

INSPECTION REPORT

PARTINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Partington, Manchester

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106305

Headteacher: Mrs L. Pickwell

Reporting inspector: Mr J. Sorsby

Dates of inspection: 14th – 18th January 2002

Inspection number: 230562

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Central Road
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Ken Rogers

Date of previous inspection: 20th April 1998

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14042	Julian Sorsby	Registered inspector		Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
19567	Mary Malin	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents How well does the school care for its pupils
18703	Christine Canniff	Team inspector	English Geography Religious education Equality of opportunity	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
25778	Andrew Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music	
22778	Anne Shannon	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	
27429	Loretta Watson	Team inspector	Art and design History Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Partington Primary School is located in the town of Partington in the south-west of Greater Manchester. This is an area of considerable social deprivation, and 40 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average of 18.6 per cent. The school is large, with 370 pupils on roll, compared to the national average of 226, including 52 children who attend the nursery part time. Only fourteen pupils are not of white United Kingdom heritage, these being mainly of African, Pakistani and Chinese descent. Four pupils speak English as an additional language, all fluently, and there are no pupils requiring special language support. Five per cent of pupils are the children of Travellers. One third of pupils have special educational needs, which is well above the national average while 0.5 per cent have statements of special educational needs, which is well below average. Nineteen per cent of all pupils joined or left the school during the past year at a time other than the normal joining or leaving time. This high proportion is a factor in pupils' attainment. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below expectations for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. During the past three years, under the leadership of a new head and deputy head teachers, there have been major improvements. Those pupils who have benefited most are those who joined most recently, as the improvements have taken hold, while pupils in the upper classes of the school have had less time to benefit significantly from the improvements. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well and many very well. Pupils join the school with standards well below those expected of children of their age. Pupils at the age of seven are attaining standards well above average for similar schools. Those now at age eleven have benefited from the improvements for less than half their education. Nevertheless, they achieve standards in line with those in similar schools in mathematics and science and above average in English.

Teaching throughout the school is good and often very good or excellent. The leadership and management of the school is excellent, resulting in excellent improvements and success in providing for the diverse needs of individual pupils. The school provides excellent value for money.

What the school does well

- It provides a warm, caring and exciting learning environment in which pupils are highly motivated, like to learn and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good, with much very good and excellent teaching taking place.
- It meets the needs of all pupils and cares for them as individuals, including those in the nursery and reception classes, those with special educational needs and Travellers.
- It provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.
- Teachers are good at assessing what pupils know, understand and can do in nursery and reception classes, and in English, mathematics and science throughout the school, and they use the information well in planning their lessons.
- The school's partnership with parents and carers of pupils is very strong and effective.
- The school provides a varied curriculum, well enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities open to all.
- The headteacher and her senior colleagues provide excellent leadership and management and are very well supported by a hard working, committed and unified staff team. The school lives up to its motto of "Seeking success by working together".

What could be improved

- There are no significant weaknesses requiring the school's immediate attention.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1998, the first day of the inspection coinciding with the first day in post of the new headteacher. Since then there has been excellent improvement in almost every aspect of the school. Particularly significant has been the improvement in the quality of provision and teaching in the nursery and reception classes. Significant improvement is also noted in the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6, the quality of the curriculum and curriculum planning throughout the school and the quality of assessment and the use teachers make of it. Similarly excellent improvement has occurred in the ethos of the school. This has had a profound effect on pupils' desire to learn and has contributed significantly to the improvements in the standards pupils achieve. Also significantly improved is the care and concern for each individual pupil and the manner in which the school analyses and meets the needs of each pupil as an individual. This has had a very positive effect on the standards being achieved, for example, by pupils with special educational needs and the children of Travellers whose attendance is irregular.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Children join the nursery with levels of attainment well below expectations. When they enter Year 1, children's standards are below national expectations in almost all areas except their physical development. This represents good achievement by pupils in the nursery and reception classes, reflecting the very much improved provision.

In reading at the end of Year 2, standards have fluctuated slightly year on year since the last inspection, and in 2001 they were the highest the school has achieved, being below the national average but well above the average for similar schools. In writing, at the end of Year 2, pupils' standards have improved steadily since the last inspection, again reaching their highest for the school in 2001 when they were in line with the national average and well above average for similar schools. In mathematics there has been considerable improvement, and in 2001 standards were in line with the national average and well above average for similar schools. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were above the national average. All these results represent very good achievement.

In English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 in 2001, a higher proportion of pupils than national average achieved the desired Level 4 in their tests, but a lower proportion

achieved the higher Level 5 than the national average. In all three subjects the schools overall result was well below the national average, but above the average for similar schools in English and average in mathematics and science. All these results also represent very good achievement.

It is worthy of note that disadvantaged pupils achieve equally well because of the very good provision made for them. This includes the above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and the children of Travellers, whose attendance rate is unsatisfactory. Although this was not the case in the past, there is evidence that suggests that higher attaining pupils are now also being well provided for and are achieving very well.

In English at the end of Year 6 in 2001 the school exceeded its targets for the proportion of pupils who would achieve the expected Level 4 or above. In mathematics the school just failed to meet its targets, by two pupils. The school's targets for 2002 are realistic and are likely to be achieved.

Standards in English and mathematics observed during the inspection indicate that pupils are on track to achieve as well as last year in writing and mathematics and better than last year in reading at the end of Year 2. Currently, standards are below average. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve significantly better than last year's cohort in English and mathematics.

It was not possible to make judgements about pupils' standards in music or physical education due to a lack of evidence during the inspection. In all other subjects of the curriculum in Years 2 and 6, standards are satisfactory and pupils are achieving well, except for information and communications technology in Year 6 where they are achieving very well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and throughout the school. This contributes significantly to their learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils become responsible young people ready for the next stage of their education. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Although the attendance rate is well below the national average, this is as a consequence of the method of recording the attendance of the children of Travellers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Nine out of ten lessons observed in the nursery and reception classes was good or better and one in every four lessons seen was at least very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a very significant improvement since the last inspection, when one in five lessons was unsatisfactory. In Years 1 to 6, approximately eight out of every ten lessons seen were good or better and one in every four lessons was very good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This too, is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Overall, ten lessons seen were of excellent quality.

The teaching of English is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good, with many very good lessons in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of mathematics is good in Years 1 and 2, similarly with many very good lessons taking place. In Years 3 to 6 it is very good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy are reinforced well in all subjects of the curriculum.

All aspects of teaching throughout the school are good or very good, with the exception of the use of homework, which is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Particularly strong aspects are teachers basic skills, for example, how they engage pupils in dialogue through well considered questioning, and the use they make of assessment data in their planning. Pupils learn well throughout the school. Particularly notable are the effort they make, the amount of work they complete and their strong desire to learn.

The school is particularly well skilled at ensuring that the learning needs of individual pupils are identified and incorporated in planning. Consequently all pupils make at least good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school and make similar progress. More able pupils are usually well challenged by the work they are set. The very good support provided for Traveller pupils results in them making equally good progress to all other pupils, despite their unsatisfactory rate of attendance.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is well enhanced by a range of additional support groups for pupils and by a wide range of popular extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good support is provided to pupils with special needs, following early and accurate identification of their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides very well for pupils' moral and social development and well for their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are well prepared for life in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This very caring school regards every pupil as special. Pupils' well being receives equal priority to their academic success.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very well. The school values very highly the involvement of parents in their children's learning and their views and suggestions.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has developed a very strong management team who have made major improvements in the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are making an increasing contribution to the life of the school and its decision-making processes.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school collects and analyses all relevant data and makes appropriate decisions quickly and efficiently.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its staff, buildings, learning resources and money to best effect to raise pupils' standards. The school has good procedures to ensure it obtains best value.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Good. The school is well staffed by appropriately qualified and experienced teachers. The accommodation and learning resources support teaching well.

Overall, the very strong and effective leadership and management by the headteacher and her senior colleagues is a significant strength of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • That teaching is good. • That the school is well led and managed. • That the school has high expectations of pupils. • That pupils make good progress. • That pupils like coming to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which they are informed about their children's progress. • The amount of homework provided.

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents but could find no evidence to support the negative views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Two significant factors influence standards achieved by pupils. Both relate to the length of time pupils have been in the school. Pupils who sat the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 had benefited from the excellent improvements in the school, for almost their whole time at school. In contrast, pupils who sat the tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 had less than half of their education at the school while the excellent improvements in provision have been introduced. This follows a very weak start to their schooling, as while they were in nursery and reception, the last inspection identified a very high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching taking place.

2. The second factor, the results of which are described later in this section, is the number of pupils who joined and left the school at times other than the normal times. Mobility can be demonstrated to have had a significant effect on the Year 6 results in 2002.

3. Levels of attainment on entry to the nursery are well below those expected of this age group and lower than at the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special needs, achieve well, helped by the very good provision in the nursery and reception classes, which is characterised by a strong curriculum and very good teaching. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children remain below standards expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In physical development, most pupils achieve average standards, while some exceed the average. These results represent improvement since the last inspection.

4. Standards in English have improved since the last inspection. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils of all abilities to achieve well. Attainment for almost all seven-year-olds was in line with national expectations in writing but below average in reading in the 2001 tests. Inspection findings indicate that current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve national average standards in reading and writing. Pupils who were in Year 6 in 2001 had derived only limited benefit from the excellent improvements in the school since the last inspection. By the age of eleven in 2001, pupils achieved standards that were well below those expected nationally. As a consequence of good teaching, the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and additional literacy support, current pupils are on track to achieve significantly better than last year's cohort. There are insufficient pupils achieving at the higher levels in the national tests at age seven and eleven although there is now evidence that the school is using all available data to plan appropriately for more able pupils.

5. In mathematics, various initiatives are making a significant contribution to improving standards, so that by the time pupils reach eleven, they have achieved well and reached average standards for similar schools. Standards at age seven have improved significantly since the last inspection, these pupils having benefited from the improvements in the school. Standards in 2001 at age eleven were the same as at the time of the last inspection. However, the current Year 6 pupils have benefited more from school improvements than last year's cohort, and standards, while still below average, are rising. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support and higher attaining pupils are now being fully challenged.

