

INSPECTION REPORT

MOSTON FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Moston, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105427

Headteacher: Mr H S Bahra

Reporting inspector: Mrs J E Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 17th-19th March 2003

Inspection number: 246488

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Brookside Road
Moston
Manchester

Postcode: M40 9GN

Telephone number: 0161 6811801

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs G Noon

Date of previous inspection: 1st December 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Moston Fields Primary School is larger than most primary schools. There are currently 309 boys and girls on roll from 4 to 11 and a further 58 children attend full time in the Nursery. Attainment as pupils start school is below average. Approximately 29 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above the national average. Fourteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. The main needs are specific learning difficulties. One pupil has a formal Statement of Special Educational Need. Ten per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups although only one per cent has English as an additional language and these do not need help in English. The area from which the school draws most of its pupils reflects a wide variety of social circumstances but economically is less favoured than the national picture. The school benefits from being part of an Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with several very good features. Teaching is good and as a result pupils make good progress. From a low starting point many reach the level expected for their age by the time they leave school. Parents appreciate this and the school is held in high esteem in the community. The dedication and enthusiasm of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are reflected in the strong sense of teamwork and with the support of staff and governors much has been done to raise standards. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Achievement is good. Pupils reach the level expected for their age in reading, mathematics and science by the time that they leave school. In Year 2, achievement is very good in science and standards are above average.
- Standards in information and communication technology are above average in Year 6.
- Teaching is good and a focus on practical activities leads to effective learning.
- Management by the headteacher and key staff is very good and the school has a clear plan of action to raise standards further.
- The school provides a rich variety of experiences including very good opportunities for pupils to grow in maturity and learn about their role in society. This leads to a caring community.
- The school has very close links with parents and the community.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing throughout the school.
- The variety of learning opportunities for children in the Reception classes.
- The use of assessment information to set targets for pupils which tell them clearly how to improve.
- Attendance, which is well below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in December 1997 has been good. Standards in science and information and communication technology have significantly improved in response to better planning and resources. Test results in English have started to rise although writing is an aspect requiring more attention. The issues from the last inspection have all been dealt with and are having a positive effect on standards. Planning has greatly improved and all statutory requirements are now met. More focus on learning through practical activities and the greater use of information and communication technology has increased pupils' independent research skills. New buildings have greatly enhanced the accommodation,

especially the very attractive play area for the Nursery. In response to close monitoring and more training, teaching has improved and more very good teaching was observed.

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	B	A	Well above average A Above average B
Mathematics	D	D	C	B	Average C Below average D
Science	C	E	C	B	Well below average E

These results show considerable improvement and compared with similar schools the pupils are doing better than expected. Higher attaining pupils are doing well and many are exceeding the level expected for their age. Results have been gradually improving in recent years in line with the national trend but with a significant rise in standards two years ago, which was recognised by a National Achievement Award. This was continued in 2002. Better planning, stronger teaching and the use of assessment to track pupils' progress have brought about improvement. Current standards in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. These pupils attained below average standards in their national tests at age seven and their overall achievement in the intervening years is good. Although overall standards in English are satisfactory writing is a weaker aspect and is below average. The school met its target in mathematics last year and exceeded it in English. Current targets are sufficiently challenging and, with the strong teaching and additional booster classes in Year 6, the school is well placed to achieve them.

In 2002, the results of national tests in Year 2 were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools results were average in reading and writing but well below average in mathematics and pupils have not been making enough progress. Teachers' assessment in science showed that the number of pupils reaching the level expected for their age was well below average. The school has put in many changes and reorganised classes so that the pupils can be taught at a level more closely matched to their need. As a result, standards have greatly improved and are now average in reading and mathematics and above average in science. From a low starting point achievement is good and very good in science. Overall achievement in writing is satisfactory although standards remain below average because higher attaining pupils are not making as much progress as they should.

Children in the Nursery get off to a flying start to their education, responding well to a stimulating range of activities. Progress slows in the Reception classes where experiences are less exciting and do not always fully challenge children. From a low starting point, overall achievement is satisfactory although many do not reach the level expected by the time they move into Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs receive well planned adult support which ensures tasks match their specific needs. This enables them to make good progress and they benefit from all the school has to offer. Pupils seen to be especially gifted have their needs met by meeting with similar pupils from other schools.

