvantage and it is this which is used in the statistical calculations in the report. Currently all pupils are from minority ethnic groups and have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (11.1 per cent) is below the national average; those with statements of special educational needs (0.6 per cent) is also below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Greenhill Community School is a very good school, which has improved significantly since its last inspection in 1996. The school has made a significant impact on pupils' progress particularly of language development, through the very good teaching. The pupils' very good behaviour, the strong leadership and management of the headteacher and the senior management team, together with a supportive chair of governors, make a significant contribution to the effectiveness the school. The school has a strong caring ethos with a commitment to improving standards. It offers very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good across the school.
- Teachers and support staff in English as an additional language and special educational needs are working in a very effective partnership.
- There is effective yet flexible use of the numeracy strategy and particularly the literacy strategy.
- The quality of the provision in the early years is high.
- Well-motivated and interested learners make good progress in lessons and over time.
- There is a strong community spirit that is responsive and sensitive to the cultural background of the pupils and helps the links with parents.
- The school effectively raises pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own.
- The school is very well led by a committed headteacher, a forward-looking senior management team and a supportive chair of governors, together with a few active members.
- Relationships are strong between pupils and staff and pupils themselves and teachers know their pupils very well.
- Pupils' very good behaviour makes a positive contribution to the inclusive ethos and standards of learning.

What could be improved

- Raise standards, especially in English and mathematics, across the school.
- Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory with only 88 per cent attendance recorded in recent months and pupils are regularly late.
- The governing body it is not sufficiently active and does not act as a critical friend, reacting to situations created within the school rather than having its own vision for the school's future and holding it to account.
- The school administration has good manual accounts but has not yet introduced computerised systems which would give access to more detailed information about finances and aid the management of the school.
- Comprehensive monitoring of teaching and the curriculum takes place and whilst this is used to develop the curriculum effectively, the development of teaching skills is incidental rather than planned.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected on 11 November 1996. Progress since then has been good. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy is beginning to impact on standards and has had a beneficial effect on writing, which was identified as a particular weakness in the last inspection. Standards remain very low because of pupils' significantly disadvantaged backgrounds and because all pupils speak English as an additional language with few opportunities to practise speaking English out of school hours. At both Key Stages 1 and 2 there is evidence that improvement is occurring in standards compared with similar schools. Pupils are well above average at Key Stage 1 in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. At Key Stage 2 pupils are in line in English and mathematics and above in science. The introduction of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have strengthened pupils' language development and number skills, but at this relatively early stage of implementation have had greater impact at Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2. The use of setting of pupils in literacy and numeracy has been particularly effective. In mathematics pupils' understanding of space, shape, and problem solving, remains an area for development, as it was in the last inspection. There has been significant improvement in science since the last inspection, especially in experimental and investigative science. Information and communication technology has improved significantly especially at Key Stage 2. The increased provision of computers in the new suite and additions to the software used have had a marked effect on standards, which are better than the last inspection. Standards in art are good at both key stages and have improved since the last inspection. In religious education pupils now gain deeper knowledge and standards have improved and teaching is better. Teaching is very good, overall, and there was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection. It is the cumulative effect of these improvements which has raised standards.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar* schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	E	E	C
mathematics	D	E	E	C
science	B	E	D	B

Key

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

*Based on the school's statistics

The base-line assessment shows that children enter school with standards that are well below average in language and mathematical skills. Currently all the pupils in the school have English as an additional language, many come from families which have low levels of literacy in English. On entry to the reception classes standards in the desirable learning outcomes are low. By the time children reach the age of five, standards remain well below average in language and literacy and mathematics. They achieve below the expected learning outcomes in knowledge and understanding of the world but are on track to achieve the expected learning outcomes in personal and social and in physical and creative development. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is well below the national average in reading and writing but well above in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment is above average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science show that the standard is below the national average but well above that for similar schools. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is well below the national average in English and mathematics and below in science. Compared with similar schools pupils' standards are in line in English and mathematics and in science they are above. Inspection findings confirm these results. In all other subjects standards are similar to those expected for pupils age except for art which is above at both key stages and design technology and music which are slightly below. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had a positive impact on standards, especially at Key Stage 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children form very good relationships with adults and each other. Their attitude to learning is very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good both in and outside the classroom, there have been no exclusions; pupils move sensibly around school and there is no oppressive or threatening behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are strong between the staff and pupils and pupils themselves. There is no racial tension and the school is a harmonious community. When they are given the opportunity, they demonstrate their ability to exercise responsibility.
Attendance	Approximately 88 per cent of all pupils attend the school regularly, which is below the national average of around 94 per cent. The main reason for absence is sickness. During Inspection week, pupils numbering upwards of 50 arrived late. This has a serious impact on the start to the school day and adversely affects the attainment of the pupils concerned.

Whilst pupils enjoy coming to school, many arrive late for lessons, which impacts on standards.

Extended family holidays taken by pupils in term-time also have a serious effect on their educational development. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. The opinions of the parents that their children enjoy coming to school are confirmed by the inspection. They are keen to learn both in lessons and in extra activities at lunchtime or after school. This eagerness is demonstrated in the way in which they settle quickly to tasks in the classroom. It is also demonstrated by the significant numbers, particularly of older pupils, who attend after-school clubs for activities such as computers and homework.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The consistently high quality of teaching across the school means that it is very good overall. Across the school almost three-quarters of teaching is good or very good, occasionally excellent and in the remainder of lessons it is satisfactory. Teaching in the under-fives is good. In more than four-fifths of lessons teaching is good or very good. At Key stage 1 two-thirds of the teaching are good or very good. At Key Stage 2 almost three-quarters of lessons are good or very good and occasionally excellent. The remainder of teaching is satisfactory across the school. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection. As a result of the very good teaching pupils learn well especially developing their skills in language.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets all statutory requirements. Time allocated is appropriate. Speaking and listening is particularly well promoted across the curriculum. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are beginning to raise standards.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The quality of learning is good. The effectiveness of teaching strategies for their literacy and numeracy development is very good. The well-constructed individual education plans ensure that all are given work which is well matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All pupils in the school have English as an additional language, conversation between pupils at playtime or with their parents tends to be in their mother tongue. They achieve well in learning to speak, read and write in English, making very good progress as a result of the very good teaching.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development and pupils know the difference between right and wrong at an early stage. They effectively experience cultures other than their own through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Spiritual development is sound and appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect are given during collective worship and in some lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The strong, caring and inclusive ethos of the school is evident in the classroom and around the school. The school continues to have very good procedures in place to promote very good behaviour and there are no incidents of bullying recorded. However, the procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are not sufficiently developed.

The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and their impact on the work of the school, whilst

satisfactory, is still a significant improvement on the previous inspection report. A number of parents come into school to help with their children's reading and others help with cooking and sewing. There is a Family Literacy class held each week during the course of the year. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets with all statutory requirements. It is planned to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Those pupils who enter the school knowing very little English are supported very effectively in their literacy work. The school continues to provide a safe and caring environment. There are effective arrangements in place to ensure the health, safety and protection of its pupils. The school continues to have very good procedures in place to promote very good behaviour and there are no incidents of bullying recorded. The procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality, however, are currently unsatisfactory. The home-school link workers try very hard and use different strategies in an attempt to improve pupils' attendance, but it remains unacceptably low and pupils are frequently late.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, principal teachers and senior staff of the school are very effective leaders and managers of the school. They have ensured that effective school development continues during the absence of the headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Apart from some active governors, of whom the chair is one, the governing body is ineffective.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates itself effectively to improve standards. A comprehensive monitoring programme is in place and this is effective at curriculum development but is insufficiently focused on teaching skills.
The strategic use of resources	The school development plan is effective and focuses expenditure closely on current initiatives and the aims of the school. The school enjoys substantial additional funding which is mostly spent on additional staff to enable the school to effectively overcome significant pupil disadvantage.
How well the school works with parents	The school has put considerable efforts at developing links with parents and now has helpers in the school, and received a curriculum award for involvement of the community in the curriculum.

Teachers have an appropriate range of qualifications and their skills have been developed well by effective in-service education. They are very well supported by a range of assistants who are used very well to promote pupils' learning, especially English. The headteacher (and the acting headteacher), principal teachers, senior staff and subject managers ensure that the school is very well led and managed. They are very well supported by the chair of governors. The governing body, overall, is less effective, does not have a clear vision for the future of the school or hold the school to account. Accounting procedures, although manual, are effective and the school follows the principles of best value, comparing costs with the Glodwick Schools' group and checking that goods and services are competitively tendered.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifty-eight completed questionnaires were returned out of 303 sent out. Fifty-seven parents attended their meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That their children like school• That their children make good progress• That they get about the right amount of homework• That teaching is good• That they are well informed about their children's progress• That they are comfortable approaching their school with questions or problems• That the school has high expectations• That the school works closely with parents• That the school is well led and managed• That the school helps their children become mature and responsible• That the school offers a wide range of activities outside of lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents were not comfortable going to the school with questions or problems

A few parents indicated they would like their children to have more homework. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The base-line assessment shows that children enter school with standards that are well below average in language and mathematical skills. Currently all the pupils in the school are from ethnic minority groups and have English as an additional language. Many come from families which have low levels of literacy in English and sometimes in their own language. There are few opportunities for pupils to speak English outside of school, which has a significant impact on their language development. On entry to the reception classes standards in language and literacy and in mathematics are very low and in personal and social education they are below average. By the time they reach the age of five, standards are well below average. Most children achieve well below the expected learning outcomes in language and literacy and mathematics. They achieve below the expected learning outcomes in knowledge and understanding of the world. They are on track to achieve the expected learning outcomes in personal, social and in physical and creative development.
2. Pupils at an early stage of acquiring the English language have little opportunity to practise English skills outside the classroom. As all pupils in the school have English as their second language, conversation between pupils at playtime or with their parents tends to be in their mother tongue, although some parents make a conscious effort to speak in English with their children. Under these circumstances, they achieve well in learning to speak, read and write in English, making very good progress as a result of the school's good provision. Many pupils, however, respond only in single word answers. Although the mechanics of reading are acquired speedily, pupils often fail to understand significant amounts of vocabulary and consequently their comprehension is weak. A limited understanding of the intricacies of English grammar leads to unsatisfactory standards in writing. This has an impact in several other areas of the curriculum in which writing skills are important.
3. Significant numbers of pupils enter the school as members of older age groups. Most of these have low levels of attainment across a broad range of curriculum areas, lowering the overall standards as measured by the national testing programme. These pupils usually make very rapid progress in learning in all areas of the curriculum except English. Many have particular difficulty with handwriting as they are unfamiliar with the concept of joining letters.
4. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests of reading, writing and mathematics are well below the national average. However, compared with similar schools* standards in reading and writing are well above the national average and mathematics is very high, reflecting the impact both of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the high quality teaching which takes place in the school.