6. In science, since the last inspection, pupils' standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 have risen and all pupils now achieve well, including those with special needs. Teachers'

assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in July 2001 indicates that their standards were above the national average and well above the average of similar schools. However, they were below the national average in achieving the higher grades. At the end of Year 6 in July 2001, 82 per cent of the pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs, reached the expected Level 4. This represents a substantial improvement since the last inspection. However, in comparison to national averages, pupils' standard were well below the national average. This does not imply a problem in Years 3 to 6 for the reasons given earlier. Pupils in the upper part of the school have not had as good an opportunity as those in the lower part of the school to benefit from the recent improvements in the school. Evidence from work seen during the inspection indicates that standards in the current Year 6 continue to improve.

7. These improvements have been as a result of a more comprehensive and systematic approach to planning and making the learning objectives clear. The scheme of work has been up-dated and teaching has improved through continued training. Better records are now kept and passed between year groups and this has enabled teachers to more accurately target the learning needs of pupils.

8. A significant proportion of pupils join and leave the school at times other than normal, and therefore do not have the full benefit of the school's provision between the end of Years 2 and 6. Among the pupils who took the end of Year 6 tests in 2001, five of the forty eight pupils were not at the school for the end of Year 2 tests, and a further five pupils who did take the Year 2 tests, subsequently left. Analysis of the school's results in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 in 2001 demonstrates that among those pupils who did have the full four years of schooling at Partington prior to the tests, including pupils with special educational needs and Travellers, a very high proportion made more than the expected two levels of progress in the four years, demonstrating their good achievement. The results were as follows:

	ENGLISH			MATHEMATICS			SCIENCE		
	Less than expected progress	Expected progress	More than expected progress	Less than expected progress	Expected progress	More than expected progress	Less than expected progress	Expected progress	More than expected progress
Number of pupils	5	9	29	2	10	31	1	2	40

9. In art and design by the ages of seven and eleven, as at the time of the last inspection, the standards being achieved by pupils are average. Good teaching throughout the school, good organisation of the curriculum and scheme of work, good resources that enable pupils to look at and appreciate an array of artists work, teachers subject knowledge and skill and the highly motivational manner of teaching the subject all help to make art and design very popular among pupils and hence to encourage them to work hard and raise their standards. All pupils, including those who are less able and those who are gifted and talented in art and design, achieve equally well given their personal starting point.

10. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in design and technology and geography are in line with expectations throughout the school and all pupils, including less and more able pupils are achieving well. Good teaching, teachers' high expectations of pupils, good resources and careful planning and preparation of lessons all contribute to pupils enjoyment and success.

11. As at the time of the last inspection, attainment in history is in line with national expectations throughout the school. This represents good achievement by pupils. Consistently good teaching throughout the school and well-chosen visits to places of historic interest help to bring history to life for pupils and to motivate them to work hard and raise their standards. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well.

12. Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils now reach average standards in information and communication technology throughout the school. All pupils including average, lower and higher ability pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6. The overall improvement in standards has been achieved through the purchase of very good resources, the establishment of a computer suite which has enabled a change in the style of teaching, a much improved curriculum and scheme of work and consistently good teaching with teachers demonstrating much more confidence in using and teaching information technology than at the time of the last inspection. Improvements in standards are also a consequence of the subject being used effectively in the teaching and learning of a limited range of other subjects of the curriculum, for example, art and design. The school is not yet making effective use of ICT in the teaching and learning of many other subjects.

13. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make judgements on pupils' standards in music and physical education.

14. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus throughout the school. Standards have improved as a result of the successful introduction of the new syllabus and consistently good and imaginative teaching of the subject. All pupils are achieving well throughout the school.

15. Pupils on the special needs register achieve as well as other pupils. This is because the school identifies special needs at a very early stage and makes appropriate provision. The school monitors the progress of pupils who are on the special needs register and from this data it is clear that standards are rising. There is sufficient detail on pupils' individual education plans and their targets are clear. Pupils with a statement of educational need are well supported in the classroom by outside agencies. This enables these pupils to attain the targets on their individual education plans and to make the necessary progress. It also enables them to be fully included in the life of the school.

16. Pupils on the lower stages of the register make good progress towards their individual learning targets because of the good support they get from the special needs teacher and the class teachers. Pupils with severe behavioural problems achieve well because of the school's strategies for managing disruptive behaviour.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. They are significant strengths of the school, and contribute to the improvements that have been achieved in standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and that they feel secure and valued. They are well motivated and consequently enjoy learning. Pupils arrive on time each day, ready to start their work with enthusiasm. They are happy to talk about what they are doing and take great pride in showing their work. These positive attitudes encourage pupils' learning.

18. While a number of pupils with special needs display challenging behaviour, this was hardly noticed during the inspection because of the very good management of pupils, and pupils' understanding of what is expected of them. Overall, behaviour is very good in class and around the school. Pupils are friendly and polite to visitors, staff and each other.

19. Pupils' personal development is very good. They willingly accept a range of responsibilities in school, such as taking the dinner register to the office daily, distributing books and materials in class and clearing up at the end of the day. Some of the older pupils help younger ones, especially in the school library. All pupils take responsibility for clearing up in the dining room following lunch. The majority of pupils also show responsibility and initiative for their own learning, for example, in the organisation of their work and in the selection of resources to help them in class. Pupils understand school and class rules and they display a clear sense of right and wrong. Their very good personal development assists them to focus on their learning and to make very good progress overall. During the past year, for disciplinary reasons two boys were each excluded for a total of three short fixed periods and then were well re-integrated into their classes.

20. Relationships throughout the school, between pupils and with staff are very good and are a strength of the school. Staff are very good role models and pupils display the same care and thoughtfulness towards one another as they see from the staff. This further encourages very good behaviour and contributes to the strong learning ethos that in turn supports pupils' efforts to achieve well. Pupils work very well together in pairs or small groups and share equipment well.

21. At the time of the last inspection, the attendance rate was unsatisfactory. Over the last three years, most pupils' attendance rate has improved. However, despite their life style, which involves periods of absence from school, Travellers attendance is required to be recorded in the same way as other pupils. Consequently, at 92.8 per cent, the overall attendance rate remains below the national average. Since absences by travellers constitute fifty per cent of all absences, and because the attendance rate excluding Travellers is 96.29 per cent, attendance is judged to be satisfactory overall.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching has improved very significantly since the last inspection to the point that it is good throughout the school. Eight out of every ten lessons observed by inspectors was good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. One in every ten lessons observed was excellent. There has been significantly better improvement in teaching in nursery and reception than the rest of the school. This is a major achievement by the school, as at the time of the last inspection over 20 per cent of teaching of these years was unsatisfactory.

23. The quality of teaching is now a strength of the school. The assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do, and the use of this information in planning, contributes significantly to this strength. Similarly, teachers' high expectation of pupils and their class management also contribute. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy have developed well since the introduction of the national strategies, and have been a focus of attention of teachers, not just in specific literacy and numeracy lessons but in teaching other subjects of the curriculum. All these factors have raised the quality of teaching and have resulted in much improved attitudes to learning by pupils. An environment has been created in which pupils are keen to learn, and very effective learning takes place. Most pupils display self discipline and are highly motivated, and lessons run smoothly with pupils learning well.

24. Over 90 per cent of teaching of children observed in nursery and reception was good or better. Staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn and the importance of play and first-hand experiences. This has a positive effect on children's progress and provides a firm foundation for learning in Year 1 and beyond. Children learn very well in nursery and reception.

25. The teaching of English and literacy was predominantly good, with a significant proportion of very good teaching. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Particular strengths were teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and the imaginative lessons they prepared. Teachers plan together in year groups ensuring that there is consistency between the lessons taught to different classes. This ensures that all pupils have the same opportunities to achieve well. The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs were met consistently.

26. The quality of teaching in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 was good overall. Eighty per cent of teaching was good or better and 20 per cent was very good or excellent. In Years 3 to 6, almost eight out of every ten lessons observed was good or better, and over half of lessons seen were very good or excellent. Teachers' planning and setting of objectives, the demonstrations they provided, their subject knowledge and the manner in which they inform and motivate pupils, were all good. Teachers managed pupils well and the relationships in the classroom were also good. These factors create a good environment in which learning is purposeful and pupils achieve well throughout the school. As in other subjects, teachers are particularly skilled at using assessment data to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are met and all pupils are appropriately challenged by their lessons.

27. Timetable difficulties made it impossible to see science in Years 1 and 2. However, the teaching of science in Years 3 to 6 was very good. Teachers planned their lessons carefully and used their very good subject knowledge to provide stimulating opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of the topics they study. They encouraged pupils to use their initiative when organising resources and to develop their ability to work well, both independently and within groups. This enabled pupils to understand and use experimental techniques well and to achieve well as a consequence. As with other subjects, very good attention was paid to ensuring that each individual pupil was enabled to participate fully in lessons and that all were suitably challenged, regardless of their prior attainment.

28. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching in art and design was never less than good and was very good overall. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was good overall. Teachers set clear lesson objectives and provided good demonstrations of techniques that pupils then followed. Resources were well prepared and organised which had a good impact on the quality of learning. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject and challenge pupils to perform well. They make very good use of praise and encouragement and always provide additional support for less confident pupils. This positive approach enables all pupils to achieve well.

29. Insufficient evidence was available to judge the quality of teaching or learning in design and technology.

30. In geography, teaching is good. Teachers plan well for the development of pupils' skills of geographical enquiry. Planning is good, and pupils have good opportunity to discuss their thoughts and ideas. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and use questions well to check pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. Good questioning keeps them focused on the skills they need. Pupils' learning is good because lessons are well managed and pupils are interested in learning about other parts of the world.

31. No teaching of history was observed in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching of history was good. Teachers provided stimulating resources and experiences that enabled pupils to gain a good understanding of everyday life and significant events associated with the periods they study. Teachers are particularly skilled at bringing history to life, which motivates pupils well and contributes very effectively to their learning and the standards they achieve. Pupils of all abilities achieve well.

32. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology were good throughout the school. Teachers are growing in confidence and subject expertise. They use computers in the new ICT Suite, well to explain and demonstrate new techniques. Lessons are a good mix of whole-class teaching and practical work. Most lessons are taken at a brisk pace. Teachers ensure that all pupils are engaged well in activities, and appropriate demand is placed on all, including lower-attaining pupils. Pupils' high levels of motivation and interest make class management easy, and contribute well to the busy, purposeful lessons seen. All pupils achieve at least well, regardless of their prior attainment or special needs.

33. Insufficient evidence was available to judge the quality of teaching or learning in music and physical education.

34. Teaching of religious education was consistently good in Years 1 to 6 and all pupils, including those with special needs and more able pupils, achieve well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and incorporate into their teaching a respect for other people within the class, the school and the wider environment. Pupils respond positively to their teachers and are keen to learn. They find the activities based on the locally agreed syllabus interesting. The ethos of respect and understanding created by teachers in religious education lessons pervades the whole school and is reflected in the very positive relationships that exist.

35. Excellent teaching by the special needs teacher was observed during the inspection where she was teaching small groups within the classroom. This enables good learning to take place and for the pupils to make progress at a pace that is appropriate to their needs while remaining as part of the whole class. In other lessons, where there is no extra support for pupils with special needs, work is usually planned to take account of this, either by providing different tasks for them or, when the class is engaged on individual work, the class teacher will work with these pupils. A few pupils have been identified as being gifted or talented and a register is kept of these pupils. They are identified by general classroom assessments and set individual targets. Traveller pupils are well integrated and receive good support from the local authority support service for Traveller children.

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

36. The school's curriculum is very good. The school provides a very good range of worthwhile learning experiences that are relevant to the age and interests of its pupils. The issues arising from the last inspection report have been fully addressed. The improvements made to schemes of work are very good. Very careful thought has gone into planning for the revised curriculum. The introduction of new schemes of work has been well managed and the nationally published plans have been adapted well to provide the most appropriate experiences for pupils. Planning for religious education has also been revised to meet the requirements of the new locally agreed syllabus. Planning for the development of pupils' skills in ICT is effective, but there is insufficient planned use of ICT to support work in other subjects of the curriculum.

37. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established. They are underpinned by very effective assessment and support systems, which contribute to pupils'

good and rising standards of attainment. Planning is good, with an appropriately strong emphasis on the development of basic skills. The school has identified the need for more development of pupils' speaking and listening. Teachers pay close attention to the use of technical language relevant to each subject of the curriculum. Although they build speaking into their planning, it needs a more structured approach. Teachers plan collaboratively in each year group and this ensures that pupils in parallel classes cover the same work and have similar experiences. Work is carefully planned to meet the needs of the different groups within the class. For the most part, it is well matched to their needs and builds effectively on previous learning.

38. The school is strongly committed to doing its best for all its pupils. Good support for lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress and allows their full involvement in all areas of the curriculum. Good use is made of assessment and the analysis of test results to identify pupils who might benefit from additional support. There is a good range of schemes to support pupils, including early literacy support in Years 1 and 2, additional literacy strategy, Springboard mathematics, and the Millennium Reading project. These are helping to raise pupils' confidence and boost their progress. Pupils themselves talk about how they enjoy Millennium reading and how it has helped them to improve.

39. Pupils with special needs are fully included in all areas of the curriculum. There is very good provision for them. There are some new initiatives in the school such as the *Calm Club* that are designed to support pupils with behavioural problems. Every pupil is enabled to participate fully in every lesson and in all aspects of school life.

40. The school has established good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. There are regular opportunities for pupils to learn about a wide range of issues, for example, they consider what makes a good citizen and explore ways of managing difficult situations. Sex education and the dangers of drug misuse are covered within this programme of work. Contributions from visitors, such as the community policeman help to bring this aspect of pupils' learning to life.

41. Teachers work hard to provide a very good range of activities outside lessons. Pupils visit well-chosen places of interest and this supports their learning in subjects such as religious education, history, geography and science. The school has established very good links with the local community and makes effective use of visitors. For example, a member of the Buddhist community talked to Year 6 pupils. There is a very good choice of clubs, including various sports clubs. Pupils have regular opportunities to take part in local events, including sports competitions with other local schools. There is very good liaison with the school to which pupils eventually move.

42. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This has improved since the last inspection.

43. Provision for spiritual development is good. There is a well-planned programme of assemblies that includes the celebration of Christian festivals and those of other faiths, which deals with themes such as happiness and trust. Pupils are encouraged to take part in prayer and to reflect sensitively on issues that are raised in assembly stories and religious education lessons, and those that affect their lives and the lives of others. Work in subjects such as history and geography, English, the arts and science provides pupils with further opportunities for reflection about their place in the world. The enjoyment and excitement that pupils experience in their learning contributes to the spiritual aspect of their lives.

44. The school is very successful in promoting moral and social development. The school's behaviour code underpins the good provision for moral development. Teachers provide effective moral guidance and promote good behaviour consistently. Pupils know what is expected of them and quickly learn how to be courteous and kind from the examples set by all staff. Wider moral issues, such as care for people in difficult circumstances at home and abroad, and care for the environment, are explored. Pupils are often involved in raising money for charity.

45. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of other cultures are integrated into the curriculum. A well-planned series of visits to places of interest and visitors to the school contribute to the development of their knowledge and understanding. They read stories from other times and cultures and learn how aspects of everyday life such as food, clothes, art and music can distinguish one culture from another. For example, Year 2 pupils learn about life in Victorian times through role-play and exploration of artefacts. Pupils develop respect for different cultures and beliefs whilst studying a range of faiths. Participation in Europe week provides pupils with valuable cultural experiences. The Year 6 geography curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge of the wider community and of world events. Pupils are well prepared for life in a multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school's emphasis on looking after the whole person, not just academic development, is reflected strongly in the very warm and caring environment it creates. This contributes significantly to pupils' attitudes and behaviour and to the standards they achieve. At the time of the last inspection, provision for the welfare, support and guidance of pupils was good. There has been further improvement and these aspects are now very good and a strength of the school.

47. An excellent example of the care teachers exercise for pupils involved their consideration of the needs of children of Traveller families. In a lesson about different types of home, photographs had been prepared by the teacher of houses, bungalows, terraced houses and cottages. The teacher had taken care to also prepare a photograph of a mobile home, such as might be lived in by one or two pupils in her class. The school is meeting the needs of all its pupils very well.

48. The school's arrangements for child protection are very good. They have been developed since the previous inspection and are regularly updated by the teacher responsible, who also provides training to colleagues. Pupils are aware that they can approach any member of staff that they choose if they have a problem they want to talk about.

49. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have improved since the last inspection and are very good. Prompt and efficient registration at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions fully complies with requirements. The school follows up unexplained absences well by telephoning or writing to parents. There are very good links with the education welfare officer who visits every week to talk with the headteacher and the administrator. There are also very good and supportive links with the Traveller education service. These contribute to the involvement of pupils' parents in their education, thus raising standards.

50. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent and have improved since the last inspection. The school's policy emphasises positive reinforcement as the preferred means of improving behaviour. Focused intervention and support offered to

pupils underpins good practice. There is an individual behaviour record for all pupils with behaviour problems, which enables pupils and staff to monitor improvements and provides an accurate record when talking to parents. All staff consistently apply the schools behaviour policy ensuring pupils receive a clear message. Very good procedures are most noticeable in the management of pupils with challenging behaviour, whose presence in classrooms usually goes unnoticed, as they participate fully in all activities and behave with great responsibility. The school has very effective procedures in place to deal with any incidents of harassment or bullying. These are very infrequent and none were seen during the week of inspection. Pupils confirm bullying to be rare.

51. Procedures to promote the health, welfare and safety of pupils are very good. Any health and safety concerns are noted and dealt with quickly and efficiently. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle through the personal, social and health education programme, with, for example, talks on healthy foods and vegetables, and in science and physical education lessons.

52. The school keeps an up to date register of pupils with special educational needs and monitors well the support given to them. This includes the monitoring of the support by the special needs coordinator and consideration of the most beneficial way of allocating her time. The school also monitors the effectiveness of support provided by the external support services.

53. Each teacher is responsible for monitoring and supporting their pupils' personal development. Procedures vary but are good overall. Teachers know their pupils very well and the record included in the pupils' annual report to parents is based on very secure knowledge.

54. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and recording their progress are good overall. They are very good in the nursery and reception classes and throughout the school in English, mathematics and science. Assessment is satisfactory for other subjects. Long-established school practices include a regular, thorough programme of standardised tests in reading, spelling, writing and mathematics from the time pupils start school. Very good assessment in the nursery and reception classes enables teachers to plan to meet the needs of all children. This is a major factor in children achieving very well during these two years, and improving their overall standards from well below average for their age to just below average. Science tests are added to the programme when pupils move into Year 3. Results are meticulously recorded together with pupils' results in the national tests at seven and eleven. When combined with ongoing teaching assessments, records enable teachers to determine quickly and accurately how well individual pupils make progress.

55. There has been considerable change to the curriculum since the last inspection, and the school has taken advantage of this to introduce new assessment procedures in other subjects. These are satisfactory. They rectify assessment weaknesses in some subjects, such as music, that were identified in the last report, and provide a manageable, consistent and efficient recording system that keeps track of pupils' progress as they complete each module of work. However, refinements are needed to improve effectiveness in tracking pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

56. The school makes good use of the wealth of information it collects for English, mathematics and science. It is especially useful in aiding the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. All pupils are set challenging, but attainable, individual targets for improvement in English and mathematics. These are reviewed regularly and modified where necessary. Curriculum plans are modified in the light of strengths and weaknesses identified through assessment. For example, analysis of mathematics data revealed weaknesses in problem solving. As a result, plans have been modified to give this aspect more emphasis.

The school is able to provide a range of very effective, well-targeted support systems for all its pupils because it has extensive and accurate assessment records. Additional “booster” lessons in English and mathematics for all pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, additional literacy support and special arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are all well established. The success of these initiatives is reflected in the steadily rising standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. The school’s partnership with parents, and the contribution it makes to the rising standards is a significant strength of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. As demonstrated in the table in the next section of this report, and in the comments from parents during the pre-inspection consultation meeting, parents speak very highly of the school and are very supportive of it.

