

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PAUL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Walkden

LEA area: Salford

Unique reference number: 105945

Headteacher: Mr D. Russell

Reporting inspector: Mr C. D. Taylor  
23004

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 230618

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Crompton Street  
Walkden  
Worsley  
Manchester

Postcode: M30 3JJ

Telephone number: 0161 790 4162

Fax number: 0161 790 4162

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Rev. C. A. Bracegirdle

Date of previous inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23004	C. Taylor	Registered inspector	<p>Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage</p> <p>Provision for pupils with English as an additional language</p> <p>Science</p> <p>History</p> <p>Music</p>	<p>Information about the school</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9039	B. Eyre	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
10120	P. Crookall	Team inspector	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Information and communication technology</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>Physical education</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>
19709	J. Fisher	Team inspector	<p>Provision for pupils with special educational needs</p> <p>English</p> <p>Art and design</p> <p>Design and technology</p>	

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections

Grasshoppers  
1 Anglesey Close  
Chasetown  
Burntwood  
Staffordshire  
WS7 8XA

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

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Paul's Church of England Primary School caters for boys and girls aged three to 11 years. The school is similar in size to most primary schools, with 213 full-time pupils of compulsory school age and 26 children who attend full-time in the nursery. The school serves an area of private and local authority housing near the A6 Manchester Road in Walkden, some four miles west of Manchester. Numbers have remained steady since 1997. Most pupils join the nursery class with levels of attainment typical for their age. Five per cent of pupils - below the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Twelve per cent of pupils - well below the national average - are on the special educational needs register. Four pupils have statements of special educational needs. Most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties or speech or hearing impairments. Only three pupils are from ethnic minorities. All speak English fluently as an additional language, and none is at an early stage of English language acquisition.

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

St Paul's is a very effective school. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour and relationships are very good. They make good progress as they move through the school and standards are above the national average in all subjects by the end of Year 6. Attendance is well above the national average. The school benefits from very good leadership and a good shared commitment by all staff to improve the school further. Although expenditure per pupil is well above the national average, the school provides good value for money.

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

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, and standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils' positive attitudes, supportive relationships and very good behaviour help to create a good atmosphere for learning.
- The curriculum is exceptionally broad, especially for older pupils, and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and reflects the Christian ethos of the school.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good and there is a good partnership with parents.
- The school is very well led by an experienced headteacher.

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

- Work set for higher-attaining pupils is not always sufficiently challenging to allow them to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- The management role of subject co-ordinators is not yet developed well enough in most subjects to raise standards in teaching and learning.
- When teachers mark older pupils' work, they do not give enough written guidance on how the work could be improved.

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

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

Since the previous inspection in 1997, the school has made good progress overall in improving the areas identified in the last inspection report. It has made good progress in ensuring that the National Curriculum programmes of study for music are fully covered throughout the school. It has adopted a planning framework in each subject that clearly identifies knowledge, skills and understanding and builds on these from year to year. It has

improved assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills, especially in English and mathematics, so that their progress can be tracked accurately and the information can be used when planning lessons. In addition, teaching and learning have improved and standards in English and mathematics have risen. Provision for extra-curricular activities has improved and is now very good. Pupils' attitudes have improved from good to very good and their relationships and behaviour have remained very good. Attendance has improved and is well above the national average. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare have improved and the good provision for pupils with special educational needs has been maintained. The school has identified suitable areas for development and has a good shared commitment and a good capacity to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

In English, standards in 2001 were in line with the national average. In mathematics, the school's results were above the national average, and they were well above the national average in science. In science, standards were above the average in schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In mathematics, standards were typical of those in similar schools, while in English they were well below standards in similar schools. Results in 2001 were not as good as in the previous two years, because the year group had a significant proportion of pupils who found learning difficult. Nevertheless, the school achieved its target in English, based on pupils' achievements at the end of Year 2, and exceeded its target in mathematics. Inspection findings show that attainment in the current Year 6 is above the national average in all three subjects. Standards are also above national expectations in all other subjects, except in art and design, where standards are well above national expectations. Attainment at the end of Year 2 was above the national average in reading, in line with the average in mathematics and below average in writing in the national tests in 2001. These results, particularly in writing, reflected the larger number of pupils with learning difficulties in this group. In the current Year 2, standards are above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and are close to those expected nationally in all other subjects, except in art and design and information and communication technology (ICT), where standards are above national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Suitable targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2002 and 2003. To meet these targets, the school has focused its attention on improving pupils' written work and on calculations and problem-solving in mathematics.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to learn and are well motivated. They are enthusiastic and closely involved in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and helpful and behave well in class and around school. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils and with members of staff are very good. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to take initiative and to carry out responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average. Punctuality is good.

## 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.*

Teaching is good, overall, throughout the school. Three quarters of all teaching is good or better, and nearly a third is very good or excellent. The teaching of English, including reading and writing skills, and the teaching of mathematics, including the teaching of numeracy skills across the curriculum, is good in all year groups. Strengths in teaching include detailed subject knowledge, good lesson planning, effective management of pupils and good use of support staff and resources. The school meets the needs of average and lower-attaining pupils well. As a result, pupils make good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Work set for the most able pupils, however, is not always sufficiently challenging to ensure that these pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and praise is often used to encourage pupils. Work is discussed orally, but there are not enough written comments to help pupils, especially older ones, to improve their standards.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum, especially for older pupils, is broader than in most schools. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met, and, in addition, there is a strong emphasis on instrumental music, French lessons in Year 6, water sports activities and residential trips. There is also a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive additional assistance and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good, as is provision for their spiritual, moral, and social development, with clear teaching of right and wrong. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good, with many opportunities for learning about local culture, as well as cultures from around the world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for ensuring children's welfare are good. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is good in English and mathematics and satisfactory elsewhere. Teachers generally use assessment well to ensure that work set is appropriate for pupils of average and below average ability, but do not always make enough use of it to ensure that work for higher-attaining pupils is sufficiently challenging.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school's links with parents are good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory, overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. With the effective support of an experienced deputy headteacher, he ensures that the school is moving forward with clear educational direction. Subject co-ordinators check teachers' planning, but most are not involved sufficiently in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, planning future developments and managing spending in their subject areas. There is a good number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers. The support staff are well trained and give good assistance to pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors carry out all their statutory duties well, with the exception of a few omissions in the annual report. They play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and governors monitor and evaluate the school's performance well and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school supports educational priorities well through its financial planning. Specific grants, including funding for pupils with special educational needs, are used effectively. The school applies the principles of best value well by comparing itself with other schools, consulting widely, and ensuring competition through tendering. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and there are many attractive displays to stimulate pupils' imagination. Resources for teaching and learning are generally good, but more ICT resources are needed in some subjects to assist pupils' learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy school.</li> <li>• They make good progress in their work.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• Children get the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school helps children become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fifth of parents who responded felt they are not kept well enough informed about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The same number felt the school does not work closely enough with parents.</li> <li>• One in seven felt that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings support the parents' very positive views. It is the inspectors' judgement that the school generally keeps parents well informed about their children's progress and works hard to involve parents closely in the education of their children. However, the inspectors agree that an additional parents' meeting in the Spring Term would be very helpful. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, but parents are not always aware of the opportunities available.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Most children have levels of attainment typical for their age when they join the nursery. They make good progress towards the early learning goals during their time in the nursery and reception classes. By the end of the reception year, most pupils achieve the levels expected in physical development and creative development, and their personal and social development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical understanding and knowledge and understanding of the world are above average for their age. Children with special educational needs make good progress in the nursery and reception classes.

2. By the end of Year 2, inspection findings show that the attainment of pupils is above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Attainment is close to the standards expected nationally in all other subjects, except in ICT and in art and design, where standards are above national expectations. Most pupils make good progress, and those who have special educational needs continue to make good progress. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender or by ethnic background.

3. In English, inspection findings indicate that attainment in the current Year 2 is above the national average. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above those expected for their age and most pupils make good progress and develop confidence when speaking. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their language skills. In reading and in writing, standards are above average. Most read simple texts with good understanding and with some expression. In writing, most pupils use simple punctuation correctly and spelling of simple words is largely accurate. Handwriting is neat and letters are usually formed correctly. Additional support for pupils with special educational needs ensures they make good progress.

4. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in Year 2 is above the national average. There is a good focus on basic numeracy skills and mental mathematics. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment by the end of Year 2 is above national expectations. Pupils have a good understanding of living creatures and the properties of different materials and there is a good emphasis on investigative work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in mathematics and science.

5. Pupils' attainment in ICT by the end of Year 2 is above the standard expected nationally. Pupils gain increasing confidence in using the keyboard and the mouse and they are given suitable opportunities to develop their computer skills across a range of subjects.