*The comparison with similar schools is based on the number of free school meals for which pupils are eligible, to give a points score for disadvantage. However, the statistics are unreliable in this school as many pupils go home for lunch; the more accurate judgement is parents' receipt of the general disadvantage clothing grant of 82 per cent.

5. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests of English and mathematics were well below the national average and in science they were below. In comparison with similar schools results in English and mathematics were in line with the national average and in Science they were above.
6. Taking into consideration the considerable disadvantage mentioned, these results reflect the very good teaching in the school and the practical approach to science which is less reliant on linguistic skills. National Curriculum tests, taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, in reading writing and mathematics results show that by the end of Key Stage 1 the performance of boys is generally better than girls. By the time pupils are 11, the girls have caught up in English but remain below the boys in mathematics and science. However, the differences in the scores are such that they are not statistically significant.
7. Over the last four years, the school has maintained a trend of improvement which is broadly in line with the national trend for all schools. There has been a steady improvement in English over the four-year period 1996-1999, since the last inspection, and a more rapid improvement in mathematics and science. Progress in language development is hindered by the restricted opportunities for pupils to practise English outside of the classroom. The positive impact of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is becoming apparent in learning in English and mathematics at both key stages, but particularly at Key Stage 1, as might be expected, and is raising standards.
8. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the provision for information technology. Currently, standards at both key stages are in line with national expectations and the National Curriculum requirements are fully met. There is equality of opportunity and access to information technology throughout the school.
9. In religious education, at both key stages, the level of pupils' knowledge of different religions is in accordance with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. With reference to the previous inspection report, there is abundant evidence that pupils now gain a much deeper knowledge of religions other than their own, although linguistic disadvantage means that their accumulated knowledge at both key stages remains stronger overall than their ability to express it.
10. The inspection confirms these findings.
11. The school bases its target setting on national and local averages in the National Curriculum tests. They are realistic but challenging and are based on the extensive knowledge that the teachers have of their pupils. They have been modified downwards for next year, because of weak cohorts at both key stages 1 and 2. This was observed during the inspection and the targets should be achievable with continued hard work.
12. Attainment of pupils with special educational needs is good in the under-fives and in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and they are well supported by learning support and classroom assistants. Teachers know their pupils well; this ensures opportunities are given to those who exhibit special skills or are talented in a particular area. This is noticeable in art where some very high quality work was seen.

13. In all other subjects, standards are similar to those expected for pupils' age except for art, which is above at both key stages and design and technology and music, which are slightly below.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. The opinions of the parents that their children enjoy coming to school are confirmed by the inspection. They are keen to learn, both in lessons and in extra activities at lunchtime or after school. This eagerness is demonstrated by the way in which they settle quickly to tasks in the classroom. In a Year 1 class, for example, all pupils were absorbed in their *early morning work* in reading and spelling within two minutes of the start of the morning session. It is also demonstrated by the significant numbers, particularly of older pupils, who attend after-school clubs for activities such as computers and homework. In most lessons pupils have a strong desire to do their best. This is evident in the attractive presentation of their work, although weaknesses in handwriting sometimes detract from the overall effect. Their capacity to work hard to succeed has a considerable impact upon the progress they make, particularly in learning to read and write in English.
15. Pupils work with sustained concentration and often persevere when tasks become difficult. Very occasionally pupils become inattentive as a result of a lesson which proceeds at too slow a pace for them, or when they are less interested in the subject matter. In physical education lessons, a few pupils do not participate fully when the teacher is not observing them directly.
16. The behaviour of pupils in and around the school is consistently very good and was similar to the last inspection. Parents' perceptions that the previous high standards have been maintained are accurate. In classrooms, teachers and support staff have high expectations of good behaviour and deal with rare infringements with suitable firmness. Pupils behave sensibly when moving around the school, mostly conforming well to rules such as keeping left on the stairs. In the playground, aggressive behaviour is almost entirely absent. Younger pupils sensibly remain within the area designated for their play. At Key Stage 1, a significant factor in promoting good behaviour is the presence in the playground of most staff each playtime and their positive promotion of a range of playground games.
17. On those occasions when larger groups of pupils meet together, behaviour is often exemplary. For example, in an assembly involving children from nursery age up to Year 2, all pupils were very interested and attentive as work done by Year 1 pupils was displayed and carefully explained by the teacher. The absence of disruptive behaviour enables learning of good quality to occur. There have been no exclusions from the school.
18. The very good relationships between pupils and adults and between pupils themselves are a significant strength of the school. Pupils are courteous to visitors and to each other. All pupils, including those at an early stage of acquiring the English language, have friendly, yet respectful, relationships with teachers and other staff members. Adults employed in the school present very positive images of partnership to the pupils in their charge. For example, when it is necessary, support staff use their initiative to work flexibly to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils, in turn, adopt similar supportive roles. Thus many pupils who have more established skills in speaking English take the initiative in helping those with lower levels of skills. A Year 1 pupil used her mother tongue to explain the teacher's instruction when she realised

another pupil had not understood. A Year 3 pupil indicated the need to listen carefully to a tape to another pupil in a dance lesson.

19. When specifically asked to work in pairs, pupils co-operate well. There are fewer opportunities for them to demonstrate their ability to work in a truly collaborative way, although this was observed in geography and science lessons in Year 6 classes. In accordance with their cultural traditions, pupils tend to play in single sex groups at playtimes and usually in groups possessing the same mother tongue. In the classroom, however, pupils work harmoniously alongside each other, no matter what their language or gender. They show interest in and respect for the values and beliefs of other cultural groups, including those predominant in the United Kingdom.
20. When they are given the opportunity, pupils demonstrate their ability to exercise responsibility. In some classes, teachers involve pupils in undertaking tasks related to everyday routines. For example, in a Year 1 class a nominated pupil gives the signal for all to clear up at the end of an activity. This also promotes speaking and listening skills as the instructions are given in clearly spoken sentences. There are opportunities for the oldest pupils to undertake tasks such as assisting to keep the library in good order. However, there are insufficient systematically planned opportunities for all pupils to undertake a range of tasks in order to develop a greater degree of personal responsibility. Attendance and punctuality at the school are currently both unsatisfactory. Approximately 88 per cent of all pupils attend the school regularly which is below the national average of around 94 per cent. The main reasons for absence are sickness and long-term holidays to their home country. During Inspection week, pupils numbering upwards of 50 were arriving between 0900 and 0920 hours. This has a serious impact on the start to the school day and adversely affects the attainment of the pupils concerned.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The consistently high quality of teaching across the school indicates that it is very good overall.
22. Almost three-quarters of teaching is good, very good and occasionally excellent; the remainder is satisfactory. Teaching in the under-fives is good. In more than four-fifths of lessons teaching is good or very good. At Key Stage 1 two-thirds of the teaching is good or very good, the remainder is satisfactory and, at Key Stage 2, almost three-quarters of lessons are good, very good and occasionally excellent. Teaching in the remainder of lessons is satisfactory across the school. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection, which is a significant improvement from the last inspection, when seven per cent of teaching was judged unsatisfactory.
23. Teachers have a very good understanding of Pakistani and Bengali culture. They work in an effective partnership with support staff, many of whom are bilingual. Teachers and support staff plan the weekly programme together and evaluate activities daily. Support staff are used flexibly to assess and meet the needs of the pupils more effectively.
24. Where bilingual staff are present, teachers use them well to translate or to check pupils' understanding. Especially good examples of this were seen in Key Stage 1 English and art lessons.

25. A particularly good feature of the teaching is the high quality of questioning which teachers use to elicit response. They are mindful of the fact that many pupils are unable to communicate in full sentences and that the only conversational English many hear is at school.
26. A great deal of time and effort is spent by all teachers developing pupils' speaking and listening skills across the school.
27. In Year 2, teachers use phonics effectively to develop pupils' language working with words which end in *air, ere, are* and *ear*. In Year 6 the teacher skilfully discusses the difference between *open* and *closed* questions and ensures that pupils respond in an appropriate way. She asks, for example, if *Are you allergic to chocolate?* is an open or closed question: the majority of pupils understood it is a closed question because it could be answered with one word. Effective discussion took place on how it could be changed into an open question by adding *and why* to it and other closed questions.
28. In a Year 2 class the teacher recalls a walk she has had with the pupils and orally develops a word list from their recall. Stimulating discussion takes place about the signs of Spring and pupils generate a *shopping list* for Spring from pupils' responses. In a Year 5/6 class the teacher develops a strategy for single stage problem solving and follows an effective four-step approach which pupils had used before. Instructions were clear and good progress from previous mental/oral mathematical work was evident.
29. Literacy and numeracy are well taught and the extensive training which teachers have received is evident in the confidence with which they approach lessons using introduction and follow-up. This is then followed up by a plenary session which establishes what pupils have learned and what areas are not understood. These strategies have been effective in improving pupils' learning and raising standards and have been effectively used in other subjects.
30. The quality of the teaching in information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and is now good; it has been influential in the raising of standards and in stimulating the pupils' interests. Most teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and curriculum planning includes an appropriate progression of skills. Learning support assistants are effective in advancing pupils' knowledge and understanding. In one Year 4 lesson the adult had high expectations and challenged the pupils very well when using *Microworld* software to steer a turtle through a maze. The pupils were well motivated and engaged in purposeful activity quickly. The high quality of teaching extends to all other subjects and there was no unsatisfactory teaching seen. The best teaching was seen in subjects in which teachers have strong subject knowledge.
31. The high quality of teaching means that pupils are frequently inspired and learn well in lessons, despite often not being able to express themselves fully due to restricted vocabulary and language skills. This strong learning is particularly noticeable in literacy lessons in which teachers will frequently extend pupils' linguistic fluency through repetition and recapitulation.
32. Planning is effective and teachers are well prepared for their lessons. In one particularly inspiring design and technology lesson, pupils planned a menu for a restaurant linked to a particular country. The combination of the teacher's very good subject knowledge, excellent management and organisational skills, led to a very

active lesson with a brisk pace, pupils preparing pizza, chocolate mousse and yoghurt salad. The excellent working relationship and high regard in which pupils hold their teacher contributed to an excellent lesson.

