

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PAUL'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105498

Headteacher: Mr D Berry

Reporting inspector: Mr F. Carruthers
21285

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 June 2003

Inspection number: 246497

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wilmslow Road Withington Manchester
Postcode:	M20 4AW
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev S Woodhead
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21285	Mr F Carruthers	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Music Religious education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13526	Mr R Barnard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18824	Mr J Heap	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	English Art and design Special educational Needs	
32548	Mrs J Raczowska	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Educational Inclusion	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This voluntary controlled Church of England primary school has 352 pupils on roll, which includes 45 full-time children in the nursery year. There are mixed age groups in all classes except one nursery and one reception class. The attainment of the children on entry to the nursery is just below that expected of children aged three. Almost half the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with a number of race heritages that include Black Caribbean, Asian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, African and also a number with dual heritage. About one third of pupils have English as an additional language, which is very high for primary schools nationally. Their mother languages include Urdu, Arabic, Bengali and Turkish and 23 pupils are at the early stages of learning English. There are a few refugee children. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free schools (at about 35 per cent) is above the average for schools nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in line with the national average but there is no pupil with a Statement of special educational need. Their needs mainly relate to moderate learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural problems. Pupil mobility¹ is slightly above the average for schools nationally. The school is housed in an old building with several temporary classrooms. Plans to move into new buildings in 2004 are well in hand.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good education for its pupils and has significant strengths. Pupils achieve well because of the good quality of teaching and provision for their personal development. Overall, standards in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science compare very well with similar schools and the leadership and management of the school are good. Although the cost of educating a pupil at the school is above the average of primary schools nationally, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Children make a good start in the nursery and reception classes and continue to achieve well so that by the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and science are above average.
- The quality of teaching is good and provision for pupils' personal development is very good. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- There is a rich curriculum taught, a very good range of activities outside lessons and music is a strength of the school.
- Partnerships with parents are very effective.
- Leadership, management and teamwork are strong features of the school.

What could be improved

- The quality of pupils' handwriting and the way the pupils present their work.
- Standards in physical education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in February 1998. Key issues relating to school development planning, information and communication technology (ICT) and health and safety matters have been resolved well. There have been good improvements in a range of aspects, including standards, teaching and learning, provision for the pupils' personal development and the leadership and management of the school.

¹ The number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the usual times

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

Pupils achieve well and standards by the end of Year 6 are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, results were average in English and science and above average in mathematics when compared with schools nationally. Pupils in last year's Year 6 classes made very good progress when compared to their attainment at the end of Year 2. Results in National Curriculum tests have improved since the time of the last inspection in line with the national trend upward and compare very favourably with schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. A good proportion of pupils achieve above the nationally expected Level 4 in each subject. The school sets challenging targets for pupils to achieve and is successful in reaching them. However, standards of handwriting could be higher and there are inconsistencies in the presentation of pupils' work in different classes. Attainment has improved in ICT and is now above average. Attainment is also above average in art and design, and design and technology. Many pupils achieve high standards in learning a musical instrument. Attainment in geography, history, religious education and physical education is average. Attainment could be higher than that in physical education and this is because lessons are often too short and some staff have limited skills to teach the subject. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in writing, mathematics and science, and average in speaking, listening and reading. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to do well and join in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils respond very well to the school's systems of rewards and sanctions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' independence develops very well and relationships are built on trust and respect.
Attendance	Satisfactory, being in line with the national average for schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good throughout the school. A good proportion of lessons are very good or excellent and there is very little unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching in the Foundation Stage² is good and helps the children to settle in quickly and develop personal and social skills very well. The teaching of English and mathematics in infant and junior classes is made effective by grouping the pupils according to their levels of attainment. As a result, the teaching challenges the pupils well and their learning is good. Pupils put in a lot of effort and concentrate well in lessons. The teaching of basic skills to support literacy and numeracy is well planned but the teaching of handwriting is not consistent enough to achieve good standards. The teaching of computer skills is much improved and there is very good teaching of individual musical instruments. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language receive good support, whether in class or in small groups withdrawn from the class. Higher attaining pupils are given good encouragement to do well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall but the time available for lessons in the junior classes is below the recommended minimum. This results, for instance, in too little time for lessons of physical education and skills are not always developed properly. The time allocated to lessons in the junior years is currently the subject of review by the school. There is a very good range of activities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Provision is very carefully planned to meet the needs of individual pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils at the early stages of learning English achieve well as a result of being immersed in the language at school and being taught by the specialist teacher. They make good progress, which is regularly checked as they become more proficient English speakers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. All aspects of the school's ethos support very well the pupils' personal development. There are very good opportunities to learn about different cultures and traditions in Britain today.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. All procedures to guide and support the pupils' personal, behavioural and academic progress are very good.

Links with parents are very good and the school provides a very good range of information for parents about the work of the school and their children's progress.

² The Foundation Stage refers to the nursery and reception years of schooling

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has improved the leadership and management through effective teamwork, which is a strength of the school. Staff play a full part in planning the school's development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors carry out their responsibilities well. Their awareness of the school's strengths and points for improvement is satisfactory.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school compares its performance with others, challenges itself to improve and seeks best value from purchases and services.
The strategic use of resources	Good. All funding is directed well to its intended purposes and as a result pupils achieve well.

Levels of staffing, both teaching and support, are good. The school has a good range of learning resources. Limitations of the current buildings are being addressed with the proposed move into new buildings in 2004.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have very positive views of the school. • They feel that their children like school. • The pupils make good progress. • Teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school. • The school helps the children to become mature and responsible and to work hard. • Behaviour is good. • The school is well led and managed. 	<p>A small number of parents have some concerns over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the level of homework given; • the arrangements for supervision of pupils at lunchtime.