In response to better resources, staff training and more detailed planning standards in information and communication technology have significantly improved throughout the school and are above average in Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are proud of their school and keen to support all it offers. They are interested in their lessons and try hard to please their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and learning takes place in an orderly atmosphere. Pupils play very happily together at lunchtime because of the exciting range of resources available. They join in the organised games with good team spirit.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respect each other and are particularly good at working together in groups. They rise to the challenge to work independently. Relationships are good. Older pupils help the younger ones.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is well below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The best teaching seen was in the Nursery and Years 2, 5 and 6 and much new learning takes place in these years. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen and this was caused by insecure knowledge of the needs of the pupils and the topic being taught.

Teaching of mathematics is good. Lively openings to lessons extend pupils' confidence to apply their skills to solve problems. The teaching of English is good overall. Early letters and sounds are taught through a range of practical activities and pupils apply these skills in their early reading. Good use of questions and discussions extends pupils' speaking and listening skills. Writing is not always developed effectively. In Years 1 and 2 teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' writing. In most years handwriting, basic grammar and punctuation skills taught in literacy lessons are not always being followed up in other examples of writing.

Effective use of support staff and a good understanding of the needs of the pupils in their classes leads to the needs of pupils with special educational needs being fully met. Pupils with behavioural difficulties benefit from the happy and caring atmosphere and this helps them to overcome their difficulties and make good progress.

In the best lessons individual expertise and enthusiasms are shared effectively for the benefit of all. Information and communication technology is taught well because of teachers' good subject knowledge. Management is positive and so learning is not disrupted. Teachers include opportunities to work in groups and lots of practical activities. Consequently, lessons move at a brisk pace and maintain pupils' interest. In mathematics, teachers make it clear to pupils what they are to learn in lessons and check this has been

achieved at the end of the lessons. This good practice is not as apparent in other lessons and leads to some confusion about tasks.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All statutory requirements are met and the variety of interesting experiences captures the interest of pupils. In the Reception classes, the curriculum is not as exciting as in the Nursery and some tasks are not matching the children's age and needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils have detailed individual education plans which enable teachers and classroom assistants to offer effective support in lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	No pupils need additional help because they are learning through English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual development is good and teachers encourage pupils to value themselves and the world in which they live. Pupils are very effectively taught about fairness and acceptable behaviour. Cultural development is good. Pupils learn about their own culture as well as life in a multi-ethnic society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a caring school and has very effective systems in place to check on pupils' safety. The school has very good procedures to assess pupils' academic progress. Pupils have targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy but these are not as effective as they could be because they are written in language that pupils do not really understand and teachers do not refer to them enough. Consequently, pupils are not clear how to improve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher is a very strong leader who has effectively managed many changes to lead the school forward. He is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and key staff. There is a team approach to decision making and a clear sense of direction for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are actively involved in the daily life of the school and in the decision making process. They check that all statutory duties are met. They are readily available to meet parents and share any concerns.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school thoroughly evaluates its performance. When areas have been identified, improvements are considered and implemented.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses the money it receives wisely and deploys its resources effectively. Additional grants are used correctly in the best interest of the pupils. The school gives good attention to the principles of best value and there is a close link between spending and the effect it will have on standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching is good and teachers expect their children to work hard.• Children enjoy school and behaviour is good.• Children grow in maturity and are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own learning.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities offered to pupils beyond their daily lessons.• Information about how well their children are getting on.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. Inspectors consider the school provides good information about pupils' progress and the range of activities outside normal lessons is very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Achievement is good. Pupils reach the level expected for their age in reading, mathematics and science by the time they leave school. In Year 2, achievement is very good in science and standards are above average.