6. By the end of Year 6, inspection findings show that standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Attainment is above the standards expected nationally in all other subjects, except in art and design, where standards are well above national expectations. Most pupils, including those with English as an additional language, make good progress compared with their prior attainment at the age of seven, and those with special educational needs continue to make good progress because of the additional support they receive. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender or by ethnic background.

7. Inspection findings indicate that, in English, pupils continue to develop their listening and speaking skills well. Pupils read a wide variety of books and make good progress with their reading. Standards in writing are good, as pupils write for a wide range of purposes and for different audiences.

8. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in Year 6 is above what is expected nationally. Pupils benefit from being taught to think in different mathematical ways and to find alternative solutions. In science, standards are above national expectations. Pupils have a good understanding of life processes and physical processes and there is a good emphasis on practical and investigative work.

9. Pupils' attainment in ICT is above the standard expected nationally by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress in developing computing skills and use ICT to assist their learning in a range of other subjects.

10. Realistic targets have been set for English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2002 and 2003. To achieve these targets, the school has focused on improving pupils' written work and an increased emphasis on calculations and problem solving.

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

11. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good. They are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life, attend regularly, relish the opportunities the school provides for outings and extra-curricular activities and have a highly developed respect for the values the school promotes. They form very good relationships with each other and with teachers and other adults. Children in the nursery and reception classes settle very quickly, grow in confidence and make a very good start to their learning. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work because they are fully integrated and supported well.

12. Standards of behaviour are very good. Pupils understand the school rules and find them fair and just. The school has struck the right balance between controlling pupils' behaviour and encouraging them to be responsible for their own attitudes and behaviour. Movement around the school is orderly, and in classrooms where space is limited, pupils are careful not to disturb other children when moving around. There have been no exclusions.

13. Pupil's personal development is good. The school has created an atmosphere where trust and respect is evident at all levels. Pupils are given opportunities to undertake responsibilities, and these are carried out very sensibly. Pupils of all ages assist with routines such as tidying away at the end of lessons. These are conducted sensibly, with classroom monitors having clearly understood roles. The range of musical experiences offered by the school is exceptionally wide and pupils demonstrate their instrumental skills by playing at a variety of musical events in the community. This develops pupils' confidence and helps them to experience the joy of entertaining others.

14. Attendance is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. There is very little lateness in the mornings and lessons usually commence on time. This contributes towards the good progress that pupils make.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is good throughout the school. It was satisfactory or better in the vast majority of lessons, with a very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was good or better in three quarters of the lessons, and very good or better in nearly a third. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when teaching was very good or better in just under a quarter of all lessons. Where teaching is good or better, this is the result of good planning of lessons, effective class management, and good use of support staff and resources. Where teaching is very occasionally unsatisfactory, it is because work lacks challenge and is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs, or because methods used for pupils to record their investigations are inappropriate. As a result, pupils do not make sufficient progress.

16. Teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes, with good or very good teaching in eight out of nine lessons. Teachers and support staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn, and make learning enjoyable. They have high expectations and consistently encourage children to make choices and to take decisions. As a result, pupils make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Teachers assess children's progress regularly and provide suitable tasks in line with their progress. Children are well managed and activities are changed frequently to hold their interest and attention. In a good lesson in the nursery, for example, there was a wide range of outdoor activities, including wheeled vehicles, a sandpit, weighing scales, rubber tyres, a wooden railway and a climbing frame, that successfully maintained children's concentration and kept them busy and happy. As a result, children learn effectively and make good progress.

17. Teaching is good, overall, in Years 1 and 2. It is good in English, science, ICT and art and design, and sound in all other subjects. Teaching is good in all subjects in Years 3 to 6, and is very good in art and design. Good teaching is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress during their time at the school.

18. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good throughout the school. This ensures that pupils are taught appropriate techniques and acquire accurate information. In a very good history lesson in Year 6, for example, the teacher's extensive knowledge of the local area in Victorian times helped pupils to compile a detailed and accurate account of Queen Victoria's visit in 1851. In music, teachers sometimes lack specialised subject knowledge, but compensate for this by making good use of a commercial scheme of work. In a successful music lesson in Year 2, for instance, the teacher made good use of the music scheme when teaching the pupils to clap out a constant beat. She combined this well with the current topic on minibeads by encouraging the children to clap out the rhythms of *caterpillar*, *butterfly* and *spider*. The teaching of basic reading, writing and numeracy skills is taught well across the curriculum throughout the school.

19. Teachers' lesson planning in English and mathematics benefits from following the guidelines in the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. In other subjects, planning generally follows national guidelines or commercial schemes of work and shows a clear progression of knowledge and understanding. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection, when lack of a clear planning framework hindered the logical development of skills and knowledge. Work planned for pupils of average and below average ability usually matches their individual needs well, but assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is not always used effectively to provide work that is more difficult for the most able pupils. This occurred in several English and mathematics lessons. As a result, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, and do not always learn as fast as they could.

20. Teachers employ a wide range of teaching methods. They usually commence lessons by referring back to previous lessons to reinforce pupils' learning. They make the learning objectives clear at the start, and consolidate what pupils have learned at the end. In a well planned English lesson in Year 5, for example, the objectives for the lesson were written up on the blackboard so that pupils were clear what they had to do. At the end of the lesson, the class discussed three letters that had been written on acetate sheets so that they could be projected onto the whiteboard for all to read. This effectively helped to identify the features of a persuasive letter and reinforced the pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of probing questions to encourage pupils to think carefully and make good use of the correct mathematical, musical or scientific terms. In history, teachers make good use of visitors and educational visits to places of historical interest. In science, there is a good emphasis on pupils' own practical and investigative work. In an effective lesson in Year 4, for instance, pupils constructed a variety of different electrical circuits to investigate the effect on the brightness of a bulb.

21. Very good relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils produce a pleasant and hard-working environment. Good classroom management is reflected in pupils' very good behaviour and very positive attitudes to work. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and concentrate well.

22. Teachers use time and resources well. They time activities carefully and generally keep lessons moving at a brisk pace. Consequently, pupils work hard and maintain a steady pace of learning. Teachers and support staff plan lessons and work closely together to provide good assistance to pupils with special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources that help to maintain pupils' interest. In an effective lesson in the reception class, for instance, the teacher made good use of a daily weather chart, a large-text book on minibeasts and colourful models of caterpillars to maintain pupils' attention when discussing the life cycle of butterflies. The many attractive displays in classrooms and corridors are designed to stimulate pupils' thinking and show appreciation for pupils' efforts.

23. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress during lessons. They generally use the results to ensure that work is matched closely to the needs of average and below average pupils and those with special educational needs, but they do not always make sure that the higher-attaining pupils are being challenged sufficiently. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend learning, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and praise is used to encourage and motivate pupils. While work is often discussed verbally with pupils, there are very few written comments, however, that would help pupils, especially the older ones, to improve their work.

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

24. The school provides an exceptionally broad curriculum that is relevant, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Statutory requirements to teach the programmes of study in the national curriculum are fully met. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when the full programmes of study were not being taught in music across the school. The curriculum is now particularly strong in creative arts and sporting activities. All pupils play at least one instrument and many learn to play a second. Water sports activities and residential trips form an integral and valuable part of the curriculum for older pupils. In addition, as part of the Language Colleges' initiative, specialist language teachers from Walkden High School teach French for one hour per week to pupils in Year 6.

25. The school has responded very effectively to the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. In addition to adopting the literacy hour, the school provides additional time for guided reading, which is used well for teaching reading and for assessing pupils' progress. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their literacy skills when writing about investigations in science, composing historical accounts and reporting about visits and fieldtrips. These include writing poetry, drafting letters to parents, and making use of ICT resources to compile newspaper reports and produce information booklets. Data handling skills are used in science and geography to analyse information and to record results in graphical form.

26. Teachers discuss the needs of individual pupils to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs, have equal opportunities to succeed. Girls and boys achieve equally well and the school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The school encourages all pupils to take up the many different opportunities it offers. Girls take part in football training, for instance, and have represented the school. Both girls and boys learn to play a range of musical instruments. However, the school needs to consider further how the disturbance caused to class lessons by groups of pupils leaving for recorder tuition can be reduced.

27. There are sound links with the local community. The school continues to visit special schools and residential homes for the elderly at Christmas time. Inter-school sports competitions take place frequently during the school year and pupils in Year 6 spend a day at Walkden High School before they transfer there in the autumn. Links with Salford College include visits from a drama group who perform plays about bullying and experience in the nursery for NVQ students. The annual visit of a circus brings the temporary attendance at school of the travelling children and a performance by the circus clown.

28. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Weekly practices take place after school in football, netball, athletics and Scottish country dancing. Pupils attend four Saturday athletics meetings and five cross-country meetings each year. In addition, the school takes part in swimming events including the Worsley Swimming Gala. Musical activities include tuition in string, woodwind and brass instruments and public performances at a variety of events.