Inspectors agree with the parents' very positive views. The school has agreed to review the consistent setting of homework. Inspectors found the arrangements for lunchtime supervision are good, given the considerable problems associated with the accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils achieve well at St Paul's. Children make good progress during the Foundation Stage,³ especially in personal, social, emotional and physical development. By the end of the reception year, almost all children achieve the early learning goals in all six areas of learning and many are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. The children are inquisitive, keen to give their opinions and they learn well about the world around them. They talk readily to visitors and learn to play together well. Their understanding of numbers is good and they enjoy drawing and painting, making and designing because of the good quality teaching they receive. Children learning English as an additional language achieve the basics of the language quickly through being immersed in talk in classrooms, and through good quality teaching by both class teachers and the teacher supporting children from ethnic minorities.
2. This good progress continues in the mixed-aged infant classes. Standards in the current Year 2 are above the average found in schools nationally in writing, mathematics, science, art and design, and music. Attainment in speaking and listening, reading, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history, physical education and religious education is average overall. Compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, results in recent years in reading, writing and mathematics have been above and sometimes well above average. Pupils show confidence in basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this is because lessons are challenging and pitched very well to cater for the different levels of attainment in year groups. The pupils are grouped by their prior attainment and within each group, work is set which supports the pupils' attainment. Most pupils are happy to talk to visitors about things that interest them, and they are polite and well spoken. Most are confident readers and choose books independently. They have a good range of skills to help them gain meaning from what they read. Attainment in writing in the current Year 2 is better than last year. The pupils write in different styles and for different purposes such as listing instructions or creating their own narrative. Spelling is satisfactory but handwriting is often untidy and this spoils the overall presentation of their work.
3. In mathematics by the end of Year 2, pupils are accurately counting up and down in twos, fives and tens and can explain the patterns formed in this way. They are beginning to solve simple problems. In science, pupils can carry out an investigation to try to stop ice melting with some level of independence, many with a basic understanding of the need to be organised as they work.
4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets set for them. Early identification and prompt intervention by the school means that frequently pupils are taken off the school's list of pupils with special educational needs because they make up lost ground. Those who require longer support have their targets reviewed and updated half termly. The progress of pupils learning English as an additional language is checked carefully and support provided where necessary. This

³ The Foundation Stage refers to the nursery and reception years of schooling

can take the form of group work led by the specialist teacher in English lessons or separately in the library.

5. All pupils continue to achieve well in the junior years, because of good teaching that is well planned and makes very effective use of assessments of what pupils need to do to improve further. The school sets challenging targets for pupils in National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics and is successful in achieving or exceeding them. Pupils achieve well and standards by the end of Year 6 are average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Results in National Curriculum tests have improved since the time of the last inspection in line with the national trend upward and compare very favourably with schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. A good proportion of pupils achieve above the nationally expected Level 4 in each subject. Pupils' achievement from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 was very good. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well and are frequently among the highest attaining pupils in year groups.
6. In English, standards are average overall by the end of Year 6 and a good proportion of pupils achieve the higher Level 5 in tests. Pupils read and talk about favourite authors and know how to find information from reference books, CD-ROMs and the Internet. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Extended writing improves and the range and purposes for writing are explored more widely. However, standards of handwriting are not as good as they should be and the presentation of work is sometimes indifferent.
7. In mathematics and science, standards are above average. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have built very well on their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils competently apply these skills and knowledge to everyday situations. Most pupils now have strategies for solving problems, whilst the highest attaining pupils have several and confidently investigate a range of links between problems and their answers. All pupils know the value of numbers, so that they accurately multiply by ten and 100. In science, the pupils use a good range of scientific vocabulary and have a good grasp of the principle of making a test fair when investigating weight as a force on pieces of rock. They make sensible predictions and can explain their findings confidently to others.
8. Attainment is above average in art and design, design and technology and ICT, which constitutes good improvement in this last subject, as standards were too low at the time of the last inspection. Pupils use the Internet for research purposes and have begun to make multi-media presentations. Their word processing skills, using the various menus and tools, are generally good. Many pupils learn one of several musical instruments taught in school and achieve high standards of performance. Because of good provision, talented pupils have good opportunities to excel in the arts. Their skills in games and sport are promoted well through specialist coaching from local clubs in soccer and tennis. Attainment in other subjects is average. Though standards in physical education are average, pupils should be achieving more in physical education and this is mainly because lesson time is often too short and the skills of some teachers are limited.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' very good attitudes to school, their behaviour and very good relationships with staff and each other are key strengths of the school and have a very positive impact on the pupils' achievements and personal development. Standards are higher than those reported at the last inspection.

10. Both parents and pupils say that the pupils enjoy coming to school. Their enjoyment of learning is evident throughout the school from nursery to Year 6. For example, in a Geography lesson, infant pupils were excited, following up a class discussion about Australia, by examining various resources to find out more about the country and its people. Pupils respond very well to the broad range of curricular and extra-curricular activities provided. These help them to develop self-esteem and confidence, especially in performing, and have a very positive impact on their achievements especially in art and design, and music.
11. In the great majority of lessons, pupils show very good interest in their work and want to do well and please their teacher. Children in the Foundation stage settle well both in the nursery and reception classes. They soon develop a positive approach and an enjoyment for their activities. This showed very well in the nursery when the children moved to the music room very excitedly and very quickly shared percussion instruments. Their enjoyment led to them developing a good sense of rhythm and appreciation of sound levels in their playing. Attitudes remain consistently very good as pupils move through the school. For example, in an ICT lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were confident to try out very good ideas as they produced multi-media presentations about Viking life. Obvious enjoyment was shown by all pupils who participate in the choir and play instruments such as steel pans. Pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language show very good attitudes to work in classes and when given individual or group tuition. They are keen to make progress and work hard. Work is set at a level which best suits their individual needs so that pupils can achieve well and make progress.
12. Behaviour is very good. There have been two temporary and no permanent exclusions over the last two years, a figure that is well below the national average. Behaviour in assemblies, in the dining room and at playtimes is very good. Pupils respond very well to the very consistent approach by all staff and the recognition by members of staff of their efforts.
13. Pupils are developing a very good sense of fairness and awareness of the impact of their actions on others. They know the reasons for the school rules. This was seen in infant classes where they discussed and recorded the importance of rules when related to nursery rhymes such as *Jack and Jill*. No bullying was observed during the inspection. Pupils and parents report that they have few concerns about issues in relation to oppressive, racist or sexist attitudes or behaviour. Racial harmony reflects the school's very positive approach to making sure everyone is included in the work and life of the school.
14. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils undertake a good range of duties and responsibilities, for example, all Year 6 pupils acting as *Buddies*. Their independence and self-confidence are developed well, for example, through an annual residential visit. Pupils are well engaged in the life of the school and the local community, such as when they perform at local festivals and the local church. They are developing a very good appreciation of moral, social and environmental issues. They reflect well on the position of others less well off than themselves, as seen in work done on *Refugee Week*. Their appreciation of music and art is developing very well with good stimulation from the school. Pupils enjoy reading, including poetry.
15. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils are very friendly and chatty. They get on well together and help each other. Very good relationships between staff and pupils in lessons help pupils in their learning. Pupils also co-operate very well in

pairs and groups, as was seen in a Years 5 and 6 lesson where very good interactions produced a very lively debate where pupils considered both sides of a dilemma, such as fouling a player and injuring him to stop a goal in football.