1. From a below average level as they start school pupils are reaching the level expected for their age in Year 2 in reading and mathematics and this reflects good achievement. Standards are above average in science and for many this represents very good achievement. These standards are much better than the results of national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, which were below the national average in reading and well below in mathematics. Compared with schools in similar social and economic settings results were average in reading and well below average in mathematics. The headteacher and staff provide convincing arguments to explain these low standards including staffing difficulties, which hampered pupils' learning. Staffing has now stabilised and teaching is especially good in Year 2. This is a major factor in the improving standards. National test results were better for eleven-year-olds and were above the national average in English and average in mathematics and science. The comparison with similar schools shows pupils have been doing better than expected and results in English were well above average and in mathematics and science were above average. There was a significant rise in all subjects last year when the school was awarded a nationally recognised school Achievement Award. Current standards are average in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in English are not as high as last year's test results because more pupils in this group have special educational needs. Taking into consideration the low results of these pupils in the national tests at the end of Year 2 their current standards show good achievement.
2. This improvement in standards has been brought about by many changes including:
 - re-organisation of classes to avoid mixing children in the Reception class with pupils in Year 1. This has enabled teachers to follow more closely new planning guidelines;
 - improved support from classroom assistants which is especially beneficial for pupils with special educational needs;
 - more stability of teaching and further staff training in numeracy and literacy;
 - extending parental support especially in reading;
 - improved assessment procedures and pupils grouped by their ability;
 - additional booster classes in numeracy and literacy;
 - more focus on practical activities in science including the very popular science week.In the determination to raise standards a complete review of the Foundation Stage¹ has taken place but it is too early for any improvements to been seen in the test results.
3. Standards in reading are now average and pupils show an interest in books and are happy to read a story to an adult. In Year 2, pupils show understanding of previous stories indicating good recall of the names of characters. They related to the noisy owl in the story *The Animals' Wishes* as the character who interrupted every one else. Most look closely at pictures to help with their understanding as well as making good use of their knowledge of letters and sounds. Average and above average pupils are confident in using non-fiction books to locate information. By the time pupils reach Year 6 many are confident readers because time is set aside for quiet reading at the start of the day. Pupils enjoy discussing their preferences for a range of popular authors. Pupils in Year 6 have read Shakespeare plays as part of their literacy lessons and can discuss the characters in *Macbeth* showing a good understanding of the plot. Average and above average readers are confident reading non-fiction texts and can scan a page to locate a point they wish to investigate. The

¹ Foundation Stage – this begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later learning and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal and social development; knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development.

higher attaining pupils read unknown texts confidently with expression, recognise how the author creates suspense and can predict what might happen next.

4. In mathematics, more pupils in Year 2 reach the level expected for their age because of improved planning and teaching. Pupils are confident handling numbers up to 100. They understand odd and even numbers and identify patterns in the multiplication tables of 2, 5 and 10. In the opening of lessons pupils use their numeracy skills to solve simple problems. In Year 2, pupils apply their skills when working with money. All can match different coins to the value of one pound recognising this as 100 pence. The higher attaining pupils are more confident using their skills of multiplication and division in their calculations. These skills are extended in the juniors and in Year 6 many are competent working out problems mentally, although a few have difficulties explaining their methods of calculation. Most are confident with multiplication and division and use their knowledge of 10s and 100s when they work in decimals and find 10 per cent of a given number. Pupils understand fractions and are beginning to convert them to decimals. Written work shows a good range of work covered with pupils showing accuracy in handling data and recording their results using a variety of graphs. Higher attaining pupils benefit from using the accelerated mathematics computer program and are working at levels above average. They show good skills when extracting information from given data.
5. Standards in science in Year 2 are above average and the achievement of many is very good. Examples of pupils' work from the school's recent science week are impressive. The pupils show imaginative ideas to make models which include an electrical circuit to make the lights work. Other examples show a good understanding of a healthy diet and identify correctly healthy and unhealthy foods. Pupils record their work in different ways and higher attaining pupils are beginning to predict their findings and explain their conclusions clearly in their own words. Current standards in Year 6 are average. These pupils have made good progress from a low starting point as they started in the juniors. Pupils enjoy science and have a secure knowledge of scientific facts, because of a good coverage of the curriculum. Investigation is given priority and this enables pupils to learn from practical experiences. Pupils in Year 6 label their diagrams using correct terminology because teachers encourage pupils to use these words during lessons. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils designed their own experiments because the teacher used questions well to challenge their thinking. They prepared a recording sheet and took into account the principle of fair testing when deciding if the amount of water affects how much sugar will dissolve. Higher attaining pupils take their investigations that step further and spot a pattern in their results and so predict the next result.

Standards in information and communication technology are above average in Year 6

6. The school has given considerable attention to information and communication technology since the last inspection. Overall improvement has been very good and has been brought about by:
 - improved resources;
 - training for all staff;
 - a more co-ordinated approach to teaching information and communication technology with every class being timetabled for a lesson in the computer suite and having the opportunity to book extra time if needed;
 - implementation of a detailed scheme of work to help teachers with planning;
 - assessment being built into planning so staff have a clear understanding of the next steps in pupils' learning;
 - close links with St Matthew's R.C. High School City Learning Centre which shares expertise and resources;
 - very good leadership by the subject co-ordinator who is very well informed about the school's strengths in the subject as well as how standards can be raised even further.
7. Pupils in Year 6 have experienced a good range of activities and are confident using information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects. They are at ease with many programs and know what to do if mistakes occur. Standards are above average and this represents very good achievement for many pupils. Pupils use word processing effectively to present their work.