29. A clear policy for teaching personal, social and health education has recently been implemented throughout the school. This includes links with science and religious education lessons and opportunities for pupils to discuss issues during class discussion times. There is appropriate provision for teaching about the misuse of drugs and sex education is taught in science lessons, supported by a visit from the school nurse. The school catering staff promote a 'Healthy Eating Day' each week, and the 'Crucial Crew' visit the school to draw pupils' attention to 'stranger danger'.

30. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. During the daily acts of worship, opportunities are taken to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and time is set aside for prayer and for quiet reflection. Spiritual development is also encouraged through art and design, music and religious education.

31. The provision for pupils' moral development is also very good. Collective worship adds to pupils' awareness of right and wrong through the telling of stories with strong moral themes. School rules are displayed in many classrooms, along with lists of pupils' weekly responsibilities. Pupils are encouraged to help in fundraising for those less fortunate than themselves through a range of local and national charities such as Christian Aid. Kind deeds



and thoughtful behaviour are rewarded in assemblies and teachers provide good role models and reinforce positive behaviour through praise and encouragement.

32. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Learning together in small groups provides many opportunities for pupils to encourage and help each other. Pupils sit in mixed gender groups during lessons and work together effectively. They participate well, taking turns to speak and listening to others. Residential visits for older pupils and many opportunities to take part in team games ensure that pupils learn to live and work together to the mutual benefit of all.

33. Provision for pupils' cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about their own culture and about cultures in other parts of the world. Pupils visit the Manchester Jewish Museum when studying Jewish culture in religious education. Other religions, including Islam, are studied in religious education, and in Year 3, pupils act out a Hindu wedding ceremony. Chinese visitors from Cheynang Province and Americans studying at a local Bible college are amongst many visitors to the school. E-mail links with a school in Canada have been established following a visit from their headteacher, and lacrosse has been introduced to pupils in Year 6 by visiting American students. The teaching of French to older pupils provides good opportunities for greater insight into a different European culture. History, art and design, and music lessons provide many opportunities for cultural education and pupils benefit from visiting places of historical interest and by participating in events such as the Salford Music Festival.

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

34. The school attaches great importance to providing a safe environment for its pupils and does this well. Risk assessments, including arrangements to ensure safety on outings and visits, are good. The school is well supported by the local education authority, which ensures that the school is kept fully informed when procedures are updated following changes in legislation. The child protection co-ordinator has established secure links with local support agencies. All adults are aware of their responsibility to protect children from harm and are supported by the school nurse. However, they have not yet received training in the most recent directives. First aid and fire prevention arrangements are good, although there is no dedicated space in the school to administer first aid or for pupils to relax if they feel unwell.

35. There are good procedures for the induction of pupils. Before children start at the school, home visits are conducted and the school administrative officer ensures that comprehensive personal data is available, so that pastoral and welfare matters are properly attended to when they arise.

36. Procedures for promoting and improving attendance are good. The school administrator uses a reliable electronic data storage and retrieval system to track individual attendance patterns and alerts colleagues when changes in attendance occur. The educational welfare officer provides swift and effective support to ensure that families are contacted to discuss extended absences. This ensures that small problems are not allowed to escalate. There is a one hundred percent attendance chart outside the school office where the names of pupils with no absences are recorded.

37. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. Parents agree that the school creates a calm and harmonious environment, conducive to good learning. Occasional incidents of bullying are handled well. Parents have confidence that the school supports their children's academic and personal development effectively.

38. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic and personal performance are satisfactory overall. Effective procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils are assessed soon after they enter the reception class to help teachers determine appropriate starting points for teaching new skills. There are detailed assessment procedures for older pupils in English and mathematics, using checklists from the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. In addition to the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils take optional tests in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4, and 5. Results are analysed to identify any gaps in teaching and to reveal any aspect of the curriculum that pupils have not fully understood. Assessment in other subjects is satisfactory, but has not developed sufficiently to identify specific areas where individual pupils are experiencing difficulties. Further refinement is needed in using National Curriculum levels to help determine the standards being reached.

39. Teachers generally use assessments well to ensure that work set is appropriate for pupils of average and below average ability, but do not always make enough use of them to ensure that work for higher-attaining pupils is challenging enough. There are good assessment and record keeping systems that enable the progress of pupils with special educational needs to be monitored regularly. Marking of pupils' work is positive and encouraging, but often does not indicate how pupils can improve their work. As a result, pupils are not always sure how well they are doing or what they need to do to raise their standards.

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

40. The school has an effective relationship with its parents, which has been maintained since the previous inspection. Parents' views are very positive. They agree that their children like the school, are making good progress and are becoming mature and responsible. A number of parents would like more information during the year about the progress their children are making and, in particular, would appreciate an additional parents' meeting during the spring term to discuss children's targets. The inspectors judge that the school generally keeps parents well informed about their children's progress, but agree that an additional parents' meeting in the Spring Term would be very helpful. Parents support the school well and are very effective in raising additional funds to enhance the quality of school life.

41. Annual reports reflect individual pupils' progress well, though more detailed information regarding pupils' achievements and teachers' expectations in specific subjects would be helpful. Reports at the end of Years 2 and 6 also contain national test results. Parents of younger pupils appreciate information regarding the topics to be studied by their children, although this does not extend to suggesting how parents can assist at home by encouraging further study.

42. The school prospectus and the governor's annual report to parents are informative and easy to read, but there are a few items missing from the annual report that are required by law. These include information on the professional development of teachers, the targets for Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics in the national tests, and what the school does to accommodate pupils who may have disabilities. Helpful newsletters to inform parents about routine matters are sent home at regular intervals.

43. Parents who accompany their children to school are always welcome to discuss day-to-day matters with individual teachers. Parents of younger pupils are encouraged to read regularly with their children and a number of homework diaries contain a steady stream of messages between the school and home. Several parents who assist in class strengthen the links between home and school. Their skills are used well in the classroom, especially

with the younger age groups. The Parents' Association works tirelessly to raise funds to enrich the curriculum. For example, it subsidises the costs involved in providing residential visits for pupils in Years 5 and 6. It has also made very generous contributions towards the provision of additional computers and to extend facilities in the playground.

44. The school has well established procedures to ensure that parents of children with special educational needs are consulted and kept well informed, and parents appreciate the support they receive. There are also very good procedures to support parents whose children are entering school for the first time. These open channels of communication ensure that trust and understanding are established quickly and effectively.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

45. The headteacher provides the school with very good leadership. He has nurtured appropriate aims and provides clear educational direction for the school. He has developed good relationships with parents, pupils and staff. He is committed to raising standards in the school and has promoted new developments in teaching and learning to raise the attainment of pupils of different abilities and those with special educational needs. The school benefits from the effective assistance of an experienced deputy headteacher who has given strong support and good leadership when introducing new initiatives.

46. The school has very clear aims and values that are well reflected in its work. The school has a strong Christian ethos and is a friendly and caring community where all are aware of the needs of others. Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is underpinned by the special partnership that exists between the parish church and the school community. The school has high expectations of all pupils and, in striving for academic excellence, provides many first-hand and extra-curricular experiences to support and enrich pupils' lives in school. There is a strong emphasis on maintaining a high quality school environment to create an atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning.

47. The management of the school is satisfactory, overall. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work effectively and identifies areas for improvement. He visits classrooms daily on an informal basis and feeds back suggestions on raising pupils' attainment from more formal observations, some of which form part of the performance management programme that operates successfully in the school. Together with the senior management team, he analyses National Curriculum test results in order to identify and address weaker areas of the curriculum. Subject co-ordinators check teacher's planning in their subject areas, but do not monitor and evaluate pupils' work sufficiently. They do not prepare action plans or co-ordinate spending on their subjects, and, with the exception of the English and mathematics co-ordinators, are not given sufficient opportunities to raise standards by monitoring and evaluating teaching in their subject areas.

48. Good leadership is provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator, who liaises closely with external specialist support agencies. Pupils requiring special levels of support are identified at an early age and are well supported by class teachers, the co-ordinator and support staff. Pupils have clearly identified targets on their individual educational plans. These are reviewed regularly by the special educational needs co-ordinator and are amended to take account of pupils' individual needs.

49. The governors play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school. They have a good working knowledge of the school and a realistic understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept well informed by detailed reports from the headteacher. They provide good support at concerts and sporting events. Several visit school on a regular basis, observe pupils at work and talk to teachers. One governor, for example,

visits classes to talk about schools in Victorian times, while the Chair regularly conducts school assemblies. Committees meet regularly to discuss curricular issues and finances. The governors fulfil most of their statutory duties well, but a few items required by law were omitted from the most recent governors' annual report to parents.

