

INSPECTION REPORT

HEALD PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rusholme, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105422

Headteacher: Mrs Ranju Martin

Reporting inspector: Mr Douglas Hayward
21234

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th December 2002

Inspection number: 246487

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Heald Place Rusholme Manchester
Postcode:	M14 7PN
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Sandra Palmer
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Douglas Hayward 21234	Registered inspector	Art and design Special educational needs English as an additional language	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
Mrs Sarah McDermott 9173	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr Martin Mayhew 22197	Team inspector	English Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs Katherine Spencer 30028	Team inspector	Mathematics Music History	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Mrs Gail Robertson 24137	Team inspector	Design and technology Geography	Staffing, accommodation and resources
Mr David Matthews 18505	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Mrs Kathleen McArthur 30935	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Heald Place is a large primary school situated close to Manchester city centre. It serves a multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural community, where there is significant unemployment and social disadvantage. Several factors make Heald Place a very unusual school. For example, last year almost half the pupils left the school or joined it for the first time. This is mainly because there are many families in temporary housing, including a third of the pupils who are refugees, mainly from Somalia. Hardly any have had formal schooling before they join Heald Place. Well over half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, a figure that is much higher than the national average. Over 90 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is far greater than in most schools, and many of them are at an early stage of learning English. The main languages spoken by pupils are Somali, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Arabic, although 22 different languages altogether are spoken by pupils. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs is below the national average.

Currently there are 359 pupils attending school full-time. There are also six children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Children start full-time in the nursery from the age of three, if there are places available. Many have attainment below or well below that expected of children at this age, and many children's language skills are not well developed. Heald Place is one of six schools in the Moss Side and Hulme Excellence in Cities Action Zone, established to improve levels of attendance for primary pupils in an inner city area.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Heald Place is a very welcoming school that works very hard and successfully to live up to its aim of making 'Every child a confident learner'. Pupils do well in this school, which is very highly regarded in the community, not only for helping them to achieve their best, but also for promoting racial and cultural tolerance and understanding. This is a school where everyone feels that they are valued and have an important part to play. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has done a great deal to develop the caring and supportive reputation of the school.
- It has an excellent ethos. It emphasises the importance of caring for each other. It helps pupils to become good learners, to believe in their own ability and to be proud of what they can achieve.
- It makes excellent links with parents. It supports whole families very well and provides them with very good information. Parents feel very welcome and trust the school to do its best for their children.
- It looks after pupils very well. They say, *'It's a safe place. It gives you this thing inside that makes you feel you have no worries.'* There are very good relationships between adults and children, and everyone respects others' feelings and beliefs.
- It provides good teaching. Teachers work well as a team. They respect pupils and are committed to helping them to achieve their best.
- It provides a good range of subjects for pupils to learn about. Exciting visits to places of interest and visitors to the school help to bring learning *'alive'* for pupils.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- Monitoring of lessons by the senior management team and subject co-ordinators to ensure that the standard of teaching reaches a consistently high level.
- The ways in which the school deals with the small number of pupils who do not always behave as well as they should.
- The ways in which the school finds out what pupils can do and sets targets for them to improve.
- The layout of classrooms, to ensure that pupils are not distracted.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1998. It has made good progress since then and has successfully dealt with the key issues in that report, for example raising standards in subjects such as information and communication technology and support for pupils with special educational needs. It was noted in the previous report that the school, *'serves its pupils and community well'* and this is very much the case now. Strengths identified in that inspection are still strengths, for example pupils' attitudes to school. Although national test results have only improved slightly, this is mainly because the school has changed a great deal in four years. For example, there are far more pupils now who are at an early stage of learning English. Many more pupils join and leave the school now and this makes it harder to help them make progress. Despite these difficulties, many pupils do as well as they can and their results, compared with those of pupils in similar schools, are above average in mathematics and science and well above average in English. The school continues to provide good value for money and is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	D	C	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Mathematics	E	D	D	B	
Science	E*	D	D	B	

Although results in mathematics and science at Heald Place may appear low in comparison with those in all schools, many pupils attain high results and the school helps them to make good, and often very good, progress. Many of the pupils who took tests last year had only been at Heald Place for a short time and spoke little or no English when they arrived. The group of eleven-year-old pupils who had joined the school in the nursery or reception classes did very well in tests last year. These results show what a good job the school does to help pupils make progress. Results in national tests for seven-year-olds this year in reading, writing and mathematics were the same as those for most other pupils at that age. There has been a steady improvement in results for infants in the last few years. During the inspection, standards were below average for seven and eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science. In the foundation subjects, standards are as they should be for seven and eleven-year olds in design and technology, art and design, geography, music, physical education and religious education. They are as expected for infants, but lower than expected for junior pupils in history. Standards are lower than expected in information and communication technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very proud of it. Almost all of them join in well, listen carefully to what teachers say and are keen to do well. They say, <i>'We get a good education in this school you know!'</i>
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. Almost all parents think that behaviour is good. Pupils are very welcoming and polite to visitors. A small number of pupils do not always meet the school's high expectations of good behaviour.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work very well together and respect each other's cultures. They say, <i>'Everyone is different and that means we've got more to talk about'</i> . They say that there is no racism. They greatly enjoy the opportunities that the school provides for them to take responsibility, for example on the school council and as lunchtime monitors.
Attendance	Below that of most other primary schools. Many pupils take extended holidays during term time.

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.

During the inspection, 75 lessons were observed. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all except three lessons, when teachers' subject knowledge was weak and there was a lack of challenge to pupils' work. Teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons is good. It helps pupils to make good progress and has a positive impact on their standards. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Teachers are very committed to the aims of the school. Pupils say, *'Teachers are respectful. If you don't understand your work, they come back to you to help you get it'*. There is a strong team spirit and teachers provide each other with lots of support. Talented classroom assistants provide pupils with lots of support, including those who speak English as an additional language. Teaching was good in about six out of every ten lessons and very good in about a tenth of lessons. In good and very good lessons, teaching is lively and pupils want to learn. Teachers work hard to make sure that all pupils join in their lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school rightly emphasises the importance of English, mathematics and science. It is beginning to make good use of computers to help pupils learn. There are very good links between the school and the community that help pupils to learn.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Work is carefully planned to match pupils' needs in lessons. Their learning targets have been recently reviewed to make sure that they make progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall. Pupils speak a wide range of languages and the school identifies them quickly to make sure that they receive good support from trained staff, including bilingual assistants who speak pupils' home languages and support them well.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school develops high levels of tolerance, respect and understanding. Everyone's talents and contributions are valued. Pupils say, <i>'There are lots of kind people. They'll help you to settle in quickly'</i> . The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn about the wider world. Visitors to the school and trips to places of interest help to promote pupils' social and cultural development.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school provides a very safe and caring place in which to learn. It is very successful in ensuring that there is no bullying or racial intolerance. <i>'The teachers don't allow it'</i> , say the pupils. The school has done everything it can to improve pupils' attendance.
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The school is well aware of the important role that parents play in their children's education. It genuinely welcomes them into school and listens to what they say. Parents think that the school is special, that it does a very good job and they know that their children are safe and well cared for. The school sends out lots of excellent information, although pupils' annual reports do not give a clear enough message about their progress during the year.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. She is very highly regarded by pupils, parents, staff, governors and the community. She and the recently appointed deputy headteacher make a strong team and have a clear idea of how to improve the school still further. There is not enough monitoring of teaching to make sure that pupils always learn as well as they could.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very knowledgeable about what the school does well and where it could do better. They are very supportive and strongly believe in the important part that the school plays in the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school is clear about the difference it makes to pupils' progress. It identifies appropriate targets for improvement and evaluates the outcomes of its actions.
The strategic use of resources	It uses its budget well to provide a good standard of education.

Resources are at least satisfactory for all subjects. Some classrooms are shared by two classes. Although most pupils work quietly, there is often a lot of 'background noise', which makes concentration difficult at times.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Seventy-three parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector, which is a high proportion. One hundred and seventy six (50 per cent) returned their questionnaires.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They say that their children like school, that teaching is good, that children make good progress and that the school has high expectations. • They say that the school does a good job of taking account of the many different cultures of the pupils, and that pupils get on well. • They feel that the school is well managed and led, that it works closely with parents and that it listens to them if they have a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few would like to see a wider range of activities outside lessons. • A few are not happy with the amount of homework that is set.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. In their opinion, the school provides a very wide range of activities for pupils to enjoy, and lots of opportunities for visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. Parents were divided about whether they wanted their children to have more or less homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The school's special circumstances

1. The school is subject to special circumstances that have an impact on its results in national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds and on the progress that pupils make. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language and of those who are refugees and asylum seekers is much higher than the national average. Added to this is the mobility rate of pupils that move into and out of the school each year, which can affect their progress. Last year the mobility figure stood at 54 per cent.
2. The mobility rate at Heald Place, the proportion speaking English as an additional language and the number of families claiming asylum status have increased since the last inspection. Manchester is now the most sought after destination in Britain for Somali refugees and Heald Place has the highest proportion amongst primary schools in Manchester. This means that families that may be moved to other areas of the city often request that their children attend Heald Place because of the school's reputation as a caring and supportive school.
3. A significant number of Somali pupils have seen and experienced violence. A few have experienced life as child soldiers before moving to England. Some arrive with only one parent, the other one remaining in Somalia. Occasionally they arrive alone to be cared for by relatives. The long-term effect of all this is that the experience of trauma results in a large number of adults with mental illness. Local authority agencies, aware of the impact on children, have set up many initiatives in primary schools to deal specifically with the after effects of trauma, including the provision for art therapy.
4. As well as arriving with little or no knowledge of English, many pupils have to adapt to formal education for the first time. Some of the older pupils have significant socialisation problems and this is occasionally apparent in aggressive and unsociable behaviour. Another significant factor in the school's attempt to educate pupils is the high rate of absenteeism. This is mainly because of extended holidays during term time and a few parents' lack of commitment to the worth of full-time education.

Children in the Foundation Stage

5. Children normally enter the nursery from the age of three, depending on the places available. At the end of the nursery year they transfer into one of two small reception classes, although currently, because of staff illness, there is only one. Early assessments show their attainment to be below, and sometimes well below, the level expected at this age. Their attainment on entry often depends on the status of the family.
6. For example, some children belong to families that are well established in the area, irrespective of their ethnic origin, and their knowledge of English has developed and some have experienced pre-school provision. Others who have been in England for only a very short time usually have no experience of formal education and their understanding of English is extremely limited. Not all the children who join the nursery or reception classes do so at the start of the school year. There is frequently

a steady 'trickle' of children joining at different times. It is difficult, therefore, to state categorically the proportion of children whose attainment is slightly or significantly below expected levels at the start of the reception year

7. Nevertheless, the impact of the school's provision is significant. By the time children move into Year 1 most will have attained the Early Learning Goals¹ in all areas, although the development of literacy skills remains the weakest area for most. Considering the low attainment of many when they enter the Foundation Stage, their progress is at least good and for those with very limited skills when they arrive, progress is often very good.

The infant classes (Years 1 and 2)

8. The results of the 2002 tests and assessments for seven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2² was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, and very low in science. In comparison with those in similar schools, results at Heald Place were average in reading, writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 was above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics.
9. It appears from data that the progress that children make in the Foundation Stage is not maintained in Years 1 and 2. However, it should be remembered that many pupils will move in and out of the infant classes and that many of the pupils who take the tests for seven-year-olds are not necessarily those who attained the Early Learning Goals. Many of the pupils attaining above average results are those who started school in the nursery or reception classes, and who have made good progress. The national percentage figures of pupils attaining Level 2 do not fully reflect their progress.
10. For example, of the 54 pupils who took the tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, 14 arrived during Year 2 speaking languages ranging from Wolof and Ndebele for those arriving from Africa, to Hindi and Urdu for those coming from other countries. Nine pupils arriving in Year 2 did not take the tests because of their limited understanding of English.
11. **Thirty-one pupils who took the tests in 2002 started Heald Place in the nursery or reception classes. Of those, 94 per cent attained Level 2 or higher in reading, 90 per cent attained Level 2 or higher in writing and 97 per cent attained Level 2 or better in mathematics. In national terms, the percentage of those pupils attaining Level 2 or higher is above average in reading and mathematics (B) and average in writing (C). The percentage attaining the higher Level 3 was above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Therefore, it can be confirmed that the good progress that pupils make in the Foundation Stage is maintained in Years 1 and 2.**
12. During the inspection, from the evidence gained in lessons, from talking with pupils and from a scrutiny of their books, standards for pupils in Year 2 were judged to be below average in English, mathematics and science. These standards are slightly higher than in last year's tests for seven-year-olds and reflect the gradual

¹ Early Learning Goals – these are targets for children by the end of the reception year. They refer to personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development.