16. Attendance levels are satisfactory, being in line with the national average. Levels of unauthorised absence and lateness are lower than those reported at the time of the last inspection. Both have reduced in the current year as a result of the positive efforts of the school to improve standards.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching is good. Seventy-six per cent of the teaching is good or better and 30 per cent is very good or excellent. Teaching is of a consistently good quality across year groups and consequently the pupils' learning matches this. The proportion of good and better teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection. There is very little unsatisfactory teaching and few shortcomings. These are: variations in teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work, and the teaching of skills in physical education.
18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers and support staff have a very good awareness of the needs of young children and manage them very well. Not only are the children made to feel secure, they are given interesting and exciting things to do. This is perhaps best illustrated by the range of activities that the children can learn from in the designated area outside the classrooms. Staff plan activities which promote the children's knowledge of their surroundings, with mini beast trails for example, as well as for their creative development through role-play in dens that the children build, tents, as well as facilities such as 'petrol pumps', and their physical development on apparatus and large wheeled toys. As a result, children are keen to come to school, they are curious and make good gains in their learning. They become very independent and concentrate well.
19. Strengths across all classes in infant and junior classes include how well teachers manage the pupils and the effectiveness of the methods to motivate and get the best out of them. Relationships between staff and pupils are characterised by being relaxed and based on mutual respect. Staff use the school's system of rewards effectively and pupils respond accordingly.
20. There are several features of teaching methods which help to make lessons very productive and pacy. Small group work by teaching assistants makes a good contribution to learning. The teacher of pupils learning English as an additional language varies her role very successfully, sometimes teaching the whole class in English lessons and at other times supporting mixed groups of pupils that include those from ethnic minorities. As a result, pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress and are fully involved in lessons. Computers and new technology are used very well to support teaching in subjects such as literacy and numeracy. Teachers make good use of *talking partners* and *hot seating* to promote speaking and listening skills. Teachers use questions very successfully to delve into issues and set pupils thinking. Good examples were seen in history, when teachers asked, *How do we know?* and pupils began to understand sources of evidence.
21. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are generally taught well and the grouping of mixed-aged classes by pupils' prior attainment for lessons of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies means teaching is well suited to the pupils' needs. However, there are some shortcomings. Handwriting is not taught as well as it might

be, teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' work vary too much, and there are some missed opportunities to use skills of numeracy in other subjects, and skills of literacy, when worksheets are used, for instance in science. A significant improvement in teaching this subject, however, has been the increased focus on providing opportunities for practical investigations. This was evident in a successful lesson involving infant-aged pupils on the topic, physical change, when pupils explored the melting of ice in an ice balloon.

22. Pupils with special educational needs are usually taught in class. Groups for literacy and numeracy organised according to pupils' prior attainment mean that teachers can plan work at an appropriate level and this helps the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are used by teachers as a guide to planning. Both teachers and teaching assistants provide very strong support for pupils to ensure they achieve their personal targets. Some pupils whose basic number and language skills need a special boost are given individual support. This provision is also very good and contributes well to the progress pupils make.
23. Teaching is good in most subjects: art and design, geography, history, ICT and music. It is satisfactory in design and technology in infant classes and good in junior classes. Teaching is good in religious education in infant classes but there was insufficient evidence to judge its quality in junior classes. Learning was good, however. There have been significant improvements to the teaching of ICT since the time of the last inspection and as a result, standards have improved. Teachers and support staff, including the technician, make good use of the ICT suite for teaching skills and supporting work in other subjects. The expertise of staff to use good quality software has been improved through better training and they are now confident and enthusiastic. Staff are beginning to make use of new technology, such as an interactive whiteboard, in their work. Teaching in physical education is satisfactory overall but has shortcomings. The importance of warm up and cool down periods does not figure highly enough in planning, often because lessons are too short, and a few staff have insufficient expertise to improve specific skills, for example, using a tennis racket.
24. The marking of pupils' work in English is generally constructive but sometimes too generous in its praise. In most other subjects, work is marked regularly but does not always comment on presentation where it is unsatisfactory. There is some good practice in the marking of work of older junior-aged pupils, where comments are specifically intended to take the learning further, for example in religious education, rather than just reflect the pupils' efforts. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Some parents find it is set inconsistently. The school has agreed to monitor this.

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

25. Overall, the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. It promotes effectively standards that are above national expectations and supports mainly good and very good teaching. Provision is better than at the time of the last inspection because the school has made good progress in developing the teaching of ICT; the work and support for pupils with special educational needs are now very good; and the range of opportunities outside lesson times is very good. Nevertheless, the school is undertaking a thoroughgoing review of the curriculum in order to improve it further. A particular focus is the amount of curricular time in Years 3 to 6, which at present is

two hours less than the nationally recommended level. Statutory requirements are, however, fully met.

26. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a well-balanced range of activities that fully reflects the six areas of learning for children at this age. There is a very good emphasis on play, and outdoor provision is a strength. All members of the teaching team help to plan the activities and each year group follows the same topics but older children take their learning further when they come back to the topics in the second year. Talented children, for example, the most articulate and those who display especially well co-ordinated physical skills, are catered for by extra planning and resourcing.
27. The curriculum followed in Years 1 to 6 is appropriately based on national guidelines. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught. All of the classes have more than one age group, for instance, in Years 1 and 2 each of the three classes has pupils from both year groups. In order to ensure that pupils do not do the same work two years running, the school employs a successful programme that runs for two years instead of one. The strengths of the provision are: the strong attention paid to basic skills, particularly in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics; and the development of the arts, which results in standards that are above the national expectation in art and design, and design and technology, and very good in learning musical instruments. Policies are in place for all subjects and there is a clear programme for all year groups and subjects. This provides staff and governors with a good idea of what is being taught at any given time.
28. Areas for development are: improvements to the teaching of handwriting and to presentation; giving greater emphasis in physical education to the warm-up and cool down periods, and safety matters; and strengthening the links between subjects, so that basic skills are taught, consolidated and practised in a range of subjects. The school has rightly identified this as the main focus for their curriculum review.
29. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is very carefully tailored to their needs. Teachers, pupils and parents contribute to the discussion about what is included in individual education plans. Those needs are also taken into account in lessons other than literacy and numeracy. For example, some pupils in Year 3 were given good support in a history lesson because the teacher had carefully thought about how best they might record their ideas. As a result, pupils were able to demonstrate what they had learned about evacuees as well as their peers had.
30. The school is successful in meeting its stated aim, *To create an atmosphere where we all support, care and respect each other*. An ethos of equal opportunities, racial harmony and mutual support is promoted. The school's assessment procedures identify trends in under-achievement in gender, ethnicity and ability. Action is then taken to provide effective support to targeted pupils. Support staff, external agencies and teachers provide good support, to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, take as full a part as possible in class and group sessions. The use of a wide range of teaching strategies and materials is effective and successful. The special educational needs code of practice is implemented fully. There is no formal identification of gifted and talented pupils and policy to ensure that all those with higher levels of attainment also have their needs met and that this does not just happen by chance. Nevertheless, in practice, pupils with special talents have very good opportunities to do well, for instance in learning to play a musical instrument and to be coached in sporting skills. The school takes seriously its commitment to equal opportunities in all aspects of the

curriculum and ensures that all pupils are included. There are no issues regarding differences in race, culture or religion.