58. Evidence collected during the inspection indicate that contrary to the views expressed by a minority of parents, the quality of information provided to parents, particularly concerning their children’s progress, is very good. This too, is an improvement since the last inspection. Written communications include a very detailed and informative annual academic report, a clear and concise prospectus, a detailed governors’ annual report to parents and very regular and informative newsletters and correspondence to parents. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly informed of their children’s progress.

59. The school acts well and quickly to inform parents of at an early stage of any concerns that a pupil may have special educational needs. Parents are then kept fully informed and involved. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are invited to the annual review and receive copies of all relevant documents.

60. The school aims to fully involve parents in all aspects of their child’s education and staff work very diligently towards this aim. There is regular communication about the work pupils are doing and will be doing the following term and there are two parents’ evenings each year. Parents respond positively to these initiatives and the attendance at meetings is excellent. Parents’ are very supportive in ensuring that their children complete their homework.

61. The impact of parents’ involvement in the work of the school is good. Many parents volunteer to help on educational visits and school outings, a few parents’ help in the library and at least one parent helps with the extra curricular activities for pupils. Several parents run a mums and toddlers group once a week in the community room.

62. The school is equally pro-active in involving parents when their child has something to celebrate, as well as when there are problems that require parental involvement and support. Parents are, for example, contacted when their child does some very good work and the pupil is encouraged to bring their parent into school at the end of the day to celebrate it. For example, parents are invited to see the range of pupils’ artwork, which is attractively displayed around the school. They are kept well informed when their children display particular talents and pupils are encouraged to develop their skills by completing projects at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63. In the relatively brief time since the appointment of the new headteacher and subsequently of the new deputy headteacher, Partington has become a very effective school in which significant progress has been made in a range of aspects of the school, including assessment, curriculum and the quality of teaching. The excellent improvements recorded in this report are having a significant effect in raising standards. However, insufficient time has

elapsed for all pupils to fully benefit from the improvements. For example, the pupils who took the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 have only benefited since being in Year 4, and thus, the effect on the standards achieved are less pronounced than those which will apply to the pupils taking the tests in 2002. What is clear is that excellent leadership and management by the head and deputy head teachers have had a pronounced effect on the provision the school makes for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and the children of Travellers. The progress achieved thus far has been based on the excellent policies and procedures put in place, the coherence and cohesiveness of leadership and management, the exemplary ethos of caring and learning that has developed, the commitment of teaching and non-teaching staff and the powerful desire of all concerned to be part of a success story. These attributes are the result of the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher, the hard work of the staff team she has built and nurtured around her, and the support and involvement of the governing body.

64. Through her skill and perseverance the headteacher has developed a very strong and unified team of both staff and senior management. One of the strong characteristics of the work of senior management is the effective delegation that takes place and the level of trust and support between all levels of management including subject co-ordinators. An example is the trust teachers have in learning support staff and the latter's commitment to the work of the school and to pupils' progress. Learning support staff voluntarily take work home so as to be able to suggest to teachers how best to support the pupils with whom they work. This has a very positive effect on the standards achieved by these pupils, most of whom make similar progress to their classmates. Teachers' hard work is exemplified not only by their efforts during the school day but the practice the headteacher has had to develop of ringing the school bell at 6 p.m. to encourage staff to go home.

65. Subject co-ordinators play an increasingly significant role in the management of the school. Through their monitoring of teachers' planning and their detailed involvement in the planning of school developments and the budget, they strongly influence the teaching of their specialist subjects and hence pupils' achievements. Their respect for each other and the manner in which they seek and receive each other's support and guidance is very good. This is an exceptionally strong and cohesive team of middle managers.

66. The school makes use of the Code of Practice and takes advantage of special needs in-service training opportunities. The governor responsible for special needs has received training from the special needs coordinator. The special needs policy has been accepted by the governing body and reviewing the school's provision and the progress of pupils with special needs is a regular feature of their meetings. The special needs coordinator is a very effective and committed teacher. She is very well qualified and experienced and has ensured that special needs has a very high priority in the school. She is very well supported by the headteacher and she is a member of the senior management team with her own specialist base.

67. The senior management team has made the inclusion of all pupils in every aspect of school life, one of its highest priorities. In addition to the good work already described with pupils who have special needs and the children of Travellers, equal effort has been very successfully expended to ensure that others, such as higher attaining pupils, gifted and talented pupils and those with medical problems, all have their individual needs addressed.

68. There has been a very good programme of monitoring teaching to help teachers identify their strengths and to improve in areas needing development. The headteacher and deputy headteacher play a major role in monitoring the quality of teaching, as does the special educational needs co-ordinator. Her role is specific – to ensure that teachers are planning and teaching to meet the needs of individual pupils.

69. The school is particularly successful in using all available data to evaluate its own performance and in taking effective action to deal with areas of relative weakness. The headteacher uses every possible source of information in her monitoring of the school's work. For example, she asks all pupils who have participated in extra support groups, such as the Millennium Reading Project, to evaluate the support they received. A very welcome result of the school's policy of listening to pupils is that pupils now feel free to ask for extra support if they believe they would benefit.

70. The clarity of the school's educational priorities is excellent, and the senior management has set a clear and appropriate educational direction. This is reinforced and consolidated by the excellent targeting of funds to support areas in need of improvement. Throughout all its work, the management team clearly reflect the school's aims and values, in particular valuing and including every pupil. The school development plan, the budget and planning in general are excellent, resulting in purposeful hard work by all, and the improved standards. An example of the clarity of thought and action by the senior management team, and their commitment to investing funds to raise standards, occurred when a permanent member of staff learned that an absence for ill health would be longer than originally thought. The senior management team was concerned that the teacher's class might suffer from the lack of continuity from being taught by a succession of supply teachers. They resolved to ask the governing body for funds to recruit a teacher on contract to cover the absence. It is also an example of the understanding and support the governing body has for the school that they agreed to the proposal. Many members of the governing body are new to the school and therefore relatively inexperienced. Nevertheless, the governing body acts as a critical friend to the management team and is performing its duties and carrying out its responsibilities satisfactorily.

71. The headteacher recognises and builds on the strengths of others, and supports those with weaknesses. Her commitment is exemplified by the investment in professional development of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching. For example, one member of the support staff is being encouraged in her desire to train to become a teacher and all members of the support team have pursued relevant training. This is having a very beneficial impact on pupils' social development, and on the progress made by pupils with special needs. The school is well staffed with teachers and support staff who have the relevant expertise to meet the demands of the whole curriculum and work as a strong and enthusiastic team.

72. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is excellent. It fully meets legislative requirements and enables all teachers to improve their skills and thus contribute more effectively to raising pupils' standards. Performance management is very closely linked to the needs of the school and is seen as an integral part of its development.

73. Financial management is good. The school development plan is extensive, and sets out clearly what needs to be done to raise standards across the curriculum. Spending plans are well linked to the school's priorities. Grant funds, for example to support pupils with special educational needs, are used very effectively and contribute directly to the good progress made by those pupils.

74. Financial control and administration systems are very good. Administrative staff monitor spending closely and produce regular financial statements so that staff and governors can keep a very good track of how money is spent. All those involved with financial planning and management take great pains to ensure that best value is obtained.

75. Accommodation is good overall, as are learning resources. The computer suite has been a welcome improvement for the provision of ICT and has had tangible benefits in

promoting learning. The suite is being used efficiently for teaching. However, the inclusion of the Junior library in the same room as the ICT suite affects quiet study. The indoor foundation accommodation is a strength of the school, along with the large physical education hall. Outdoor facilities are good. There are three separate hard surface playgrounds, a well developed wildlife garden and a stone circle and a selection of grassed areas to play on. There is a partly covered area for outdoor play for the youngest children. All these facilities promote learning and development.

76. The adequacy of learning resources is good overall. In particular, it is good in mathematics, English, religious education and ICT. Resources in music are satisfactory overall, but there is not enough recorded music from different countries.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77. The school has made and continues to make excellent progress. There are no significant issues requiring attention.

78. Minor areas identified in this report which should be considered by the school are as follows:

1. The school's program to develop the use of ICT in teaching a range of other subjects has only been partially implemented. (See paragraphs 12, 36, 101, 105, 111, 129, 149)
2. Plans to further develop pupils' speaking and listening and to extend their vocabulary are only partially implemented. (See paragraphs, 37, 96)
3. Plans to further develop the assessment of pupils in subjects other than English, mathematics and science have yet to be fully implemented.(See paragraphs, 55, 117, 129)
4. The inclusion of the Junior library in the ICT suite affects quiet study there. (See paragraph,75).
5. In design and technology, pupils do not routinely evaluate their work in progress or when completed. (See paragraph,128).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	21	34	16	0	0	0
Percentage	10	27	43	20	0	0	0

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

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)	26	344
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	117

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	106

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	37
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	17	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	26	26
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	38	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (80)	93 (95)	96 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	26
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	38	41	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (88)	91 (88)	96 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	28	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	12	18
	Girls	19	15	21
	Total	33	27	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (79)	56 (67)	81 (83)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	16
	Girls	21	18	21
	Total	33	30	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (83)	63 (73)	77 (77)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	5
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	311
Any other minority ethnic group	19

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	73

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	685 231
Total expenditure	683 130
Expenditure per pupil	1 975
Balance brought forward from previous year	78 970
Balance carried forward to next year	81 071

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	370
Number of questionnaires returned	135

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	31	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	30	2	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	39	1	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	33	9	1	3
The teaching is good.	69	30	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	29	13	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	24	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	25	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	57	36	2	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	67	30	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	39	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	24	4	0	3

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

79. There are 52 children who attend the nursery part time. Parents choose whether their child attends the morning or afternoon session. In the two reception classes there are 44 children who attend school full time. Children enter the nursery as soon as a place can be offered after their third birthday. The reception classes have a single intake each September.