² Levels- by the end of Year 2 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Those who attain Level 3 are, therefore, attaining above nationally expected levels. By the end of Year 6 pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. Those who attain Level 5 are, therefore attaining above nationally expected levels.

improvement in standards in the core subjects. In the foundation subjects, standards were lower than expected in information and communication technology, although the school has recently opened a new computer suite and there is a clear improvement in standards. Standards were as expected in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.

The junior classes (Years 3 to 6)

13. The results of the 2002 tests for eleven-year-olds showed that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 was below average in English and mathematics and average in science. This was a slight improvement on results in English in 2001. The percentage attaining Level 5 was average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Compared with those in similar schools, results at Heald Place were well above average in English (A) and above average (B) in mathematics and science.
14. **Once again, these results do not tell the whole story.** Of the 35 pupils in Year 6 who took the 2002 tests for eleven-year-olds, 17 (49 per cent) joined Heald Place in the nursery or reception class. Analysing the results for those pupils enables us to judge how effective the school has been in 'adding value' to their progress. Of the 17 pupils, six spoke English as a first language, two spoke Somali, three spoke Urdu, five spoke Bengali and one spoke Arabic. The percentage of those pupils attaining Level 4 was above average in English and mathematics (B) and very high in science (A*). The percentage reaching Level 5 was average in mathematics and science and well above average in English.
15. There has been a gradual trend of improvement in the school's results over the last four years that has been broadly in line with the national trend, as can be seen from the table below.

Test results for eleven-year-olds

	English	Mathematics	Science
Year	% at Level 4 or higher		
2000	67%	50%	47%
2001	63%	70%	73%
2002	72%	72%	91%

On a local level, the school's results this year were significantly the best in the group of schools within the same Education Action Zone³.

16. During the inspection, standards for pupils currently in Year 6 were judged to be below average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As with infant pupils, the difference between these judgements and the most recent test results is due to a gradually improving pattern of pupil attainment in the core subjects. In the foundation subjects and based on a scrutiny of work, observations of lessons and discussions with pupils, standards were judged to be below average in information and communication technology and history. Standards were average in art and design, design and technology, geography, music, physical education and religious education.

³ Education Action Zone – the school is part of the Moss Side and Hulme mini Education Action Zone, comprising six local schools. As well as offering mutual support and opportunities for training, each school is funded to appoint a Learning Mentor who will form an effective link between the school and home in an attempt to improve attendance.

Across the school

17. **There is strong evidence to show that the longer pupils spend at Heald Place the better they perform in national tests. Although attainment may be low compared with national figures, pupils' achievement is often high. That is, they do the best they can and reach the highest levels that they are capable of.**
The school can show that girls consistently outperform boys in tests, but it does not use the comprehensive data it collects to compare how different ethnic groups perform. Nevertheless, the school has built up a strong reputation for academic progress. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were very pleased with the progress their children made. Their questionnaires showed that 99 per cent of them supported this view.
18. What is clear is that pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting supported this view. The school is both proactive and reactive in its approach to pupils with English as an additional language. It is quick to act when pupils whose first language is not English enter school, carrying out an immediate assessment of their language needs and recording their stage of language acquisition. Sometimes the school uses bilingual assistants effectively to ascertain the pupils' language development. Occasionally it employs the services of external agencies where the pupils' spoken language is not known by the school. All these first steps ensure as smooth a transition to school as possible.
19. To its credit, the school ensures that pupils with English as an additional language are not incorrectly identified as having special educational needs. There are, indeed, occasions when the school uses assessments in pupils' first language to confirm that they have special educational needs, as well as require support for language acquisition. Within classes, pupils receive good support from teachers and bilingual assistants. Their needs can often be similar to those of pupils identified as requiring support for reading or writing. That is, they may require easy stages to their work to build up a knowledge of words that they recognise by sight, and to develop their understanding of letter sounds. For example, pupils in Year 2 are developing well their understanding of letter sounds and how groups of letters make up words, even though the spelling might not be absolutely correct. For example, '*l yus scissors cefley*' (I use scissors carefully) and, '*miy clothes har clen*' (my clothes are clean).
20. In lesson introductions, bilingual assistants often provide good support. It is at its best when they are actively engaged in using a combination of the pupils' first language and English translations. Similarly, the use of additional teachers to support pupils is best when they focus on the needs of small groups of pupils, either supporting them in class or withdrawing them for short periods of time, rather than sharing the teaching during a lesson introduction. The problems for pupils speaking a language other than English are not only those of acquiring basic literacy skills. Pupils often find it difficult to develop their subject-specific vocabulary; that is, the language of mathematics or science. The school is aware of this and works hard to develop technical vocabulary, for example in mathematics and science.
21. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Recent improvements introduced by the co-ordinator for special educational needs have helped to ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Revised Code for Special Educational Needs. Pupils' targets in their individual education plans are now shared with them so that pupils themselves can be involved in assessing their own progress. Targets are well focused and include literacy and

numeracy activities. Pupils' individual education plans have recently been altered and improved by the co-ordinator to ensure parental participation at all stages.

22. Some pupils are correctly identified with challenging behaviour and this is occasionally apparent in their responses in lessons. Teachers are very supportive and work hard to include these pupils in all activities, although they make their expectations of good behaviour clear, and will appropriately exclude pupils from activities which might pose a safety risk to themselves or others. The school has an established behaviour policy, which includes rewards and sanctions, but this is not always appropriately applied and can cause confusion for teachers and pupils. For example, the system of withdrawing pupils to another class is usually applied as a 'final measure'. Although this is a valid course of action its success is variable. On some occasions during the inspection 'withdrawn' pupils were unclear about what they had to do in another class and some teachers were unprepared for their arrival. The school has not yet adopted a policy of pupils themselves playing some part in deciding when they feel that 'time out' would be an appropriate option. The school is due to review its policy shortly.
23. Classroom staff play an important part in supporting pupils. When they are most effective they constantly interact with pupils to find out whether they understand the information they are receiving. Currently, however, they do not keep any on-going written record of whether the pupils are meeting their targets in their individual education plans, for example assessing the length of time that they can concentrate or their willingness to answer questions. The lack of shared written information is a missed opportunity to add to the information the school already keeps to monitor pupils' progress and to update their individual education plans.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

24. Pupils have maintained the very good attitudes to school and their learning that they had at the time of the last inspection. They arrive eagerly in the morning and look forward to their day in school, because the staff are so welcoming and the care for the pupils is heartfelt. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the activities and outings that they take part in. During a lunchtime club, pupils thoroughly enjoyed cooking chocolate chip cookies, and pupils in Year 6 spoke excitedly about their forthcoming residential trip to the Lake District. In lessons, pupils are eager to learn and respond well to interesting teaching. For example, in a good geography lesson on water treatment, the pupils were fascinated to watch an experiment when dirty water was cleaned by passing it through fine sand. Because they were interested, they learned very well.
25. The behaviour of pupils is good, which is a little less strong than at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils are very well behaved and make the most of their learning time. During the inspection the attitudes and behaviour of pupils in the majority of lessons were judged to be good or very good. A few pupils find it difficult to behave sensibly and draw attention to themselves. Often these are boys who are not confident with the English language or who take advantage of teachers who do not have effective systems or expertise to deal with their undermining and challenging behaviour. There were two fixed-term exclusions last year, which is a substantial reduction from the ten recorded at the time of the last inspection. This reduction is all the more significant when considering that over the past few years the school has seen an increase in the number of pupils entering the school with traumatised and disrupted lives. This has an inevitable impact on those pupils' ability to conform to school and class rules, despite the teachers' consistently high expectations.

26. Pupils are lively and make the most of their break times out in the playground. Inappropriate behaviour has been much reduced because there is an interesting range of organised sports and activities to burn off excess energy. In school, the pupils come in and out of assemblies in a very orderly fashion. They are not over regimented, so they are learning effectively that it is their choice to behave and that they must take responsibility for their silly or harmful actions.
27. The personal development of the pupils still remains very good. They enjoy taking on responsibilities around the school. In Year 6 they are proud of their positions as play zone leaders and are very sensible in organising the younger pupils to play hockey and football, or to skip. The members of the school council are mature and manage their own budget sensibly. During the inspection they discussed the logistics and financial implications of setting up an after-school art club. In the classroom some pupils are starting to take the initiative for improving their own learning. However, there are still many pupils who wait to be told what to do next, rather than checking or perfecting work they have already done.
28. Relationships in the school are impressive. Pupils come from a vast range of backgrounds, faiths and languages, yet they all get on extremely well. They relish mixing with peers from different creeds and cultures and see variety as a positive advantage. One older pupil said, *'Everyone is different, so there are more things to learn about'*. Although these pupils are aware of racism outside school, they say they have never experienced racial bullying or harassment in the school. Newcomers to this school, or even to formal education for the first time in their life, are soon confidently coping with the school day and their learning because they are given such a warm welcome. Such racial and religious harmony leads to very good respect for feelings, values and beliefs. Pupils are also learning to look beyond the material and obvious. In a very good lesson on personal and social education in Year 4, the pupils could close their eyes and imaginatively reflect on what they would hear, see and smell as they walked through a field of tall, waving grass. This growing ability to appreciate intangible things is bringing an added dimension to their lives.
29. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. This was a key issue at the last inspection when levels were as low as 87 per cent with unauthorised absence at a very high 1.6 per cent. Although the rate of attendance was still very low compared with that in other primary schools in the last full year, figures this autumn show a significant improvement. To the school's credit, the levels of unauthorised absence are in line with the national average, because parents are consistently reminded to let the school know the reason why their child is missing school.
30. High levels of absence are mainly due to long holidays to the families' country of origin. During the inspection week a substantial number of pupils were absent to celebrate the end of Ramadan and to attend Eid parties. The school is sympathetic towards absence because of religious observance or family links abroad. However, time away from school, particularly a lengthy one, not only has a seriously detrimental effect on attainment and progress for the pupils, but also is disruptive for the teachers and other pupils on the pupils' return. For example, in an infant mathematics lesson, pupils who had missed a vital introduction to a new topic because of their previous day's absence, found it very difficult to keep up with their peers.

31. The majority of pupils arrive on time in the morning, but there is a significant stream of latecomers. Late pupils frequently interrupt the time arranged at the beginning of the day to establish a calm learning atmosphere and to share news.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

32. During the inspection, 75 lessons were observed. All but three of them were at least satisfactory. In those lessons there was a lack of challenge to pupils' work and teachers' subject knowledge was not secure. In 73 lessons (96 per cent) teaching was at least satisfactory. In 43 lessons (57 per cent) it was at least good and in eight lessons (11 per cent) it was very good. These proportions are remarkably similar to those seen during the previous inspection, when teaching was at least good in 55 per cent of lessons and very good in 13 per cent. Ninety-four per cent of parents in their pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that teaching is good. At the parents' meeting they said how committed the teachers are to the school's ethos and how easily accessible they are if parents wish to see them at short notice.
33. Although comparisons can be drawn between the quality of teaching in the previous and present inspections, there are significant differences in the school now. There have been major staff changes as many teachers have moved on to promotion. On the current staff of twelve class teachers there is one newly qualified teacher and three who have taught for two years or less. But the major difference is in the ethnic make up of the pupils attending and the increased number of them who speak English as an additional language and those who join the school as refugees, with all the consequent problems of trauma, family break up and challenging behaviour.
34. Despite these difficulties, teachers are very hardworking and committed to including all pupils in all activities and work very well as a team. These qualities were also noted in the previous inspection. The proportion of very good and effective teaching gradually increased as the current inspection went on and was observed throughout the school. This is especially notable considering that because of staff illness during the inspection, two teachers were teaching classes for which they had very limited responsibility previously. Those teachers responded very well to the challenge. In the previous inspection, teaching strengths such as good planning and high expectations were highlighted. Teachers still have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the work they can do, and recently introduced improvements to planning documents have been a major improvement. Weaknesses noted in the previous inspection have been addressed, for example improved teaching of and support for pupils with special educational needs.
35. Teachers' planning has improved considerably in a short time. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has, in her action plan, correctly focused on improving teaching and learning. This is in order to produce consistency in planning throughout the school, leading to clearer lesson objectives that are made explicit and shared with pupils. In fact, many of the proposed improvements contained in the action plan are already evident in lessons, for example improved planning of work to take into account the full range of pupils' abilities and how to use support staff most effectively in lessons. During the inspection, teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons was good overall and reflects the benefit that teachers find in tightly planned national initiatives.
36. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. This is a school where staff know pupils extremely well and offer them considerable support. Their bright and enthusiastic approach is understood and appreciated by pupils. Teachers use praise very well to reward them for correct answers, for effort and for 'having a go'.