31. The school provides a very good range of activities outside lessons, including sport, music, visits, visitors and the work led by the study support network. In the main, the activities in sport and music are taken up by pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, the school is planning to include more activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 from the start of the next school year. Pupils, staff and parents are full of praise for the quality of sports coaching that is provided, for example, by Manchester City Football Club.
32. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The work covers a wide range of activities, including healthy eating and diet, which has been recognised by a *Healthy Schools* bronze award; work in subjects such as science where pupils learn a great deal about the human body; and Circle Time,⁴ where themes such as rights, responsibilities and valuing all things are explored. In addition, the school properly seeks the good advice and tangible support of outside agencies to implement policies on sex education and drugs awareness. For example, the school nurse provides valuable support and guidance to older pupils in the sensitive work on sex education and the way the human body changes.
33. The school's links with the community are good and promote pupils' learning well. Pupils visit local hospitals and other commercial outlets to support and broaden their understanding of how society works and to see skills being developed and used for the good of all. For example, groups of pupils visited a local restaurant to see pizzas being made as part of their work in design and technology. Interested pupils have been heavily involved in learning and playing the card game *MiniBridge* with a local club. This initiative has rightly led to national recognition and the identification of the school as an exemplar of good practice. In the broader community, the school has forged good links with schools in Europe, through the Comenius project.
34. The school has recognised the need to set up constructive relationships with partner institutions and has been very successful. For example, there are very good links with Manchester Metropolitan University teacher training establishment, where the headteacher is chair of the steering group, and a very effective partnership with a school in Finland. This has led to effective school journeys being undertaken by both schools to each other and has broadened pupils' understanding of Europe. Pupils with particular needs receive strong support from outside agencies because the school has fostered very good relations with, for instance, social services and the nurse.
35. All aspects of the school's provision for pupils' personal development are very good. Provision for their spiritual development is very good and pupils develop very strong principles and values of their own because they are enabled to explore religious beliefs and see how they influence others' lives. Pupils consider others' views and feelings and draw conclusions for their own guidance. Assemblies provide very good opportunities for this. Pupils are encouraged to think about *God's World*, for example, and how some strive to succeed while others do not. They explore ideas of social justice and poverty and learn to empathise with vulnerable groups such as refugees. As one pupil wrote, *I would be hopeful that someone would take me back home when the danger was over*. Some assemblies take place in church, providing pupils with the chance to experience a place of silent and sacred reflection. In lessons, pupils particularly appreciate the creativity of art and music and this is reflected in the quality

⁴ Planned whole-class discussions

of their work. Pupils are very mindful of others and show respect in the way they mix with each other in groups and collaborate in work and play. They share likes and dislikes and courageously defend their views in comments such as, *I don't like graffiti, it spoils everything.*

36. Provision for pupils' moral development is very strong. There is a clear moral code which all pupils understand and the vast majority adhere to. The pupils themselves agree classroom rules. Teachers recognise and praise positive behaviour and effort, and pupils fully understand the consequences of the decisions they make. Personal and social education provides opportunities to talk about moral dilemmas and to make reasoned judgements. For example, pupils speak out strongly against bullying and racist behaviour – feelings which were confirmed by the quality of relationships seen during the inspection.
37. The school provides very well for pupils' social development. As a consequence, pupils' social development is very good. The *Buddy* system allows older pupils to take on some responsibility and show initiative. Such opportunities extend to events outside school, for example, when groups perform in local festivals, church services and community homes. Pupils learn to appreciate the importance of school as a community and how they contribute. Group and individual achievements are highlighted in assemblies. Annual visits to residential centres and the chance to lead groups, such as the steel band, add to the opportunities for pupils to develop their personal qualities.
38. Provision for the development of pupils' cultural awareness is very strong because of the way in which the school embraces the richness of the many groups represented by its pupils. Pupils show respect and tolerance of one another. Different festivals are celebrated. A notable example was the recent Eid festival when the school took part in a shared assembly with a local Muslim school. Pupils met afterwards for a special Eid celebration. Visitors to school talk about their religious practices and beliefs and what impact they have on daily life. The languages of different cultural groups are recognised in the multi-lingual notices around the school. At times pupils lead the school assembly in prayers recited in their own language. Music representing different cultures is a feature of assemblies. When working with the Halle orchestra in the *Music round the World* project, pupils composed and performed pieces based on traditional Hungarian music. In art lessons, pupils explore Aboriginal designs and research Caribbean and Asian traditions to generate ideas for headdresses. All pupils benefit from a visit to the Whitworth Gallery where they have opportunity to enjoy some of the exhibits and take part in workshop activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school provides very good care for its pupils and standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils feel very secure and valued.
40. Health and Safety procedures and monitoring by staff are good. The school has a clear policy and good measures are in place to identify potential issues and risks. The caretaker has recently provided crucial support and expertise, given the condition of the ageing buildings. Some teachers lack expertise or experience in relation to teaching physical education, such as the importance of appropriate warm-ups for activities. There are restrictions on space in the school hall for the teaching of games and gymnastics. Risk assessments in relation to the wide range of extra-curricular, *study support* activities are particularly thorough. Security arrangements are good especially taking account of the demands of the large site. Very good care is taken at

the end of school to ensure a responsible adult collects each child from the nursery, reception and Years 1 and 2 classes.

41. Child Protection procedures and awareness are very good. Members of staff, under the expert guidance of the headteacher, handle issues in a sensitive but rigorous manner. First aid arrangements are good and staff training ensures all areas of the school are covered. Pupils' personal development is monitored very effectively with all staff knowing the pupils very well and providing very good personal support, which enables every pupil to develop confidence and feel valued. A key feature is how well all pupils, regardless of gender, race or level of attainment, are included in the life of the school. Pupils new to the school, such as children starting in the Foundation Stage and refugee children, are given much personal support to help them to settle into the life of the school. Pupils help in this process too, through the *Buddy* system for example.
42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. The behaviour policy, with its emphasis on the use of rewards and praise, is having a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and the development of their self-esteem. The very consistent approach adopted by all staff contributes well to the success of the policy. Procedures to discourage and deal with bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are very good and any potential incidents are monitored and recorded promptly and rigorously. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The school continues to take good steps to monitor and reduce the level of lateness and unauthorised absenteeism.
43. The school maintains very good records of pupils' attainment and achievement in all subjects. Teachers use this information very effectively to adapt the work of individual pupils and groups to ensure they are working at an appropriate level. This is particularly successful in allocating pupils to work in groups according to their prior attainment for English and mathematics from Years 1 to 6. Pupils are given good support as they move through the school and pupils in Year 6 say they are well prepared for their move to secondary school. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very carefully checked and recorded and new targets are set regularly to ensure continuous progress. Regular meetings between class teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs ensure that all are kept aware of pupils' particular needs. Very good records of progress are kept and individual education plans are updated every term. When necessary, outside help is sought to provide extra support for pupils who have more specific learning, physical or behavioural needs. The teacher of pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language tracks their progress very closely and continues to provide support and guidance when the pupils become proficient. However, there is no register kept recording pupils who are gifted and talented.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Partnerships with parents are very good and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to school. The school has worked hard to improve on the satisfactory standards described at the time of the last inspection.