For example, poetry is attractively published with a variety of graphics to enhance the final result. In a lesson in Year 6 pupils enthusiastically used computers to gain information for a presentation about World War Two. All are confident in moving items around the screen, recording their commentary and saving their work. Conclusions in science have been written on the computer and findings supported with graphs. The digital camera is used to enhance artwork. Pupils competently use spreadsheets to analyse information, especially in mathematics. The first point of call for many when given a topic to research is the Internet. For example, the recent work on earthquakes was brought to life by the information found by the pupils. The school has effective systems in place to prevent access to unsuitable material. Information and communication technology is used to encourage decision-making. This can be seen in the designs pupils have made of a classroom. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from working with a partner and sharing their expertise and, as a result, make good progress in extending their skills.

8. These good standards in information and communication technology enhance learning in other subjects because the pupils are successful. This raises their self-esteem and gives them the confidence and motivation to try hard at tasks which they find more difficult.

Teaching is good and the focus on practical activities leads to effective learning.

9. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In the 26 lessons seen teaching was very good in 5 lessons, good in 13, satisfactory in 6 and unsatisfactory teaching was observed in 2 lessons. The best teaching seen was in the Nursery, Years 2, 5 and 6 and in these years tasks are more challenging and much new learning takes place.
10. Teaching in the Nursery has many very good features. Children feel secure and eager to learn because of the well established daily routines. Teachers and support staff work well together and are very aware of the needs of these young children. They know when to step in and offer help and when to encourage independence. Learning is enjoyable because of the variety of purposeful activities, which keep children busy throughout the day.
11. In Years 1 to 6, teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. The major factor for the improvement in information and communication technology is teachers' knowledge and ability to support pupils as they use the computers. Teachers also make effective use of the interactive white board in their lessons and this especially maintains the interest of the older pupils. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Lessons follow the structure of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and include a useful conclusion to consolidate pupils' learning. Numeracy skills are taught effectively in the lively opening to lessons which effectively increase pupils' problem solving skills. Letters and sounds are taught well and pupils use this skill in their reading.
12. Planning is good and teachers are very aware of the individual needs of their pupils and recognise that many find it difficult to maintain concentration for any length of time. To overcome this difficulty many lessons include group activities and practical tasks that maintain pupils' interest. Teachers appreciate that many pupils need to increase their speaking and listening skills and, especially in Years 5 and 6 include much discussion and have high expectations of pupils' contributions. This was very effective in the literacy lessons observed when pupils were debating the issues about the pending war with Iraq. Pupils respected the opinions of others and used technical vocabulary such as, lethal weapons, mass destruction and terrorism when putting forward their point of view.
13. A weakness in the previous inspection was linked to limited opportunity to carry out independent research. This has improved especially with more opportunities to use computers. Homework often includes research and pupils rise to this challenge and produce some impressive work. Pupils enjoy the regular setting of whole school challenges. For example, many attempted to estimate the total of the ages of the teachers in the school.

14. In the best lessons in Years 2, 5 and 6 a fast pace is set to lessons with pupils being told how much time they have to complete a task. This was most effective in a Year 2, literacy lesson when pupils were told there was *only four minutes left to finish*. This accelerated the rate of learning as pupils worked hard to complete their task.
15. A positive feature in most lessons is the warm relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers manage pupils well and have few problems in gaining and keeping the pupils' attention. There is often much shared humour that makes lessons enjoyable. For example, in Year 6 drama was included and pupils quickly grasped the idea of using language to create imaginative characters because the teacher mimed how Sherlock Holmes might have spoken.
16. Support staff are used well in lessons and this is very beneficial for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers plan tasks to meet their needs and they are supported by either the teacher or a classroom assistant to enable them to be fully involved in the lessons. When required, individual education plans are written which include specific targets. Teachers refer to these in their planning and, by regular monitoring check that when one target is reached another is set. As a result, these pupils make good progress linked to their prior attainment.

Management by the headteacher and key staff is very good and the school has a clear plan of action to further raise standards.