Throughout the school there is a definite climate of acceptance of all pupils' answers, without pupils worrying whether their answers are 'right' or 'wrong'. Comments such as, *'Don't worry about the spellings at the moment'*, help to reinforce the idea quite rightly that getting pupils to contribute was more important than accuracy at that time. Teachers use praise very well to lift pupils' confidence and to raise their self-esteem; for example, in a physical education lesson, *'I really like the way he's doing those curls! Excellent!'* and in a numeracy lesson, *'You're a star! You're doing really well!'*

37. In satisfactory and good lessons there are strengths and areas for development. Good teaching is usually 'sharper' than satisfactory teaching and involves pupils to a greater extent. Clearer opportunities to assess how pupils are learning often differentiate good from satisfactory teaching and usually involve more focused questioning by teachers that enable them to carry out their 'on going' assessments. In good and very good lessons teachers make the intended learning objectives clear, often by writing them on the board and sharing them with pupils. That is, the teacher explains to the pupils what it is they are going to learn. In the best lessons teachers refer to the intended learning objectives to make clear to pupils whether they have achieved them. Questioning enables teachers to find out how much pupils have learned from previous lessons, to recap on previous lessons and to remind pupils of specific information.
38. Teachers' questions such as, *'Who can tell me?'* and, *'Are you sure?'* or, *'What do you think?'* to individual pupils and the class as a whole help to establish how well pupils have learned. For example, in a very good literacy lesson, the teacher's questioning about characters and settings in books they had read this term revealed that pupils had remembered a great deal and were well prepared to start writing their own story openings using some of the ideas they had learned. In a very good numeracy lesson the teacher's probing questions about how pupils had worked out answers to problems in their heads enabled her to find out a great deal about their understanding and their methods. For example, *'I doubled three and three to make six and then I added on two more'*. There is an agreed and effective school 'colour' system that enables pupils to answer questions successfully and allows teachers to work out whether pupils understand, without putting them under too much pressure. If an imaginary 'red light' is in place the pupil is not confident to answer. If an 'amber light' is indicated, the pupil will try to answer but is not absolutely sure if he is correct. A 'green light' lets the teacher know that the pupil is sure he is right and is confident to answer.
39. In good and very good lessons teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well, so that even if a pupil shows challenging behaviour it is dealt with quietly and effectively by the teacher. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and in all lessons there is a clear emphasis on a positive approach to pupils behaving well, rather than pointing out what they might not be doing well. For example, in a very good physical education lesson the teacher continually praised good behaviour, such as saying, *'I like the way that you are sitting'*. In a good science lesson she made her expectations clear by telling pupils, *'I like the way that you are putting up your hands to answer questions'*.
40. The main differences between good and very good lessons are that very good lessons have extra pace that retains pupils' interest and enthusiasm. There are often opportunities for pupils to be practically involved in lessons and there is very good use of precise explanations that makes tasks absolutely clear to pupils so that they can get on with their work quickly. Occasionally during the inspection pupils' learning was sound, but not good, despite the teaching being good. This was mainly because in some lessons pupils lacked the ability to express themselves in correct subject

vocabulary. There were also some occasions when working noise levels in shared classrooms meant that teachers' explanations were not always audible. This affected some pupils, and especially those with English as an additional language, who rely on clarity and audibility of speech to understand. In one or two lessons early in the inspection, the after effects of Eid celebrations could be seen in high levels of fatigue amongst pupils who, despite the teachers' best efforts, could not concentrate and did not fully engage in the lesson.

41. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language is good and helps pupils to make good progress (**see paragraphs 18 – 20**). Work is usually planned by teachers to take pupils' differing ability into account and it is planned separately for different 'tables'. Often this includes an added challenge for more able pupils, who often have to complete an appropriate 'extension activity'. In lessons, teaching and bilingual support assistants are generally deployed effectively to provide good help for pupils. When they are most effective they play an active part in lesson introductions, rather than sitting passively. Although they record pupils' responses to the learning objectives and whether they achieve them, they do not record the progress that pupils make towards achieving the targets in their individual education plans, and miss good opportunities to add information to reviews of pupils' plans.

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

42. The school provides its pupils with a rich curriculum. It meets the requirements of the Foundation Stage, the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when it did not focus well enough on information and communication technology. There is a new computer room where good teaching is beginning to help the school to drive up standards in this subject, though the school still lacks some resources to help it to teach what it plans for pupils in Year 6. The school's arrangements for teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy are good and help pupils to achieve well in English and mathematics in relation to their prior attainment.
43. Pupils enjoy school because teachers plan a wide variety of interesting activities that are meaningful to them. Many of these are outside normal lessons and they are particularly relevant to these pupils who come from such a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The school is good at fully including pupils whose parents are refugees or asylum seekers. For example, increasing numbers of Somali pupils are helped by attending a supplementary school at the end of the school day and at weekends. Here learning is fun and often involves parents.
44. The large number of pupils who are learning English as a new language are well supported in lessons and this enables them to feel secure and to make good progress in their learning. However, the school does not build systematically on this good progress with enough well-planned opportunities for these pupils to share in speaking and listening activities. Where opportunities to speak and listen are provided, they are sometimes inhibited by background noise from another class sharing the same room. Here pupils and teachers cannot always hear one another well enough to develop speaking and listening skills sufficiently.
45. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress as a result. Pupils' access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is good. This is because the school cares about all of its pupils and ensures that this

concern is reflected in what it provides for them. All pupils feel secure and so they benefit from the curriculum that the school provides.

46. Children who are under five receive a good, well-balanced and relevant curriculum for their age and needs. This helps them to make good progress in the different areas of their learning. The school has recently taken sound steps to improve the way that these children learn through well-planned opportunities to play in a purposeful way that develops their understanding and skills. It has yet to develop fully the outside facilities for these children so that their learning improves further. Not all staff make good use of the 'stepping stones' national guidance to support their plans for children to learn in a progressive and structured way in their early school years and so enrich their learning.
47. The school caters well for the personal, social and health education of pupils throughout the school. It sets time aside for them to talk about social issues. These focus well on ensuring that pupils are capable of making sound decisions. For example, in lessons about drugs the pupils consider which people might be safe to trust and which might not. There are effective plans for sex education. These good arrangements contribute well to the pupils' very good social development. Pupils in Year 5 learn about first aid, water safety and fire safety and those in Year 6 visit a local hospital as part of their health education programme.
48. There are significant factors that help to make the school's curriculum vibrant for its pupils. For example, there are very good enrichment activities outside lessons. There are only limited opportunities for clubs at the end of the school day, but the school more than compensates for this in other ways. For example, there are various lunchtime activities, some of which are well run by teaching support staff. These include cooking and good use of the computers. Visits to a very wide range of places of interest help to make subjects more interesting. These include parks, museums and places of historical, artistic and scientific interest. Residential visits in Year 6 extend pupils' experiences well beyond the confines of the school. Teachers are quick to use topical issues to extend pupils' understanding. For instance, they focused pupils' attention well on the Manchester earthquake to help them to grasp what it must be like for earthquake victims in other locations across the world.
49. The school receives very good contributions from the local and wider communities. Visitors to the school help to make pupils' learning stimulating and lively. They represent a wide range of cultures and they contribute very well to pupils' understanding and appreciation of a broad range of traditions. For example, one visitor helped the pupils to learn about African story telling. People from the local community visit the school to share their experiences and to foster learning. The local mayor, for example, visited to speak to the school council and a visitor from a local church supports pupils' singing.
50. The school makes very fruitful links with other organisations. Good links with a local art gallery have led to an exhibition of pupils' work. The school has made very good use of consultants to help to improve children's play in their early years. The school's very good relationships with outside agencies help staff to provide effective support for all groups of pupils, notably those who arrive with little or no ability to speak English.
51. The school's motto of 'Every child a confident learner' is the bedrock of the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school develops high levels of tolerance, respect and understanding amongst pupils who come from

many different backgrounds and who often have not been in the school long. The provision remains as strong as it was at the time of the last inspection.

52. The provision for spiritual development is very good and is very much linked to the very strong cultural development. Throughout the school day pupils are inspired to appreciate and celebrate the different faiths and ways of life of their peers. With over 22 different languages spoken, the school is able to draw on this to broaden the pupils' horizons and think beyond their own personal circumstances. Although many pupils come from war ridden countries or traumatic domestic situations, the school still encourages them to reflect on how lucky they are and to have empathy with children in the world who are less well off. In a good lesson on personal social and health education in Year 1, the teacher gave the pupils time at the end to quietly reflect on the fact that some children do not have food or homes.
53. The promotion of self-esteem is very strong. The school has perceptively recognised that pupils' confidence in their own abilities, particularly pupils from disrupted home lives, is vitally important for them to begin learning effectively. Displays around the school, assemblies and a range of rewards in the classroom and at lunchtime give the pupils confidence and a feeling of being wanted. As one girl in Year 6 so poignantly put it, *'It's a safe place. It gives you this thing inside that makes you feel you have no worries.'*
54. Assemblies are held every day and are used well to promote self-esteem, to encourage pupils always to do their best and to share in celebrations such as Eid or Christmas. However some teachers find it difficult to add a spiritual dimension to assemblies and lessons when they lack confidence or find it difficult to manage the behaviour of some pupils.
55. The school provides a very good range of visits out of school and visitors to the school to add to the very good promotion of cultural awareness. Pupils have taken part in the Manchester Arts Festival to perform a Nigerian version of *Macbeth* and visited the nearby Whitworth Art Gallery to further their appreciation of different styles of art. Last summer many pupils enjoyed the Golden Jubilee celebrations for the Queen and learned more about the culture and way of life of the United Kingdom.
56. The promotion of moral development is very good. All staff have very clear and consistent expectations of behaviour and communicate them clearly to the pupils. Pupils soon learn the difference between right and wrong. Most want to behave because they have been taught that it is unfair to upset others or spoil their learning. When pupils misbehave they are encouraged to take themselves off to reflect on what they did wrong and to think about how they can improve. This approach works well for most pupils. In lessons on drugs and medicines pupils are given a good understanding that they can say 'no' when offered something about which they are unsure.
57. The school promotes social development very well. Pupils are very much encouraged to widen their responsibility and contribute to the school community. Children in the nursery soon learn to find their names for their own milk and from an early age pupils are given the job of returning the registers to the office. The older pupils gain in confidence as they are selected for the role of play zone leaders or participate in the school council. Electing of councillors and running meetings are very good ways to learn more about democracy and citizenship. Election officers from the city council came to school to organise the use of real ballot boxes in the elections and the school councillors have been to visit the Lord Mayor in the council chamber. The wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as the residential visit to

the Lake District for the Year 6 pupils or the football training at Manchester City Football Club, add to the pupils' personal development as they learn how to interact with their peers in different situations. For some pupils, who have had very few opportunities to socialise with children their own age, even local trips to Platt's Fields or sports events on the school field are valuable experiences in their limited personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

58. The school cares for its pupils very well. From the moment they come in the front door, cheerily greeted by the caretaker, they are in a safe haven. The systems for health and safety, child protection and welfare are very good. All staff know what to do should they be suspicious of child abuse. They are kept well up to date through regular meetings and communication with senior staff. Health and safety systems are very tight and well monitored. Staff are confident that if they have a potential hazard in their classroom it will be remedied very quickly. The site is safe and secure, with closed circuit television and constant vigilance at the doors and gates. Any minor accidents are dealt with properly and recorded well. Parents have given their permission for their children to use the Internet and the school has ensured that there are blocks to inappropriate sites.
59. Despite the attendance levels of the pupils being unsatisfactory, the school has very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. The systems have been perfected since the last inspection. A major concern is the large number of lengthy holidays that families take to their country of origin. The school regularly reminds parents that days out of school mean that learning is disrupted. The benefits of regular attendance are displayed prominently around the school and the importance of attendance and punctuality is brought home to pupils in many ways. The weekly attendance target and the percentage actually reached for each class are posted outside the classroom. At the end of each week the class with the best attendance competes eagerly for the silver trophy. The learning mentor, appointed by the Education Action Zone to concentrate on improving attendance, makes sure that parents are contacted on the first day that children miss school. Careful monitoring of the computerised attendance registers by the headteacher ensures that pupils with worrying amounts of absence or lateness are given special attention by the learning mentor or education welfare service. The recently started breakfast club has been very successful in bringing normally late families into school well on time for cereal and toast. The concerted effort to improve attendance has led to a substantial reduction in absence over the last term.
60. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good and most pupils respond well. The school has a simple and appropriate set of school rules with clear rewards and sanctions. Parents have been sent the behaviour policy so that they can understand and support the school approach. Staff have high expectations of conduct, but occasionally find it difficult to manage the few pupils with challenging behaviour and the school's strategies to address challenging behaviour are not always effective. Often these overcome the immediate disruption, but mean that the responsibility is passed on to another teacher. The school makes very good use of a wide range of outside services, as well as the pastoral support team within school, to support behaviour management. However, the impact is sometimes difficult to gauge when so many different people are involved and the record keeping is thorough but too diverse. As the background of the incoming pupils changes, so the school is finding that there are more with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Consequently, it plans to review its behaviour policy regularly to ensure that it matches the need in the school and methodically makes the most of the good work of the many personnel

and staff involved in behaviour management. With a strong ethos of tolerance and respect, the school is very successful in ensuring that there is no bullying or racial intolerance.

61. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. It is very quick to identify the needs of each pupil on arrival and justifiably prides itself on knowing each pupil very well. Much of the formal personal support for pupils comes via the well-established personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are taught well about a healthy lifestyle and eating properly, in addition to appropriate sex and drugs education. Beyond personal, social and health education the school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop personally, whether in school taking on jobs and responsibilities, or representing their school in competitions or out on the good range of trips. Young children are settled in very well to formal education and are soon able to cope with the school day. The pupils in Year 6 receive given good support and guidance as they move on to secondary schools, because their parents are well included and they have a good chance to visit the new school. Pupils who need particularly focused pastoral support are effectively identified for group support out of the classroom. These sessions work well for the withdrawn pupils who lack confidence, but are not always sufficiently effective for the boys with disruptive behaviour. Parents receive a perceptive report on their child's personal development at the end of the year based on the teacher's informal, but effective overview.
62. The school has satisfactory procedures for finding out what pupils can do. It has improved and refined its procedures since the previous inspection to make them more useful and informative. Teacher assessments are carried out half-terminly in English, mathematics and science and a National Curriculum level is awarded. These contribute usefully to teachers' long term tracking documents. Examples of individual pupils' work are collected over time to build up a clear picture of their attainment and achievement, although National Curriculum levels are not presently being awarded to this work. Teachers' planning documents identify the outcomes of assessments of pupils' work from previous lessons and adjustments are made to the content of future lessons accordingly. An analysis of National Curriculum tests for seven and eleven-year-olds has been carried out in mathematics and science and weaknesses have been identified. This means that teachers have a good understanding of particular areas they need to concentrate on that pose the greatest difficulties for pupils.
63. There are currently some discrepancies between results from some standardised tests and teachers' assessments of pupils' performance. The school recognises the need for teachers to carry out moderation of pupils' work on a more regular basis where teachers agree National Curriculum levels together. The school has a good system of tracking and monitoring pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds. Given the very large amount of pupil mobility within the school, the system is able to show what positive impact the school has made on pupils who have attended since nursery and reception. This tracking document does not currently identify whether attainment levels are different for different groups of pupils. Assessment procedures for foundation subjects are currently limited, but the school has already identified this and an action plan is in motion to address this issue.
64. A good system of target setting has recently been introduced to the school under which pupils and teachers agree specific areas for development in English, mathematics and science. These targets are easily accessible to pupils, teachers and parents. Pupils are clear about what they have to do to improve in these areas and older pupils have a good understanding of what National Curriculum level they

are working towards. During the inspection there were very good examples of how teachers were marking pupils' work according to their targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. Parents think that the school is special. They are very appreciative of what the school does, not only for their children but also for the whole family. Many parents who have escaped from troubled countries or who suffer domestic problems turn to the school for support and are very relieved to find a safe educational haven for their children. A very good number of parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires. They were practically unanimous in their support for all the school does for their children. In particular they like the good job the school does in taking account of the many different cultures of pupils, the fact that their children like school and the high expectations of hard work. The inspectors concur with all these positive views. A few parents would like to see a wider range of activities outside lessons. However, in the team's opinion the school provides a large number of varied opportunities to extend the pupils' learning. Although some parents were divided about whether they wanted their children to have more or less homework, the team believes the amount and regularity of homework are as expected for primary schools.
66. The school provides a lot of excellent information for parents. A large proportion of the information is appropriately conveyed by word of mouth as the parents are welcomed in the morning or gather to collect their children in the afternoon. The corridor walls are used extremely well to inform and remind parents about a variety of school issues and activities, such as national tests and the need for regular school attendance. Translation is always available, whether in writing or cassette tape or via the many bilingual staff. Details about the subjects covered each term are regularly sent out and parents have the chance to attend workshops on literacy and numeracy. Many school documents, such as the behaviour and homework policies, are sent home so that parents can work with the school in supporting their children. Particularly useful for parents are the very clear and understandable targets set for each pupil to improve their English and mathematics. Annual reports give a good indication of what topics have been covered over the year, but are insufficiently clear on the progress in learning made by the pupil in each subject. The outstanding links with families are strengthened by the additional educational and social support given to the parents. The school is fast becoming a centre for adult education classes and guidance in completing various domestic and social service forms.
67. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home is good. The school's successful philosophy is that satisfied and well-supported parents mean effective learning for their children. Parents want the best for their children, but language barriers often prevent them giving as much help as they would wish. Many parents enjoy sharing books with their children, but the school is aware that the support of reading from home is not as strong as it could be. Attendance at parent-teacher meetings is improving every term and parents have responded well to the drive to improve attendance. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. There is no official school association, but participation in end of term celebrations is good. Several parents are volunteers in classrooms and on trips and some have progressed to become lunchtime supervisors. The school is well aware of the important role that parents play in their children's education and, as at the last inspection, values the very strong partnership it has with the families.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

68. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. Whilst attainment by the age of eleven does not meet the expectations for schools nationally, pupils make good progress and they achieve well (**see paragraphs 11, 14, 17**). Indeed, test results show that standards have risen in recent years. This is despite a major annual change in the pupil population and an increase since the previous inspection in the proportion of pupils who enter the school with either no English, or at the early stages of English acquisition. Test results for pupils aged seven and eleven usually exceed those in similar schools nationally. Much of the reason for the school's success in this respect is the very good attention consistently given to pupils to help them settle into school life, and to raise in them a sense of self esteem and confidence to learn and achieve. Consequently, the school's prominent mission statement that, 'Every child is a confident learner' is substantially achieved.
69. The educational direction, the day-to-day practices, and the work of the school constitute a very good reflection of the school's aims and values. The headteacher leads her school very well towards meeting its aims and has developed an ethos of support and care for pupils that is almost tangible, and that includes a strong partnership between the school and parents. The governing body and all staff are equally committed to the school ethos and to its good links with, and its standing in, this multi-cultural and multi-ethnic community. The headteacher has successfully adapted the school's procedures to take account of the rapidly changing pupil population. As a result, pupils are secure in the knowledge that the school and its staff are always available to help them. The school's values are fully reflected in its everyday life, which is orderly, secure, harmonious and happy.
70. The headteacher has the confidence of colleagues, parents and governors. She works very closely with the recently appointed deputy headteacher, who supports very well the work of the headteacher and is an essential member of the senior management team. The deputy headteacher uses her observations of lessons and scrutiny of teachers' planning to bring about necessary improvements through offering helpful and well-founded guidance. She has good oversight of the work of subject co-ordinators, whose roles both she and the headteacher agree need further development in order to be fully effective. Despite some time made available for them to carry out their monitoring roles, they do not have a detailed enough supervision of their subjects, including the quality of teaching and learning and the standards that pupils across the school attain.
71. Action taken in response to the issues identified by the previous inspection report has been successful and levels of attainment have slowly risen. Because of continuous development, the use of national guidance and good, clear leadership from the headteacher and her deputy, subjects are better planned now with explicit opportunities for assessing pupils' learning.
72. The headteacher has introduced more structured systems for checking and improving the quality of teaching, and for linking this with teachers' professional development. These systems are not yet entirely effective. Essentially they lack the rigour to assess the nature, extent and effect of inconsistency in the quality of teaching and to raise the proportion of teaching from good to very good. Recent observations of lessons have centred on teachers' behaviour management strategies rather than judging the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. As a result, some weaknesses persist and effective strategies are not shared as a matter of course amongst teachers.
73. The school's systems for analysing test results and tracking pupils' progress enable it to identify specific areas of persistent weakness in pupils' performance, for example in writing in the juniors, and in speaking and listening. This has enabled the school to

begin to identify clear targets in literacy and numeracy for each term and for each pupil. Potentially, this is an effective means for ensuring that teachers take steps to strengthen pupils' performance. However, the systems for observing teaching and for assessing attainment are not made to work rigorously together so as to identify the effects of any remedial action implemented.

74. The school development plan is a comprehensive and, in many respects, a well-written document. It pays detailed attention to actions, priorities and implied costs, and is an example of the diligence that the headteacher and senior staff give towards meeting the challenge of a higher level of attainment. The targets identified are arranged in order of priority and chosen following regular appropriate evaluations of the school's achievements.
75. The management of special educational needs is good. The recently appointed co-ordinator has quickly and correctly identified areas where practice can be improved and has put procedures in place. Consequently, parents' involvement has increased, pupils are involved with the review of their own targets and individual education plans are more precise. The management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also good. Pupils' needs are identified early and the school works hard to support them. Regular meetings are held to discuss pupils' progress and to assess the impact of the school's provision.
76. The governors play an essential and valued part in shaping the direction of the school, and fulfil their responsibilities with enthusiasm and considerable expertise. They are fully aware of the school's strengths, of which they are proud, and rigorously pursue those aspects of the school that still need improving, such as achieving the highest standards. The governors fully support the work of the headteacher, whom they hold in high regard, yet rightly question school management and school policy to ensure that actions taken always promote the school's aims. Their support is valued by the headteacher. Indeed, the governing body has made some important decisions, based on good advice. For example, recent building improvements and staff appointments have made significant differences to the school's security, working environment and teacher expertise. Individual governors are linked to classes and many take the opportunity to gain first-hand information about the school. This is of benefit when governors meet twice each term to consider such items as the school development plan, budgeting and standards.
77. The headteacher and governors are developing well their ability to evaluate closely the school's effectiveness and use the results of statutory assessments, and other data, to help decide future action. The governors apply the principles of best value well, including comparison of school results with those of others, and setting challenging targets for the school to achieve. There is good capacity for the school to improve.
78. The school makes good use of its finances and is successful in bidding for extra funding for specific initiatives. The headteacher and key governors work skilfully to make good use of all available personnel, resources and finance. The use of funding is considered carefully and the budget managed prudently. A recently acquired carry forward amount is already allocated for necessary increased levels of staffing and improved resources for information and communication technology, both of which will improve pupils' scope for learning. The headteacher and the school administrator control the budget well on a daily basis. A recent audit of the school's finances identified a number of minor aspects for improvement, which have been implemented. There is good use made of specific funds, for example to support pupils with special educational needs and to implement local and national initiatives.