45. Parents' views of the school expressed at the parents' meeting, in response to the pre-inspection survey and given during the inspection were very positive. Parents feel that their children like school, they make good progress, and teaching is good. They feel comfortable approaching the school, the school helps the children to become mature and responsible and to work hard, behaviour is good and the school is well led and managed. A small number of parents have some concerns over the level of homework given and the arrangements for supervision of pupils at lunchtime. Inspectors agree with the parents' very positive views. The school acknowledges that there is a need to review the consistent setting of homework. Lunchtime supervision and arrangements are good, given the considerable problems associated with the accommodation.
46. Parents show good involvement in the work of the school, many supporting homework well and encouraging their children to read. The active Parent and Teacher Group provides good support. Parent governors play an effective part in the good liaison between school and home. The school is making very good efforts to involve parents further in the school and their children's education from an early age. Good induction arrangements and liaison arrangements in the nursery help children settle quickly and also encourage parents to become part of the school, a process which continues throughout the school. Newsletters are regular and give very good information on school life and areas of work to be covered by every class each half term. In the nursery and reception classes, this information is sent out every week. Parents are made most welcome in school and all staff are readily available if problems arise. The specialist teacher supporting minority ethnic groups has set aside two occasions per week when she can meet and talk to parents informally at the start of the school day. This provides parents, especially newly arrived refugees, with a point of contact should they require support. Annual reports give parents very good information on their children's progress; these are enhanced by the sharing and reviewing of targets for improvement at individual consultations. The school keeps parents of pupils with special educational needs well informed about their children's progress. There are special parents' meetings to discuss the actions that the school is taking to support learning. Parents are conscientious about attending review meetings to contribute to their children's individual education plans.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff with additional responsibility are good. The aims, policies and values are reflected well in all aspects of school life. There is shared commitment by the headteacher, staff and governors to develop a self-managing school, moving towards strong leadership teams of headteacher, two assistant head teachers, the school bursar and team leaders. This collaborative structure is effective and has impact as a result of very good communication between teaching and support staff. The headteacher has established and maintained an ethos of care and support to direct the school forward.
48. Delegation of responsibility is good to make best use of staff skills and expertise. Whereas in the last inspection report, the deployment of staff was seen to address the increased pupil intake, there is now a greater focus on the placement of staff in teams in order to meet pupils' needs.
49. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection to develop the strategic direction of the school through the school development plan. Actions included in the plan comply with local authority requirements, are comprehensive, highlight responsibilities, costs, monitoring, evaluation and indicators of success to

ensure there is a real impact on teaching and learning. Priorities for development are identified initially through the senior management team and meetings are held regularly. Team leaders communicate issues to the senior management team who decide priorities to be discussed with governors. Subject leaders raise curricular issues and every staff member contributes to discussions.

50. Levels of morale amongst teaching and support staff are high; there is a sense of purpose and very good team spirit. Communication between staff is excellent and ensures that all staff work in a similar way, providing pupils with security about what is expected of them. Good arrangements are in place for performance management. All teachers and those with responsibility have up-to-date job descriptions and know their roles. The induction and training of new staff are excellent. Monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning is generally good but has not identified shortcomings and inconsistencies evident from scrutinising pupils' work.
51. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed very well by the co-ordinator. There are clear systems in place for supporting pupils and for administration. The co-ordinator has very good knowledge of pupils and an understanding of effective learning methods. Teaching assistants work very well with class teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' individual progress. The governor who supports special educational needs has very good knowledge of the systems and processes, links very well with the co-ordinator and parents, and provides very strong support.
52. The school has appropriate aims; there is a very good ethos. The motto *Caring about learning – Learning about caring*, is prominently promoted in all aspects of the school. Equal opportunities are well provided for both genders, of all levels of attainment, all backgrounds and all religious faiths.
53. The school governors fulfil their statutory obligations well and have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The chair of governors, who is vicar of the parish, is in regular contact with pupils and staff and meets the headteacher formally to discuss issues each week. She is well known to the pupils through her regular visits, her contributions to assemblies and through classes visiting the church. There is a recognition of the differing skills and expertise offered by governors, mirrored by their trust and respect for the headteacher as leader of an effective team. Governors' knowledge of the school development plan is satisfactory. They are less involved in the monitoring and evaluation of planned actions, however, and how these intentions have actually had an impact on pupils' learning. Often governors receive reports about aspects of the school and its curriculum but have little opportunity to see for themselves. The school tries to involve governors and their additional time commitments are recognised.
54. Resources are managed well. The school bursar is effectively placed to administer financial procedures on behalf of the school, reporting to a half termly meeting comprising the headteacher, chair of finance committee and local authority representative. There is clear leadership of financial matters by the governing body in relation to their role and overseeing spending. Good financial controls are in place and issues raised by an auditor's report in 2001 have been addressed fully. The headteacher has a very good awareness of the school's financial position and forward planning is secure. The above average carry-forward in the school budget is planned appropriately to support resourcing when the move to new buildings takes place. Principles of best value are pursued well. Team leaders have delegated budgets, which are used appropriately and strategically based on priorities identified in the

school development plan. The school is well resourced for learning and teachers make good use of resources, which are organised and appropriate for subjects, despite some difficulties with availability of space and access in the present building. Pupils respect the resources they use in lessons.