17. The headteacher is a very strong and determined leader. He leads by example being seen regularly about school and has earned the respect of parents who consider the school is well led and managed. Soon after his appointment the headteacher identified major weaknesses in the school's performance in the national tests at Years 2 and 6. The results painted a picture of underachievement compared with both the national average and the average for similar schools. This information was spelt out in no uncertain terms to all involved with the school. As a result, many changes have been put into place and current indications are these are reaping benefits, with the decline in standards being halted and improvements now evident in standards in both Years 2 and 6. Because staff have been involved in both the need for change and the changes themselves, they are supportive of them. This effective management of change has led to a real team spirit, with all working together to raise standards and ensure pupils are making as much progress as possible. The school now has a high quality improvement plan, which provides a key focus for improvement for the whole school community.
18. The deputy headteacher has played a key role in these changes, acting both as support and a critical friend for the headteacher. If necessary, slowing up the pace of change or searching out more advice to ensure the best route was being taken. The deputy headteacher also carries out the role of special educational needs co-ordinator very effectively. The requirements of the Code of Practice² are fully met and records are meticulously maintained. This strong leadership has led to the smooth and highly successful integration into Moston Fields of pupils from other schools specifically for pupils who have special educational needs.
19. The management of the juniors and the infants is good and has led to a closer check on the curriculum to see that skills are being given sufficient attention and that in the mixed age classes work is not repeated or missed out. The senior management team analyses assessment information and support is put in for pupils who are identified as not making as much progress as expected. This has increased the progress pupils make as they move from class to class because teachers have an informed picture of their current level of ability and their future needs. Under new management the Foundation Stage is being re-organised with more emphasis on learning through play and practical activities. This is already showing improvements in the Nursery. The subject leaders for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology provide effective support for

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

colleagues. The school has re-organised the management of English and mathematics but close liaison with the previous leader means that none of the strengths in the leadership have been lost. These subject leaders inspire other teachers because they are willing to give that extra effort to raise awareness about the subjects that they lead. For example, the science club and science week creatively show staff, parents and pupils how learning can be fun.

20. A key factor in improvement is the attention the school now gives to evaluating its performance. Detailed analysis of test results is carried out. When a weakness is spotted, prompt action is taken. This has been effective in improving reading in the juniors with more focus on questioning pupils to check they are fully understanding the books they read. Teaching is monitored well. This has led to improvement in the organisation of classrooms, evident in many classes during the inspection.
21. The school's motto, *Putting Children's Future First*, is displayed around school and features on all documents. Under this very effective leadership, this can be seen clearly in the daily life of the school.

The school provides a rich variety of experiences including very good opportunities for pupils to grow in maturity and learn about their role in society. This leads to a caring community.

22. Since the last inspection the school has taken a close look at the curriculum and introduced new planning guidelines to ensure the focus on content does not outweigh the teaching of specific skills. As a result, pupils now follow a richer curriculum which is more relevant to their needs. The emphasis is very much on developing self-confidence and self-esteem and providing a firm foundation for the enjoyment of learning and self-involvement. A positive feature is that all pupils have equal access to all the school's full range of learning opportunities.
23. The school now follows the local authority guidelines for teaching religious education and all statutory requirements are met. A contributory factor in the greatly improved standards in information and communication technology is the successful implementation of detailed planning guidelines. These tell teachers clearly which skills to introduce so that pupils acquire skills in the correct sequence. In other subjects, the school follows nationally recommended planning guidelines and adapts them to the school's needs especially for the mixed age classes. This careful planning avoids repetition or omissions and resolves a weakness identified in the last inspection. Teachers also make effective links between subjects so that learning is more relevant for pupils. This can best be seen in the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. Themed weeks are a popular feature in the school that also enrich the curriculum. The displays of pupils' work alert visitors to the high quality work produced during these events. The fantastic collection of models created using an electrical circuit showed great imagination. Models ranged from a bear with a nose that lit up made by a young pupil, to some amazing working lighthouses.
24. This is a very caring school with very good procedures to check on pupils' safety. This is extended to the curriculum and in Circle Time³ pupils learn the importance of good relationships and helping each other. This was seen in Year 2 when very sensitive teaching developed the idea of teamwork. Pupils explained they were successful in changing places in an orderly way because *we helped each other, we were careful and helpful* and *we worked together*. The school gives good attention to healthy living and has a 'Healthy School's Award' and an 'On Your Marks Award' for physical education. Pupils are taught about the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Sex education is included as part of health education lessons.
25. Pupils in Year 6 help the younger pupils to feel secure, to understand school rules and to settle into school life. The Year 6 pupils look forward to being *Buddies* in this way and have training to carry

³ Circle Time- during these sessions pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person will speak at a time. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease free from any form of interference of interruption from other children.

out their role sensitively. The personal development of all involved is enriched and is further promoted by the buddies meeting with buddies from other schools to share their experiences.