79. The quality and experience of staff match the demands and range of the Foundation Stage and the primary age range. All teaching staff, except the newly qualified teacher, have responsibility for managing a curriculum subject. They are suitably qualified and benefit from regular training in the subjects they lead. There are good and well-informed procedures to help teachers who are new to the school and newly qualified teachers. Arrangements for managing the performance of teaching staff are firmly established and are satisfactory. The school offers good opportunities to trainee teachers and student classroom assistants to gain confidence and expertise.
80. There are a good number of classroom assistants. The nursery nurses and classroom assistants in the Foundation Stage are well deployed and work very closely with the teacher. They provide good assistance, particularly when supporting children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The assistants in the rest of the school provide valuable support, but are not consistently well deployed, particularly during the introduction of the literacy and numeracy lessons.
81. The school administrative staff carry out their duties very effectively and are central to the running of the school. The experienced caretaker provides an excellent first point of contact. She and her staff maintain the school in excellent order. Lunchtime staff perform their duties in a friendly, capable way. The school also benefits from the valuable voluntary assistance of many parents. All support staff are valued members of the school community and reflect the strong team spirit, with everyone playing a significant part in the running of the school.
82. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The staff have worked hard to make the Victorian building a bright and attractive learning environment. Displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school make it an interesting, vibrant place. They demonstrate the value that the school places on pupils' work and the displays enrich the environment. The refurbishment programme has improved the quality of school life. Pupils are very pleased now with the condition of the lavatory areas and their spacious computer suite.
83. Most year groups are taught in a shared teaching space, where two classes function in one large spacious classroom. The ceilings are high and there is significant echo. This often leads to a high level of working noise and, consequently, distraction for pupils, which affects their learning. Pupils cannot always hear the teacher or each other when answering questions or offering comment. Governors effectively prioritise the most needed maintenance and carry these jobs out first to ensure pupils' comfort and safety. Vandalism is a constant concern and is the cause of many costly repairs. There is no playing field, but good use is made of the school playground and an adjacent park area for games and athletics. The reception class does not have immediate access to the outside area like that enjoyed by nursery. They do, however, make use of the nursery outside environment and take part in the school's physical education programme, making good use of the halls and playground.
84. The school is adequately resourced overall, although there are few computers in the junior classrooms. The school has recently reorganised the resources, which are now held centrally in cupboards and small rooms. Co-ordinators have worked hard and effectively to catalogue, organise and file resources for easy retrieval.
85. Taking into consideration:
- the children's low achievement when they start school and the good progress they make;
 - the pupils' very good attitudes;

- the support for pupils with English as an additional language;
- the attainment of pupils compared to those in similar schools;
- the excellent links with parents;
- the good quality of teaching;
- the very good quality of leadership;

the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

86. In the context of its strengths and the good quality of education it already provides the school should now:

raise pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science by:

- **ensuring that the headteacher and staff continue to regularly monitor standards of work throughout the school;**
- **providing planned opportunities to develop and improve pupils' speaking and listening skills, including the development of subject specific vocabulary;**
- **developing pupils' skills in locating and using non-fiction books;**
- **reviewing and extending the opportunities for pupils to undertake different types of writing and for different purposes;**
- **ensuring that the school handwriting policy is applied consistently;**
(see paragraphs 72, 101-105, 111, 119 of the main report)

improve monitoring and management responsibilities by:

- **continuing to implement the recently introduced teaching and learning policy;**
- **focusing the monitoring of lessons on the impact of teaching on learning to obtain consistently high quality teaching;**
- **developing the role of subject co-ordinators to ensure that they have regular opportunities to monitor teachers' planning, lessons and pupils' work to help raise standards;**
- **reviewing and assessing the impact that background noise in shared classrooms has on pupils' progress and evaluating ways of reducing distraction;**
(see paragraphs 40, 70, 72, 83 of the main report)

make effective use of assessment data to raise standards by:

- **continuing to analyse data from tests and assessments to identify weaknesses in pupils' skills and knowledge and to judge how successful the school is in helping pupils to make progress;**
- **ensuring that teachers consistently use information from all assessments to plan their lessons so that work is well matched to pupils' abilities;**
- **improving assessment procedures in the foundation subjects;**
(see paragraphs 38, 63, 64, 73 of the main report)

review the school behaviour policy to:

- **ensure that the policy is appropriate and rewards and sanctions are fully understood and consistently applied.**
(see paragraphs 22, 25, 39, 56 of the main report)

*** Many of these areas have already been identified in the School Development Plan**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	8	35	29	3	0	0
Percentage	0	11	47	38	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60	302
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	214

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	332

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	93
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	82

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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
	2002	28	26	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	19
	Girls	22	21	23
	Total	40	38	42
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	74 (80)	70 (77)	78 (80)
	National	(84)	(86)	(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	13
	Girls	22	20	18
	Total	38	37	31
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	70 (77)	69 (80)	57 (74)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
	2002	16	16	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	12
	Girls	13	10	17
	Total	23	23	29
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	72 (63)	72 (70)	91 (73)
	National	(75)	(71)	(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	12	9	15
	Total	23	21	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	66 (52)	60 (61)	77 (67)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
14	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
65	0	0
39	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
134	2	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
30	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	446

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	60
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 / 2002
	£
Total income	934,515
Total expenditure	870,257
Expenditure per pupil	2,494
Balance brought forward from previous year	183,094
Balance carried forward to next year	247,352

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 49%

Number of questionnaires sent out	359
Number of questionnaires returned	176

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	86	12	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	74	24	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	22	6	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	68	20	5	2	5
The teaching is good.	79	15	2	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	25	3	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	18	0	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	16	0	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	74	17	6	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	76	16	3	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	27	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	24	7	2	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

87. Children enter the nursery from the age of three. Most attend for the whole day. They move into one of the two reception classes in either September or January of the school year during which they become five. During their first term in the nursery, the teacher informally assesses their abilities using the school's own baseline assessment scheme. The local authority baseline assessment is used to make a more formal assessment of older nursery children, and again when the children move into the reception class. When children start in the nursery their attainment is well below that normally seen in children of their age. Many speak little or no English, there are many different home languages and children's personal and emotional development is limited. Good teaching, with particular emphasis on the acquisition and development of language, combined with the provision of a good range of worthwhile learning experiences ensures that all children make good progress, and some make very good progress. Most children enter Year 1 with knowledge and skills in line with expectations for their age, although for many their language development is still limited.
88. All the staff in the nursery and reception classes work hard to provide a secure, welcoming and calm environment and the children are clearly happy to come to school. The staff know the children and their families well, and greet them individually when they arrive each day. Good bilingual support helps both parents and children to communicate. Parents have informal opportunities to talk to staff and are encouraged to stay whilst their children settle. On arrival, the children calmly and confidently choose a quiet activity and quickly become involved in their learning activities. Parents are kept well informed about what their children will be doing from the good range of information on the parents' notice board, from the nursery brochure and from regular newsletters that are available in different languages and on audio-cassette. They are encouraged to support their children at home with reading books and homework.
89. In the nursery and reception classes, the quality and range of learning opportunities for the children are good and the curriculum is satisfactory. Staff responded positively to the new curriculum specifically designed for the Foundation Stage and now plan activities in all six areas of learning towards the Early Learning Goals. Reception and nursery teachers plan some shared themes, such as '*The Three Bears*' activities, but do not yet plan jointly in other areas. The use of the 'stepping stones'⁴ in the foundation curriculum to plan, track and monitor children's progress more closely is still being developed. The children use the outside area every day and staff are working to make outdoor learning activities more purposeful and structured.

Personal, social and emotional development

90. Children have many planned opportunities to develop their self-confidence, to make choices and decisions, and to become aware of the needs of others. The staff are good role models, treating everyone with respect, and encouraging children to give their ideas and by valuing what they say. The children reflect this by showing good attitudes towards each other, and responding and participating eagerly in all activities. When the children in the nursery discussed friendship, the teacher warmly

⁴ 'Stepping stones' – these are gradual stages that help teachers to plan children's learning towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

praised their ideas of how to be kind to each other. They develop some independence by being allowed to choose which learning activity to undertake, or deciding when to drink their milk at the 'milk bar'. When they arrive in the morning, children in the reception class register themselves by signing their own names. They tidy up well at the end of a lesson, efficiently collecting all the pieces of the games and jigsaws and quickly putting them away. Children are encouraged to share their own cultures and faiths, and Muslim children enjoyed describing their Eid celebrations. Children in the reception class looked at pictures of places to play and know that the park is safer than the street, a useful step in learning to consider their own safety and well-being. At lunchtime they show that they know how to take turns and ask politely for any help they need, confidently following the routines they have learned. Good teaching ensures that, when they leave the reception class, the great majority are achieving the Early Learning Goal in this area.

Communication, language and literacy

91. Many children have poorly developed language skills and may speak little or no English when they join the nursery. Staff use every opportunity to promote language and speaking skills by encouraging the children in the nursery and reception classes to discuss and describe their activities. The younger nursery children mixed and tasted porridge and the nursery nurse skilfully led them to say what it looked and tasted like, but could get very few words from them because their language skills are at a very early stage. They make good progress, however, and older nursery children showed an increased vocabulary when they could name all the fruit, including the mango, in the story *Handa's Surprise*. Sometimes there is little interaction between the children, but younger nursery children talked happily about their drawings, saying, 'This is daddy dog, and this is mummy dog and this is baby'. When asked whether it was like the three bears, they replied, 'No, it's dogs! Staff promote listening skills well by reading stories with excitement to encourage the children to listen attentively. There are good links between the 'big books' and role-play activities, to promote the use of language.
92. Each room has a good supply of attractive books and the children enjoy choosing and sharing stories, particularly with an adult. There is a strong focus on learning the sounds of words and letters. The nursery teacher checked that the children recognised the letter 's' at the beginning of words by deliberately making a mistake, which the children quickly spotted. They soon recognise their own names, and those of their friends, and can put their name label on their carton of milk.
93. Children in the reception class spot words that rhyme because the teacher places good emphasis on them when reading a poem, and many read a large number of the words they meet frequently, such as 'had' or 'and'. They look carefully at the pictures for clues to help them read a new word, recognising 'drum' and 'guitar', but limited vocabulary may mean they cannot name other items. More able children used their skills well to follow simple written instructions during a mathematics activity, clearly reading, 'There are five lorries'. Good examples of print support reading and writing in the classrooms. Children enjoy using the writing tables and are provided with a good range of materials to encourage them to make marks and write. In the nursery they were entranced as they watched the teacher write a letter and were inspired to write letters to their friends. Children in the reception class have progressed well enough to write favourite nursery rhymes from memory with very little help, and were encouraged to 'sound out' the words. Teaching is good overall in this area of learning and children make good progress. The great majority achieve the Early Learning Goal and some more able children will be working at a higher level.

Mathematical development

94. In the nursery and reception classes, there is a strong emphasis on oral number games and rhymes. The younger children sing, *'Five little speckled frogs'* using their fingers to show the correct number of frogs. They counted to five and back again, but they were not challenged to go further, although many clearly could. Children in the reception class counted up to 65 accurately when estimating how many cubes would fill a container. The bilingual assistants supported this activity well, helping all children to make sensible predictions. All activities are supported by a good variety of equipment for counting, sorting and matching, and by bright displays that help the children count, recognise and order numbers and their value, and continue patterns. Many older nursery children already know the names of basic shapes, for example *'square', 'rectangle', 'triangle'* and *'circle'*. Nursery children made a simple pictorial block graph showing favourite breakfast cereals. More able children in the reception class enjoyed using their reading and reasoning skills to solve simple problems, for example comparing the number of lorries with spots with the number without spots. They begin to record some of their work in a practical way by colouring, cutting out and matching, or adding one more to a total. There is good progress in mathematical development. Teaching is good and most children will reach, and some exceed, the Early Learning Goal for mathematics before the end of the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

95. When they enter the nursery, the children have little knowledge and experience of the world around them, and their limited language skills hinder their ability to express what they do know. However, they are stimulated and excited by the wide range of interesting and investigational activities provided for them. They showed great interest and enthusiasm when investigating the tastes of different fruit and recognised vegetables on sale in the *'shop'*, including brussels sprouts. To develop children's sense of the passing of time, staff encouraged them to compare the toys they played with as babies with the toys they prefer now. In the reception class, children looked at their family history and saw how they have progressed since babyhood. Science investigations enabled the children to identify the difference between rough and smooth textures. More able children in the reception class can label a diagram of the body without adult help, correctly naming the fingers and neck.
96. The children in the reception class and the older nursery children use the computers confidently during their weekly lessons in the computer suite and make very good progress. In one good lesson, they learned how to move images and change colour and font size because the nursery nurse, aided by the bilingual assistants, gave very good guidance and simple directions. Most children show good control of the mouse, although some of the nursery children are still learning to co-ordinate the point and click action. To enrich and extend their learning experiences beyond the classroom, the children planted bulbs in the outside area, ready for spring, and have visited the local park and shops. The reception class visited the Museum of Science and Industry, and used their experiences in a space project to investigate suitable warm clothing for a journey to the moon, and to make models of spaceships. Good teaching provides the children with a range of stimulating experiences. They make rapid progress in this area of learning and meet the Early Learning Goal by the end of their time in the reception class.