33. The strongest lessons seen were where teachers' good subject knowledge, thorough planning and imaginative use of resources lifted the lesson and inspired the pupils. In this respect the approach to literacy and particularly speaking and listening is particularly strong and pupils are learning well. Where teaching in parts of lessons is less effective, the planning is less thorough and the pace of the lesson is slower, allowing pupils' attention to wander.
34. Teachers identify pupils as having special educational needs at an early stage. They work effectively with teaching support staff to ensure that pupils achieve the targets identified in their individual education plans. The high number of pupils with hearing impairment are sensitively and effectively managed. Work is marked effectively but more often than not it is feedback on pupils' work during the plenary sessions which is most effective.

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

35. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets with all statutory requirements. An appropriate allocation of time has been given to all subjects.
36. There are several strands to the curriculum that are particularly strong.
37. Teachers in the under-fives provide a stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum, based securely on the desirable learning outcomes.
38. Provision for the under-fives makes a very good contribution to children's moral and social development. They are developing a very clear understanding that some actions are right and some are wrong. Very good opportunities are provided for children to work sociably in small groups and share resources.
39. The school is very aware of the minority ethnic nature of its intake and works proactively to extend pupils' understanding of other cultures whilst fully valuing pupils' own cultural background. An example of this is the work in history. A good range of activities gives pupils the opportunity to explore Britain's past, particularly in this century, and their own ethnic heritage. Similarly, work in the literacy hour extends pupils' understanding of great British novelists and playwrights. There is very good attention to other black cultures. Art topics enable pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 to examine African art in detail. Afro-Caribbean music is included, with a very successful steel band for Year 6 pupils meeting weekly at lunchtime. The school actively seeks and uses positive images of black people from non-Asian cultures and challenges any negative behaviour which occurs.
40. Speaking and listening are well promoted across the curriculum. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has been very effective across the school and is having a positive impact on standards. The National Numeracy Strategy is also beginning to raise standards in mathematics although it has not yet been in operation long enough to have the same effect as the Literacy Strategy. There is a very challenging and imaginative art curriculum. The scheme of work for history allows pupils to explore the more recent past as well as their own ethnic heritage.

41. The curriculum is planned to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Those pupils who enter the school knowing very little English are supported very effectively in their literacy work. Work is also well matched to the needs of pupils on the register of special educational needs, including statemented pupils. This provision, together with the effective deployment of support staff, ensures that they enjoy access to the full range of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 are also given the opportunity to join the Booster Club which provides extra lessons in English and mathematics after school on three days of the week in addition to two hours on Saturday mornings. In combination with the homework club and the increasing use by pupils of E-mail and the Internet, this has provided more opportunities for independent learning. This is an improvement from the previous inspection findings.
42. There is very good provision for personal and social education. Written policies have been drawn up for sex education and health education. These topics are effectively covered in circle time in Reception and at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, science and physical education make a prominent contribution to their coverage and the science curriculum also includes an element of drugs education.
43. The school provides an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities to broaden the experience of pupils. Their athletic abilities are developed through the gym club that meets at lunchtimes and there are football teams for both boys and girls. Pupils can also play snooker, draughts and various board games. A steel band and an art club cater for pupils' musical and artistic talents and a computer club allows them to refine their information and communication technology skills. A Brownie pack, for which members have developed their own uniform blend, and a Rainbow group meet after school.
44. There are regular visits to museums, heritage and local interest centres to support pupils' work in history, geography and science. To help increase their understanding of different faiths in religious education, pupils visit an Anglican Church, a mosque and a Hindu temple.
45. The school has established several important links with the community which enhance pupils' learning. Both staff and pupils exchange visits with three secondary schools. In one of these, Year 10 pupils have worked with Year 6 pupils at Greenhill to produce a newspaper. Children in the Nursery and in Reception benefit from using the toy library whilst pupils in Key Stage 1 are given talks by visiting police and fire service officers when they study the theme of *People who help us*.
46. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for their spiritual development remains less effective than it is in other areas, which was the case at the time of the previous inspection. There are short prayer sessions at the end of key stage assemblies during which a devotional atmosphere is created. Each class has contributed two lines to prayers entitled *Our School* and *Our Friends* and pupils read these out in assemblies. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 have requested that a memorial garden should be laid out at the site of the new school for a child and teacher who died and they will plant trees in the designated area. However, although there are occasions, particularly in science and design and technology lessons, when pupils are induced to express their awe and admiration, these do not occur often in other areas of the curriculum.

47. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The Code of Conduct is well understood by pupils and there is a copy of the school's Mission Statement in every classroom. In addition, each classroom has its own rules and procedures. Pupils' achievements are highlighted and celebrated in assemblies and an award is presented to one pupil in each class on the basis of good work, exemplary behaviour and willingness to be helpful. Through assemblies, circle time, personal and social education and religious education lessons, pupils are frequently encouraged to think about moral issues and to consider the difference between right and wrong.
48. Pupils' social development is very well supported. Plentiful opportunities are provided in subjects across the curriculum for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs and in groups. The school places a strong emphasis on sharing from the time when pupils enter the Nursery. All Key Stage 1, teachers supervise playground activities in order to cultivate and reinforce pupils' social skills. Under the school's arrangements for paired reading, Year 5 pupils assist those in Year 1, and in lessons higher attaining pupils often willingly support pupils with SEN. Pupils take responsibility by acting as register monitors in each class whilst Year 6 pupils help to run the school library. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very positive. Pupils also relate well to each other and they behave courteously towards visitors and other adults who work in the school.
49. The provision for cultural development is good. Pupils become acquainted with a range of different cultures through their work in a number of subjects, especially art, music and religious education. In art, they study the works of famous artists of the past and the present from different regions of the world. Pupils who are members of the steel band gain a familiarity with Caribbean music. In religious education, pupils visit the buildings for worship of three different faith communities and compare the beliefs, values and traditions of Christians, Moslems, Hindus and Jews. Pupils learn about local culture in their geography lessons on the school's environment. The curriculum for history gives pupils good opportunities to learn about the development of British culture over many centuries as well as aspects of their own cultural inheritance. Regular visits to museums promote further understanding of both the local and the national heritage.
50. The quality of learning opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. The effectiveness of teaching strategies for their literacy and numeracy development is very good. These pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum and well-constructed individual education plans which ensure that all are given work which is well matched to their needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51. In the under-fives, staff know the children well, provide a secure environment and encourage independence. These promote children's self-esteem very effectively. The school's initial assessment of children's learning is undertaken in the nursery. Assessment approved by the local authority is used in reception. The school continues to provide a safe and caring environment, with very good educational and personal support and guidance for its pupils.

52. There are effective procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and protection of its pupils. Nominated members of staff co-ordinate the necessary arrangements and there are good links with most outside agencies.
53. The school continues to have very good procedures in place to promote very good behaviour and there are no incidents of bullying recorded. The procedures for monitoring attendance, however, are currently unsatisfactory. The numerous occurrences of lateness are not being recorded correctly in class registers and absences are not followed up quickly enough. The involvement of the educational welfare service is ineffective in identifying and dealing with this current problem. The home-school link workers try very hard and use different strategies in an attempt to improve pupils' attendance.
54. There are good procedures in place to monitor pupils' academic and personal development. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. There are formal procedures in place to assess pupils' progress in mathematics and English and there are formative arrangements for other subjects. The assessment information is used well to guide teachers' planning and set individual targets for the pupils. The personal development targets, especially for the older pupils, have increased their confidence and communication skills. The arrangements in place have meant that the teachers know their pupils very well and have been able to effectively support them and their needs.
55. There are good arrangements to assess the level of pupils' English language acquisition. The information gained enables the school to note which of the five stages of English language each pupil has reached each year. The school takes care not to equate poor English to special educational needs. Pupils are grouped according to their ability in subjects where appropriate, rather than according to their English skills. Where it is suspected that a pupil has special educational needs, he or she is assessed by a bilingual support assistant using the pupil's mother tongue. This enables staff to detect special educational needs and work to meet them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. There are very good induction arrangements which ensure that children under five settle well into school routines. Parents view the school very favourably and are supportive of what is trying to be achieved. The questionnaire and the formal meeting raised no significant minor issues. Parents spoken to during inspection week highlighted the positive progress their children have made, particularly with regards to learning English as a second language.
57. The quality of information provided for parents is good. There are regular newsletters and home visits made by staff, as well as a number of notice-boards strategically placed around the school. There are opportunities to meet with teachers on a daily basis and to attend the more formal meetings each term. The end of year academic reports on pupils' progress are informative and welcomed by parents. The governing body has managed to recruit parent representatives to its numbers. Attendance at meetings is intermittent and, except for a few notable activists, the governing body is ineffectual, as it does not hold the school to account or have vision for its future, relying too heavily on the strong management of the headteacher.

58. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and their impact on the work of the school is satisfactory and a significant improvement on the previous inspection report. A number of parents come into school to help with their children's reading and others help with cooking and sewing. There is a Family Literacy class held each week in the school and around 20 families attend during the course of the year. The contribution that parents make at home, however, to their child's learning remains adversely affected by their low levels of literacy. Parents, generally, still possess insufficient skills to be able to effectively help the progress their child is making at the school. To this end the school has implemented the Family Literacy Project to develop parents' and family skills. The school has gained the *Investors in People Award* for a second time, complying with the rigorous standards of personnel and community development which this award implies, and a *Curriculum Award* for the many ways in which the school involved the community in its life.
59. There are very good links with the local community to enable pupils to learn about British culture and to provide support for particular ventures. Notable amongst these are links with schools and businesses. A Church of England school and another from an affluent area outside of Oldham, both with pupils from a predominantly white ethnic background, act as partners to Greenhill School. Pupils play sports against each other regularly and plans are in hand to extend these partnerships to include individual e-mail links between pupils. A local shop is sponsoring the football team and has provided the finance to buy football kit for each member.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The headteacher was absent on extended leave due to illness during the inspection. His place was taken by an acting headteacher. The leadership and management of the school are very good; the combination of very effective delegation of responsibilities to the two principal teachers and to other senior teaching staff has minimised any disruption which the school might have experienced due to the headteacher's absence. All the teachers work in close partnership and play their part to make the school very effective. This has been recognised in the *Investors in People Award* and the school has worked hard to achieve the rigorous standards required by this organisation for a second time. The school was a winner of a prestigious *Curriculum Award* for the many ways in which it involved the community in the life of the school. Another local initiative which recognises the particular difficulties the school faces is the Family Literacy Project which aims to improve the standards of literacy of adults and pupils' siblings at source.
61. The chair of governors is very supportive of the school and together with the acting headteacher has done much to effectively help guide the school during the long-term absence of the headteacher, including monitoring the National Literacy Strategy. The governing body as a whole, however, is less effective. Whilst there has been some success in recruiting parent representatives since the last inspection, the governing body relies too heavily on employees of the school to make up numbers. Governors' meetings are frequently poorly attended, which makes them less effective as a decision-making body. For example, the adoption of a computerised accounting system, which would help the management of the school by giving greater information about the schools' finances, is still not in place despite having been decided on some time ago. The formation of sub-committees has been attempted in the past to make the governing body more efficient, but they have not been effective.
62. There is a small committee of activists led by the chair of governors who try very hard

to compensate for the overall lack of interest in belonging to the governing body, but as decisions can only be made in full committee this limits their influence. The governing body is not sufficiently forward looking, does not have a clear vision for the future of the school, and does not act as a critical friend to the school, reacting to situations created within the school rather than having its own vision for the school's future and holding it to account.

63. Great credit should go to those members of the governing body who are active for maintaining close links with the school and for compensating for those who are not. It is their work together with the strength of leadership of the headteacher, the principal teachers, senior staff and the chair of governors which has enabled the school to continue to develop and improve standards.
64. The leadership and management of the under-fives are good. There is a strong and dedicated team of adults. The teachers, nursery nurses, classroom assistants and bilingual support staff are very effective. Subject managers are also effective and ensure that subject planning is thorough and that new initiatives are well introduced. For example, the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been the focus of much development recently and the school rightly concentrates its resources on such initiatives through the comprehensive school development plan.
65. Good use is made of finance provided to support the learning of pupils who are acquiring English language skills. Most of the support is targeted in the early years and Key Stage 1 where most pupils at the beginning of the process are located. In Key Stage 2 the school has recognised that even pupils whose English is more advanced require some additional support. It has appointed two part-time teachers to support mostly the work in literacy and numeracy, enabling pupils to be taught in smaller groups in these subjects.
66. Teachers are well equipped to teach pupils with English as an additional language. There are good arrangements to increase their skills in this area. Many are voluntarily learning some basic Urdu or Bangla to increase their effectiveness. The school receives a number of grants including one for the level of disadvantage, another for pupils with special educational needs, and a very substantial grant to provide assistance for ethnic minority groups. There has also been a single payment to the school from the regeneration budget awarded to the Glodwick area which is part of the Alexandra ward in which the school is situated. This was used to purchase computers and set up the computer suite. Much of this additional finance is used to give an advantageous staffing ratio which enables the school to deal effectively with significant pupil disadvantage.
67. Non-teaching staff are similarly well qualified to meet the needs of the pupils having either nursery nursing qualifications or bilingual abilities to a high level. All work hard and are prepared to be flexible when necessary.
68. Because most of the pupils from a Bengali background are first-generation immigrants, their need for support is substantially greater than that of the pupils from a Pakistani background, but the availability of such support is rather less. Nevertheless, the school has achieved a satisfactory level of support for these pupils.

69. The school has an adequate supply of dual-language fiction books but rather less non-fiction. Most are in Urdu and English or Bangla and English. There are no books written only in the pupils' mother tongues. This is because the quality of the few such books, which are available, is not high.
70. Care is taken in the purchase of resources. For example, books are examined to ensure they provide positive images of black people and cultures. Play equipment, such as dressing-up clothes or dolls, for use in the early years classes, is chosen carefully to reflect both the pupils' background and the majority culture of the United Kingdom.
71. The school uses additional funding very well to provide additional support for pupils with special educational needs. The special needs co-ordinator deploys support staff very well. They provide imaginative and appropriately challenging work for their pupils and know them well. They have a thorough knowledge of their individual education plans and provide effective support to help pupils achieve their targets.
72. The co-ordinator provides good support for teachers in devising individual educational plans. However, teachers are not always fully involved in the later stages of this process and this aspect of provision could be better.
73. Senior teachers are involved in a comprehensive programme of monitoring teaching. This is effective in developing the curriculum and ensuring continuity in English and mathematics across age groups and key stages. It is less effective in developing teachers' performance as it is not sufficiently focused on developing teaching skills, other than incidentally acting as a trigger to provide in-service education.
74. The school has close links through the headteacher with Manchester University and provides valuable initial teacher training facilities for postgraduate certificate of education students. New staff are very carefully inducted into the school through an excellent mentoring system which ensures they settle into the school very quickly.
75. A new school is being built on a site near the present school. The current building, although in poor condition, is well used and looked after so that pupils' education is not affected. The teachers have made great efforts to make the building as attractive as possible and use the considerable space available to advantage. The move to a new school in the next academic year will answer all the criticisms made of accommodation in the last report. The level and quality of resources are good, the improvement since the last inspection of information and communication technology resources is particularly noticeable, as is the development and planning of the library which is indexed and has a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. Literacy and numeracy are well served and the requirements of all initiatives are well served by the priorities in the school development plan.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76. The school should raise standards by:

- developing strategies to improve attendance and punctuality (paras 20, 53, 97);
- raise the awareness of the governing body as to its role and responsibilities in providing a clear direction for the school (paras 57, 61).

Minor issues

The governors may wish to consider the following:

- The more effective use of the comprehensive monitoring programme to further develop teachers' skills (para 73);
- The implementation of information technology in school administration (para 61).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

75

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

103

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1%	27%	47%	25%	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	44	303
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	146

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	36

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	325

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	94.9
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	18	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	17
	Girls	14	16	18
	Total	25	26	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (37)	74 (32)	100 (42)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	14	15
	Girls	11	15	17
	Total	20	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	57 (42)	83 (40)	91 (44)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (84)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	21	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	12	13
	Girls	9	7	16
	Total	15	19	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	39 (37)	50 (39)	76 (55)
	National	70 (64)	69 (60)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	6	9
	Girls	7	6	8
	Total	12	12	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	32 (49)	32 (57)	45 (61)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	149
Bangladeshi	122
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2:1
Average class size	25.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	390

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	42.0:1

Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81.25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7:1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/9
	£
Total income	735708
Total expenditure	747052
Expenditure per pupil	2292
Balance brought forward from previous year	27839
Balance carried forward to next year	10977

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	303
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	90	9	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	31	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	22	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	31	5	2	7
The teaching is good.	71	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	16	7	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	19	3	5	9
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	9	2	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	71	16	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	22	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	17	2	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	14	5	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents at their meeting wanted more homework for their children.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

77. The provision for the under-fives is good and has a positive impact on children's learning and progress. Children enter the nursery with poor social and learning skills. The vast majority communicate entirely in their home language and are very dependent on adult support for most activities. The high quality of care and the stimulating environment provided by staff in the nursery are a strength of the school. This very good provision ensures that children's early experience of school is rewarding and enjoyable and makes a significant contribution to their development in all areas. Nearly all children transfer to the reception classes. On entry to the reception classes standards in language and literacy and in mathematics are low and in personal and social development they are below average. This is confirmed by the initial assessment of children's achievement which is approved by the local education authority. By the age of five, achievement is well below the expected outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, and below average in knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children are on track to achieve the desirable learning outcomes in personal and social and in physical and creative development. This judgement is made according to the national criteria established for this age group. This represents sound improvement overall since the last inspection.

Personal and social development

78. Personal and social development is in line with national expectations. On entry to the nursery class, most children have little previous experience of sociable interaction with children and adults outside their immediate family. Teachers plan a varied range of activities for children in nursery and reception classes. This provides new learning in a number of areas and successfully increases their knowledge and self-confidence. Consistently good or very good teaching and management of children ensure that progress is good and standards in personal and social development are sound by the age of five. Teaching and support staff work very effectively together as a team and are caring and supportive. They create a positive ethos for learning and are very good role models. They treat children with respect and courtesy and this promotes very good relationships. Children play and work sociably together. During snack time they are polite and well mannered and take responsibility for tidying up after themselves. Opportunities are sometimes missed to allow children to develop language, counting skills or initiative by, for instance, preparing and distributing food and drinks for their group. They are beginning to develop initiative and independence, such as when choosing clothes for a doll to wear. They move confidently from activity to activity and work sensibly without supervision.

79. On entry to the nursery, many children are apprehensive about coming to school. They have difficulty in communicating in a new language and in unfamiliar surroundings. Bilingual and English speaking staff provide a calm, very well organised and stimulating environment. As a result, children settle down well into daily routines and quickly appreciate which actions are right and which are wrong. The displays in the nursery are imaginative and of a high standard, which makes a further contribution to children's good progress. Children in nursery and reception classes learn to care about the world around them and develop a sense of compassion. For instance, they understand clearly that babies and toddlers must be treated with love and care. The

very good supervision of activities has a very positive impact on their attitudes to school. They become absorbed in what they are doing to the extent that there is no inappropriate behaviour and levels of co-operation are very good.