26. The previous inspection identified the number of extra-curricular activities as poor. This is not the case now and many staff give generously of their time to provide a very good range of activities for pupils. These include sports, fishing, a computer club and musical activities. The school is also enriched by many visits and visitors which bring subjects to life for pupils because they learn from first hand experiences.
27. The curriculum includes good opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
28. Spiritual development is good. Teachers provide many relevant experiences to develop pupils' self-esteem so that they learn to value themselves and grow in maturity. In many classes pupils have notice boards where they can celebrate their achievements. For example, pupils in Year 3 have written, *I have done neat writing, I am pleased with my division*. They learn about other faiths in religious education and are taught to appreciate the values of other cultures. Teachers give due attention to extending pupils' curiosity and appreciating the world around them. This is best illustrated by the plants being grown in the Nursery and the suspension created in the Reception class as the children wait for the butterfly to emerge from its chrysalis.
29. The provision for moral development is stronger and is very good overall. Pupils develop moral understanding through the discussion of rules, how to behave in class and around school, and what is right and wrong. Teachers consistently apply the school's rewards and sanctions so pupils are aware of what is acceptable behaviour. All staff provide very good role models for the pupils. Tolerance and patience are features in the management of pupils and this leads to pupils respecting adults in the school. In lessons, pupils debate issues which provide opportunities to make decisions and understand how their behaviour can affect others. Pupils discussed the value of space travel after the Columbus shuttle tragedy and the pros and cons of going to war. This enables pupils to explore wider issues and come to decisions about what is right and wrong and how circumstances can often change people's opinions. Pupils recognise that some people need help to overcome difficulties and this has led to much fund raising and support for local and national charities.
30. The pupils learn together effectively in a happy, social setting because provision for social development is good. Posters around school encourage friendship. For example, in Year 5, visitors are welcomed with the headline *come and meet us* supported by photographs and character descriptions of the pupils. Many lessons include collaboration and when pupils are expected to work independently in lessons, they usually do this well, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The School Council is a very good strategy to develop the pupils' awareness of citizenship. Members of the School Council show a sense of ownership for the school because they have a good level of responsibility.
31. Cultural development is good. Work in art and design and literacy contribute to pupils' aesthetic and cultural awareness. For example, as part of literacy lessons pupils study a range of classical texts including in Year 6 the work of William Shakespeare. Pupils say they enjoyed *Midsummer Night's Dream* and had good recall of the characters. Pupils study the work of famous artists and are successful in their attempts to paint in their style. Pupils learn about other culture in lessons and through visits and visitors. Pupils have visited a temple and enjoyed a performance by African dancers and drummers. Pupils from King David School visit to explain Hannukah to the pupils at Moston Fields. Other major festivals are celebrated in assemblies and these encourage pupils to recognise the importance of rights and beliefs of different faiths.

The school has very close links with parents and the community

32. Parents have very positive views of the school and the school has adopted some innovative approaches to strengthen this partnership. The school year starts with an opportunity to meet the

teachers where parents are informed about the topics to be covered and how they can help their children at home. Other more formal meetings in the autumn and summer term allow parents to find out about the progress of their children. Every week the school organises a *surgery* and teachers are available either by appointment or on an informal drop in basis. Governors also run monthly *surgeries* and the school gives great attention to parents' suggestions and concerns. Parents are very appreciative of this and one parent was very impressed by the way resources were adapted to meet the special needs of her child.

33. The previous inspection identified an omission in the school's prospectus. This has been rectified and the school's documents are now well presented and very informative. Parents receive numerous newsletters, which keep them up-to-date with everything happening in the school. New parents welcome the opportunity to visit before their children start school. Annual reports are well written and give a full picture about children's progress.
34. As a result of these close links, the school is in tune with parents' needs and consequently events are well attended. For example, in the personal, social and health education week parents can take part in activities and meet with professions offering advice about dental health and drugs awareness. As part of the Education Action Zone ⁴ training has been provided in information and communication technology as well as social events like the enjoyable tasting of exotic fruits. The events organised by the very busy Parents and Friends' Association are also well supported and considerable funds are raised for the benefit of the pupils.
35. The school has outstanding links with the local community that enrich both the curriculum and pupils' personal development. Good support from local businesses provides sponsorship for special events, such as sports day. Many local people visit school to talk about their experiences and this makes learning effective because the sessions are both relevant and enjoyable. For example, fire officers spoke to the pupils about fire safety and the young children got the chance to explore the fire engine. Older pupils thought the visit from a local theatre company was *fantastic*. As part of the school's Healthy School Award pupils plant flowers in the local area and the police visit to talk about personal safety. Links with the community and other schools are extended through the support of the Education Action Zone. This can best be seen in activities like the release of balloons to celebrate the launch of the action zone when everyone enjoyed a piece of cake made by a local baker. Another shared project is the arrangement made for gifted and talented pupils to come together to work with pupils from other schools.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing throughout the school