55. Specific grants received by the school are used well. For instance, the management for provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is good. Pupils are included fully in the curriculum, receiving good, targeted support. The specialist support teacher is very involved in lessons, often team teaching for part of a literacy session. This organisation is effective as it allows all pupils to be included in whole-class discussions as well as in small group situations.
56. Since the last inspection the use of new technology in the school's administration has improved. This has had a good impact on teachers' planning and organisation. Similarly the quality and presentation of information to parents have been enhanced. Effective technical support and training aid this development. Data systems are used well to monitor attendance and pupil information.
57. The school spends above average funding per pupil, compared to other schools nationally. When taking into account the below average levels of attainment of pupils on entry to the school, the progress they make, the quality of the education provided and the costs per pupil, the school gives good value for money.
58. The school is well staffed with sufficient experienced and suitably qualified teachers and a good number of support staff, who are well trained. There is some lack of expertise in teaching physical education that restricts pupils' achievements in this area. Administrative support is very effective in reducing the burden of routine tasks for teachers, especially the headteacher.
59. The accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are of a sufficient size for the current number of pupils. Outdoor facilities for the youngest children are very good. The location and condition of the many classrooms and the dining area result in time being taken for pupils to move to and from lessons, assemblies and lunch. Many parts of the playground are uneven and the hall is narrow and cluttered with resources, inhibiting performance in physical education in some lessons. At the time of the inspection, plans for the new buildings, which are due to open in 2004, were well in hand.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. To raise standards further, staff should:

- (1) Raise standards of pupils' handwriting and presentation by:
 - Improving the teaching of handwriting;
 - Raising the expectations that staff have of pupils' handwriting and the quality of presentation of their work;
 - Monitoring samples of pupils' written work to improve the consistency of handwriting and presentation across classes and year groups;
(Paragraphs 2, 6, 17, 21, 28, 79, 96, 141)

- (2) Raise attainment in physical education by:
 - Reviewing the time allocated to the subject with a view to increasing it and making more effective use of it ;*
 - Improving the management of the subject;
 - Providing more staff training to improve teachers' expertise, where required;
 - Improving health and safety requirements in the school hall.
(Paragraphs 8, 23, 25, 28, 133 – 138)

* Features in the current school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	74
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	17	34	16	2	0	0
Percentage	7	23	46	21	3	0	0

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

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)	42	310
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	124

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	7	71

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	105

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	24	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	18
	Girls	24	23	23
	Total	40	38	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (83)	84 (86)	91 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	19	17
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	38	42	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (90)	93 (79)	89 (95)
	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	27	18	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	22	25
	Girls	12	14	15
	Total	33	36	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (85)	80 (59)	89 (91)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	23	20
	Girls	8	11	13
	Total	25	34	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (78)	76 (78)	73 (80)
	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
139	2	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
20	0	0
6	0	0
2	0	0
16	0	0
5	0	0
14	0	0
10	0	0
15	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	0
5	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)	13.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	242

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 02
	£
Total income	894,031
Total expenditure	872,600
Expenditure per pupil	2,472
Balance brought forward from previous year	58,601
Balance carried forward to next year	80,032

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	352
Number of questionnaires returned	87

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	34	0	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	60	40	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	43	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	46	10	2	5
The teaching is good.	69	30	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	39	7	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	31	2	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	30	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	41	9	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	52	43	0	3	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	33	7	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	43	11	1	7

Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents have some concerns over the level of homework given and the arrangements for supervision of pupils at lunchtime.

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

61. Children in the nursery and reception classes get off to a good start to their education in the school's very well resourced provision. There are 45 nursery-aged children attending full-time, thirty of whom are taught in the nursery class, housed in a separate building, while the remainder, who are the oldest in the year group, are taught in a class mixed with fifteen younger reception-aged children. There is a further class of thirty reception-aged children.
62. There is a broad range of attainment on entry to the nursery and overall their attainment is just below the average expected of children aged between three and three and a half. A few children on entry are at the earliest stages of learning English as an additional language and several more from minority ethnic backgrounds are at the later stages. Some children enter with good personal and social skills and one or two are very articulate and knowledgeable. All children make good progress, some achieving highly, so that by the end of the reception year, the great majority have achieved the early learning goals in all six areas of learning and are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. The children's progress in personal, social, emotional and physical development is very good. This is because of the consistently good quality of teaching and the access that the children have to a wide range of outdoor play equipment and apparatus in the school hall to develop their physical skills. Teaching in the nursery class is never less than good and at times very good.
63. Provision is very well led and managed by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. For example, procedures to introduce the children to the nursery class are very effective and the children settle in quickly. There are very good links created with parents, who receive weekly letters about what is happening, what topics the children are studying and how parents can help their child to do well. Planning the curriculum is carried out by all members of the Foundation Stage team and effectively covers all the required areas of learning. Staff plan many opportunities to assess the children's progress; and teachers and nursery nurses check carefully how the children tackle the various activities that are organised. As a result, they have a clear understanding of the children's achievement and plan for all the children well, including the higher attaining children as well as those who have specific needs in language, communication or personal development. The teacher of pupils learning English as an additional language makes a good contribution to the progress of individual children, supporting them sometimes in class and sometimes in small groups on work linked closely to the topics that all the children follow.
64. The quality of provision and the achievement of children have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. There have been improvements to the location of the reception classes so that they can make full use of the extended outdoor area. More resources have been added and children in their reception year now make good rather than sound progress, which was found previously.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. Progress in this area of development is very good. Children in the nursery learn the class routines very well. They know what is expected of them and help to put things out and tidy away after activities. They show good levels of independent behaviour

and this is because the staff have created a relaxed, welcoming environment for the children that encourages the children to be curious and to try new challenges. When they play together, for example, in the water tray outside the classroom, they share equipment well and there are few squabbles. Children spend time at activities and see things through without losing concentration. It is a harmonious environment in which the children make friends. Children were seen making things work by playing together, for instance pulling the rickshaw along to give a child a ride.

66. This level of progress continues in the reception year. At the start and end of a gymnastics lesson in the hall, most children in the mixed nursery and reception class were able to undress and dress themselves. They managed the various fastenings on their clothes well. They got out and put away pieces of apparatus with the help of an adult. Children also act as monitors and are keen to help their teachers. They respond well to visitors and want to share with them what they are doing. For instance, they were pleased to show inspectors the changes happening to the caterpillars they were monitoring and the eggs in the incubators.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Children in the nursery show confidence talking to adults and visitors. By the end of their year in the nursery class, they can hold a simple conversation and higher attaining children describe in great detail what the snails and other mini beasts in the tanks in the classroom are doing. They soon gain a love of stories and rhymes. They thoroughly enjoy listening to the nursery nurse read *Billy's Beetle* from a Big Book and they follow the illustrations closely. Some can relate the story to experiences that they have had themselves. Through rhymes and games, the children learn about letter sounds, particularly those at the beginning of words and those in their own name. They use various materials to increase their familiarity with letters, such as *playdoh* and alphabet moulds, to make their own name. Registration is used to promote the children's recognition of their names. There are good opportunities to talk in the lively role-play area, which at the time of the inspection was a fire station. The children begin to make marks on paper in the well-resourced writing area, using pencils, crayons and felt tip pens. They 'write' their own versions of the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and many show they are aware of the initial sound in words.
68. This good progress is maintained as the children continue in the reception year. The children talk readily about what they are doing, and they begin to recall and use specialist terms they are learning, such as a *segment* of a mini beast. They ask pertinent questions, for instance, *Why are the ladybird's legs folded up?* (when in flight) and they show good skills of listening. By the end of the reception year, early skills of reading and writing have developed well. Through short, well focused sessions of the National Literacy Strategy, children have a good awareness of letter sounds and simple blends, such as *sh*. They recognise a range of important common words and know the basic elements of punctuation. They are beginning to discriminate about choice of words, for instance, one child suggesting *slithered* for the movement of the snail in their class story, *The Bad Tempered Snail*. Higher attaining children are well beyond the early stages of reading and enjoy simple readers. They are beginning to read aloud, putting expression into their voices when a character speaks. Most children have achieved beyond the early learning goals in reading, though some lower attaining children are still working towards them. Children's writing in the reception year makes similar strides. Most have become independent writers by the end of the year, making good attempts at writing their own ideas. They are making good progress spelling simple words (for instance *see sad* for *sea side*).