Physical development

97. All children use the outdoor area each day, but the time available to the reception class is limited to a brief session at the end of the morning. This class also has a

weekly physical education lesson in the school hall. There are a suitable number and range of wheeled toys and bikes outside and the children enjoy riding round the marked roadway with one operating the 'stop/go' sign. They use bats, balls and the large climbing frame well, developing control of their movements and increasing agility. The nursery nurse helps the children improve their hand-eye co-ordination by playing a simple game of throwing bean bags into a ring with them. Staff make suggestions for games, and usually participate, and follow the children's directions for imaginative play. Children develop small physical skills by using tools and scissors, although some of them in the reception class still find it difficult to cut accurately. They manipulate pencils and brushes, thread beads and control the computer mouse competently. Satisfactory teaching helps the children to progress steadily and meet the Early Learning Goal by the time they leave the reception class.

Creative development

98. Creative play is well organised and enjoyed by all children. The children in the nursery dressed as the girl in the story *Handa's Surprise* and enjoyed acting out the story after their literacy session, with the basket of fruit on their head, and most were able to retell the story accurately in simple words. Younger children work in the 'Café Abdul', and staff help them to learn and use the correct vocabulary, such as 'menu', and remind them to take 'orders' by telephone. Children in the reception class dressed for a visit to the moon, but forgot that they would need to dress warmly and simply donned the clothes that appealed to them. Creative activities using the outdoor area are not always developed well enough. Children's work is well displayed in all areas, for example exciting art work produced in the computer suite, and this helps to make the environment bright and stimulating. They enjoy expressing creative ideas in a range of materials and media, including paint, glitter, coloured pencils, modelling and play dough. After their museum visit, children made kites, rockets and hot air balloons, reinforcing their knowledge and understanding of air travel. All children enjoy singing rhymes and songs, for example *Five currant buns in the bakers shop*. Most start in the nursery with a very limited knowledge of traditional songs and nursery rhymes because their parents are not always familiar with them, so the staff prepared a tape for parents so that they can share them and support their children. Teaching is satisfactory and ensures that the children achieve the Early Learning Goal by the time they enter Year 1.

ENGLISH

99. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected and lower than those seen in the previous inspection, although the nature of the pupils that the school admits has changed considerably since 1998. **However, many pupils achieve good standards. Taking into account the very low level of attainment for the great majority who join the school, most pupils do well and make good progress overall.**
100. Inspection findings show that they make very good progress in reading. There are three reasons for these achievements. Firstly, most teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to talk and communicate meaningfully. Secondly, effective teaching of letter sounds at an early age, and encouraging pupils to take an interest in books, results in pupils learning the necessary skills to read previously unknown words. Most teachers are skilled in using the National Literacy Strategy to present pupils with an exciting range of texts, which they use to develop reading and writing skills. The high proportion of pupils for whom English is not the first language is the major factor in the school's apparently low results in comparison with the national average.
101. Standards in speaking and listening across the school are below those normally expected. In the infants, a high proportion of pupils do not have a sufficiently wide vocabulary to communicate in complete terms their ideas and opinions, even though many are keen to do so. They make good progress and this becomes less of a problem in the juniors for those pupils who have benefited from entering school at an early age. Whilst higher attaining pupils are quite competent and are able to comprehend the nuances of language, many pupils in the upper juniors still cannot order spoken or written sentence structure to transmit their thoughts accurately and succinctly. For example, one junior pupil, when asked why the ship's orchestra on the Titanic continued to play, said, *'It try to keep people down'*, meaning, *'To calm the people.'* Teachers do much to enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills, for example through building their confidence at the beginnings of lessons in whole-class discussions and through providing a rich and varied curriculum. Some teachers are consistently aware in their lessons of the need to regularly explain to pupils, in simple terms, the meaning of words that are less well known, such as *'veer'*, *'recounts'* and, *'starboard'*. Additionally, specially trained staff, many of whom are bilingual, do much throughout the school to support pupils' learning. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take part in role-play situations, including drama, or small group discussions, in order to add further dimensions to their learning and comprehension of language.
102. Pupils do well in their reading skills across the school, and attain standards at seven and eleven that match those expected of their ages nationally. Teachers and classroom assistants work hard and successfully to develop pupils' reading skills. The skill of sounding out new words to find their meaning is well taught and this gives a good foundation for progression through the school. Pupils experiencing difficulty, including those with special educational needs and those with particular language development problems, receive additional help so that they develop confidence through success. Books drawn from commercial reading schemes have been carefully graded so that pupils make secure progress until they are able to choose reading books freely.
103. As a result, most seven-year-olds confidently acquire the technical skills necessary to combine the sounds that groups of letters make. Average attaining pupils in Year 2 correctly read words new to them, such as *'twinkled'*. Some higher attaining pupils

correctly read more difficult words, such as *'mischief'* but, because of comparatively limited language development, can offer only a superficial explanation of their meaning. By Year 6, many pupils have read a wide range, including non-fiction books, although teachers do not sufficiently develop pupils' research skills by setting practical tasks in other subjects. These pupils read fluently and with reasonable quality of expression, and discuss the content of books with obvious delight, interest and understanding. Lower attaining pupils at this age, whilst continuing to make good progress in deciphering and identifying words, make slow progress in understanding what they have read, often because their understanding of English is at a lower level than that of their peers. The absence of a central library resource in the school adds to pupils' difficulties in reaching expected standards in some aspects of reading. Teachers do not encourage pupils sufficiently in the juniors to turn to dictionaries or thesauruses to help them understand what they read, although this approach was seen to good effect in one lesson.

104. Standards in writing are below average overall. The school teaches pupils to write in a joined style from an early age but, by the end of Year 2, much work is still poorly presented on a daily basis. Thereafter, standards of presentation progress at a satisfactory rate, with some good examples of word processing. The quality of handwriting in the juniors is often of a high standard, particularly in Years 5 and 6 when pupils complete work that they have drafted and refined. Sometimes, however, pupils fail to join letters, even in their finished work. Teachers' high expectations of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and sentence structure are effective and generally good standards are maintained throughout the school. Teachers regularly remind pupils to consistently develop and apply these skills. The setting of targets for them to do so shows the importance that teachers attach to these skills. For example, regular spelling exercises to *'look'*, *'cover'*, *'write'* and *'check'* pay dividends in helping to improve standards of spelling.
105. Formal exercises form a large part of the writing programme through the school. This approach assures good knowledge of grammar, but exercises are not always linked directly enough to extend writing tasks for pupils in the juniors, and the amount of exercises reduces the time available for skills to be put into practice. Pupils in the middle range of attainment are most affected, with lack of practice evident in their shorter stories and factual accounts when they write independently under pressure. By contrast, the most able pupils often write well, in a range of styles. For example, they have a good understanding of how to create atmosphere and character in their stories, and use adjectives and adverbs to sometimes startling effect. When given the opportunity to do so, they describe technical processes accurately in other subjects, for example mathematics and science. Pupils with low attainment receive extra help or simpler versions of the task so that they can succeed. Pupils throughout the school do not have enough access to the benefits of poetry to refine their thinking and improve the quality of their writing.
106. The quality of teaching is good overall in the infants and juniors, with the most consistently higher quality in the upper juniors, where there is occasionally very good teaching. The framework of the National Literacy Strategy is used effectively to guide teachers' planning, because it takes account of the need to present pupils with different levels of attainment with work that closely matches their capabilities. In the best lessons, teachers tell pupils very clearly at the outset what they are to learn and what is expected of them. These targets are then taught with determination through all aspects of the lesson and pupils' success is thoroughly reviewed at the end. By contrast, in a lesson that was otherwise satisfactory, pupils wasted too much time by having to write out the lesson objectives. Whilst the teacher tried hard to extend pupils' learning, too many pupils found the tasks too difficult. This resulted in many

pupils adding little to their skills and understanding. The planning for the lesson took little account of the needs of those pupils whose first language is not English although, in practice, the teacher made good efforts to ensure in the first part of the lesson that these pupils understood the text used.

107. The final review session is used well in many lessons to evaluate progress and reinforce the lesson's targets. In general, though, not enough use is made of this opportunity to develop pupils' speaking skills. Teachers show care and commitment in marking pupils' work and most give some encouragement and praise. However, work in some classes is not marked regularly enough, nor do some teachers give guidance in their marking about how pupils can improve. The best marking refers to improvements and then follows this up at a later stage.
108. The subject is well led and managed and recent improvements are leading to improvement. Nevertheless, monitoring is not well enough developed to ensure that all pupils make the best progress across the school. In particular, monitoring does not yet identify the most effective teaching practices in order to share them amongst the staff, for example the quality of planning, the approach of teaching extended, imaginative writing and the plenary to develop speaking skills. Resources are satisfactory and a recent, rigorous audit of books has left a small but good stock. However, the lack of a central library resource limits pupils' development of library and research skills. Work in class is extended satisfactorily through homework, although its regularity is not consistent.

MATHEMATICS

109. Standards of attainment in mathematics are below those expected nationally at the ages of seven and eleven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well for a number of reasons as they progress through the school. Children enter the nursery and reception classes with low levels of competency in mathematics and many have only basic levels of English. The school has collected data on pupils who remain at the school until Year 6 and can show that these pupils make good, and often very good, progress and achieve standards that are in line with those expected nationally. The very large degree of mobility within the school is a factor when comparing results from national tests with other schools. Data that the school has collected shows that it helps pupils to attain better standards in mathematics each year. Good teaching, thorough the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and good planning are the reasons why pupils achieve well throughout the school.
110. The strong emphasis placed on developing number is evident in pupils' books and in lessons. Pupils in Year 2 learn to calculate addition and subtraction to 20 mentally and are developing an understanding of place value. They identify two-dimensional shapes and begin to measure accurately in centimetres. By the end of Year 6, pupils have explored a number of strategies to help them carry out addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They have developed an understanding of negative numbers and plot and move shapes in four quadrants by translation and symmetry. Pupils' understanding of analysing and interpreting data is not as well developed because not enough emphasis is placed on this aspect of work.
111. Although many pupils display competent levels in mathematics, a large number are not yet at a stage where they can explain mathematical vocabulary sufficiently well to follow instructions or explain their answers. This, in turn, hinders the amount of progress they can make. The school has, quite rightly, identified the urgent need to develop pupils' understanding of mathematics and a strong emphasis is placed on

this in lessons. Lists of key words for the week are often displayed and, in the best lessons, constantly referred to. 'Concept maps' are used in Year 2 to make links between words that pupils will need in connection with their work on money. These lists are built up at the beginning and end of lessons and pupils have good opportunities to learn new words that will help them make better progress. In Year 1 the teacher is skilful at developing pupils' understanding of words and phrases that mean add or subtract. Constant use of mathematical vocabulary and skilled questioning help pupils to remember and use these words successfully.

112. The quality of teaching is good. The school has worked hard in recent months to develop effective systems of planning to guide lessons. Teachers are beginning to identify National Curriculum levels on their planning documents and work is usually matched to the wide range of abilities within the class. In some cases during the inspection, pupils had been grouped according to their language ability and not their mathematical ability. This means that they were carrying out lower level mathematical tasks than they were capable of. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well by able classroom assistants and communication between teachers and assistants is good.
113. A good feature of teaching is the way in which teachers praise pupils for their efforts, which motivates them to learn and take an active part in their learning. Relationships between pupils and teachers are strong and this sets a good climate for learning. Pupils in Year 3 are particularly well motivated to practise their mental recall of addition and subtraction facts and have learned a song to help them. Teachers make the intention of the lesson clear to pupils at the start, which keeps a focus for the lesson. In the best of lessons this objective is referred to and discussed at the end. This means that teachers and pupils are able to judge how successful the learning has been. Lessons move at a good pace and the good use of resources, particularly during the first part of the lesson, keeps pupils interested and involved. On occasions, the pace of the lesson introduction is too slow and this leads to some pupils becoming restless and losing interest. The majority of pupils work well in lessons and settle to tasks quickly. Some older pupils spend too long writing out the wording for questions, which wastes time that could be better spent on solving mathematical tasks.
114. Pupils have good opportunities to explore and investigate mathematics and apply their knowledge to problem solving. A good display of work showed how these skills are developed and built upon as pupils get older. For example, pupils in Year 2 investigate all the different combinations of putting 15 counters in three pots whilst pupils in Year 3 investigate the different ways of adding four odd numbers to make 20. There is a tendency for the problems set for older pupils to be more restricted, with specific right or wrong answers rather than the open-ended variety that the younger pupils experience.
115. The school has recently introduced a good system of setting targets for improvement with pupils. Infant and junior pupils are aware of what they have to do to meet their targets and older pupils are fully aware of what National Curriculum level they are working at. These targets are easily accessible to pupils and teachers to remind them of what they have to do to improve. The school is able to track and monitor the progress of each pupil and uses standardised tests at the end of the year to determine their level of attainment. The quality of teachers marking varies with the best examples giving pupils positive encouragement and a clear idea of what they have to do to improve. For example, comments such as, 'Wow!' and, 'You're a brilliant mathematician', motivate pupils and raise their self-esteem. One teacher wrote of a pupil in Year 2, '--- is very confident with her 2 and 5 times tables and

knows them by heart. She now needs to secure this knowledge by knowing them by heart in any order'.