36. The 2002 results of national tests in writing for Year 2 pupils were below the national average and average when compared with similar schools. The number of pupils reaching higher standards was well below the national average and this held down the school's overall performance. Current standards reflect a similar picture with few pupils working at levels higher than expected for their age. Considering pupils start in Year 1 with below average levels of attainment overall achievement is satisfactory. However, many are not making enough progress and the higher attaining pupils are underachieving. Test results for eleven-year-olds showed a more positive picture last year and were above the national average in English. This is a significant achievement for many. However, reading is included within these results and writing is not as strong. Current standards are below average in writing. Pupils in Year 6 attained below average standards in the national tests at age 7 and their achievement in the intervening years has been satisfactory.

⁴ Education Action Zones are local partnerships of schools, Local Education Authorities, representatives from business and community organisations. They work together to develop new and innovative ways of raising standards of education.

37. Most pupils in Year 2 can put down their ideas on paper and make good use of their knowledge of letters and sounds to attempt new words. They understand that writing changes for different purposes and have made a good attempt at writing instructions for making marzipan fruit and made a list of ingredients. However, many pupils rely heavily on the spoken word and this leads to errors in their grammar and spelling. For example, one higher attaining pupil wrote, *when they was running he dropt the brush and stud on it*. Many are not using basic punctuation correctly. Higher attaining pupils are more accurate using capital letters and full stops and are attempting to use dialogue to make their characters more interesting. However, there are few examples of sustained writing and higher attaining pupils are not always being sufficiently challenged. For examples, when marking work, some teachers' comments are too positive and give pupils a false impression of their attainment. Work does not always extend the pupils' learning. For example, in one lesson observed the higher attaining pupils' task included cutting out captions for comics and newspapers. This led to many pupils reading favourite parts from the comics and an opportunity to write their own captions was missed. Pupils have a legible print but a few continue to mix upper and lower case letters and are unsure about size and spacing.
38. Most pupils in Year 6 produce a satisfactory amount of writing but much is spoiled by inaccurate spelling and poor handwriting. The school has a clear handwriting policy but this is not being put into practice and so few pupils have achieved a fluent style of joined-up handwriting. Many are still relying heavily on their knowledge of sounds to spell words which they should be spelling correctly, for example, *trafic* and *burnted*. Errors are often linked to pupils' speech and a lack of imaginative vocabulary affects the quality of writing. This can be seen in an example of a letter of complaint which included, *to complain about meal me and three friends had*. A small core of higher attaining pupils show more flair and structure their writing very well. For example, a letter of complaint included *I found your coffee appalling for several reasons* and then sequences these including *firstly* and *finally*. Teachers remind pupils of basic punctuation but many are failing to use this information in their independent writing and so basic errors in punctuation remain. Pupils are taught effectively how to structure their work and many are starting to use paragraphs to group their ideas together. However, insufficient attention is given to editing work and so pupils are not learning to recognise and correct their own mistakes.
39. The school is well aware of the weakness in writing and has a clear action plan to raise standards. This includes extending the range of writing pupils do in other subjects so that they have more opportunities to improve their skills. The focus on speaking and listening in Year 5 and 6 is having a positive effect on pupils' use of technical terms although many still struggle to express their ideas in writing.

The variety of learning opportunities for children in the Reception classes

40. As part of its determination to raise standards the school carried out a detail analysis of the progress children were making in the Foundation Stage. This revealed that children were not making as much progress as they should be. Since then considerable changes have taken place under new leadership. These are now evident in the Nursery and the children now benefit from a stimulating and well organised curriculum. The next stage of improvement is to build on the Nursery experiences in the Reception classes.
41. In the Reception classes, the curriculum is based on the recommended areas of learning but is in a more structured way than the Nursery. In the daily literacy and numeracy lessons opportunities are missed to draw on less formal experiences to promote reading, writing and number. This leads to some mornings lacking variety to match the interest of the children with a formal literacy session followed by a numeracy lesson. A review of children's work shows an overuse of photocopyable worksheets rather than practical activities. These tasks are not extending children's learning especially the higher attaining children because they include too much colouring and not enough opportunity for free writing. Many examples include cutting and pasting pictures and it is unclear how many practical first hand experiences are offered to the children For example, children have cut out

pictures of toys when learning about growth and the needs of babies. In the classrooms, *flower shops* encourage role-play but they are rather cramped and lack resources to encourage writing. One shop lacks money and a cash register so the opportunity to use number in a practical activity is missed.