Mathematical development

69. Children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage in mathematics, through regular use of rhymes and counting games, as well as activities that involve an understanding of shape and simple measurements using non-standard measures. Later in the reception year, there are short sessions of the National Numeracy Strategy. At the time of the inspection, children in the nursery were counting the days that the eggs had been in the incubator on a daily chart that they completed with the teacher. They counted backwards in rhymes from six and they could make a simple pattern of colours to resemble the segments of a caterpillar's body. In a simple activity about eggs they learned to rank order them by size. There are many planned opportunities to explore concepts such as capacity by using various containers and funnels in the water tray. Children's play is used well to further their understanding of numbers.
70. In the reception year, the children's ability to use numbers to ten improves well. For instance, the children match numbers with toy mini beasts and are beginning to add together numbers in two sets. When measuring the length of books using small cubes, the children can make a reasonable estimate of how many will be needed before they carry out the measurement. In oral sessions with the class teacher, the children have learned how to use apparatus such as *number fans* to give answers to mental problems. They can add two more than a given number up to ten and higher attaining children have a growing understanding of much larger numbers. There is a very good range of practical activities to help the children to learn, though occasionally there is inappropriate use of worksheets, which are too easy and have insufficient challenge in them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Staff in the Foundation Stage plan to provide very good opportunities for the children to explore the environment around, to begin to understand a little about the past and present and to appreciate the wonders of life. In the area outside, which is shared by all three classes, the children explore living things, make shelters from cardboard packaging, and find out about things that float and sink, when parts of the area are flooded through rain. They use equipment to 'service' their wheeled toys with petrol, and wash them. There are visitors such as members of the fire service and parents, who show the children how to make chapattis and Indian sweets and how to put on a sari. The children dress up to play the story of Rama and Sita. Through well-planned topics such as those on fairy tales and new growth, the children have opportunities to explore the world of science. For instance, children are asked to work out how they can stop Humpty Dumpty from falling off his wall. They use lots of different materials to make him stay up on the walls they build, and they explain their choices. The children draw accurately the caterpillars and cocoons they observe, using magnifiers. They paint pictures and write about what they have seen.
72. Children in the reception class during the week of the inspection were finding out about the development of ladybirds from eggs to fully grown adults and explored the wild areas in the grounds looking for eggs on leaves and aphids that the ladybirds eat. Their curiosity and enthusiasm for their study were boundless. Children's skills using computers are developed well through programmes that match some of the topics they cover, as well as simple ones involving literacy and numeracy. Children in the reception class, supported by a nursery nurse, used a computer programme, for

example, to select a picture of a mini beast and insert a short text in the form a description and label.

Physical development

73. The outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage is an excellent resource to help the children to improve their skills of pushing, pulling, riding wheeled toys, sliding and climbing. There are plenty of resources for the children to use on a daily basis and their skills develop very well. Most children of nursery age learn to ride a two-wheeled cycle very quickly because of the ready availability of cycles and the well laid-out tracks and pathways that they can use. Older children develop good skills of climbing, jumping and landing during timetabled lessons with small apparatus in the school hall. Older reception-aged children could walk a few steps balancing on a narrow beam and all children in the mixed nursery and reception class explored different ways of travelling along and under an inclined beam. They moved backwards and astride, they slid or pulled themselves along. Most have achieved the early learning goals in this aspect of their development and their awareness of safe practice and healthy exercise was good. Using small tools and equipment, the children cut, stick and fasten together objects to make models, such as mini beasts made from waste material. They construct models using various kits. A small group of reception-aged children followed the instructions to build a fairground Ferris wheel. Not only did they sustain concentration very well, they produced an excellent finished product.

Creative development

74. Children make good progress and have extensive opportunities to create through imaginative role-play, artwork and music. In the nursery, the 'fire station' is well resourced with clothes, helmets, play phones, tools and an arrangement of chairs and blocks to resemble a fire engine. The children enjoy dressing up and they take their play outside in fine weather using hoses and ladders on their 'fire engines'. Using paint and materials, the children in all three classes explore making patterns, rubbings and wax resist pictures. Staff display the children's work with care, and examples are displayed in parts of the school other than in their own classrooms, such as the school hall and corridors, thus giving the children's work prestige. For example, the children have designed and decorated slippers relating to the children's story, *The Elves and the Shoemaker*, and these are on display near the entrance to school. Children have good opportunities to sing and play simple musical instruments. Groups of children have timetabled lessons in the music room. In one lesson with half the children in the nursery class, the children played their instruments loudly and softly, slowly and fast. They stopped on a given signal. They clapped and banged a simple beat and the teacher showed them the different sounds made by metal and wooden instruments.

ENGLISH

75. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and speaking and listening skills. At the end of Year 2, reading and speaking are average but attainment in writing has improved and is better than expected for that age group. Overall, standards in the current Years 2 and 6 are broadly similar to those indicated by the 2002 National Curriculum tests but over time they show a rising trend. The considerable proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, some of whom learn English as an additional language, achieve as well as others in the school. School records show that boys do not achieve as well as girls in reading and

steps have been taken to generate more interest for boys through better choice of books and texts used in English lessons.