50. Financial planning is effective and supports the school's educational priorities well. The three-year school development plan is clearly set out. It identifies appropriate targets and ensures that resources are directed towards raising pupils' attainment. Appropriate links are made to the annual budget. The personnel, resources and timings are clearly identified, but there are no specific criteria by which the impact of new developments can be evaluated. The school makes appropriate use of resources allocated to support specific groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs. Governors monitor the school's budget on a monthly basis and suitable financial controls are in place. The principles of best value are applied well. The school compares its performance with other schools. It consults widely and seeks competitive tenders to ensure it receives the best value for money. Day-to-day administration is efficient and computers are used effectively for placing orders and for keeping pupils' records.

51. The staff and governors have a good shared commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning and the school has a good capacity to make further improvements. Suitable targets have been set for raising standards in English, mathematics and science in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2002 and 2003.

52. Teachers and support staff are well qualified to meet the needs of the curriculum. They work together well to ensure that lessons run smoothly and pupils receive good support. Subject co-ordinators are well motivated, but most are not involved enough in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, planning future developments and managing spending in their subject areas. Resources for teaching and learning are generally good, but more computer software is needed in subjects such as mathematics and science to assist teaching and learning.

53. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The hall is large enough for most purposes and staggered sittings at lunchtimes ensure that pupils are able to eat in comfort. Some parts of the school were designed as 'open-plan' teaching spaces and, over the years, partitioning has been added to create discrete teaching areas. Consequently, access to some classrooms is only possible by passing through other teaching areas and, in one classroom, the limited amount of usable space restricts movement and opportunities for independent learning. The toilets are barely adequate, however, and the computer suite is difficult to keep cool during periods of high occupancy. Outside, there is a large grassed area and an adequate hard play surface for pupils to use at break times. There is also provision for pupils who may wish to be quiet and reflective at these times. Displays are used very well in classrooms and corridors to create a stimulating learning environment.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should

- (1) Provide suitably challenging work for the most able pupils by:
  - making greater use of assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills;
  - building the results of assessment into teachers' planning.(Paragraphs: 15, 19, 23, 39, 73, 78, 82, 98, 104)
  
- (2) Develop the role of subject co-ordinators in all subjects by:
  - improving their use of development planning;
  - encouraging them to co-ordinate their own budgets;
  - developing monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in their subjects.(Paragraphs: 47, 52, 84, 89, 99, 104, 109, 118)
  
- (3) Mark older pupils' written work more effectively by giving more written guidance on how pupils could improve their work.  
(Paragraphs: 23, 39, 73)

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

- The school should ensure that the governors' annual report to parents includes all the information required by law. (Paragraphs: 42, 49)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	20	9	2	0	0
Percentage	2	29	45	20	4	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 two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	213
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	11	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	10	8	9
	Total	25	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (87)	80 (87)	83 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	24	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (84)	80 (90)	80 (94)
	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	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	14	15	19
	Total	26	28	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (94)	88 (90)	100 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	12
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	28	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (90)	88 (87)	88 (90)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	180
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.2
Average class size	30.4

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	119.5

#### **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	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	41.0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.7

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

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

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	501 328
Total expenditure	480 538
Expenditure per pupil	2 020
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	20 790

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	239
Number of questionnaires returned	171

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	2	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	40	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	41	6	1	3
The teaching is good.	66	30	2	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	38	11	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	28	4	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	36	11	7	2
The school is well led and managed.	70	22	3	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	34	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	40	11	4	11

## **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**

55. The school has continued to provide a very good start to children's education since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is nearly always good or very good. Together with the broad curriculum and the well-equipped classrooms, this ensures that children learn effectively in the Foundation Stage.

56. Most children join the nursery when they are three, and move into the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were 30 children of reception age and 26 children of nursery age, all attending full-time. Most children have a range of skills typical for their age when they join the school. They achieve well and make good progress in both classes. By the time they leave the reception class, most achieve the levels expected in physical development and creative development, and their personal and social development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical understanding and knowledge and understanding of the world are above average for their age.

57. Teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They manage the children very well and provide a wide range of interesting and challenging activities. As a result, the children are happy and enthusiastic, concentrate well and work with interest. They play happily together both indoors and outdoors, co-operate sensibly when sharing equipment, and are well motivated. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good because teachers' expectations are high, lessons have clear learning objectives, and work is well matched to the needs of individual children. Teachers assess children's understanding carefully and provide tasks in line with their progress. All staff have very good relationships with the children and provide them with good role models. Children with special educational needs receive plenty of assistance both from their class teachers and from the nursery nurses and classroom assistants. As a result, they make good progress. Several volunteers provide valuable assistance in class and parents who encourage their children to read at home help to develop their learning.

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

58. Teachers are very effective in developing children's social skills. Children enter the nursery confidently in the mornings and register themselves by placing their name card in a pocket with their picture on. They are quickly occupied by a wide range of 'free-choice' activities, both indoors and outdoors. This builds their confidence to make decisions and helps them organise their own time. In one session, several children chose to play in the home corner, using money for 'shopping'. They developed their social skills by tidying up the 'house' and putting things away. Other children acted out an adventure by chatting confidently as they poured water into containers. "Here are the boats", announced one boy, and added, "Its stopped" as one sank. By the time they join the reception class, children have learned to put their hand up to answer questions and they know how to take turns when sharing resources. In one lesson, reception class children listened carefully as they took turns to describe models of caterpillars and butterflies. Children eat their morning snack sensibly and sit quietly while they drink their milk. They eat their lunch politely and treat staff respectfully. At the end of the day, most put their own coats on unaided. Teachers encourage children to be thoughtful and to look after each other. Consequently, children make good progress in developing social skills, and their level of personal, social and emotional development exceeds what is typical by the end of the reception year.

## Communication, language and literacy

59. Teaching of language and literacy skills is good in both classes. Most children have speech and language skills typical for their age when they join the nursery class. Teachers and nursery nurses constantly talk to children to introduce new words to their vocabulary. They frequently ask open-ended questions in order to develop fluency and confidence in their speech. Children are encouraged to explain the activities in which they are occupied and to discuss the books they have been reading in class. In a nursery lesson, for instance, children discussed a book about learning to swim and were encouraged to describe a variety of articles such as a towel, a swimsuit and a comb, which had been hidden in the *story box*. Teachers make good use of role-play activities to encourage children's language development. In the 'travel agent's' in the nursery, for example, boys talked about their summer holidays, while boys in the reception class used plastic hose pipes outdoors to 'put the fire out'. In the reception class, children discuss the weather every morning, and can identify different weather types, as well as naming the days of the week and the months of the year. As a result of the good teaching, children make rapid progress, and their language development is better than that usually found at the end of the reception year.

60. Children listen to stories enthusiastically, and enjoy looking at books. Children in the nursery class, for example, enjoyed listening to a story about sea creatures. They listened carefully, followed the pictures and the text well and talked enthusiastically about the sea lions and the sharks. Children take reading books home regularly and share the stories with their parents and other adults. Children listen on their own to interactive stories on the computer and enjoy looking at books in the reading corner, holding the books correctly and turning the pages carefully. Children in the reception class are taught the sounds and the names of letters and most can identify the initial sounds of common words. Most pupils recognise a range of simple words that occur frequently and are beginning to combine these together to read simple sentences. Some higher-attaining children can read simple text confidently. Children make good progress and most can read better than is typical for their age.

61. Children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. Nursery children make good attempts at early writing, while children in the reception class can write most letters correctly. Children are taught to recognise the sounds associated with the letters of the alphabet. During a lesson in the reception class, for example, one boy sat at the writing table copying a variety of words beginning with 'c', while a girl coloured in pictures of 'n', began to overwrite the 'n's and then practised writing them freehand. Most children are beginning to write simple words reasonably accurately without assistance and to write their own names unaided. Most can copy short sentences such as *'I got a swing for my birthday'* correctly by the end of the reception year. Overall, children make good progress, and standards of writing are well in line with those expected nationally for children of this age.