80. All staff in the nursery and reception classes have worked extremely hard to establish a caring, secure and happy environment for the children. Parents are very welcome at all times and are kept well informed about their children's needs and achievements. Great importance is placed on children feeling valued and respected and, when appropriate, children may gradually build up their time in school until they feel sufficiently confident to attend full sessions. This caring approach is also applied to children's transition to full time schooling in reception. In the Summer term, groups of nursery children join the reception classes so that the new routines become familiar and children are happy to move into their new classes in September. Nursery staff continue to support these children in their first few days in reception by joining them in the dining hall and ensuring that they become confident in their use of cutlery and choosing from the menu. The very good communication between the adults working within the nursery and reception classes means that the social and educational needs of all children are carefully considered and reflected in the teachers' planning.

81. On entry to the nursery, children's standards of attainment are well below expectations for their age and are lower than at the time of the previous inspection. At the end of the Foundation Stage, standards in literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world are below expectations. However, standards in mathematics, physical, creative, personal and social development are only just below expectations. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and are achieving well. The very good provision for children's learning in the nursery and reception classes and the achievements of all reflect significant improvements since the last inspection.

82. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good. All adults have a very clear understanding of the needs of the children and make sure that all are included in the activities on offer. There is pace and purpose to all the lessons so that the time is utilised to the full. Teaching programmes provide a very good balance between opportunities to consolidate skills and the introduction of new challenging concepts. All staff have a very caring, encouraging manner with the children and they use every opportunity to build up their self-esteem and praise them for their work. As a result all the children are very keen to participate and very willing to learn. They feel both secure and confident that their efforts will be appreciated. They share their pleasure in what they are doing, or have done, with visitors and the adults who collect them at the end of each session in school. The quality of teaching from all members of staff enables all the children, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress.

83. Children's individual needs are assessed when they enter the nursery class and their progress is carefully monitored and recorded. They are assessed at the end of their time in the nursery and the close liaison between staff enables the reception teachers to plan appropriately for each new intake. The special educational needs co-ordinator is a member of the Early Years team and is closely involved in supporting the children with specific learning difficulties. Baseline assessments at the beginning and end of the reception year indicate children make good progress. Each child has a portfolio and targets are set to meet individual

needs. Records are given to Year 1 teachers so that appropriate provision can be made for those children who have not yet reached expectations in any of the six areas of learning.

84. The children's attitude and behaviour are good. Although many newcomers may be shy on entry, the stimulating environment and the care and attention they receive from adults enables children to settle quickly and become very keen to contribute to and participate in all activities. The children readily seek help and advice from adults because there is a strong sense of mutual respect and this helps set the tone throughout the school.

85. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well established and teaching approaches based on the national literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully introduced. Adults know the needs of their children very well and plan the curriculum to meet the early learning goals and the needs of individual children. The very good curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a wide range of challenging and focussed activities to promote all aspects of the children's development.

86. The indoor accommodation for the Foundation Stage is bright and appealing. There is good use of captions to create interest around the displays and to further the awareness of print in the children's immediate environment. Outdoor areas are also of a high quality, offering children good opportunities for both structured and unstructured play. Learning resources are good.

87. Since the last inspection, the school has worked extremely hard to improve the quality of teaching and provision for children in the Foundation Stage. All involved have successfully created an environment with which both parents and children are very happy and in which all children learn well and feel secure and valued.

Personal, social and emotional development

88. Nearly all children enter the nursery with immature personal and social skills. This area of development is emphasised throughout the nursery and reception classes and children make very good progress. By the time they leave the reception class, many children have achieved the early learning goal in this area and overall standards are below but close to expectations. This reflects the very good teaching in this area. Children are encouraged to be independent and to make choices such as painting or using the computer. The everyday routines and organisation encourage children to come together as a group. Focussed activities are used very well to encourage everyone to respond politely and to share in each other's success. The adults provide very good role models, always treating one another and the children with courtesy and respect. Children learn to look after their environment and are encouraged to tidy up as they go, as well as at the end of each session. Most children work together well, sharing resources and helping one another, for example when getting dressed and serving "afternoon tea" in role-play sessions. Adults promote personal development by ensuring that equipment is accessible and easy to use.

Communication, language and literacy

89. Children enter the nursery with skills less well developed than expected for their age. In the nursery and reception classes, children are encouraged to listen with interest and concentration to stories and to instructions. Adults show children that they value their efforts at communicating by listening to what they say and by joining in the activities and games the children themselves have devised, such as building safe enclosures for model animals and rolling large, soft equipment to each other. Children enjoy looking at and sharing books both with adults and with other children. They understand the word "title" and know that books contain stories. There are opportunities for children to act out stories they have heard. For example, children take the parts of Jesus and his disciples while listening to the Bible story

about the calming of the sea. Some higher attaining children write their own names and are beginning to write simple sentences, using correctly formed letters. Most children correctly identify initial sounds but many have yet to develop the ability to correctly write all letters of the alphabet. Children are regularly given opportunities to develop their writing skills and make good progress by the end of reception. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Overall standards are below expectations in this area.

Mathematical development

90. Children enter the nursery with skills less well developed than expected for their age. Teaching in this area is good. Children are encouraged to develop their counting skills whenever opportunities arise. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children enjoy counting candles on birthday cakes, building blocks used in a structure or numbers of model elephants and tigers. Most reception children correctly count to twenty and some count beyond this. They confidently count backwards from ten to zero. Higher attaining children attempt very well to count backwards from twenty. Reception children are beginning to understand the concept of addition and successfully demonstrate and record ways in which a group of six can be split into two groups. Children recognise the numerals one to ten and correctly order them. They understand the concept "one more than". Nursery and reception children recognise shapes such as triangle, circle and rectangle and some are able to match these shapes to objects in the classrooms. They understand terms such as large and small, long and short and correctly group objects into these categories. Children make good progress developing their mathematical skills and, by the end of reception, standards are still below but close to national expectations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

91. The knowledge and understanding of the majority of children entering the nursery is well below that expected for their age. The staff work extremely hard to broaden children's experiences and enable them to develop a greater understanding of the world around them. In the nursery, opportunities are provided for the children to prepare and taste food they have not experienced before and their opinions are encouraged and respected. They make jam tarts and honey sandwiches and produce charts reflecting their preferences. In reception, children experience variations of familiar items and learn to observe and compare. Children learn the differences between hen and duck eggs by looking carefully at the size and colour of shells and yolks and feeling the consistency of the yolks and whites after the eggs have been broken into bowls. Children thoroughly enjoy this experience and describe the feeling using words such as *slippy*, *soft* and *sticky*. They know that they must always wash their hands with soap before and after handling food and are very willing to do this. Children know the names of many animals. They correctly distinguish between farm and wild animals and know which live in the sea or on water. They know the days of the week and are able to describe the weather using terms such as sunny, wet and windy. Children enjoy experimenting to determine which material would make the best hat. Under careful supervision they sensibly test plastic, paper and cotton to determine which are waterproof. When unsure, they repeat the experiment until they are satisfied with the outcome. They are beginning to learn the fundamentals of using the computer and a few children were observed successfully using the mouse to move the cursor across the screen. Given the lack of experiences with which many children enter the Foundation Stage, most make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. On entering Year 1, standards of attainment are below rather than well below expectations.

Physical development

92. Children enter the nursery with less well developed skills than those expected for children of this age. As a consequence of very good teaching, most attain the early learning

goals in this area and some exceed them. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Nursery children quickly learn to move safely when sharing large equipment. They make good progress developing their sense of balance when moving under and over apparatus and are beginning to improve their eye-hand co-ordination skills and when rolling soft cylinders to each other. Reception children continue to demonstrate the development of good balancing skills and control of body movements as they move around the hall on their hands and feet and explore ways in which to move along wooden benches. The children demonstrate a developing confidence by using their initiative to create individual example of movements in response to the teacher's instructions. In spite of limited previous experience, they very sensibly help each other to move equipment within the hall and use it with care and consideration for others. They are proud to demonstrate the skills they have learnt and are very appreciative of each other's efforts.

Creative development

93. When they enter the nursery, the creative skills of most children are well below those expected of children of this age. Children make very good progress in the nursery and reception classes and most achieve standards below but close to expectations for this area of learning. Children paint self-portraits that, for their age, demonstrate a well-developed sense of proportion and shape and they correctly name the colours they use. They are learning to use scissors and glue spreaders but these skills are not yet fully developed. They make sensible choices when selecting materials and position eyes, beaks, feathers and feet correctly when making model ducks. Children contribute neatly made and coloured birds and flowers to a class collage illustrating the nursery rhyme "Sing a Song of Sixpence". All children enthusiastically participate in musical activities. They readily join in the singing of familiar rhymes and songs. They learn quickly to play instruments such as triangles, drums, maraccas and tambourines. They listen carefully to instructions as to when they should play or rest and most respond very well. The children are developing a good sense of rhythm. All children are encouraged to participate and their efforts are always appreciated both by adults and each other. There has been a significant improvement in the development of children's creative skills since the last inspection.

ENGLISH

94. The achievements of most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are very good over time. There has been very positive change since the last inspection and standards at the end of Year 6 and standards in writing at the end of Year 2 have risen steadily. By the ages of seven and eleven, however, standards are below average. In the national tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' results were below average in reading and average in writing. However, the proportion of pupils achieving national expectations was close to the national average in reading and above average in writing. This reflects the emphasis the school has placed upon raising standards in writing. When compared to similar schools, standards are well above average.

95. By the end of Year 6, standards in the 2001 tests were well below average when compared to all schools, but pupils' standards are above average when compared to similar schools. Although the majority of pupils achieve the national expectations, few achieve the higher levels and this depresses the school's overall results. It is important to note that children start school with well below average attainment in language and communication skills, and that there is a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs.

96. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of speaking and listening bearing in mind their low level of language and communication when they start school. However, the speaking and listening of pupils in Years 2 and 6 are below average. Teaching provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to talk and offer their ideas during lessons, but a

more focused approach is needed to help pupils develop a broader vocabulary and to use extended sentences. By the age of seven pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. They learn to speak audibly and show a growing confidence in offering simple explanations and discussing their storybooks. Most pupils in Year 6 speak clearly, although they often find it difficult to put across their thoughts and ideas coherently. They have some difficulty in using technical terms and the words they choose sometimes lack imagination, but generally pupils show a clear understanding of what they hear. Teachers carefully explain unfamiliar vocabulary and adapt their use of language to help pupils understand. Pupils generally listen well and they are willing to take the views of others into account. When pupils are reluctant to answer questions or speak teachers overcome this by asking focused questions. This is effective in ensuring that all pupils are involved. Teachers' supportive approach helps to build their confidence which leads to effective learning.

97. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their reading and by the end of Year 2 standards are close to average. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the learning of letter sounds and how to read unfamiliar words. This, along with the daily practice, is helping pupils to approach their reading with greater confidence. Average and higher attaining pupils are developing a satisfactory vocabulary of words they recognise in print and are confident in using their knowledge of sound patterns when tackling unfamiliar word, although lower attainers are still at an early stage of applying these skills. Higher attainers read fluently and expressively, and like to talk about the characters in the book and explain what is happening. Average and lower attaining pupils make use of picture clues to help them understand what the story is about. Teachers give careful thought to the choice of reading materials for whole class reading and for guided reading groups so that pupils experience an interesting range of texts matched to their needs. Pupils clearly enjoy the 'big books' and express disappointment when the session is over. During shared text sessions they read aloud with the teacher and are beginning to follow the teacher's example and use expression, for example, speaking louder when they notice the type size increasing. By the end of Year 6 pupils are becoming independent readers and some have developed preferences for different authors or type of book. Some higher attainers can clearly explain why they prefer a particular author. For example, one pupil chose the author Jacqueline Wilson because of the relevance of the themes to real life. However, average and lower attainers do not always have a good understanding of what they have read. Teachers encourage pupils to develop good reading habits and pupils choose books to read at home. Pupils' progress in reading is consistently monitored by teachers and there are very good support programmes for those who need extra help. For example, pupils enjoy the Millennium Reading project and speak positively about it. Older pupils' are getting better at using the library and they can explain the purposes of indexes and contents and most are generally aware of how to locate books.

98. Pupils' achievement in writing is good because teaching is good. Pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities for writing for different purposes. Teaching is strongly focused on developing pupils' understanding of grammar and how different forms of writing are structured. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound understanding of simple sentence structure. Average and higher attaining pupils begin stories properly and spell common words correctly, applying sensible alternatives to more difficult words. Although lower attaining pupils find writing tasks more difficult, they are beginning to communicate their ideas through simple words and phrases. By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils communicate satisfactorily in writing, although their writing lacks the lively and imaginative language necessary to achieve higher standards. This is a general weakness throughout the school and reflects the restricted vocabulary that pupils use when speaking. Although older pupils know how to use paragraphs and punctuate speech, they do not use them consistently in their writing. They begin to understand the rhythm in poetry that develops by using a certain number of syllables in each line, for example in Haiku. Pupils have opportunities to draft and

redraft their work, although the second version shows few signs of extending their original ideas. The handwriting of all pupils improves well and by Year 6 they write satisfactorily in joined script.

99. Teaching in English is good in both key stages. It has improved since the last inspection and this is reflected in the higher standards that pupils achieve. Lessons are well planned and carefully structured to ensure adequate challenge. In the best examples, tasks are well matched to all abilities and help pupils learn at an appropriate pace. In most lessons teachers share the planning with pupils so that they know what they are to do and learn, and why. Occasionally some tasks are too repetitive and do not have as much impact on the development of pupils' language as they might. For example, counting the syllables in numerous examples of Haiku, without any discussion about the theme or mood of the poems, or adding the suffix 'tion' to words without using these in context to help extend pupils' vocabulary. The pace of lessons is good throughout the school, although sometimes lessons for the youngest pupils are rather long as they continue with their individual tasks after the summary session. A strong feature of lessons is the use of a variety of teaching strategies and interesting activities to sustain concentration, and the challenge of well targeted questions. Consequently, pupils are interested and concentrate well, persevering to overcome difficulties. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very positive and mutually respectful. Pupils of all ages work well together on collaborative tasks. Teachers' good subject knowledge is demonstrated through their clear explanations and use of examples.

100. Throughout the school there is good support for pupils with special educational needs. The special needs co-ordinator or a learning support assistant provides good support for individuals and groups and enables full participation by lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. They help pupils to understand what is being discussed and to tackle their group and individual tasks. This results in these pupils making good progress in lessons.

101. The subject is well managed and organised. The school has very clear procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' learning and progress, and for setting targets for their improvement. The good range of strategies to raise standards, such as the booster groups, additional literacy and early intervention in Years 1 and 2, are well managed. These have a positive effect on raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence as well as improving standards. Teaching makes limited use of ICT to develop pupils' literacy. However, it is used effectively to support pupils taking part in the Millennium Reading project.

MATHEMATICS

102. In 2001, Year 2 pupils reached average levels in the national tests, and well above the average of those of similar schools. Most current Year 2 pupils are on target to reach the level expected for seven-year-olds, but few will attain higher levels. As a result, overall standards are presently below national averages. In Year 6, 2001 test results were well below national averages, although in line with those attained by pupils in similar schools. Current Year 6 pupils are on target to improve on these results. However, inspection evidence indicates that few pupils will reach higher attainment levels, and overall standards therefore remain below national averages. Pupils make good progress and achieve very well given the very low standards with which they start. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from Traveller families, achieve equally well.

103. By the age of seven, most pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100, and calculate simple addition and subtraction sums correctly. However, few can explain, for example, how to add 21 or 19 by adding 20 and then adjusting the answer, and lower

attaining pupils are generally only accurate with numbers to 20. Pupils know the names of two-dimensional shapes such as squares and hexagons, and describe them correctly using vocabulary such as “corner” and “side”. They measure familiar classroom objects in centimetres, and draw simple block graphs to show, for example, how many items they find that are made of wood, plastic or metal.

104. By the age of eleven, pupils know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers to 1000 or more, but many make errors in calculations due to inaccurate recall of basic number facts such as multiplication tables. This affected learning in two Year 6 lessons, especially when pupils calculated answers mentally. However, once pupils turned to formal written methods their accuracy improved. Most pupils are developing a good understanding of decimals and the metric system of measurement. For instance, they calculate perimeters of simple shapes, and know that answers can be written in different ways, such as 520 centimetres or 5.20 metres. Lower attaining pupils do not yet understand these equivalents, and sometimes confuse different units such as millimetres and kilograms.

105. Pupils make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills in other subjects. For instance, pupils weigh ingredients when cooking, they interpret temperature graphs in science, and use their knowledge of shapes to make Christmas tree decorations. Pupils make insufficient use of ICT to develop their mathematical skills and understanding because teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities. No pupils were observed using ICT in mathematics lessons during the inspection.

106. The quality of teaching and learning are both good throughout the school. Some lessons are very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection. Teachers understand the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy and teach it well. Good questioning and thorough explanations involve pupils effectively and ensure that they understand what is being taught. For example, in a lesson on addition, pupils were encouraged to explain how they added several numbers, for instance by combining numbers to make 10 or 20. The teacher went on to use this explanation to involve other pupils. This developed pupils’ speaking, ensured that the whole class was involved in the discussion and prepared them well for the work that followed.

107. Teachers plan lessons well. Work is set appropriately to challenge pupils of different abilities, so that learning builds progressively on what pupils know, understand and can do. Teachers assess pupils’ work thoroughly, and occasionally modify future lessons in the light of what has just been taught. Prompt action of this kind is effective, and in one lesson seen, helped to develop pupils’ rapid recall of multiplication tables, where it had been poor in the previous lesson.

108. Teachers manage pupils in their classes very well. They are firm but fair, and earn the respect of pupils. Relationships between pupils and adults, and among pupils are very good. Consequently, pupils behave well and want to learn. Good management of pupils with behavioural difficulties, and effective support from classroom assistants, where they are available, ensure that pupils with special educational needs learn very well in lessons.

109. Most lessons run well to time, although occasionally whole class sessions are too long. Where this occurs it contributes to loss of concentration and minor misbehaviour in the class, and leads to less being covered in the lesson than could have been. Slow lesson pace was a significant factor in the small number of lessons that were judged satisfactory overall, where other factors were good. By contrast, brisk lesson pace contributed well to the excellent lessons seen, because it created enthusiasm in the class, leading in turn to very active and productive learning.

110. Assessment procedures in mathematics are very good. Data is used effectively to set challenging but attainable individual pupil targets for improvement, including for pupils with special educational needs, and to provide extra lessons for all pupils (known as “Booster” and “Springboard” classes) that are well targeted to their needs.

111. The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very successfully introduced under the skilled guidance of the coordinator. She has monitored lessons, advised on planning and used assessment information effectively to address weaknesses. For example, curriculum plans have been modified to give problem-solving greater emphasis this year because analysis of the 2001 Year 6 test results identified this strand as being weak. Additional “Booster” and “Springboard” lessons are proving both popular and effective. Teaching is good overall. The mathematics development plan identifies important areas for development such as improved use of ICT to support teaching and learning, and further improvements to support pupils with special educational needs. For these reasons the school is well placed to continue the rising trend in standards that has taken place in recent years.

SCIENCE

112. Since the last inspection, pupils’ standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 have risen, but results in the national tests taken by 11 year olds in 2001 show standards were still below the national average. Teachers’ assessment of pupils’ attainment at the end of Year 2 in July 2001 indicates that a higher than average proportion reached the required standard of Level 2, but a lower than average proportion reached the higher Level 3. At the end of Year 6 in July 2001, 82 per cent of the pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs, reached the expected Level 4. This represents a substantial improvement since the last inspection. Fifteen per cent of pupils reached Level 5.

113. The standards of attainment of pupils in the current Year 2 are in line with national expectations. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in science. They observe closely and record their observations in simple words, pictures and charts, using information and communication technology where appropriate. They understand that living things need food and water to live and can talk about the differences between animals and plants. They can explain how they make a light bulb light up using a simple circuit and they have some knowledge of simple life cycles, such as that of a butterfly. The work of pupils in the portfolio shows full coverage of appropriate topics to build scientific skills and knowledge. Work in the current books shows that pupils should reach the expected level in their national tests in 2002.