42. A common weakness in lessons seen was a lack of imaginative tasks to capture children's enthusiasm. For example, in numeracy the task was to put paper flowers into groups but in practice the children stuck flowers on a shape and little new learning took place. In literacy, insufficient opportunity was given for speaking and practising writing. In a dance lesson observed the focus was too much on the children learning a dance rather than being creative and learning to interpret the music with their own movements. Examples of art on display show a variety of resources are used but some activities include too much repetition. For example, sticking paper squares on an outline of a gingerbread man, led to a completed picture but limited development of children's imagination and creative skills.

The use of assessment information to set targets for pupils which tell them clearly how to improve

43. The school has greatly improved assessment procedures since the last inspection and now has a wealth of detailed information about the progress pupils are making and the next steps they need to take to improve. In literacy and numeracy the school is attempting to include pupils more in their own learning by giving them targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy. This good practice is not being as effective as it could be because pupils are not always clear about what the targets mean because they are written in language which they do not fully understand. For example, in Year 6 one target included *to develop character through narrative* and discussion revealed a lack of understanding about what this meant. Similarly, in Years 1 and 2 pupils had their targets on display on their desks but few referred to them because they included phrases such as *use language and structures from reading when writing* and this made little sense to the pupils. This is also a weakness in the numeracy targets when teachers have used the objectives in the National Numeracy Strategy without changing the vocabulary to make it easier for pupils to follow. Often too many targets are included and this makes them less effective as pupils find it difficult to recall them.
44. Older pupils are more aware of the purpose of their targets. In Year 6, a few pupils refer to them to check on their progress and the higher attaining pupils can discuss them with relevance to the National Curriculum level they hope to achieve in the national tests. However, teachers are not always reminding pupils of their targets and so many forget them. In one lesson observed the teacher reminded pupils of their targets but because there are so many it led to some confusion and clouded the main learning outcome for the lesson.

Attendance, which is well below the national average

45. Although the school's attendance figures are good compared with Manchester they are well below the national average. The school encourages pupils to attend by rewarding good attendance and many pupils have good attendance records. The school's prospectus makes it very clear to parents that they have a duty to ensure their children attend regularly and punctually and that poor performance is often linked to poor attendance. The first point in the school's home-school-child agreement is *to see that my child goes to school regularly, on time and properly equipped*. Nevertheless, the number of parents taking children on holiday in term time and low attendance by a small number of pupils has a big effect on the school's attendance figures.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) raise standards in writing throughout the school by:
 - implementing the school's handwriting policy;
 - giving more attention to editing work so that pupils learn to spot and correct their errors, including their spelling mistakes;
 - checking that pupils transfer the skills taught in literacy lessons to their other writing;
 - ensuring that pupils have as many opportunities as possible to practise writing in a range of different styles in other subjects;
- (2) improve the range of learning experiences offered to pupils in the Reception classes;
- (3) use the information now available to make the literacy and numeracy targets set for pupils more effective by:
 - writing them in language which pupils understand;
 - reducing them in number;
 - referring to them more so that pupils recall them and try to take note of them in their work;
- (4) look for even more ways of impressing on parents that they are responsible for the regular attendance of their children.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

26

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

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	13	6	2	0	0
Percentage	0	19	50	23	8	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 four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	58	309
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	101

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	44

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
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	19	24	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	16
	Girls	18	19	20
	Total	30	33	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (71)	77 (74)	84 (86)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	15
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	31	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (76)	81 (79)	81 (86)
	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	21	25	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	21
	Girls	22	18	22
	Total	39	34	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (73)	74 (69)	93 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	21
	Girls	22	20	22
	Total	37	38	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (69)	83 (73)	93 (89)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	270	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	6	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)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	218

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65.3
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	761,662
Total expenditure	754,979
Expenditure per pupil	2257
Balance brought forward from previous year	75,842
Balance carried forward to next year	58,644

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	367
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	49	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	46	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	37	2	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	49	12	0	7
The teaching is good.	54	37	2	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	35	17	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	35	3	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	29	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	37	7	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	47	46	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	47	0	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	39	15	2	10

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.