## Mathematical development

62. Teaching is good in both classes, and children are given many opportunities to use numbers and to explore shape and size. In the nursery class, very good use was made of numbers on a 'washing line' to recognise numbers from 1 to 9. Children enjoyed counting with the *Counting Snail*, and the teacher never missed an opportunity to count objects such as starfish and sea birds. Nursery children sing a range of counting songs, sort objects into those that are 'too little' or 'too big' to fit onto a toy swing, and use weighing scales to measure objects that are 'lighter' and 'heavier'. Reception age children count up to 20 and back accurately, sort the numbers to 20 into the correct order, and identify numbers 'one more than' and 'one less than'. They throw two large dice, and add up the number of dots correctly. In one lesson, children repeated a three-colour sequence accurately when sticking circles together to create a caterpillar. They recognised which items were 'long' or 'short',

counted accurately in tens up to 60, and identified the number of days in each month correctly. Two boys played a counting game on the computer and identified numbers that were 'more' or 'less' than others. Teachers and classroom assistants help children with special educational needs effectively so they are fully involved and make good progress. By the end of the reception year, most children have mathematical skills better than those expected for their age.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

63. Good teaching in both classes ensures that there are many opportunities for children to learn about the world around them during lessons, outdoor activities and on visits in the local area. In the nursery, for example, children explore the local area, then paint pictures of houses, the church and the allotments, and stick them onto a large map. In the reception class, children used a range of resources to discover facts about caterpillars and butterflies. Some children watched a video sequence showing a caterpillar hatching out of an egg, while others used information books to identify different types of butterflies, or examined model butterflies to learn about antennae and wings. They plant bulbs and watch tadpoles as they grow into frogs. Children examine a range of materials and use magnets to identify objects that are magnetic and those that are not. They observe the local weather each day, and develop their understanding of time by sequencing pictures showing the life-cycle of a butterfly. Children learn to use a computer mouse to click onto the correct pictures on the computer screen. Children make good progress, and their levels of knowledge and understanding are better than those expected by the end of the reception year.

### **Physical development**

64. When children join the nursery, their manipulative skills and co-ordination are usually typical for their age. Teachers provide many opportunities in both classes for children to develop better control and manipulative skills by using scissors, crayons and paintbrushes. They pour water and sand into containers, assemble construction toys, put jigsaws together and learn how to use scissors. More energetic activities often take place outside in the closely supervised play area. Here, children develop better co-ordination and balance on the climbing frame and slide, ride tricycles round the playground, and throw tennis balls to each other on the grass. The children co-operate happily, take turns and share equipment sensibly. They make satisfactory progress due to sound teaching, and their physical development is well in line with what is expected nationally by the end of the reception year.

### **Creative development**

65. Good teaching in both classes ensures that children make sound progress in developing their creative skills. Children have access to a wide variety of paints, paper, card, fabrics and construction materials, and are encouraged to choose their own equipment sensibly. They make handprints and learn how to hold a brush correctly to paint daffodils and houses. They use tissue paper to make flowers to stick onto a collage, and cut out paintings of birds to hang as mobiles from the ceiling. In one lesson, a child with special educational needs pasted pieces of wool into an old egg box to create an attractive bird's nest. During a lesson in the nursery, two boys used construction toys to make a space station, while two girls created a model playground with roundabouts and swings. Children in both classes join together enthusiastically to sing a range of simple songs such as *'Bananas in pyjamas'* and *'We can play on the big bass drum'*. In the nursery, children used 'loud' and 'soft' voices to vary the dynamics while singing *'Bobbie Shaftoe'*. During an effective music lesson in the reception class, children clapped in time to the rhythm of their names, altered the dynamics by clapping 'loud' or 'soft', and played a range of percussion instruments in time to a steady beat. Children enjoy singing nursery rhymes and join in happily with the actions that often

accompany the songs. As a result, children's artistic and musical skills are broadly in line with those expected for their age at the end of the reception year.

## ENGLISH

66. Standards are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is better than at the previous inspection, when standards were similar to the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. It is better than the results of the national tests in 2001 when standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 were in line with the national average, and standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 were above the national average in reading but were just below in writing. The results in 2001, particularly in writing, reflected the large number of pupils with learning difficulties in the Year 2 group. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Standards in English are improving due to better teaching following the adoption of the National Literacy Strategy, an improved curriculum and better use of assessment to monitor pupils' progress.

67. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils listen attentively to stories, plays and biographies, such as 'The Little Box' and are given the opportunity to read to the class and to discuss the feelings evoked. Year 2 pupils, for example, after listening to a book on 'Change', gave very good explanations of how a non-fiction book is organised and the purpose of the contents page, glossary and index. One pupil explained excitedly that "a bee is a flying insect which talks to other bees by dancing". Occasionally, opportunities to use pupils' enthusiasm to develop and extend vocabulary are missed. In a Year 1 lesson, for instance, the teacher's talk was too lengthy, causing the ensuing discussion to be too short to be productive.

68. By the end of Year 6, most pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed and they achieve standards above those expected for their age. Many pupils speak fluently, lucidly and with confidence. The lowest attaining pupils demonstrate immaturity in these skills, but they are able to communicate their ideas satisfactorily. All pupils are given regular opportunities to express themselves fully and to explain their ideas through discussion. Pupils in Year 3, for example, took part in an effective question and answer session about 'time connectives', using words and phrases such as 'after a while', 'eventually', and 'suddenly' correctly. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils worked in pairs to argue the case for, or against, caging birds. Pupils perform publicly in school productions and musical events and these offer valuable opportunities for pupils to use spoken language in more formal settings.

69. Standards in reading have improved since the previous inspection and pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 2, standards are above the national average. Most pupils read expressively and with confidence. Most pupils have developed secure strategies for working out unknown words, and can combine the sounds of individual letters and groups of letters well. Pupils enjoy reading and most can recount in simple terms the content of a passage. Lower-attaining pupils need more support to read unknown words, are more hesitant in selecting the main points of a story and are unsure about the meaning of some words they have read. Strong home-school links and the wide range of reading activities continue to make a positive contribution to standards. The introduction of homework diaries has encouraged pupils and parents to work together to improve standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets.

70. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are above the national average. Most read fluently, expressively and with confidence. The wizardry of 'Harry Potter' and the mysteries of the Roald Dahl adventure books are great favourites, as are books about animals. Higher-attaining pupils infer meaning and predict outcomes from the text, but these more advanced skills are less well used by lower-attaining pupils. Most pupils have developed the ability to

'read ahead' and understand what they are reading about. The two school library areas are attractive and generally well stocked. Most pupils understand the classification system and enter their reading record onto the computer. The range of fiction and non-fiction books is good and has improved, following the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Effective home school links and a range of homework activities make a positive contribution to raising standards. All pupils, including those with English as a second language and those with special educational needs, make good progress.

71. There is an abundance of writing from all subjects of the National Curriculum displayed in the classrooms and corridors. Standards by end of Year 2 are above the national average. There are fewer examples in pupils' books, and, as some are in 'draft' form, the quality, overall, is not as good as the work on display. Pupils work in a range of forms, including stories, diaries, poems, letters, instructions and factual accounts. Year 1 pupils, for example, write short sentences to recount their own experiences. Pupils engage their imaginations as they write poems such as, 'Red is anger, strawberries, a heart and blood'. They make factual books about butterflies, successfully linking their writing and scientific knowledge on how to 'cultivate' butterflies. They write instructions to make gingerbread men and begin to use persuasive techniques when composing a letter to the Mayor of Hamelin. Most pupils make good progress when practising their handwriting skills, but do not always write as neatly when writing in other subjects. There is a systematic approach to spelling. Pupils take spelling books home to prepare for a weekly spelling test, concentrating on particular word patterns such as 'ee', 'ea', 'oa' and 'ow'. Punctuation is taught systematically and sentences are usually punctuated with capital letters and full stops.

72. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards in writing that are above those expected nationally. The basic skills of writing are taught well. There is a clear focus on different types of writing such as fiction, persuasive writing, play scripts and formal letter writing, and pupils examine their relevant characteristics and styles. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were encouraged, very successfully, to write curriculum vitae to present to their future high school teachers. The systematic approach to handwriting continues, and by the time pupils reach Year 6, most pupils write clearly and fluently with good attention to size, proportion and orientation. Attractive displays show a wide range of independent writing, some of which is linked, successfully, with other curriculum areas such as science and history. During their visit to Lledr Hall, pupils in Year 6 wrote letters to their families, and afterwards compiled information booklets, wrote a newspaper report of their stay and composed poems about their surroundings. Spelling is taught systematically throughout the school, using dictionary and thesaurus work to draw pupils' attention to spellings.

73. Teaching of English is good or very good in the majority of lessons and is never less than satisfactory. Lesson objectives are stated clearly at the start of lessons so that pupils are left in no doubt as to what they are to do. As a result, they make good progress. Question and answer sessions and demonstrations by pupils at the end of lessons also focus on what the pupils have learned. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during lessons are good because teachers manage pupils well and provide relevant and interesting experiences for them. Lessons are well planned, teachers' knowledge is good and the effective use of good resources stimulates pupils' interest and enhances their learning. Homework is used effectively and shared with all pupils to extend learning. The pupils' use of individual whiteboards for brainstorming, planning and drafting purposes, helps pupils to write confidently, knowing that mistakes can be erased and rectified quickly and easily. In some lessons, however, the lack of challenging tasks suitable for higher-attaining pupils leads to insufficient progress being made by the most able. Marking of pupils' work is done regularly and conscientiously. It is encouraging, but in some classes it lacks challenges to extend pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the work is appropriately matched to their needs and they receive good support from classroom



assistants.