114. The standards of pupils in the present Year 6 are in line with expectations. Their work shows good coverage of appropriate topics and clear progression in their understanding. The majority are already, half way through the year, reaching the expected level and some pupils are working within the higher level. All are using their skills and understanding well, and show high levels of enthusiasm both in their lessons and when talking about the work they have been doing. Year 6 pupils showed a clear understanding of what is meant by a food chain. Year 4 pupils demonstrated that they understand a fair test. They planned an experiment to see whether it is easier to pull a weight on a shiny surface rather than a rough surface. The achievement of pupils, including those with special needs, is very good.

115. The quality of teaching is never less than good and most of the teaching is very good. Teachers use planning documents well and they start lessons promptly and confidently sharing the lesson aims simply and clearly with the class. This builds confidence in the work undertaken and helps pupils to pay attention and work hard. Teachers use carefully directed questions to clarify and extend pupils' understanding. Lessons finish well with a revision of what has been learned during the session, using questions based on the learning objectives or, simply with younger pupils, "What have we found out today?" Often pupils are told what they will be learning in the next lesson. Teachers are aware of the needs of all groups within the classroom and make everyone feel valued and included. Tasks are often planned at different levels so that work is suited to all abilities. Teachers also work alongside lower achieving groups to support them. Pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in these lessons.

116. Pupils work well together in groups and are usually absorbed with their tasks. They show enthusiasm and most are able to concentrate well. They share ideas and discuss sensibly. For example, in Year 3, they study various objects and predict which ones are magnetic. In Year 6 they discuss together which order elements in a food chain should be placed. Year 6 pupils predict and draw conclusions from their experiments. They understand about a fair test and can predict results when they change one variable. They use the appropriate scientific language for example, *photosynthesis*, *irreversible change*.

117. The coordinator is effective. She is well organised and knows what needs to be done to raise standards further. She is always looking at ways to develop the subject and improve attainment. She and the headteacher have raised standards since the last inspection by ensuring that all teachers are well trained. The scheme of work has been adapted to suit the needs of the school and this has helped to improve the delivery of investigative science lessons. A simple assessment is undertaken after each topic has been completed. Resources are satisfactory and teachers use them well. The use of ICT in support of pupils' learning science is satisfactory.

118. Although the science results had always compared favourably with other subjects, the school felt there was a clear need to raise standards. This has been achieved by taking a whole school approach to the planning for the subject and making the learning objectives clear. The scheme of work has been up-dated and teaching has improved through continued training. Better records are now kept and passed between year groups. The school has looked to the involvement of the wider community and has formed links with Astra Zeneca to help raise standards. Setting up an after school science club linked to the British Association of Young Scientists has promoted an interest in the subject among the junior pupils. The next step is to improve the systems of assessment to help teachers to appropriately challenge different ability groups in the same lesson.

ART AND DESIGN

119. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' standards are in line with national expectations. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Given pupils' below average creative development when they enter Year 1, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. This rate of progress is an improvement since the last inspection.

120. By the age of seven, pupils can draw satisfactorily. Their self-portraits and observational drawings of fruit, church artefacts and structures indicate an appropriate sense of proportion and attention to detail. They take care when colouring their pictures, using either paints or pastels. Pupils study artists such as David Hockney and Mondrian and make good attempts to reproduce their styles. Good use is made of computer programs to reinforce this

area of the curriculum. Pupils also develop their knowledge and understanding of art and design when studying other areas of the curriculum. They use clay to make Deva lamps and effectively use paper, foil, chalk and coloured pencils to design and produce willow pattern plates. Pupils are given opportunities to sew and weave and they produce some attractive designs.

121. By the age of eleven, pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge of materials, processes and skills. They study carefully the work of William Morris and work hard to produce their own examples of repeating patterns. Again pupils make good use of computer programs to successfully generate examples of pointillism and pictures created using one or two planes of reflection. Older pupils develop their observational skills and understanding of ways in which the natural properties of materials can be used to best effect. They carefully study a variety of containers made from a range of materials and become quite knowledgeable about the resources and techniques used by craftsmen around the world. Art and design is used in other areas of the curriculum. For example, while studying the Ancient Greeks, pupils produce striking examples of urns on which they depict aspects of everyday life. Pupils are beginning to learn how to analyse their work and discuss the challenges involved in the approaches and skills they use. There are a few pupils who produce work of a high standard but the majority have yet to develop the maturity expected of pupils of this age.

122. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and resources well organised. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject and challenge pupils to perform well. They make very good use of praise and encouragement and always provide additional support for less confident pupils. This positive approach enables all pupils to achieve well. All pupils approach their tasks with enthusiasm and persevere throughout lessons. They take pride in their work, share ideas and resources very well and are always supportive of each other. Pupils are given opportunities to appreciate the skills and talents to be found within art and design and this contributes to their spiritual and cultural development. Teachers encourage pupils to work closely with each other, developing their literacy and social skills whilst discussing their activities and achievements.

123. Pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum and teachers are encouraged to use art and design to enhance other subjects within the whole school curriculum. The quality of support for teachers has improved significantly since the last inspection. The local community benefits from the artistic efforts of the pupils in a variety of ways. The school provides a float for the Partington Carnival and pupils' work is exhibited at the Annual Show. Pupils were involved in the designing and production of the striking mural in the Community Centre and pupils' ideas have been used for Christmas cards distributed by the Trafford Health Authority.

124. Satisfactory use is made of ICT in pupils learning of the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. Pupils reach average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. All pupils achieve well, given their low levels of creative development when they enter Year 1.

126. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 design and make products such as pizzas, using real ingredients and fabric imitations, pop-up cards, puppets and wind-up toys. Photographs of completed work, and a small amount of current work on display, show that these are well made. For example, fabric pizzas are cut out accurately and neatly sewn using simple stitches. Pupils follow a simple design template on which they record design ideas, they list

the materials they will need and write simple lists of instructions for assembly. However, many pupils write poorly and consequently find it hard to complete these in much detail.

127. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 explore a wide range of materials, and make items such as picture frames, fabric purses, chairs, bread and slippers. Again, few artefacts were available for inspection, but those that were, plus photographs of completed work and discussion with older pupils indicate that these are of the standard expected. They are accurately measured and cut out, robustly assembled and attractively decorated. In lessons, Year 6 pupils explained how conflicting requirements in the design of slippers leads to different products being marketed for different buyers. Comments such as “this slipper looks like a fun slipper, with a clown’s head on”, and “these slippers look safe because they have little bumps on them for grip” are typical of higher attaining pupils. However, lower attaining pupils are able to make few extended comments, and record simple observations such as “soft” and “colourful”.

128. Too few lessons were seen to enable overall judgements to be made on the quality of teaching and learning. Those seen were good overall. They were well planned from the school’s scheme of work, ensuring that work was demanding. Teachers make good links with literacy teaching, for example using a dictionary definition of “specification” to start a discussion about slipper design and developing word lists for pupils to use in their own work. Classes are managed well and lessons are generally brisk, although in one lesson seen the introductory discussion was too long, contributing to some loss of attention and misbehaviour. Teachers approach design work in different ways, which leads to inconsistencies in pupils’ attainment. In particular, pupils do not routinely evaluate work as it progresses or on completion, or record changes to their designs. Similar comments were made at the last inspection, where design evaluations were judged to be “superficial”.

129. The coordination of design and technology is good. New National Curriculum guidelines have been used well to develop a broad curriculum. However, opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning are limited and need development. New assessment procedures, developed alongside the scheme of work, are satisfactory, but need refinement to enable teachers to judge pupils’ progress accurately as they move up through the school.

GEOGRAPHY

130. Pupils’ standards are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is unchanged since the last inspection. Throughout the school pupils are interested in learning about the world around them. This has a positive impact on their progress and the achievement of pupils of all abilities is good.

131. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand that maps can represent physical and man-made features of the landscape. They have drawn maps to show their route to school and the landmarks that they see along the way. Through the story of Katie Morag, they learn about the features of an island home. They construct a three-dimensional map to show the main features and places of interest. They have experience of looking at a range of maps in order to locate different places, such as a map of Europe to find England and the world globe to locate Peru. Planning for the development of map work is good. As pupils move through the school they encounter a good range of maps and become more skilled at using them to research information. Pupils in Year 5 have used Internet maps to plan a route from Partington to Jedburgh. From the location of a place on a map they deduce what type of landscape and buildings they are likely to find, and what occupations might be found there. By Year 6 pupils know how mountain ranges are formed. They make satisfactory use of atlases to research information about the highest mountain ranges around the world and the mountain ranges of the British Isles. Through the topic ‘What’s in the news?’ they collect and

record evidence about places. Pupils are becoming more aware of where different countries and towns are located around the world. They learn how events and people can affect the environment through conflicts and natural disasters, such as an earthquake in India or the terrorist attacks in New York.

132. Teaching is good. Teachers plan well to develop the skills of geographical enquiry. They plan interesting work and give pupils plenty of opportunities to discuss their thoughts and ideas about the different topics, for example, why people choose particular destinations for their holiday. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and use questions well to check pupils' understanding and help them learn. Good questioning keeps them focused on the skills they are to use and develop. Pupils learn well because lessons are well managed and pupils are interested in learning about other parts of the world.

133. The subject is well managed. The curriculum is well planned and organised to meet the school's needs. It is covered in a way that builds on what pupils already know. There is an appropriate range of visits to support the curriculum and provide pupils with opportunities for fieldwork. All classes take part in European week. This gives pupils a good insight into life in other European countries.

134. Satisfactory use is made of ICT in studying geography.

HISTORY

135. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' standards are in line with national expectations. Given their below average knowledge and understanding of the world when they enter Year 1, pupils make good progress and achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

136. Younger pupils learn to compare past and present life styles. For example, they learn how everyday activities such as cleaning and ironing were much more difficult before the use of electricity. Pupils gain a deeper understanding through role-play when acting out washday in a Victorian kitchen. Well-planned links with science topics such as light and investigations involving the use of hot and cold water and detergents reinforce pupils' learning. By the age of seven, pupils learn about famous characters such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys and significant moments in the history of Britain, for example the Great Fire of London. They are developing a sense of time and make satisfactory attempts to place these people's lives and important events on a simple time line.