Language and literacy

80. Attainment is well below national expectations. On entry to the nursery class, nearly all children communicate only in their home language and are unable to speak, read or write using English. Very good teaching and support in the nursery class ensure that children quickly adapt to listening to and following instructions in a new language. Bilingual support is used sensitively to enable children to make the transition to more regular use of spoken English. In nursery and reception classes across all the areas of learning, adults speak clearly and slowly to ensure understanding. They encourage children to reply increasingly in English and this develops their confidence in speaking. On a small number of occasions, teachers do not give clear direction to support staff about their role during a lesson. Consequently, their interaction with children becomes merely supervisory and lacks focus. Opportunities to assess listening skills or develop specific vocabulary are missed. In the majority of lessons, however, all adults intervene constructively to encourage children to express ideas and experiences. By the age of five, most children have significantly improved their ability to listen and understand. They regularly use a number of words which occur frequently in their school life. The majority of children at this stage limit responses to single words, whilst a small number of higher attaining children use whole sentences: for example, one child discussing his family explained, *I have one sister who lives in Pakistan and another who lives in London.*
81. As children enter the nursery, many are unfamiliar with books, whether in their home language or English. A significant minority do not hold books the right way up or are not aware that words convey meaning. Many children do not recognise that print is read from left to right. Teachers in nursery and reception classes plan regular reading sessions during which children are encouraged to handle, read and enjoy books. Additionally, they have many opportunities to listen to favourite stories both in their home language and English. This ensures that they are making good progress in reading by the age of five in relation to their achievement on entry. By the age of five, most children enjoy reading with support. Many recognise individual words and use pictures to help them to understand stories. Nursery children develop early writing skills through mark making and the formation of familiar initial letters from books they have seen. Higher ability children in the reception classes form at least some of the letters of their name showing clear pencil control. By the age of five, most children over-write letters or short words using tracing paper or by joining dots.

Mathematics

82. Attainment is well below national expectations. However, good teaching helps children to improve from a very low level of achievement on entry and they make good progress. The teaching of basic skills in numeracy throughout nursery and reception classes is very effective. Teachers provide a wide range of activities, well matched to children's needs, which familiarise them with numbers one to ten. One adult in the nursery class, for example, asked children to sort clothes into sets according to their suitability for a baby or an older child. Children are encouraged to *feel* numbers made from a variety of tactile materials or fill in the shapes of numerals using paper or paint. In reception classes they put their knowledge to practical use by, for example, sorting pairs of socks according to their colour. By the age of five, most children count to ten

unaided. They recognise basic shapes and some children name them clearly. Higher attaining children count successfully in twos with the help of a number line.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Attainment is below national expectations. Teachers plan an imaginative range of activities to promote children's curiosity and interest in the world around them. These are introduced in the nursery class and are continued throughout the reception year. Good teaching has a positive effect on children's ability to make sense of their immediate surroundings. By the time they are aged five they have an increased understanding of their position in their family, the area in which they live and changes which take place. Progress is limited by the difficulties which most children have in explaining or recording their experiences. All children realise that they were once babies and that babies grow into toddlers and later go to school. Learning is well supported by visits to school by parents with babies and with small children. Children in reception class are given opportunities to prepare a meal for a small child with adult support. In the nursery, children develop their sense of direction by finding their way along a simple floor map. Teachers in reception classes organise visits to the local shops to further improve geographical awareness.

Creative development

84. Standards in creative development are in line with national expectations by the age of five. When children enter the nursery they have poor control of pencils and crayons. Teaching methods and the support provided for children are very good. As a result, children quickly improve their confidence and control using a wide range of media and make good progress. They mix colours for themselves and paint large pictures with clear, recognisable features. They use malleable materials such as dough for making, for example, a three-dimensional model of the baby they have painted. Drawing skills are less well developed and many children have difficulty in making clear pictures with pencil or crayon. Most children use glue brushes and paste competently for collage work. In the reception classes, the range of activities is widened further to include printing and examples of the work seen were clear and attractive. The majority of children take part willingly and confidently in imaginative play, although some find it difficult to communicate ideas in their home language or English. In assemblies and dance lessons, they sing familiar songs tunefully and enthusiastically.

Physical development

85. Standards in physical development are in line with national expectations by the age of five. In the nursery, adults provide good opportunities for children to develop physical skills, confidence and co-ordination. They are given very effective support and gain increasing control when using scissors, glue and paint brushes. Adults in nursery and reception classes work effectively in the outdoor play area to develop confidence on larger apparatus such as climbing frames. With their support, children gain increasing control using pedal-driven toys and show good awareness of the space around them. In dance lessons, they follow instructions well and perform gestures and movements in time to music. Many children rely heavily on adult assistance when they enter the nursery. Through consistently good teaching and well-directed support, children make good progress in developing independence and self-confidence. By the age of five, most children dress and undress without help before and after physical development lessons.
86. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support work across the areas of learning. All children have regular opportunities to use computers in the technology suite. They use the mouse confidently to drag images across the screen or *paint* pictures, although they cannot yet load or save their work unaided. Most children load and operate a tape recorder independently.
87. The leadership and management of the under-fives are good and there is a very positive ethos for learning. There are some weaknesses in the planning of work for reception classes. There is no overview of what is to be covered throughout the reception year and shorter-term planning does not identify opportunities for assessment. The role of support staff in some lessons is not made sufficiently clear to them and progress could be better on these occasions. All adults involved in the teaching and care of children in the nursery and reception classes are strongly committed to their work. The management of children is patient, very effective and has a significant impact on progress.
88. Effective systems are in place for identifying children with special educational needs as early as possible. In some instances, home visits enable the school to assess the needs of such children before they arrive in the nursery. The school makes very good use of additional funding to supply extra support for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Due emphasis is placed on helping the high numbers of children who come into the nursery speaking only their home language. This is successful and provides a good basis for their future education. The accommodation for the under-fives is spacious and attractive. The outdoor play area has been made more secure since the last inspection and the school has invested in good quality play equipment.

ENGLISH

89. There are no pupils of white ethnic backgrounds in the school. All pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. About 47 per cent are from a Bengali heritage, speaking Bangla as their mother tongue, and 53 per cent from a Pakistani heritage, speaking either Urdu or Punjabi. Many pupils have arrived in this country relatively recently. About 55 per cent of all pupils are at an early stage of learning the English language. Attainment on entry to the school is very low; the majority of pupils have no English language skills at all and very often have little or no exposure to English language at home. Nearly all children who come into the school are not able

to speak, read or write English at all and this includes those who enter the school in later years. Children are well supported in the nursery class. This, together with the stimulating environment and good resources, ensures that children quickly get used to listening to and following instructions in a new language. Bilingual support is used sensitively to develop the skills of spoken English. In nursery and reception, adults speak clearly and slowly to ensure understanding. They encourage children to reply increasingly in English and this develops their confidence in speaking and listening. By the age of five pupils have a knowledge of the most commonly used words spoken, but standards remain well below those expected for their age.

90. In the national Curriculum tests of 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 standards in reading and writing were well below the national average, but standards were well above in comparison with similar schools, which reflects the findings of the inspection. The impact of the National Literacy Strategy has raised standards at this key stage. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in English remain well below the national average although they are in line with similar schools. The impact of the national Literacy Strategy is yet to be as apparent at this key stage as in Key Stage 1, and this reflects the findings of the inspection
91. In speaking and listening pupils speak with confidence, although not usually with any grammatical structure. However, they are able to communicate quite effectively with the teacher and each other, but find the expression of complex ideas in language very difficult. In one Year 2 lesson pupils recalled a walk in the park and developed a list of words such as *daffodil* and *baby lamb*, but were not able to express what they had seen in sentences unless strongly guided by the teacher. Many strategies are used to sustain interest in language. For example, in a Year 3 class the pupils focused on an oral performance of a rap poem, *Work a rap*, clapping and clicking their fingers rhythmically as the teacher read the poem out loud. In one Year 3/4 class many pupils answered the teacher in sentences when talking about Ted Hughes' story of *The Iron Man*. They added suffixes successfully to words such as *volcano* and *angel*. In a Year 6 class pupils discussed the difference between open and closed questions. They found that many closed questions can be turned into open ones by adding *and why?* They asked the teacher, *Do you like chocolates and why?* Many pupils find this type work difficult because of their inability to express themselves in full sentences. But it is evident from their reaction and response to teachers during extended discussions, that their understanding is better than the ability to express themselves. A strong feature of the pupils' achievement across the school is the confidence which they show when speaking, no matter how restricted the language skills, and the very close attentiveness they pay to the teacher.
92. The development of reading across the school is good. Although overall standards across the school are well below the national average. Across both key stages pupils read mechanically at standards which are frequently in line with those appropriate for their age and they can often recall in detail what is written: their training in memorising the Koran helps them with this. It is the understanding of the text which is lacking and the ability to express this understanding in words. This is well illustrated in the 1999 National Curriculum test scores at Key Stage 1: pupils' scores in the reading comprehension tests (16 per cent) were less than half those in the reading tasks (37 per cent) and at the lowest level.
93. In a Year 1 lesson all pupils look closely at the text of the story of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* in a big book as a class. The teacher encourages pupils to make sentences about the story from the pictures, before attempting to read the text. This ensures that pupils are paying close attention before they start. In a Year 2 lesson pupils learned phonics well. They successfully sounded out words such as *water*, *some* and *little*. Later in the lesson pupils discussed with the teacher the sounding of *air*, *ere*, *are* and *ear*, to help them with their end of week spelling test.
94. The standard of writing is well below that expected for pupils' age, although the presentation of work is frequently good. Pupils try hard across both key stages to present their work neatly although they use printed handwriting until quite late in the school. Writing is developed well across the school but is emphasised less than speaking and listening which is an appropriate strategy for pupils who have such

restricted linguistic skills. The school has adapted the National Literacy Strategy to suit its needs effectively. This is already starting to impact on pupils' standards, giving them a good grounding in basic grammatical skills so that they understand the structure of the language. This is particularly evident at Key Stage 1. In one Year 2 lesson in which pupils recalled a walk in the park, they wrote down a list of suitable words on the white board such as *baby lamb* and *daffodils* and put these into simple sentences on a worksheet. In a Year 3/4 class after changing nouns to adjectives, such as *volcanic* and *angelic*, some pupils complete a 'cloze' procedure (filling in blanks in sentences) effectively, although many found this difficult because of lack of understanding of the text. By the time pupils reach Year 6 many write pieces of extended writing, although spelling is frequently weak. In one example, pupils wrote about the advantages and disadvantages of the Saturday *booster classes* attended by pupils. Some considerable thought had gone into these pieces which were displayed. One boy mentioned humorously that attending these classes did not give him *time to rest*. There are some examples of information technology being used to draft written work, but computers are not fully utilised in English on a day-to-day basis.