74. The management and co-ordination of English are good. The co-ordinator evaluates the work of teachers and pupils through the examination of pupils' books, teachers' planning and lesson observation. There is a good focus on developing writing and punctuation skills across the curriculum. Assessments of pupils' work are analysed effectively and the resulting information is used to set targets and to track the progress of individual pupils. Pupils have opportunities to use ICT to support spelling and reading and to word process finished items, but, during the inspection, there was little use of classroom computers or the Internet. Overall, resources are good and are used well, but there is a lack of listening centres for pupils to improve their listening and reading skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. Standards are above those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is better than at the previous inspection, when standards were in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. It is similar to the results of the national tests in 2001 when standards achieved by Year 6 pupils were above the national average and better than the standards achieved by Year 2 in 2001 as there were more pupils with learning difficulties in this year group. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive from classroom assistants.

76. By the end of Year 2, pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum and are developing their mathematical vocabulary well. Pupils add and subtract within ten and count on and back in tens with confidence. They count up to 20 and tell the time accurately by half and quarter hours. They identify regular two and three-dimensional shapes and count the number of corners and faces using the appropriate language. They construct bar charts and sort objects using Venn and Carroll diagrams. Pupils are encouraged to think mathematically and to describe alternate strategies for solving problems. As their attitudes towards the subject and their behaviour in class are good, they work well and are eager to answer questions and to suggest their own solutions. Much of the work is related to topics studied in other curriculum areas. Work on sequencing and ordering, for instance, is related to "All about me and what I do at different times", while the butterfly topic includes work on symmetry. Pupils make good progress, particularly in the development of number skills and the use of key vocabulary.

77. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have a good knowledge of multiplication tables and are making good progress in number work. They order 4 digit numbers accurately, are familiar with different ways of adding large numbers and demonstrate a good understanding of place value. Most pupils work successfully with decimal fractions and understand ratio and proportion. They measure accurately and calculate areas and perimeters of rectangles and triangles. Pupils work well in problem-solving activities and investigations and know the names and properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They enjoy using their white boards to display answers in oral and mental activities and are confident in sharing ideas with peers and reporting back to the class in plenary discussions. They make good progress, overall, with particularly good progress in the older classes. Daily sessions of mental arithmetic are effective in helping pupils to rehearse and apply their knowledge in investigations and other activities. Some statistical calculations, using different kinds of averages, and investigations into probability, however, are underdeveloped. Pupils are familiar with the need to represent information on graphs and diagrams, and use co-ordinates well. When requested, they enjoy working collaboratively and take turns sensibly.

78. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, in Years 1 and 2 and is good for older pupils. Teaching was good or better in half of all lessons and only one was unsatisfactory. All teachers follow the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, greater consistency in the quality of oral and mental mathematics sessions would improve the recall of basic number facts and strategies for calculation. Most lessons have a good pace, and teachers support average and below average pupils effectively with appropriate tasks. Higher-attaining pupils, however, are not always given sufficient opportunities to extend their abilities, and tasks do not always present the extra challenge required. All lessons include discussion sessions at the end to review progress and to reinforce the learning objectives; but in some cases these are too brief. Numeracy skills are used well in other curriculum areas. In addition to analysing data and using graphs in geography and science, pupils measure distances on maps and use scales to translate them into actual distances in the field. In design and technology, pupils used the net of a cuboid to design the decoration of a large storage unit for outdoor equipment.

79. The subject benefits from strong leadership and efficient organisation. The co-ordinator played an important role in introducing the National Numeracy Strategy and was given time to observe teaching to ensure that the structure of planning was appropriate in all classes. All teachers have benefited from the training programme arranged for them and have visited other schools to observe good practice. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and the co-ordinator has a sound overview of progress in the school. Standardised tests are taken each year throughout the school and are analysed by the senior management team. Resources are good, well maintained and continually upgraded to meet the needs of the subject. The school is extending its library of mathematical software for use on the computer network, but the use of ICT to enhance learning was underused by teachers and pupils during the inspection.

## **SCIENCE**

80. Standards are above those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is better than at the previous inspection, when pupils were performing in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. It is similar to the results of the national tests in 2001 when standards achieved by 11-year-olds were well above the national average, and overall standards achieved by seven-year-olds were also above average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the additional help and support they receive.

81. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good throughout the school. There is a good emphasis on practical and investigative work. Older pupils plan their own investigations, predict the outcomes and carry out fair tests to explore their hypotheses. As a result, pupils learn effectively from first-hand experience. In a lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils predicted the brightness of the bulbs in a variety of different circuits and then used circuit diagrams to construct the circuits accurately before determining whether their hypotheses were correct. This developed their investigative skills well and helped to extend their understanding of circuits. Average and higher-attaining pupils found it suitably challenging to write their own explanations of the brightness of the bulbs, but lower-attaining pupils would have found it helpful if they had been given an easier way of recording the results of their investigations. The accurate recording of the results was not helped by most pupils missing part of the lesson to receive recorder lessons from a visiting music teacher.

82. Teaching has several other good features. Lessons are planned carefully, with appropriate learning objectives from a scheme of work based on national guidelines. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, and ensures that pupils develop skills and

knowledge in a logical order as they progress through the school. Teachers encourage pupils to use correct scientific vocabulary. In the Year 4 lesson on circuits, for example, the teacher repeatedly used scientific terms such as 'voltage', 'cells' and 'terminals' so pupils became familiar with them. Teachers make good use of open-ended questions to make pupils think scientifically and to help them explain their ideas. In a Year 2 lesson following a visit to the butterfly house in Moss Bank Park, for example, the teacher made good use of questions that pupils had prepared prior to their visit to ensure that they understood the functions of the 'thorax' and the 'antennae'. On-going assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills enables teachers to be clear about what pupils already know, though this information is not always used well enough to ensure that the work closely matches the needs of both the higher-attaining and lower-attaining pupils. Teachers make good use of a wide range of resources to stimulate pupils' interest. In Year 5, for instance, pupils made good use of poppy and dandelion seeds to investigate the effectiveness of different methods of seed dispersal. Pupils tabulated the results of this investigation well, but generally, they do not make enough use of computers to record the results of their investigations as graphs and charts. In most other classes, pupils do not use CD-ROMs and the Internet sufficiently to assist their scientific learning.

83. Teachers have a good understanding and knowledge of science and this helps them to explain scientific ideas clearly. They manage pupils' behaviour well, and, as a result, pupils concentrate hard, are very keen to answer questions and have very good attitudes towards their work. Carefully mounted displays of pupils' work encourage children to develop their investigations further and show them that their efforts are appreciated. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants, and consequently make good progress. The subject is generally well resourced, though more ICT resources are needed to assist teaching and learning. Good use is made of the local area and of visits to 'hands-on' exhibitions and a local butterfly house.

84. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, but does not evaluate pupils' work from other classes or observe teaching in the subject. He has not been given the authority to use his expertise to co-ordinate planning and budgeting for the subject across the school in order to improve standards further.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

85. Standards are above the level expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and are well above the expected level at the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Good provision for art and design has been maintained since the previous inspection for younger pupils and has been improved for older pupils with the introduction of a regular and systematic study of famous artists and their work. The use of an artist in residence and visits to art museums has further enriched pupils' learning. Art enhances the work of other subject areas and attractive displays provide good stimuli for further learning.

86. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given many opportunities to explore colour, pattern, texture, line and tone, and to combine and organise them for different purposes. They experience a range of media and apply colour effectively in pastels, chalk, paint and crayon. Observational drawing and sketching form the basis of pupils' two-dimensional work throughout the school. Sketchbooks are not used, but pupils' planning on sheets of paper shows their ability to develop their ideas and indicates that pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of application techniques using pencil and pastels. Pupils' still life drawings are of good quality. Pupils in Year 1, for example, draw self-portraits, while those in Year 2 recreate sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh, showing good observational skills. A particular strength in art and design is the work undertaken in textiles and fabrics. Pupils in Year 2

create vivid, eye-catching butterflies using a variety of application techniques such as embroidery and appliqué, while older pupils in Year 5 effectively demonstrate the use of shape and colour in their 'Watery Weaving', to express their ideas of the painting 'Polynesie la Mer' by Henri Matisse.

87. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build successfully on the knowledge and skills acquired earlier. Pupils examine body gestures, movements and facial expressions through examining different artists' work and recreate pictures in a similar style. Pupils in Year 3, for example, sketch still life compositions resembling Cézanne's 'Fruit', while those in Year 5 create attractive arrangements in the style of Peter Blake, using natural materials such as twigs, rocks, stones and bark to achieve contrasts in shape, form and texture. By Year 6, pupils express their own ideas and interpretations with increasing confidence and sophistication. Their high quality sketches of 'Mother and Child' (using a parent as a model), and 'The Girl in the Hat' reveal a perceptive eye for the work and techniques of Picasso. Pupils develop their modelling skills well and use a variety of materials to fashion tiles and pots, and decorate them with vibrant colours. Examples range from the simple plaques fashioned in Year 1, to the use of 'thumb pot' techniques to make Anglo Saxon clay oil lamps in Year 4. Work on textiles develops very well and an impressive range of quilting, smocking, appliqué and 'rag rug' making illustrates the successful combination of these techniques.

88. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan well to ensure pupils experience a wide range of activities. In the best lessons, learning objectives are clear and teachers have high expectations of pupils. Effective use is made of a good range of visual stimuli and teachers demonstrate techniques successfully. Pupils are given the freedom to choose appropriate media for their work and decide which techniques they would like to use. Pupils respond well to the relaxed atmosphere that is created, working well and using the resources with care. All pupils have good attitudes to art and design and display enthusiasm for their lessons. They are attentive and involved, working co-operatively on a range of themes. Relationships between pupils are very good. They appreciate the efforts of other pupils and make positive comments about each other's work. The curriculum is well planned to make good use of a wide range of resources. Non-Western art is represented well, with Aboriginal paintings and Indian Hindu art giving a good insight into different cultures. A particular strength is the way in which other subjects, such as mathematics, literacy and history are linked with art and design. Visits are also used to stimulate creativity. During a visit to the Lowry Centre, for example, pupils in Year 6 not only gain an insight into life in a northern mill town in early twentieth century Britain, but also focus on the sketches and paintings from different periods of Lowry's life.

89. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. There is a clear understanding of what the school does well and where improvements could still be made. There is now a more effective scheme of work, for example, which gives detailed guidance about the knowledge, skills and techniques that pupils need to know. The school recognises, however, that assessment of pupils' art and design skills and monitoring of teaching and learning need further development to enable the co-ordinator to raise standards further. Resources are very good and are used well to extend pupils' experiences. A digital camera is used effectively to record a profile of pupils' achievements. Good use is made of visits and visitors. Local artists hold workshops to demonstrate the skills involved in the creation of cartoon drawings. Visits to art galleries, such as the Lowry Centre, offer a range of stimulating experiences for pupils.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. Standards are in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and are above by the end of Year 6. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

91. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use models, pictures and words to describe their designs. They develop skills in handling paper, card and malleable materials. They learn to cut, shape, join and combine materials to make 'pop up' cards and Easter baskets. They cut out components fairly accurately, with the aid of templates, and join them with split pins, staples, glue and thread. Pupils develop ways to introduce movement, such as simple levers, and use large construction apparatus to make moving vehicles with axles and wheels fixed to a simple chassis. Pupils gain a basic understanding of structures through creating rafts from art straws and paper, and create 'Amazing Monsters' from reclaimed materials. Pupils in Year 2 design and make attractive bags, using materials and cotton embroidery thread. They identify the strengths and weaknesses of their designs and begin to evaluate the finished products by seeing how well they fit the original design. There is less evidence, however, of pupils using computer-generated designs. Design and technology is often linked successfully to other subjects, such as literacy. Pupils in Year 1, for example, used words and phrases making sequential connections, when writing out the instructions for making a cup of tea.

92. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build well on the knowledge and skills already acquired. Pupils used their knowledge of a balanced diet, for example, to investigate the contribution of bread to healthy living. Pupils in Year 3 visited a local supermarket bakery, tasted samples to identify their personal likes and then compiled their own specifications for a new bread product. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated the importance of hygiene in food preparation when assembling a 'Super Sandwich'. Pupils decided what materials they needed and critically assessed their work to see how they could improve the appearance, aroma, texture and taste. Pupils learn about fabric construction, decorating techniques and appliqué and older pupils use advanced joining techniques such as running stitch and backstitch when making slippers. Pupils in Year 5 design and make controllable toys, using switches and motors. Evaluation of the products is a feature of all lessons. A Year 6 pupil, after making an electrical burglar alarm, made the perceptive comment, 'It just needs to be closer to the connection, so any weight will set it off.' Pupils sketch their designs and record evaluations of their work, but there is no use of sketchbooks throughout the school, which would form ongoing records of pupils' work.

93. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory or better. In the better lesson, the learning objectives were shared with the pupils so that they were left in no doubt about the lesson's purpose. Very good organisation and a sense of urgency ensured that the majority of pupils made good progress. In the other lesson, whilst there was an appropriate balance between instruction and pupils' activities, the slower pace resulted in some loss of interest and concentration. Generally, most pupils respond enthusiastically to design and technology tasks and make good progress. They discuss their work with interest and talk about the processes involved in designing and evaluating. They understand about using tools safely and the importance of hygiene when working with food. Overall, less contribution is made to pupils' skills through the regular and frequent use of ICT.

94. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. There is an effective scheme of work that gives detailed guidance about the knowledge, skills and techniques that pupils need to know. There is no formal assessment of pupils' skills, however, and, while there are numerous samples of pupils' work kept for reference, there are no assessed pieces to help teachers judge the standard of pupils' work. This makes it difficult for teachers to know which skills individual pupils need to develop. Overall, resources are good, are used well and are easily

accessible to all pupils. Use of an electrically fired kiln enhances the pupils' work in clay.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

95. Standards are typical of those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and are above national expectations at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were broadly typical at both key stages. Older pupils make good progress because of some very good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.

96. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a good understanding of their local area. They are well motivated and greatly enjoy their field visits to places of interest. They talk confidently about the local neighbourhood and places they have visited. They complete maps of their classroom and the school, and use grids to find the treasure on a map of Treasure Island. Pupils behave well in lessons and make good progress because of their good attitudes to learning. From the local area they progress to studying the British Isles and the continents of the world. They make good use of atlases to locate places, and study the climate and weather in different parts of the world, contrasting and comparing features with their own locality. Their use of atlases and their analysis of the weather and climate provide good links with their mathematical studies.

97. Older pupils develop their knowledge of the local area further, and have produced a questionnaire to assess the reaction of the community to the building of a racecourse nearby. They collaborate well when working in small groups and enjoy discussing together in a constructive way. They show a good understanding of differences in lifestyle in other settlements within their own country and in other countries by comparing life in Naru Moru in Kenya with Walkden. Their knowledge of the British Isles is reinforced by studying the delivery of letters around the country. Pupils make good use of first hand experience to study local features, and their comparison of settlements in Ireland and Yorkshire is well documented. Climatic conditions around the world are studied using the theme of holidays to extract relevant information from brochures, atlases and other sources. They use these resources well and handle them with care. A detailed study of the River Mersey produced information to compare river management with that on the Nile. Older pupils develop an understanding of latitude and longitude and make use of Ordnance Survey map symbols.

98. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good, overall, with some very good teaching of older pupils. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and plan effectively. Too much written work in pupils' exercise books, however, tends to be based on worksheets, and pupils have little opportunity to develop extended writing. In addition, all classes are taught in mixed ability groups, and work set for higher-attaining pupils is often not challenging enough to extend their knowledge and understanding sufficiently. ICT resources are generally under-used in the classroom, although in one lesson, good enquiry skills were taught, using graphs produced from the pupils' own questionnaires on how pupils spend their leisure time. Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and introduce cross-curricular links whenever possible.

99. The management of the subject lacks sufficient direction and is unsatisfactory. Progress is monitored informally and assessment of pupils' skills lacks rigour. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching or pupils' work, and there is no overview of the scheme of work to ensure progression and continuity throughout the school. Resources are generally good and give ample support for teaching and learning. The local environment is

used well and residential visits provide extended opportunities to develop geographical skills.

## **HISTORY**

100. Standards match those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and are above average by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were broadly typical at both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school.

101. Planning for lessons is generally good, and teachers help to develop pupils' literacy skills by encouraging them to research and present information for themselves. In the one lesson observed in Year 6, for example, pupils were encouraged to write a newspaper report of Queen Victoria's visit to Worsley in 1851. Very good use was made of contemporary photographs and documents, and this led to a good level of concentration and some high quality work on the local area in Victorian times. The teacher made sure that pupils understood exactly what they needed to do at the start and this ensured that they worked effectively throughout the lesson.

102. Teachers make effective use of a wide variety of resources. In Year 1, for example, pupils look at a range of kitchen implements to see how objects change over time. They make comparisons between an 'old' cooking range and a 'new' cooker, for example, and place the items in chronological order. In Year 4, pupils examine a variety of artefacts from the Sutton Hoo burial ship to discover what life was like during Anglo-Saxon times. In Year 6, pupils visit Conwy Castle during their residential trip to North Wales, and travel to Worsley to see the buildings that Queen Victoria visited in 1851. Good use of a range of visits and resources enables pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of the past effectively.