116. The co-ordinator for mathematics has received intensive support from the local education authority in monitoring teaching and learning and is in a satisfactory position to continue to develop the curriculum. The school has recognised the need to develop the use of information and communication technology in mathematics work, as there is very little evidence of this happening at present. A useful analysis of National Curriculum tests at the ages of seven and eleven has been carried out which has identified weaknesses, which the school is addressing. Samples of pupils' work are being collated to help teachers assess what pupils can do. At present they are not being fully used to help teachers plan the next stages of pupils' mathematical development.

SCIENCE

117. Standards in science are below expected levels for seven and eleven-year old pupils. This is not as positive as the judgement made on standards for juniors in the previous inspection. The large number of pupils leaving and joining the school and the high proportion who arrive with little or no ability to speak English affect the school's results significantly. In view of these factors, the pupils achieve well.
118. All pupils, including those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is because the school provides well for them, notably through well-placed adult support. Sometimes, however, teachers miss opportunities to develop further the skills of pupils for whom English is an additional language. For example teaching in Year 6 does not always enable pupils to talk enough, for example when revising previous learning. Pupils who join the school in the nursery or the reception class generally make very good progress and achieve very well by the end of Year 6.
119. The main weakness in the attainment of pupils of all ages is that most have poor abilities in talking and writing about what they have found out in their investigations. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 know about a range of sources of heat including 'kettle' and 'iron'. All pupils are aware of different materials and whether they are 'metal' or 'non-metal'. Some are developing an understanding of the way magnets affect different materials, while more able pupils know that some materials are suited to certain purposes while others are not; for example, a spoon is made of metal because it is strong.
120. Pupils in Year 6 know about the dangers of drugs. Most have a growing understanding of processes including dissolving and evaporation, but many find it difficult to express in writing the findings of their investigations. For instance, one lower attaining pupil wrote, *'After 1 day it irreversible into a solid'*, while an average attaining pupil put, *'1 Kg will weigh the furthest elastic band'*. Most pupils do not present their work neatly, although there are notable exceptions to this, for example amongst average attaining pupils. More able pupils are beginning to record their test results by plotting points on a graph, although this does not extend to using the resulting graph to predict what might happen when, for example, further weights are added to an elastic band. More able pupils do not always choose the best way to record their findings, such as when testing the upward thrust of water on an object, when graph paper or squared paper might have been useful.
121. Teaching is good. Teachers have positive relationships with pupils and they generally manage them well. They give them clear explanations and instructions so

that those who are learning English have a clear understanding of what they should do. Teachers manage discussions and questioning sessions well because they value what pupils say and they work hard to include all pupils. For example, one teacher in a Year 2 lesson said, '*We need to listen to what everyone says*' and, '*I'm getting all the answers from one person*'. Although teachers prepare and use resources well, there are occasions when suitable resources are not available and this affects learning. For instance, stop clocks were not available in a lesson planned to help pupils to time accurately the fall of card spinners. Teachers' summing up at the end of lessons usually helps to strengthen pupils' learning. In a lesson in Year 2 about melting chocolate, however, the summary did not draw out the findings from all the groups well enough for pupils to get a clearer understanding of the issues involved. The opportunity was also missed to leave the three types of chocolate on the hot water bottles during assembly so that pupils could observe what had happened over a longer time. Teachers focus well on helping pupils to learn correct science terms such as 'investigation' in Year 2.

122. Pupils have good attitudes to science, particularly when teachers involve them in practical activities that capture their interest. Boys in Year 5 were especially interested in a practical lesson that involved melting ice. Most pupils respond well to teachers' good relationships and they behave sensibly and responsibly when carrying out investigations. They co-operate well together and despite background noise from classes that share the same room, they try to talk about what they are investigating. Pupils are less interested when teachers' explanations are too long or repetitive.
123. The co-ordinator has a clear view of how science needs to be developed through the school. She achieves this by, for example, analysing the results of tests to identify areas of weakness and by making good use of outside agencies for advice. However, she has had no opportunity to observe teaching in order to share with staff what works well and how weaknesses could be addressed. This prevents her from having maximum impact on the subject. She is aware that teachers do not rigorously use information from assessing pupils' learning when they plan future work. Teachers make good use of opportunities other than those in the classroom to make learning interesting and to bring science alive for pupils. For example, all classes visit a local park to help pupils to learn about living things and several classes visit a mobile planetarium to find out about the earth and beyond.
124. Although the school has a digital microscope, information and communication technology does not support pupils' scientific learning as well as it might. For example, teachers cannot carry out plans for pupils in Year 6 to work on aspects such as 'pressure' as there are no resources, although resources for science are, generally, satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

125. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and attain the standards that are expected for seven and eleven-year-old pupils. This is in line with the judgement made in the previous inspection.
126. The importance that the school attaches to pupils' artwork is evident in the 'eye catching' way that their work is displayed around the school. It is important in helping to develop the overall impression of a vibrant, stimulating and exciting environment for pupils and visitors. Pupils say that one of the major improvements in school is the appearance of the building and they enjoy looking at colourful displays on the walls. Pupils are very proud of the fact that they recently had their work displayed in the Whitworth Gallery as part of the Manchester Arts Education Festival.
127. Pupils learn a good range of skills and many of their displays are based on the work of famous artists, for example Lowry, Matisse and Klee. Consequently, there are good sketches of 'Goldfish' in the style of Klee, imaginative collage work in the style of Matisse and detailed charcoal and chalk sketches imitating the work of Lowry. Pupils' observational drawings of shoes involve the use of pencils, charcoal, chalk and water colour and pupils can describe in detail how they managed to use pencils to make light and dark marks to good effect.
128. Art is developed well with older pupils when they make good use of a digital camera to make three-dimensional self-portraits. By using the prints to help study the position of features on their faces they were able to make very effective and high quality three-dimensional 'mask like' self-portraits. Good use was made of a visiting artist to show pupils how to draw and, in the past, artists in residence have made a good contribution to the pupils' work.
129. Pupils' attitudes to art are good. They are proud to show off their work and enjoy talking about the different techniques that they used. In Year 6, pupils made very effective 'movement collages' using a range of different materials, including torn paper. Other pupils were invited to act as 'critical friends' in appraising their work. This is a useful exercise, although more successful if pupils are invited to talk about it rather than write their responses, which takes away some of the 'immediacy' of their thoughts.
130. In the lessons observed teaching was good overall. Teachers are good at creating an atmosphere where pupils can become absorbed in their work. This was particularly evident in two lessons where pupils were desperate to carry on their work. Teachers support pupils well, whilst not interfering and offer sound advice, without over-directing. The subject co-ordinator provides clear leadership, enthusiasm and advice, which help to develop art work in school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

131. Standards for seven and eleven-year-olds are as expected and all pupils make sound progress in developing the ability to design and make models and products. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. However, since then the scheme of work has been adjusted in line with current national guidelines and pupils benefit from regular opportunities to use tools and materials, particularly in Year 2. There are several factors that promote pupils' progress in the subject. For example: pupils are developing a good awareness of the

design and making process; they have good attitudes to their work and are proud of their achievements; they benefit from their teachers' good subject knowledge.

132. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan interesting activities that fully involve pupils and effectively capture their interests and imagination. As a result pupils have good attitudes to their work and are proud of the models they make. By the end of Year 2, pupils generate ideas confidently and have a satisfactory understanding of the process of designing and making. For example, a study of pupils' past work shows that in Year 1 they worked hard to create a moving picture carefully drawing designs on strips of paper.
133. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher successfully maintained pupils' interest and motivation. Levels of discussion and involvement were good as pupils offered views and opinions about the different effects and style of decoration. The way that pupils' interest was sustained during the lesson made a significant contribution to the progress made and they achieved the desired results.
134. Pupils make particularly good progress in their knowledge and understanding of how to evaluate products. The work of pupils in Year 3 shows some good evaluations of product packaging. One pupil, describing an egg box wrote, *'this packaging is strong, easy to open, but light enough to carry'*. Pupils in Year 4 look at many different types of money containers and evaluate them before going on to design and make a purse. Pupils in Year 6 design, make and evaluate a pair of slippers. This involves planning skills, problem solving, decision making and making a recording of the work's progress.
135. Assessments are largely informal. Teachers plan work and support for pupils carefully, are familiar with the national guidelines and have a good knowledge and understanding of what pupils should be able to achieve at different ages and abilities. However, the lack of more formal assessment procedures means that lessons tend to be planned for and taught to the whole class with not enough challenge for some pupils.
136. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post but has accurately identified areas for improvement and future development, such as assessment and the development of a portfolio of annotated work samples to provide teachers with good ideas and an overview of standards. The subject is well linked to work in other curriculum areas, for example art and design and science, but opportunities are missed to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through written plans and evaluations.

GEOGRAPHY

137. Only two lessons were timetabled during the inspection. However, additional evidence was gathered from a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and a discussion with pupils, and was sufficient to judge that pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Several factors influence pupils' progress; for example, pupils benefit from teachers' good subject knowledge and have a good attitude to the subject. To improve standards the school should develop its assessment procedures and develop the use of information and communication technology.
138. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop a sound understanding of the need to wear different clothes in different countries. They plan what to take on a holiday to a hot country or a cold one. On a journey to Bangladesh they would take, *'sunglasses and*

sun cream protection, while going to Scotland they would take, *'a vest, shoos and trosers'*. In Year 1, pupils learn about their home locality and begin their mapping skills by looking at a map of the local area and identifying the location of the school.

139. By the end of Year 6, pupils have learnt that water is a universal need. They draw and label the movement of water within the water cycle. They use their knowledge of science when trying to find out what happens to the rain when it hits the earth. Pupils showed great interest in their work. The earthquake that hit Manchester was the opportunity for pupils in Year 4 to study this phenomenon in their geography lessons. Excellent links were made with literacy when they wrote newspaper headlines to accompany their geography lesson, such as, *'City Rocked by Quakes'* and, *'Manchester has the Shake!'* In Year 3, pupils make accurate maps showing the routes they take to get to Heald Place School.
140. Pupils' attitudes to geography are satisfactory. Teachers try to make geography interesting and exciting for the pupils. They use the locality well so that pupils can identify with what is being taught. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils' knowledge of more distant places and cultures is promoted well through studies of a range of countries around the world. There are good links with India and developing links with the United States of America through contact with a past pupil.
141. In the lessons observed teaching was sound. The subject is co-ordinated satisfactorily. The school follows national guidelines, but there has been no review or evaluation to determine its appropriateness for pupils at the school. Information and communication technology is rarely used in geography. Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development. A residential excursion for Year 6 pupils enriches the geography curriculum and is a good feature in this subject.

HISTORY

142. Standards of attainment by the age of seven are as expected nationally. At the age of eleven standards are below expectations. At the time when the school was last inspected standards were in line with national expectations throughout the school. The reason for the change is mainly to do with the very large mobility of pupils in the juniors who have not covered enough aspects of the history curriculum. Many of these pupils speak English as an additional language and are not yet at the stage to be able to handle the vast amount of information that is required to attain standards in history that are comparable with those in other schools. In addition to this, although each class has at least one history focus during the school year, many topics are not taught in sufficient depth.
143. Pupils in Year 2 have gained a good understanding of the Great Fire of London because of thorough and stimulating teaching. They talk expertly about dates and series of events and are beginning to empathise with people from the past. Following a discussion about Samuel Pepys and his diary, one pupil wrote her own diary entry about the day the fire started. *'I wock up eley (early). I sae (saw) big flames in the sky. I saw yellow glow in the sky. I wock up my mum and dad. We got sced (scared). We all got to the side of the river and bereyd our things'*. Pupils in Year 6 have only a limited understanding of the chronology of events. They confuse Victorian times with Tudor times and have little knowledge of people of influence during these times. They talk about the life of Ancient Egyptians with a greater degree of understanding and are aware that evidence about historical periods can be collated from a number of sources. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in history to compare and contrast different life styles and express their feelings about what life might have been like a long time ago.

144. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is effective, planning is detailed and takes account of different abilities within the class. Tasks and activities are interesting and stimulating and motivate pupils' curiosities. As a result of this pupils learn to ask appropriate questions, which help them to make progress. Good questioning by the teacher, such as, '*How do you know?*' and '*How can you tell?*' deepens pupils' thinking skills and encourages them develop their understanding of the past. Where teaching is not as effective, pupils are not sufficiently stimulated and the under-use of suitable resources means they are unable to find answers to their questions. Pupils in Year 5 are given good opportunities to use information and communication technology to research information about the Ancient Greeks, although the use of information and communication technology throughout the school is more limited.
145. A good feature of the curriculum for history is the emphasis placed on 'Black History' month. Good links are made between other subjects such as mathematics and art to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures. A good link has been established with a man in America whose late wife was a former pupil of the school. Pupils in Year 5 have begun a correspondence to establish what the local area was like during World War 2.
146. The curriculum is further enriched by visits to places of interest to support history work. For example, older pupils visited an air raid shelter to experience what life was like during World War 2. The school has worked hard recently to improve its planning for history and is beginning to adapt published schemes of work into its own weekly plans. Teachers are beginning to consider how they might make access to different historical topics and skills equal for all pupils. At present there are some classes that have a mixture of year groups. Pupils in different classes but in the same year group do not currently carry out the same type of historical enquiry. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and monitors teachers' planning documents. She and the assessment co-ordinator are currently thinking of ways in which to improve the assessment procedures for history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

147. Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected for seven and eleven-year-olds. In view of the large number of pupils leaving and joining the school in all year groups and the many pupils with English as an additional language, pupils make good progress. They achieve well in most aspects of the subject. This includes pupils with special educational needs, who receive good support.
148. The school has made good progress since the last inspection when there was insufficient emphasis on information and communication technology. It has set up a computer room where teaching and learning are often good. Here, pupils develop very good attitudes to computers in lessons and through opportunities outside lessons. For example, classroom support assistants run interesting lunchtime activities such as designing Christmas cards on computers. Good access to the computer room begins early, so that the children in the nursery become familiar with computers and produce imaginative colourful designs. Despite this improvement, resources are only satisfactory because the lack of some equipment restricts opportunities for older pupils. Teachers' plans show that pupils in Year 6 will work with sound, make electric bulbs light up and sense physical data such as pressure. However, current resources do not allow this to happen. There is no agreed system

for teachers to assess how well pupils learn and to use what they find out to plan future work.

149. While the co-ordinator's leadership of the subject is satisfactory, there is not a rigorous plan of action to ensure that the oldest pupils will carry out all the work that is planned for them. Furthermore, there has been no opportunity to observe systematically the teaching in different classes to share with teachers what is working well and how teaching might be developed. The school's initial focus has been on literacy and numeracy. The main impact in literacy is teachers' emphasis on word processing. This is most effective where, as in Year 2, teachers enable pupils to use computers to draft and redraft their writing. Teachers are beginning to enable pupils to use computers to gather information to support their work in other subjects. Notably pupils use the Internet for research in history and religious education. For example, pupils in Year 5 carry out research on the Ancient Greeks and those in Year 4 find out about Buddhism. The school has yet to extend the planned use of ICT across the range of subjects.
150. By the time they are seven most have good keyboard and mouse skills. Most can log-on to a computer, but many have only a limited ability to talk about how they could programme a floor robot to make it move in a particular way. Although teachers try to ensure that pupils learn correct terms, even some more able pupils are unsure of words such as 'cursor'. One talked about, '*that little book thing*' rather than a 'file'. By the time they are eleven, many pupils combine text and pictures well. Some pupils confidently use spreadsheets. Although some pupils have programmed a robot on a screen, many have poor skills in making things happen in a range of ways, such as bulbs lighting up in a sequence. This is because they have had too few opportunities to develop these skills. Because the school has been without access to the Internet until recently, pupils in Year 6 have not been able to send and receive e-mails and this has limited their attainment in communication skills.
151. Teaching is good. Teachers generally give pupils clear instructions and explanations so that they all know what to do. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and use praise effectively to motivate them and to create a good working atmosphere. Classroom assistants provide effective support for all pupils. Sometimes teachers take too long to spot pupils who are having difficulties, such as when Year 6 pupils were logging on to computers, and on these occasions learning slows. Teachers promote pupils' independence well as in Year 1 when pupils learn to save the pictures that they have created. As a result of teaching strengths pupils behave very well, co-operate effectively in pairs and try hard, even when they face difficulties.

MUSIC

152. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and eleven and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make sound progress. This is the same as when the school was last inspected. Although no lessons were timetabled in Year 6 during the inspection, evidence was collected from discussions with pupils and an analysis of teachers' planning documents.
153. Pupils in Year 2 learn how to maintain a steady beat and explain how it, '*stays the same all the way through*' and how '*it has no rests*'. They clap various rhythm patterns over a steady beat and explain that the difference between pulse and rhythm is that rhythm '*has rests*' and '*it changes*'. They have good opportunities to listen to and reflect upon different musical extracts. Whilst listening to the Chinese Dance from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* pupils explained how the music, '*goes*

quiet and loud and reminded me of floating'. A display of pupils' work showed that they have a good understanding of the work they have carried out. One pupil wrote, 'This week I learned that when you play a rhythm more than one it is called an *ostinato*'. Pupils in Year 6 develop their understanding of rhythm and have opportunities to use their knowledge and understanding to compose their own music. They take turns to conduct a group of pupils and have opportunities to discuss and evaluate each other's work. They talk excitedly about a visit they carried out to an African drumming workshop where good opportunities were offered for them to participate.

154. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. When teaching is effective, the teacher is confident and has a good understanding of what to teach. Lessons move at a good pace and pupils are active participants throughout. Good teaching is also characterised by good management of behaviour. Pupils are kept motivated and involved and do not have time to become disinterested. Where teaching is less effective, teachers are not secure in their own knowledge of the curriculum and lessons become little more than a series of play activities that do little to develop pupils' musical knowledge and understanding.
155. The school has adopted the local education authority's scheme of work, which is comprehensive and a good tool on which to base weekly plans. Sound opportunities are offered to enrich the curriculum, particularly to experience a range of multi-cultural music. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a weekly samba lesson, whilst visits to music centres and visitors to the school help to develop pupils' understanding of African and Indian music. The co-ordinator is in a good position to understand the strengths and weakness of the subject and has the opportunity to monitor teachers' planning documents.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Standards in physical education match those found at the time of the previous inspection and are those expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Girls and boys throughout the school take part in lessons with equal enjoyment and make at least satisfactory progress overall. They make good progress particularly in those lessons that build well on pupils' skills in games and dance because of their teachers' specific expertise. Most classes have three physical education lessons per week in each of three disciplines, selected from games, dance, gymnastics and swimming. This shows the importance that the school rightly attaches to developing pupils' skills in the subject.
157. Some very good teaching in the infants ensures that pupils learn well how to interpret music in controlled movements and to combine their movements to produce expressive dance sequences. In most lessons, pupils use space safely and sensibly, especially when their teachers clearly define the space they can use. The acoustics in both halls make it difficult for pupils to hear their teachers' instructions and recorded music. Some teachers overcome these problems by clear voice projection and ensuring that all pupils stop, listen and concentrate when asked. Only one games lesson was seen in the infants, in Year 2. Pupils in this lesson developed well their control of a ball using their feet because the teacher set them targets of control and passing that matched their capabilities.
158. Lessons in games at the end of the juniors show how well pupils progress from the infants. By the age of eleven, most pupils use a hockey stick skilfully to control a ball and send it accurately to a partner. They work sensibly with each other because the teacher expects them to concentrate on developing controlling skills and to listen

carefully to instructions. Pupils in the juniors, where teaching of the subject is good overall, make sound progress in gymnastics. Teachers teach pupils to link floor exercises well in order to demonstrate balance and variation in speed, for example when pupils in a Year 3 class found differing ways of transferring their weight onto their hands before moving into a controlled roll.

159. Most teachers have good strategies to manage their pupils, as in a Year 2 lesson when the teacher's obvious enthusiasm, very good planning and fast, but understanding pace, fully involved all of the pupils in all of the activities. As a result of lessons of this quality, pupils find that learning is fun and enthusiastically strive for high quality work. Sometimes, lessons are not so well thought out. They do not take enough account of the resources available, or pupils are not clear about what they have to do. Nevertheless, most teaching gives important attention to developing good work, with a high level of control, and teachers use praise and demonstration to good effect. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to swim at a local swimming pool and achieve an appropriate standard, though no such lessons were seen during the inspection.
160. The subject co-ordinator was absent during the inspection, but evidence would suggest that management of the subject is good. Physical education has a high profile in the school, and much has been done recently to raise teachers' expertise across all the disciplines and with good effect. There are good opportunities for pupils to experience further activities, for example in football, lacrosse and gymnastics, and the school has useful links with Manchester City Football Club.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

161. For the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, attainment in religious education matches the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils make satisfactory progress, including those who speak English as their second language and those who have special educational needs. Standards and progress were also judged to be satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. During the current inspection, one lesson for younger pupils was observed, and two for older pupils, and further evidence was gathered from pupils' books, displays around the school and discussions with the subject co-ordinator. The school scheme of work is based firmly on the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils study all six major world faiths, gaining an increasing insight into more complex concepts as they move through the school.
162. Many faiths are represented in the school, and one particularly strong feature of note is the way pupils willingly share their knowledge of their own faith and show respect for others. Ramadan had just ended at the time of the inspection and Muslim pupils eagerly recounted how they celebrated Eid. Important events in all the major religions are celebrated, and good displays show Diwali, Christmas and different harvest festival traditions from around the world. Pupils are willing to learn about other faiths and this makes a very strong contribution to the harmonious atmosphere of the school. Religious education makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
163. Younger pupils study Christianity and learn about weddings and special places. They share ideas about places that are special to them, and suggest home, bed, the mosque and the church. They know that a mosque is special to Muslims, and the church to Christians, and the teacher broadens their knowledge by sharing her special place, the Hindu temple. Their work was enriched by a useful visit to the

local Christian church and pupils drew on photographs of their visit for further information.

164. Older pupils use their literacy skills well to retell the Hindu story of Rama and Sita. In a very good lesson, pupils studied Buddhist teaching about the nature of happiness and considered how it could help them to understand aspects of their own lives. The teacher skilfully helped them to consider what makes them happy. They know that, although they enjoy their toys and possessions, these are not essential to their happiness, but their family and friends are. Pupils in Year 6 studied Islam in greater depth and know the importance of the Qu'ran and the Hajj to Muslims. They responded by writing imaginary accounts of their pilgrimage, showing an emotional response to this important feature of Islam. They co-operate well by sharing their own personal knowledge and experiences, and pupils of different faiths share their own ideas of important journeys and develop an awareness of the concept of life as a journey.
165. The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is satisfactory overall. Teachers show good knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. They use their pupils' own personal knowledge and faith backgrounds well to bring further information and ideas to lessons. They use questions skilfully to help their pupils to develop increased understanding of abstract concepts, for example the nature of happiness. In a very good lesson observed during the inspection, the pupils were challenged by the teacher's high expectations, but responded very well and progressed well in their ability to respond and reflect on new ideas. When time is used well, and lessons are moved along at a good pace, pupils remain involved with their activities. Occasionally, teachers do not expect their pupils to produce their best work and the quality of their learning is not as good as it could be.
166. A good range of visits enriches the curriculum. Visitors to school include the local Christian minister. Pupils use the Internet to research information; for example, those in Year 4 sought answers to questions about Buddhism. Good displays and a range of books support pupils' learning well in all the six faiths covered by the syllabus, although few examples of pupils' work is displayed.
167. The leadership and management of the well-qualified subject co-ordinator are satisfactory. She is new to the post, and has already prepared a long-term plan to ensure that each class has a clear scheme of work. She has a good knowledge of standards throughout the school and monitors progress through a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions and evaluations of lesson plans. Resources have been audited and improved and future plans include further in-service training to supplement teachers' knowledge. There has been good improvement in religious education since the previous inspection.