95. The teaching of English across the school is consistently good and occasionally very good. It is the consistency of teaching across the school which makes it so effective. Teachers have sharpened their skills with the National Literacy Strategy training. The commonality of approach to teaching literacy, which takes up a significant part of the school day, has benefited the quality of teaching and increased pupils' learning as there is a precision in the teachers' expectations of pupils across the school. This has improved standards and is a significant improvement from the last inspection. The features which are evident across all the teaching are the good use of probing open-ended questions. In a Year 1 lesson for example the teacher gently insisted on verbal responses to her questions about *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. In a Year 3 lesson the teacher told those who had been successful in answering questions about a rap poem to give themselves *a pat on the back*. In all lessons a brisk pace was evident and pupils were learning well. Teachers are sensitive and aware of pupils' limited linguistic skills and take many opportunities to correct their English and grammar.
96. Teachers manage pupils well and use a variety of techniques to keep lessons interesting, for example, encouraging pupils to clap and click their fingers to a rap poem in a Year 3 lesson. Teachers' knowledge of English is very good and this combined with the strong relationships formed between the teachers and pupils means that pupils progress well in this subject. Of particular note is the way that those pupils whose language skills are well developed help those with weaker skills. Lessons are well planned and organised, have a clear purpose and are designed to match pupils' needs. The school 'sets' older classes for literacy, splitting them into groups according to attainment in language. This is effective in enabling pupils to progress more rapidly especially those pupils whose language is better developed or who are gifted and talented in the subject. Teachers use the generous number of effective support staff very well so that those pupils who have special educational needs or who are at the early stages of learning English are very well supported.
97. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' achievements based on the National Literacy Strategy. These, together with summative records such as annotated pupil achievement books and optional National Curriculum tests, mean that teachers know their pupils very well and carefully track their language development to ensure work is closely matched to pupils' abilities. The effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, the very good leadership and management of this subject, together with grouping of pupils into sets, have had a positive effect on pupils' achievements,

although on occasions lessons at the beginning of the day are interrupted by pupils arriving late to school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection

MATHEMATICS

98. Standards in mathematics are well below average by the end of both key stages reflecting weak cohorts in Years 2 and 6 identified by the school. Work shows clearly, however, that the standard varies from year group to year group. Standard Attainment Tests in 1999, for example, showed that all the then Year 2 pupils reached level 2, a result well above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching level 3 was also above the national average. The Year 6 cohort in the same year scored below the national average but in 1997 the Key Stage 2 results were very close to the national average. The school maintains that the poorer result at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1 in 1999 is accounted for by the difference in the cohorts rather than poor progress through Key Stage 2. The work sample would agree with this view. Pupils do, in fact, make good progress, linked to good teaching, through the school. At Key Stage 1 their learning improves with their grasp of English as the previous report noted. Through Key Stage 2 pupils continue to learn at a good rate considering the difficulties that some of them continue to experience with written and spoken English. The demands for linguistic skill in mathematics increase through this key stage making even greater gains necessary for success.
99. Standards in mathematics have improved since the time of the last inspection at both key stages. The previous report gave attainment as 63 per cent of Year 2 pupils achieving level 2 or above and 28 per cent of Year 6 pupils gaining level 4 or above. The corresponding figures for 1999 were 100 per cent and 50 per cent.
100. Pupils work well in maths. This is partly because of good teaching but also because pupils are keen to learn and prepared to concentrate. This in turn allows the lesson to proceed at a good pace to produce more interesting work. They behave well and are keen to answer questions in the oral part of numeracy lessons. They work together well and in several Key Stage 2 lessons there was some very good discussion towards problem solving. Pupils listen quietly to the teacher's instructions. They present their work well. The school emphasises the importance in showing working to indicate developing understanding of a question, but many books could look tidier and work could be easier to read through more use of rulers.
101. Teaching is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen and just over half were good or very good. Lessons, especially at Key Stage 2, are lively and help to create and use pupils' natural keenness. Teachers prepare well and organise lessons efficiently and effectively. In the best lessons teachers question pupils very well, leading them, for example, to think about the mathematics involved in a particular problem. At Key Stage 1, teachers encourage individual pupils to participate in the oral sessions. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and to be attentive during explanations. In all lessons seen boys and girls took an equal part and pupils of all abilities were well involved. Teachers pace lessons well, in turn helping pupils to concentrate and to follow the explanations. In one Key Stage 1 lesson the pace was rather too slow and pupils became restless but this was a rare exception. Teachers match tasks to pupils' level of attainment.
102. In Key Stage 2 the school puts pupils into groups by ability so that they can all work at a suitable level and pace. Mathematics is well assessed and the recording system is good. This helps teachers to decide at appropriate intervals in which group a pupil

should be for maximum learning advantage. The strategy works and is helping to raise standards.

103. Although pupils do some data handling, books show that this attainment target receives too little emphasis. There is currently too little use of computers in mathematics but the school is addressing this issue. Similarly there is not enough evidence of pupils using and applying mathematics, although teachers work hard to introduce pupils to the language of mathematics. During the inspection pupils in several classes at Key Stage 2 were progressing in their understanding of how to work out the mathematics needed to solve a given problem. Year 5/6 pupils could work out the steps towards solving problems about spending money and made good progress in their understanding of how to do this in the lessons seen. The balance of the mathematics curriculum is better now than at the time of the previous inspection.
104. Mathematics is well led. The subject manager has produced extensive assessment systems and a complex but logical and helpful system of groupings for pupils in Key Stage 2. The mathematics policy document is lacking but the school is aware of this and plans to carry out a comprehensive revision in the near future. Mathematics is well resourced, not least in the number of teachers and assistants available to teach it. Small group work helps pupils to learn the language of mathematics and to learn more quickly and surely. Every classroom has a *Maths Wall* and, although a small minority of these show good display but relatively low challenge, the overall effect is of a mathematically rich environment. Two teachers are Leading Maths Teachers for the local education authority and give demonstration lessons for teachers from other schools.

SCIENCE

105. Attainment in science is below national expectations at the end of both Key Stages. Standards in all aspects of the subject are broadly similar. There are no significant variations in attainment with regard to any area of scientific knowledge and understanding. In the last inspection, standards in both Key Stages were found to be in line with national expectations. These findings were in contrast with test results for the same academic year, when standards of achievement were well below national expectations in both key stages.
106. The most recent National Curriculum test results showed that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was below the national interpretation overall. It was average at Level 2 and above and well below average at Level 3 and above. In comparison with similar schools, the number of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was well above the national average and below this at Level 3 or above. At Key Stage 2, the number of pupils achieving Level 4 or above was below the national average, while the proportion achieving Level 5 or above was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools, the proportion of pupils achieving Levels 4 and 5 or above was well above average. Over the last few years, standards in Key Stage 2 have risen broadly in line with national trends, after a marked improvement between 1996 and 1997. The inspection findings broadly reflect this picture. There has been steady improvement in pupils' attainment at both key stages since the last inspection.
107. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know the properties of different materials and explain their uses. They carry out their own tests to measure the effects of exercise on the human body and recognise the difference between healthy and unhealthy

foods.

108. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know that different solids dissolve until the solution becomes saturated. They clearly understand the importance of conducting a fair test to ensure that results are reliable. They know how to make a hypothesis, and have some grasp of how to control variables and why it is important to do so. Most pupils have well-developed investigative skills and put these to regular use.
109. The school has worked hard to improve the teaching of experimental and investigative science. This work is having a positive effect on standards and reflects good improvement in provision since the last inspection. The investigative approach is fully embedded in work across all the areas of the science curriculum. Appropriate use is made of information communication technology in the subject to interpret data gained from investigations. Good use is made of available resources. For example, the site of the new school building has been exploited imaginatively as a means of studying materials and their uses.
110. The teaching of science is good throughout the school. Teachers at both key stages present their pupils with interesting, often exciting activities and their enthusiasm builds positive attitudes to science. They plan and organise the work in such a way that pupils of all abilities are presented with tasks which challenge them and extend their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate work and are supported well both by their class teachers and by well-directed support staff, so that they participate fully in the work of the class.
111. Teachers use correct scientific language in a systematic way so as to enhance pupils' language. This work makes a positive contribution to the basic literacy skills of all pupils. For example, a Year 3 pupil explained her work on sound by saying, *I made a sliding instrument. If there's a little cavity, it makes a high sound.* Teaching in many lessons also develops pupils' numeracy skills, for example when reading and recording changes in temperature on a thermometer. In all lessons, teachers expect pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to work as part of a team. This is a very effective strategy and makes a significant contribution to personal and social development. Standards of behaviour are consistently very good.
112. The combination of good teaching and good class management ensures that pupils' learning is good as they move through the school. Because they are presented with interesting work which is well matched to their needs and abilities, pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding well at all stages. They concentrate very well and show interest and enthusiasm for what they are doing. Because they are well motivated, pupils show very good intellectual, physical and creative effort and a good pace of work is maintained. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported so that they also learn well.
113. Science is well co-ordinated and managed and the co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject. She has created a good ethos for learning, particularly in the improved area of investigative science.

ART

114. Whilst it was only possible to observe one lesson in each key stage, work in pupils' portfolios and on display in classrooms and around school indicate that pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in the subject and achieve standards above that normally expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good and often very good progress in the subject and achieve standards in their artwork well above that expected of pupils of a similar age. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection when attainment was deemed to be satisfactory.
115. In Year 1 pupils demonstrate good observational skills as they produce some pleasing pictures of flowers linked to Van Gogh's 'Irises'. The teacher's exposition to this lesson, as the class reflected on their visit to the local flower market, and her resulting questions did much to develop and enhance pupils' oral skills. The good quality work produced by pupils was much influenced by their total commitment to the lesson and their ability to give their work their full and undivided attention.
116. In Year 5 pupils focus on art skills as they work on colour shading and blending in watercolour pencils. These skills are to be used in the next art lesson as pupils work in detail on pictures based upon Tudor miniature portraits. During the lesson pupils were observed working quietly both in an independent manner as well as supporting each other in their efforts.
117. Observation of the high quality work around the school indicates that pupils are provided with the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the art curriculum. This includes drawing and painting in a range of styles based on a range of artists' work; collage work; three-dimensional figure work in clay, straws, silver foil and *Modroc*; pottery and papier mache; textile work on tapestries, appliqué and wall hangings; and computer generated art.
118. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to revisit each of these activities, to experiment and to refine their skills. Pupils explore art from other countries and cultures and use this experience as a stimulus for their own work. Pupils produce some imaginative paintings, masks, heads, and figures based upon African and Chinese art. There are good links between art and other areas of the curriculum, in particular history. Pupils draw and paint Greek vases, Egyptian mummies, and are involved in a range of art activities linked to the Tudors. The high quality of work produced by pupils is reflected in the fact that one of the tapestries produced by the school has been selected for display in the Millennium Dome. Pupils rightly show real pride in the work they produce.
119. Pupils treat all materials and equipment in a safe and sensible manner, and are as committed in clearing away at the end of the lesson, as they are in the practical activities they are involved in. A good working atmosphere existed in both lessons observed. Whilst pupils produce good and often very good artwork based upon the work of a wide range of challenging artists (El Greco, Picasso, Andy Warhol, Escher and David Hockney), a significant number of pupils lack the communication skills to talk about their own work, and the work of the artists they have studied.
120. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. Lessons are well planned, resourced and organised. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, provide them with good support during lessons, and allow them to share and celebrate their work at the end of lessons.
121. The subject is led by an informed and enthusiastic co-ordinator who influences the