103. Pupils in Year 2 use video programmes to find out about Grace Darling, George Stephenson and Neil Armstrong. Older pupils in Year 5 use photographs, maps, recipes and fact sheets when researching topics on Tudor times. In Year 3, pupils use information well to make comparisons between the life of citizens in Ancient Greece and those in Ancient Egypt. Pupils in Year 4 make good use of research from books and articles when exploring life in Britain during Roman times. Good use of photographs and documents encourages pupils to find out for themselves, but pupils generally do not make enough use of photographs and articles they have downloaded from CD-ROMs and the Internet themselves when researching information on their own.

104. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory and in need of further development. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, but she is not allocated time to improve standards by monitoring pupils' work, observing and evaluating the quality of teaching across the school or by planning and co-ordinating spending on the subject. The school has adopted a scheme of work based on national guidance and this ensures that pupils develop historical skills in a logical order. The subject policy, however, needs updating to include guidelines on the assessment of pupils' topic work and how it could be improved further by matching work more closely to the needs of the most able pupils. Resources for the subject are good and the local area is used effectively to provide first-hand learning experiences.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

105. Standards are above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were broadly typical at both key stages.

106. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good use of the computer to write short pieces of work. They practise keyboard skills and are developing co-ordination in moving the cursor on the screen. They have a positive attitude in lessons, work well in pairs, and take turns to operate the computers. They use lower and upper case letters and different fonts and colours to write names and addresses on envelopes. A simple art program is used well to create pictures involving shapes and colours. For example, pupils create pictures of minibeasts relating to the topic on butterflies by incorporating lines and mathematical shapes. The younger pupils, in particular, enjoy the excitement and wonder of the world of technology.

107. Pupils in Year 3 design cereal boxes using 'word art' facilities involving a wide range of fonts, colours and styles. They import 'clip art' graphics to enhance the text, moving and resizing pictures to produce the best layouts. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join in discussions of their work sensibly and are prepared to listen to each other's views. Word processing techniques are used to design party invitations and to print out a 'Prayer to God'. Data collected by using the pupils' own questionnaire is fed into a spreadsheet and represented graphically for interpretation in geography. Pupils in Year 4 make use of the Internet to locate information and to contribute to the school web site. Following an exchange visit by a Canadian headteacher, they also conduct regular correspondence by e-mail with a school in Canada. Older pupils import photographs of the residential trip to Dovedale to prepare a tourist brochure. Pupils in Year 5 use a spreadsheet to record receipts from a 'copper collection' incorporating appropriate formulae in the cells. Pupils in Year 6 use desktop publishing techniques to report football matches, including pictures in their imaginative layouts. Power point presentations are currently being developed to present a report on the residential trip to an audience of parents and governors.

108. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and ranges from satisfactory to very good. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and are continuing their programme of training. They receive good support from the ICT technician. Teachers maintain a good pace in lessons by setting targets for pupils and by the good use of questioning. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons, work in mixed ability pairs and make good progress. Pupils are taught the potential of ICT and are encouraged to use appropriate technical language. Pupils make good progress in ICT because there is an up-to-date policy and good planning for progression and continuity in the development of skills. Planning for the whole school sets out recommended topics for each year group and coverage of the subject is linked to topics in other subject areas. As a result, the teaching of computer skills is integrated effectively into other curriculum areas during class sessions in the computer suite, but greater use could be made of the ICT facilities in the classrooms, where the use of ICT in other subjects such as science is limited.

109. Effective support for teachers has provided a firm foundation on which to develop the school's provision for pupils. The co-ordinator is well qualified, provides good leadership and is well sited to give help and support. Management of the subject is satisfactory, but is in need of further development. Assessment of pupils' skills and recording of their progress are underdeveloped, and opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate teaching in other classes need further attention. Facilities to store pupils' work on disc are available, but there is little recorded at this stage, though plans to store records of pupils' progress and attainment are in hand. ICT resources are good but the air conditioning servicing the



computer suite is in need of attention. Software resources for classroom use in other subjects are somewhat limited but all classes are timetabled to use the computer suite to develop their ICT skills.

## MUSIC

110. Standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and are above national expectations by the end of Year 6. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards of seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds were below national expectations. This improvement is due largely to the introduction of a commercial music scheme that has raised the standard of teaching throughout the school and has ensured that pupils learn musical skills in a logical order. Class teachers now have much more guidance when planning their lessons. As a result, teaching is nearly always at least satisfactory, and is often good.

111. Most class teachers have limited musical expertise, but make good use of the commercial music scheme. As a result, planning has clear learning objectives, and there is a good stress on using correct musical vocabulary. In a Year 6 lesson, for instance, the teacher insisted that pupils used the terms 'rhythm', 'beat', 'chord' and 'melody shape' correctly, though she didn't explain sufficiently what a 'chord' is. Pupils enjoy singing, and happily join in clapping exercises. Pupils in Year 2, for example, made up their own verses in a simple song about minibeasts, and clapped out the rhythm of 'caterpillar', 'butterfly' and 'spider' enthusiastically. Teachers make good use of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils used instruments they had modelled out of 'junk' effectively to compose and perform pieces reflecting the sounds heard in a city at night. Pupils develop their understanding of rhythm patterns well. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils clapped out a rhythm represented by 'duck' characters correctly, and then went on to compose and perform their own rhythmic patterns. Pupils with special educational needs joined in well and made good progress.

112. Pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to a range of music from different parts of the world. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, pupils listened to African tribal music and then attempted, with some success, to copy the 'monkey chant' by 'chattering' rhythmically in three parts. Pupils in Year 1 listened to an interesting selection of music from Ireland, China and South America. Most pupils listened carefully and were able to identify some distinct characteristics of these different musical styles, though the way they were asked to record their impressions was too difficult for many of them. Children listen to a variety of music when entering and leaving school assemblies. The title of the music and the composer are displayed clearly, though opportunities to talk about the different musical styles are often missed. Pupils sing a varied selection of hymns and modern worship songs during collective worship. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically, though opportunities to improve the diction and to vary the dynamics are not always taken during hymn practices.

113. The school has a strong musical tradition and the subject is co-ordinated well by the headteacher. The subject is well resourced and there is a good range of tuned and non-tuned instruments. There is a strong emphasis on instrumental music tuition, and most pupils, including those with special educational needs, play at least one instrument. All older pupils receive recorder tuition from a visiting teacher, and standards are high by the time pupils leave the school. Many pupils have woodwind, brass, violin or guitar lessons from visiting teachers, and pupils perform regularly in assemblies, during concerts and at music festivals. The school is planning to hold weekly rehearsals for its school orchestra / band in the autumn term. Members of the Salford Music Service visit the school regularly, and occasionally give performances and run workshops for pupils. Pupils have also attended a workshop featuring drums and gongs held at the Whitworth Hall. There was no choir at the time of the inspection,

but pupils often perform in concerts and sing carols in the parish church and at the local supermarket and hospital at Christmas time.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

114. Standards are typical of those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and are above national expectations at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were broadly typical at both key stages.

115. In Years 1 and 2, pupils improve the co-ordination and control of their bodies. They develop ball skills and learn to travel, send and receive. Pupils change speed and direction smoothly, working individually and in pairs. They learn to co-ordinate movements by reflecting each other or moving in parallel. Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour is good. They work well individually and in pairs, sharing ideas and taking turns when using equipment. They perform with confidence before their peers, who evaluate their progress and offer support and ideas for improvement.

116. In Years 3 to 6, the curriculum provides a wide range of experiences in gymnastics, dance, athletics, water sports and field sports. There is also a wide range of games opportunities available and many out of school clubs and teams. Pupils enjoy these activities and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. They evaluate each other's skills, join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to other's views. All older pupils learn to swim, and nearly all pupils in Year 6 have achieved the National Curriculum Award. High standards are rewarded with success in inter-school competitions in football, athletics, cross-country and swimming. Visiting students from America provide coaching in lacrosse. The Scottish dancing club meets weekly and performs in assemblies and at summer fairs. There are no exclusions and all teams are as inclusive as possible. Girls are included in football training, for example, and have represented the school in the football team. Pupils learn canoeing, kayaking, windsurfing and sailing at the Salford Quays Watersports Centre during the summer term.

117. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Lesson planning is based effectively on a scheme of work outlining the long-term plans for the whole school and covering all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers share the learning objectives with their pupils and set clear challenges. Pupils are reminded of the need for warming up and cooling down exercises and the need to maintain control and awareness of others during physical activities. Lessons are well structured and the pace is brisk. Teachers develop pupils' decision making and independence as well as promoting partnerships and group work. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and use larger soft balls if appropriate. Races are started by using a clapper for the hearing impaired.

118. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and gives good support and advice to colleagues. Lesson plans are monitored informally, but the co-ordinator does not have any opportunity to improve standards by observing teaching in other classes. Informal assessment and recording procedures are satisfactory but need further development to give more accurate information on pupils' attainment and progress. The school hall and outdoor facilities are satisfactory. Fixed apparatus and other resources are good.