137. By the age of eleven, pupils consider much greater periods of time. They understand how the Romans changed the lives of Ancient Britons and that further changes occurred with the invasion of the Anglo-Saxons. They know why people have invaded Britain and describe the changes they have brought with them. Pupils sensibly compare the lives of wealthy and poor people in Tudor times and express preferences based on good understanding. Pupils make good use of the range of resources in school and know that they can gain further information from the public library and the Internet. Pupils enjoy researching the lives of Victorian children and discover that children from wealthy families enjoyed many familiar activities such as sketching, singing and acting. They use information gained from videos and other resources to discover differences between modern school life and the experiences of Ancient Greek children. All pupils approach the subject with enthusiasm and are very keen to learn about life in different times. They retain information well, both from previous lessons and from topics studied lower down the school. They take care and record their findings accurately.

138. No history teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and prepare lessons well. Good use is made of the school's resources and lessons are stimulating and thought-provoking. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and all pupils are encouraged to share their knowledge and help each other when appropriate. Pupils are invited to express their opinions and preferences and to justify their ideas, which they do well. Teachers know their pupils very well and select tasks that reflect their capabilities. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the advantages they now have and this contributes to their spiritual and cultural development.

139. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched by visits to the Tudor house in Salford and the Victorian schoolroom in Macclesfield. Pupils also benefit from their "Roman Day" when they experience aspects of life in Roman times. Resources are well organised and accessible and the range of artefacts available to pupils is gradually being increased. The use of resources has improved since the last inspection and current planning ensures that teachers prepare more appropriate activities for all their pupils.

140. Pupils make satisfactory use of ICT in studying history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

141. In the last inspection, standards in ICT were below those expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Since then the school has made very good progress in buying new equipment so that all pupils now have access to a well-equipped computer suite. Teachers have received training. This has raised confidence and the school is now in a position to improve and develop what is already in place. A further improvement is in the revision of the scheme of work. The school has adopted nationally published guidance for the subject and adapted it to suit the school's own needs. The impact of these improvements is beginning to be seen throughout the school and as a result standards are rising. Pupils now make good progress in relation to their prior achievement and the majority should attain standards, which are in line with national expectations for their age at seven and eleven. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and benefit from some additional support from the advisory teacher who works with small groups of pupils. Good computer software has been bought to support pupils with special needs.

142. Most pupils can use the Windows operating system to load a program. They can gain access to a specific file. Throughout the school they develop word processing skills that they use to present work for display. By the age of eleven pupils can change the print size, style and colour of text and know how to use the spell checker and print their own work. Pupils throughout the school use data-handling programs at appropriate levels to enter and present data. Mouse skills and colour recognition are developed from an early age and by the age of seven pupils are able to give directional instructions to a small computerised vehicle. They use ICT to enhance their artwork, for example looking at the work of Mondrian, and use ICT to design a Christmas card. By the age of eleven they have an understanding of the main toolbar when using Excel and use the program to make mathematical calculations. They can access a program quickly and easily using the toolbar and are confident in changing the width of columns and typing in information. However, most pupils are slow at doing this.

143. In the few lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, which took place in the computer suite, learning was usually good because the lessons were well planned with very clear learning objectives. Good classroom management and organisation allowed pupils to make good use of the time available to them to practise and develop skills. A good example of this was a Year 4 lesson where pupils were modelling effects on the screen, learning that the screen turtle can be given commands to produce a specific shape on the screen. Pupils are

beginning to use the Internet but their skills in this area are limited. They use e-mail between classes and talk enthusiastically about this.

144. The teaching of ICT is never less than satisfactory and usually it is very good. The school's use of the New Opportunities Fund has had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and the progress the school is making in raising standards. The introduction of the nationally recommended scheme of work has been effective in ensuring clearly focused lessons and a structure for progression through the school. The coordinator, well supported by a colleague in Key Stage 1, works with teachers to develop their confidence and skills in areas that have been identified as being a particular weakness. Good classroom management and clear learning objectives have ensured that teaching of the subject has improved and that good learning takes place.

145. The subject is well led and managed. Additional external funding has been successfully applied for and this has been well targeted to improve both provision and teaching. The timetable is well planned so that the new computer suite is in constant use.

MUSIC

146. Pupils reach nationally expected standards in singing throughout the school. However, there is insufficient evidence to judge standards in other aspects of the subject, or to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.

147. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 sing tunefully and they join in well with suitable actions and clapping. They sing well from memory, and join in celebrations such as the annual Nativity with enthusiasm. Older pupils sing unison songs and two or three-part rounds confidently, maintaining good pitch and diction. When given clear musical direction, they also pay good attention to changing dynamics so that the quality of performance reflects the mood of the words in hymns such as "Peace, Perfect Peace". Videos of past Christmas and summer productions such as "Alice in Wonderland" show that pupils clearly enjoy singing and dancing. Their performances, including solo songs and dance routines, are well rehearsed and performed. The high levels of commitment and responsibility evident in these large-scale musical events contributes well to pupils' confidence and personal development.

148. Three lessons were seen during the inspection, which is insufficient to judge the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the lessons seen were good or very good. The scheme of work for music is good, and each module of work is planned in detail so that lessons build on each other. Instruments and recordings are used well to develop pupils' listening and composing skills. For example, in one lesson a recording of "Carnival of the Animals" by Saint-Saens was used well to stimulate discussion on musical imagery. Pupils listened attentively, and used their knowledge of pitch and tempo to describe how rats and birds move using words such as "scurrying" and "fluttering".

149. In a very good singing lesson, the teacher combined good musical direction, including attention to breath control and dynamic range, a brisk lesson pace and progressively harder tasks very effectively. Pupils clearly enjoyed their work, they worked hard at part-singing, and by the end of the lesson their confidence and the quality of their performance had improved noticeably. Pupils behave well in lessons because teachers make lessons interesting and brisk, so that pupils have no time to become bored. Teachers involve pupils well in discussions, encouraging them to make suggestions, which adds to their sense of enjoyment and achievement. Insufficient use is made of ICT in the teaching of music.

150. The coordination of music is good. The coordinator supports colleagues well, advising on planning and leading music training sessions. Music makes an important contribution to

pupils' cultural and personal development through opportunities to join the music club and ocarina club and to take part in school productions. The school needs a wider range of recorded music to enhance the development of pupils' understanding of life in other places around the World.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

151. During the inspection timetable restrictions resulted in only a few physical education activities being seen. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 5 were observed during dance lessons and they achieved standards above expectations for their age. In Year 2 they showed spatial awareness and a good level of control and co-ordination in linking the movements of Ying and Yang to form part of a dragon dance to celebrate the Chinese New Year. They displayed an understanding of the expressive qualities of dance. Year 5 pupils were seen exploring and improvising circular movements using turns, rolls and circling pathways on the floor and in the air. They were aware of the effects of exercise on their own bodies, such as an increase in heart rate.

152. Year 6 pupils were observed during a games lesson, where they were being shown the skills and tactics for playing a game of lacrosse. They practised the skills of scooping up the ball into the net of the stick and of throwing the ball to a team member. They also took part in a game where the emphasis was on attack and defence. Pupils showed ball skills, which are average for their age, and applied them satisfactorily in the game.

153. Pupils have the opportunity to swim in Years 3,4 and 5, and the majority achieve the recommended minimum of swimming 25 metres. There was no opportunity to observe younger pupils in a games session or any pupils at gymnastics or athletics, but these activities are included in the school's planning, which follows the national guidelines for the subject. Pupils also have further opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities such as the gymnastics club, which staff give their time to run. They also have the opportunity of being coached in football by members of Manchester United Football Club. The school competes successfully with other local schools in competitions, for example football and netball.

154. In the dance lessons the overall quality of teaching was very good with some excellent teaching. In all the lessons pupils were given the opportunity to discuss their work and to develop their ideas. Teachers have good understanding of the subject and are able to demonstrate ideas to the class. They use questions well to encourage the pupils to think about what they are doing. Questions such as, "What was good about...?" and "Why do you think...?" help pupils to reflect on what they are trying to achieve. In one lesson in Year 2 the classroom support assistant was used to good effect, which ensured that all pupils were able to take part and to achieve well, including those with special needs.

155. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and work well whether they are working individually, in pairs or in larger groups. They behave very well during lessons and are very supportive of one another. They listen carefully to their teacher and follow instructions quickly. The pupils benefit from having a large hall and good outdoor facilities.

156. Physical education makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. In dance lessons pupils have the opportunity to appreciate both music and art when they are required to interpret through movement or to reflect on a painting or a piece of music.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

157. Standards in religious education have been maintained since the last inspection and meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.

158. By the age of seven pupils are gaining knowledge about well-known Bible stories and about the main Christian festivals. They understand that the Bible is a special book for the Christian community and have heard about the story of Mary Jones. They understand that it shows how one person's commitment can influence others. A visit to the local church gives them an insight into the significance of church furniture such as the font and the lectern. Pupils are aware that light is an important feature of religious beliefs. They are beginning to understand that there are other religions besides Christianity. Year 1 pupils learn about Diwali and how it is celebrated. By the age of eleven, pupils are aware of the religious practice in some major world religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Islam, and understand that people's beliefs affect the way in which they live. There is a suitable emphasis on pupils reflecting how they would feel in similar circumstances to some of the people in the stories they hear, and reflecting on their own thoughts and beliefs. They extend their knowledge of Christianity and of the teachings and stories of Jesus through study of the four gospels.

159. Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and prepared. Teachers give clear explanations and, in the best lessons, make good use of pictures and artefacts to engage pupils' interest. Their sensitive handling of different religions and practices is reflected in pupils' good attitudes. They listen respectfully to the teacher and when classmates share their own ideas and beliefs. The quality of questions in most lessons successfully focused pupils' minds and enabled them to make observations and add personal contributions, which added to the quality of the lesson.

160. The management of the subject is good and the curriculum is well planned in line with the requirements of the new agreed syllabus. Stories in assembly and personal and social education also contribute to pupils' learning in religious education. Good use is made of visitors who are invited to talk to pupils about different aspects of the religions studied, for example, a Buddhist visitor to Year 6. The quality of written work is variable and is sometimes limited in scope. Opportunities to use religious education lessons to promote independent writing are missed. Information technology is under-used in the teaching and learning of religious education.