teaching of the subject through her own good practice. The subject is generously resourced. This is a significant factor in the range of art activities available to pupils. There is a policy for the subject, which needs to be up-dated. Whilst the school is using an effective commercial scheme of work for the subject, it is looking towards the introduction of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. Opportunities are found for pupils to visit local art galleries, and the school regularly hosts artists in residence. Pupils will in fact work with an artist in residence the week after the inspection on a project on litter in the environment. The subject does much to contribute to pupils' cultural development, and the welcoming atmosphere in the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Standards of attainment, especially in design work, are a little below national expectations at both key stages but some good work is done. For example, a Year 6 food technology lesson showed pupils thinking carefully about both the planning and the making of pizzas. This was food technology work of high quality. In 1999 pupils made a Millennium Tapestry that now hangs in the Millennium Dome and photographs in the school show this to be a fine and colourful piece of work. Generally, however, there is little evidence of pupils designing as opposed to drawing a picture of what they are going to make and writing about what they are going to do and what they will need. Books also show little evidence of designs being changed to improve them either before or during the making process. One exception seen was in Year 2 where pupils had experimented with wheels to see which would make their model car work best. Year 4 posters about help for flood victims in Mozambique showed limited design skills but careful work. A strong sense of social responsibility came through this work. Pupils in a Year 3/4 class were less confident about cutting and sticking together the boxes they were making than would be expected from the age group. Few pupils were able to design a box shape for themselves. Year 3 pupils were well aware that their pneumatic toys would work by using air but were less secure when asked how.
123. Pupils' response to design technology is good. They share materials and equipment sensibly. They work quietly and concentrate well. There is often an air of quiet industry in design technology lessons.
124. Pupils' enthusiasm and good working practices are closely linked to the teaching, which varies but overall is good and sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. Teachers prepare well and organise lessons effectively. Good teaching both creates and uses pupils' enthusiasm. It leads pupils to make satisfactory progress despite the language difficulties that many of them have. In a Year 3/4 lesson for example, the teacher introduced the idea of making boxes in such a way as to make it very attractive. Pupils' were very excited about making the pizzas and the teacher harnessed this enthusiasm very well. In another lesson a teacher was too eager to show pupils how to do things where their own experimentation would have been more valuable. Groups work well with classroom assistants who are well briefed and well able to lead group sessions. A good example happened in the Year 6 lesson where the class assistant worked with a group of special needs pupils. Sometimes a little more teacher intervention and help would make a good session better. Time is well used when teachers and assistants are able to work intensively with small groups of pupils. It ensures that pupils of all abilities are well involved, and the girls participate as actively as the boys.

125. Teachers use their subject skills well and the display around the building owes much to the flair of the subject manager. The action figures in the Year 3 classroom are a good example. On one of the staircases colourful display has improved the environment making attractive an area in a very poor decorative state.
126. Whilst the best of the work is at least as good as at the time of the previous report, overall standards have not improved. The school uses the Qualification and Curriculum Authority scheme of work that can provide for a sound balance and for progression and continuity. Currently, books show that for some classes the balance favours food technology rather too much. The new subject manager has exciting ideas for the subject's development and the school is ready to raise standards. She intends to revise thoroughly the existing policy document which is out of date. Pupils plan for technology in planning books at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 some work is in topic books. The work could usefully be brought together in one book or folder so that pupils (and teachers) can see and appreciate the progression of work in the subject. More attention needs to be paid to re-drafting and altering designs so that, as the making process runs through, pupils can see why some ideas work and others do not.
127. Assessment is not particularly effective and does not feed well into future planning. The subject manager has prepared good systems for assessment that would help teachers to use their knowledge of what pupils can do in their preparation of future work.

GEOGRAPHY

128. Standards noted in the last inspection have been maintained and are in line with national expectations at both key stages. There is still a strong environmental bias with excellent use being made of the local area.
129. At Key Stage 1, pupils study a range of topics in geography well which enhance skills, knowledge and understanding. Evidence from lessons and displays indicate that pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good understanding of the local environment. Pupils in a Year 1 class had visited Oldham market and were developing their visit by drawing plans. Most pupils talk about the seasons, and know that the weather and life in other countries is different. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils describe physical and human features of different places when comparing their local environment with other places. Simple mapping skills are developed.
130. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use skills and sources of evidence to respond to a range of geographical questions. They show a sound awareness that different places may have both similar and different characteristics. The quality of learning is good. Pupils show an interest in their work and talk about it with understanding. A Year 4 class studying the journey of rainwater could successfully relate their tour round the outside of the school to their exploration of how rainwater is treated before being used in our homes.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features which contribute strongly to pupils' learning. A strength of the teaching is the way in which teachers use the local environment to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject and to heighten their awareness of environmental issues. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives and teachers establish a good learning environment. Pupil management is good and this enables all pupils to learn and to make progress. Pupils' own good attitudes to the subject and their good behaviour in lessons also contribute well to their quality of learning. Pupils with special educational needs are

provided with good support and make good progress.

132. The co-ordinator is effectively managing the subject and has established very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Resources are managed well and good for the subject. Maps, globes, atlases and photographs are available and the school has excellent resources for local and comparative studies. There is a good policy and scheme of work in place to guide teachers' planning and to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning.

HISTORY

133. Whilst it was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons during the period of the inspection, observation of pupils' work around the school and teachers' planning indicate that the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject. Many pupils achieve standards broadly in line with those expected for their age at both key stages.
134. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrate a simple understanding of change over time as they handle a range of household artefacts linked to washdays long ago, come to an effective understanding of their use, and compare them to contemporary washday equipment. The good range of artefacts and an appropriate worksheet did much to enhance learning in this lesson.
135. Pupils in Year 2 show a satisfactory understanding of chronology as they sequence pictures in the life of Florence Nightingale, and come to some understanding of health and medicine during the Victorian period. Pupils then use this knowledge in a useful manner as they compare the lives of nurses and patients in the past with those of today.
136. Pupils In Year 5 are provided with the opportunity to develop a clearer understanding of life in Tudor times as they explore the importance of food in peoples' lives, and how the different foods people eat reflect their status in society. After watching an informative television programme on video, pupils respond to a useful multiple choice question worksheet to assess their understanding. They are provided with the opportunity to taste a range of foods appropriate to the period made by the teacher using original Tudor recipes. Pupils then go on to classify the foods as to whether they would be eaten by a poor or rich person. This lively and active lesson was much enjoyed by all pupils. The teacher had obviously spent a great deal of time in planning and preparing for this lesson. As with all history lessons observed it was very much enhanced by the good support provided by classroom and bilingual assistants.
137. Pupils' learning is much influenced by the good questioning skills used by teachers to extend pupils' oral skills and to assess their understanding. Because of the limited communication skills of a significant number of pupils' questions tend to be short and pointed, requiring a specific answer, rather than open-ended questions, which provide opportunities for an extended response. These same limited communication skills also inhibit pupils' ability to develop and utilise a range of research and reference skills, those factors so often linked with the study of history.

138. Pupils approach their history work in a positive and committed manner. They show real interest in the area of history they are studying and support each other when engaged in practical and writing activities.
139. History is delivered on a two-year cycle with pupils exploring all the areas of history identified in the history curriculum. The subject is much enhanced by the good links to pupils' own culture with some interesting work on post-war immigration to England and the history of Pakistan. The subject makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. The majority of work in pupils' books involves them making a personal written response to their studies, with a number of pupils producing imaginative empathetic writing, as they write in the character of a servant at Tudor court, or a housemaid in a Victorian household. Pupils' good artwork including work on Tudor portraits, both large and small, a fashion time line, and an extended large-scale collage time line with important figures throughout history on display in the stairwell from the ground to the first floor, does much to promote a motivating environment for the subject.
140. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and convey it to pupils in a meaningful manner. They have high expectations of all pupils, and provide them with a challenging range of history activities appropriate to their needs and abilities. Lessons are always well planned, resourced, organised and managed.
141. The subject is led by a well informed and forward looking co-ordinator. There is a policy for the subject, though it needs to be updated. The school is piloting the QCA scheme of work for history in Years 1, 2 and 3, with the intention of introducing it into the whole school in the not too distant future. The subject is well resourced with opportunities for pupils to visit local museums and places of historical interest. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school is in a good position to move forward in its provision for history.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

142. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the provision for information technology. Currently, standards in both key stages are in line with national expectations and the National Curriculum requirements are fully met. There is equality of opportunity and access to information technology throughout the school.
143. The school has improved the resources and a computer suite has been installed. There is also separate Internet access. This has had a huge impact on improving the teachers' skills and knowledge and in raising the standards of the pupils' work. For example, some Year 5 pupils were observed effectively exploring Internet pages to download relevant extracts for use in their history study of the Tudors.
144. The quality of the teaching is now good; it has been influential in the raising of standards and in stimulating the pupils' interests. Most teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and curriculum planning includes an appropriate progression of skills. Learning support assistants are effective in advancing pupils' knowledge and understanding. In one Year 4 lesson the adult had high expectations and challenged the pupils very well when using *Microworld* software to steer a turtle through a maze. The pupils were well motivated and engaged in purposeful activity quickly.
145. Some use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in other

subjects. However, this is inconsistent and more opportunities to use information technology should be encouraged. There were some good examples like the design for a pupil's pot in the art club being produced on the computer and Year 6 pupils using maps from the computer for their European tour in geography. A particularly successful use of information technology supporting literacy and numeracy was independent groups of Year 6 pupils using *Success Maker* to support their learning. The school should now build on similar opportunities in other subjects.

146. Pupils in the Nursery have regular opportunities to visit the information technology suite and use the computers. At Key Stage 1 pupils use both the keyboard and the mouse to control programmes. They use icons and menus on familiar software to create pictures and text. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are confident in their understanding of the facilities of computers and know how to use the tool bar, the meaning of icons, and how to load, save and print their work. A Year 5 class were successfully using spreadsheets including the calculate facility. Those pupils who lack confidence are helped when teachers group them with others who are able to support their efforts.
147. Pupils show considerable enthusiasm for work in information technology. They are well behaved, listen carefully to instructions and show good levels of concentration when working independently.
148. The subject is particularly well led. A detailed policy and scheme of work are in place to ensure continuity and progression. Hardware and software are sufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum and are of a good quality. Access to the Internet is limited to two machines. However, this will improve significantly when the school moves to new premises at the end of the year. The co-ordinator has good expertise in the subject and regularly supports colleagues and pupils. The use of a large grant for information technology has been particularly well used for hardware, software, and staff training. The school is now in an excellent position to continue to improve teaching and learning.

MUSIC

149. Standards in music are a little below those expected for pupils' age at the end of both key stages. Pupils sing enthusiastically but many sing on the *speaking voice* and there is little good tone. Enough pupils pitch accurately, however, for the overall impression to be tuneful as was noted at the time of the last inspection. The sound can become rather hard when pupils become excited and inclined to shout. The short singing sessions for all pupils in two year group units are especially useful for language work in this school because pupils can hear, and in Key Stage 2 see, the words of the songs as others sing them. Pupils have a good sense of pulse and rhythm. Many of the Nursery and Reception children were able to clap on the main beat in the songs they sang. Similarly, Year 3/4 pupils could move to the beat of a sea shanty and appreciate how the song could help the sailors in their work.
150. There is no extemporisation or composition in evidence but pupils do invent simple tunes and rhythms and use music as a starting point for art work. Year 6 pupils understand that notes sounding together form a chord and could follow an eight bar pattern playing the notes of three chords on glockenspiels. The use of a lively backing tape and enthusiastic direction by the teacher turned this basic skill into an exciting performance - to the obvious delight of the pupils. One Year 6 boy invented a fine description of a chord not played well together: he considered it to be *scruffy!*
151. Pupils enjoy singing. Year 3/4 pupils were enthusiastic about the sea shanty but a small number took advantage of the teacher's own enthusiasm to be a little less

sensible than they usually are. In the Year 6 lessons both groups concentrated well through intensive sessions. Behaviour in the large singing gatherings was very good. Year 6 pupils work very well together, sharing instruments in the class sessions and having a good sense of corporate responsibility in the steel band,

152. The teaching of music varies. Some teachers are less confident than others and some have more musical skills than others. The singing sessions were well led with the good behaviour and concentration shown by pupils being at least in part due to the careful preparation and good pupil management of the teachers. The subject manager uses her good piano playing skills to accompany singing fluently and musically. In Year 6 lessons and with the steel band she sets a high level of expectation. Tasks in class help pupils to learn and progress towards the nationally expected level. Music is enthusiastically led.
153. The one extra-curricular activity in music is a steel band. The school possesses a large collection of steel pans and Year 6 pupils make an impressive sound on them. They have grasped to a good degree the difficult rhythms needed for good steel band playing and play with surety and not a little aplomb. Pupils gain a good sense of achievement in music activities from the simple chord work in the lower ability Year 6 group to this work with Caribbean sounds. Boys and girls are equally involved. Indeed in both class and band activities some of the most enthusiastic as well as most competent contributions were made by boys.
154. The school is leading pupils into a knowledge of music and building musical skills having sensitive regard for the pupils' own cultural background,

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

155. Lessons in gymnastics, dance, indoor and outdoor games were observed during the inspection. Standards of attainment in the subject meet the expectations for pupils at the end of both key stages. This is broadly similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection.
156. Year 1 pupils use the space of the hall well as they move around it. They produce a good variety of high quality stretched shapes. At the end of the key stage, pupils know the importance of preparing for physical activity by warming-up exercises. These pupils climb confidently on apparatus and roll in a variety of ways, but have not yet developed smooth sequences of actions.
157. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 listen to music attentively as they prepare to use it as a basis for their dance. Many show considerable creativity in their subsequent dancing. However, some have insufficiently developed their skills in listening to enable them to respond rapidly and accurately to a pre-recorded tape. Year 4 pupils display developing ball skills, bouncing a large ball around obstacles with good control in most instances. Ball skills continue to develop well in the final two years of the key stage, but more strategic skills, such as knowing where to hit a ball for maximum effect, are less well developed. Efficient throwing techniques are used by only a minority of pupils. The standard of gymnastics is very variable at the end of the key stage. Many pupils produce well-linked sequences of movements. They use their imaginations well to add variety to the shapes they create, especially when working with a partner matching or mirroring their movements. However, others rush their work, leading to a lack of control. These pupils give little attention to polishing or refining the sequences they have constructed.

158. Most pupils show positive attitudes towards their work in physical education, working hard to improve their performance and enjoying what they do. Their high level of effort is accompanied by good behaviour. For example, there was a quiet, busy atmosphere in a Year 4 games lesson, despite it taking place in the cavernous basement hall in which high noise levels are difficult to avoid. In many classes, a small number of pupils show less interest in the subject and tend to adopt the role of a passive observer.
159. The quality of most of the teaching in physical education lessons is satisfactory, with about 40 per cent rated good or very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers begin lessons with warming-up activities but these are sometimes too gentle to fulfil their objective. There is a good emphasis on developing skills with, in most instances, plenty of time for pupils to practise and good support for individual pupils to show them ways to improve. Good use is made of pupil demonstrations to ensure that all pupils, including those at an early stage of learning English, know what is expected of them. A Key Stage 2 teacher demonstrated mirroring a partner's movements in a dance lesson and this resulted in pupils working more imaginatively. In good lessons like these, teachers are clear about what skills they wish to teach or improve. They focus on specific objectives so that all pupils make large strides in their learning. For example, a Year 1 teacher strongly motivated pupils to improve by questions such as *Is every part of your body stretched?* or *What could be stretched more?*, and this led to a much higher level of performance. Although noise levels are occasionally too high, teachers exert effective control over their pupils. They respond instantly to commands to stop, so that a safe working environment is maintained at all times.
160. The school's programme in Key Stage 1 consists of a good balance of games, dance and gymnastics lessons. To these are added swimming and athletics in Key Stage 2. It is hoped to increase the provision for outdoor and adventurous activities when the new school is opened later in the year. In accordance with the local authority's advice on physical education in multi-faith schools, swimming is now taught to pupils in Years 3 and 4 rather than to the older pupils.
161. The headteacher, currently absent from the school, is the subject manager for physical education. His considerable expertise and energetic promotion of the subject has enabled all staff to teach with confidence. New opportunities have been grasped well. For example, sporting links with other schools have been used very effectively to give pupils experience of competitive games and also of contrasting cultures. The sponsorship of local businesses has been successfully harnessed to obtain resources the school could not otherwise afford, such as football kits for the school team.
162. There is a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities open to Key Stage 2 pupils. Resources and accommodation for the subject are good, apart from the absence of a grassed area for outdoor games. The school is aware of the need to update its policy statements.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

163. At both key stages, the level of pupils' knowledge of different religions is in accordance with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress under the close guidance and supervision of their teachers and support staff.
164. The Under-fives learn to recognise the important roles played by different members within their own families. Pupils at Key Stage 1 begin to appreciate that the Bible is a special book for Christians and that the life and ministry of Jesus are central to the Christian faith. They compare the stories of Jesus with those of other religious traditions. They also begin to develop a sense of empathy: in a Year 4 lesson, for example, several pupils showed that they could understand how the feelings of the shepherd changed from despair to joy in the parable of *The Lost Sheep*.
165. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn the main differences and points of similarity between Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism in respect of buildings, symbols, ceremonies and festivals. Their religious vocabulary is notably extended. With reference to the interior of a Christian church, they know what is meant by pew, font and organ. Higher attainers can locate the nave and the altar and understand the functions of the pulpit, the lectern and the stained glass windows. In Year 6, pupils of higher and average attainment write about the subject at a satisfactory standard of literacy. However, there is scope for the writing of upper key stage pupils to be more extensive and to embrace a wider range of style. Some of the comments in pupils' notebooks indicate that teachers are aware of these possibilities.
166. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and respond well to the demands of their teachers. This is a prime factor in their good level of progress at both key stages. They show a fascination particularly when they are introduced to the artefacts and symbols of different religions. They display very positive attitudes to the subject, participate fully in all of the activities and aspects of their lessons and sustain their concentration well. They begin the tasks that they are set readily and efficiently and support each other's learning appropriately when they are organised to work in groups or in pairs.
167. Teaching was either satisfactory or good in all of the lessons seen except for one in which it was very good. All teachers enjoy a secure command of subject. Their lesson plans specify clear and attainable learning objectives and take proper account of the needs of pupils at different levels of prior attainment. They enjoy positive working relations with their pupils and are skilled at class management. High expectations of pupils are also frequently in evidence: in a Year 4 lesson for instance, which followed a visit that the class had made to a local Anglican church, pupils were asked to recollect all of the functions involved in playing the organ.
168. Planning of the subject fully satisfies all the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator monitors the teaching of the subject through a scrutiny of lesson plans and the work of pupils of differing abilities in each year group. To enhance their work in lessons, pupils visit a local mosque in Key Stage 1 and a local church and Hindu temple in Key Stage 2. Pupils are also given talks by a vicar and a Christian lay person who visit the school whilst a teacher who is a Hindu gives them a deeper insight into her religion.

169. With reference to the previous inspection report, there is abundant evidence to show improvement. Pupils now gain a much more satisfactory knowledge of religions other than their own, although their knowledge at both key stages remains stronger than their understanding and the standard of teaching is now good at both key stages. Learning resources for the subject have been expanded and comprise a good range of artefacts and videos as well as topic books. They are now adequate for teaching every section of the syllabus except for Judaism where there is still a shortage of teachers' resources and artefacts. Information and communication technology is not used in the teaching of the subject, which is an aspect for development.