76. Pupils are attentive in lessons. They listen well, follow instructions and answer questions appropriately. In Years 1 and 2, pupils express their ideas clearly and can talk about and explain their work. For example, when the teacher peeled an 'ice balloon' the pupils were excited by what they saw. There was some good discussion about why the water had frozen in that way and the best places in the classroom to help the ice melt. There are good opportunities for pupils in junior classes to develop speaking skills. Strategies such as *talking partners* or *hot seating*, where pupils engage in role-play help them to clarify their thinking so they express ideas more accurately. Pupils are encouraged to use precise language, for example in science, mathematics or music. Most are happy to initiate informal conversation about things, which interest them, and they are polite and well spoken. A weaker element, however, is pupils' ability to speak to a larger audience. On those occasions, the pupils tend to become self-conscious and voices become almost inaudible.
77. Pupils make good progress throughout the school in reading. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are confident readers and choose independently from an increasing range of books. They have a good range of skills to help them gain meaning from what they read. For example, they use letter sounds and knowledge of how words are built up, they use pictures to get clues or read the text again if they meet an unfamiliar word. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and use the contents, index and glossary pages to find specific information.
78. By the end of Year 6, many pupils supplement their school reading by borrowing from public libraries. They read and talk about favourite authors such as Roald Dahl, Jacqueline Wilson and J K Rowling, as well as more traditional children's writers like Enid Blyton. Some pupils recall classic stories such as *Oliver Twist* and *Romeo and Juliet*, talking about main events in the plots. Pupils' research skills are good. They know how to find information from reference books, CD-ROMs and the Internet.
79. Throughout the school progress in writing is mainly sound and pupils achieve well given their prior levels of attainment. By the end of Year 2, pupils communicate ideas clearly in well-sequenced sentences. They write in different styles and for different purposes such as listing instructions, retelling stories or creating their own narrative. Spelling is satisfactory and pupils show an increasing awareness of correct punctuation. However, handwriting is often untidy and this spoils the overall presentation of their work. Good examples of purposeful writing were seen when pupils listed sets of rules about keeping safe. Nursery rhymes such as *Humpty Dumpty* and *Jack and Jill* stimulated some good ideas by making pupils think about possible dangers. Small booklets in which pupils set out instructions or retold favourite traditional tales also provide good examples. By the end of Year 6, most pupils demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Writing becomes more sustained and the range and purposes for writing are explored more widely. There is some lively narrative as well as good example of poetry and writing linked to other subjects. For example, pupils practise the skills of discursive writing when debating whether or not Withington High Street should be closed to traffic. There are some clearly written explanatory texts about Sikhism and the Guru Granth Sahib. However, standards of handwriting are not as good as they should be and, as with younger pupils in the school, the presentation of work is sometimes indifferent.

80. The National Literacy Strategy has been fully embraced by the school and results in a good emphasis on basic reading and writing skills. Shared reading and writing sessions are used effectively to stress good sentence structure, spelling, vocabulary and strategies to enhance writing quality. Time is used thoughtfully in literacy and other lessons to allow pupils to practise the skills they learn.
81. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall. Although some highly effective lessons were seen during the inspection, pupils' work over time shows that the issue of standards of handwriting has not been satisfactorily dealt with, because expectations are not high enough. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is very good and this underpins the good learning seen in lessons. Teachers value the contributions pupils make to lessons, so pupils feel confident to 'have a go'. There is a very strong ethos of mutual trust and respect, which promotes very good behaviour and willingness to co-operate. The range and variety of teaching methods used add interest for pupils and stimulate learning well. *Talking partners*, when pupils discuss work with each other, white boards, open discussion and very carefully planned work provide for the needs of all pupils so they become engaged in learning at their own level. In one lesson, the teacher's use of a *Power Point* presentation meant that pupils were immediately focused on the text at each stage of the lesson, so that the pace of learning was very good.
82. Basic skills are generally taught well but there are shortcomings in the teaching of handwriting. Teachers' good subject knowledge means that lessons are very clearly planned. The quality of texts and vocabulary used by teachers as examples enriches pupils' language skills and provides a good stimulus for writing. In a lesson for Year 2 pupils, the pace and clarity of the teaching together with very clear expectations resulted in highly effective learning. Teaching remained very well focused on what skills pupils were to learn so that by the end of the lesson all pupils were able to write a list of questions linked to a statement, exploring the uses of *How?*, *where?*, *when?*, *what?* and *why?* Teachers encourage pupils to express thoughts and feelings in writing, and throughout the school there are examples of thoughtful use of language. For example, poems about *Thunderstorms*, *In the Playground* or *Golden* encourage pupils to choose words more precisely to gain the best effect, while some telling sentences such as *I felt afraid because I didn't know the language* capture the emotions of an imagined refugee.
83. Teachers use assessment well to ensure work is suitably matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with special educational needs have clear individual education programmes, which are used very effectively to plan the right level of support. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive good support from the specialist teacher who works with groups and sometimes leads whole-class lessons. Teachers follow the marking policy satisfactorily. Comments recognise pupils' achievements and sometimes provide clear guidance on how work might be improved. Seldom, however, do they challenge the quality of presentation, so pupils are not encouraged by seeing their work improve in appearance over time. Occasionally teachers are too generous in their praise of what pupils have achieved.
84. The two subject leaders make a strong contribution to the leadership and management of English. There are good systems in place for monitoring planning and the quality of teaching. Evaluation has led to improvements, for example in the school's approach to teaching in guided reading sessions. There is too little emphasis currently on checking the quality of pupils' work in order to evaluate the impact of teaching on how well pupils actually learn. Very good systems for tracking

pupils' progress provide the subject leaders with a clear overview of achievement and enable realistic targets to be set. Strong teamwork contributes considerably to the teachers' capacity to make further improvements.

MATHEMATICS

85. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above national expectations. These judgements confirm the general picture represented in the 2002 National Curriculum test results. The levels of attainment and the general provision are good improvements since the last inspection. For example: there have been good developments in the use of ICT; an increase in time allowed for the subject leaders to lead and manage the subject; and an increased emphasis on the use of judgements of pupils' levels of attainment to guide teaching and curriculum planning.
86. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well. One of the main reasons for this is the school's effective method of grouping pupils according to their prior levels of attainment. As a consequence, higher attaining pupils are challenged, stretched and, increasingly, encouraged to approach mathematical problems in a creative and confident manner. Similarly, lower attaining pupils receive the support and guidance they need at their particular level of work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets, as do pupils learning English as an additional language, who play a full and productive part in lessons.
87. By the end of Year 2, pupils are accurately counting up and down in twos, fives and tens. They explain the patterns formed in this way. Pupils solve two-part money problems. The highest attaining pupils have their own strategies for solving the problems, for example, *Mr. Head had 50p and a thief stole 21p; take 30p from 50p and add 1p to answer*. Most pupils understand symmetry, with the highest attaining pupils drawing lines in more than one plane. The majority know the main events of time and sort well-known two and three-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining pupils understand and use units of measure such as metre, centimetre, litre and kilogramme and find the number of triangles in a complex figure. Most pupils accurately draw bar charts and pictograms whilst the highest attaining pupils interpret correctly the information in the charts.
88. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have built very well on the knowledge, skills and understanding gained earlier. Pupils competently apply these skills and knowledge to everyday situations. Most pupils now have their own strategies for solving problems, whilst the highest attaining pupils have several strategies and confidently investigate a range of links between problems and their answers. All pupils know the value of numbers, so that they accurately multiply by ten and 100. They understand what fractions are and the highest attaining pupils can work out equivalent fractions. Most pupils have a good understanding of ratios and accurately work out percentage increases and decreases: for instance, $\pounds 400 + 75 \text{ per cent} = \pounds 700$.
89. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of shape, including knowing the names of angles and finding areas and perimeters by measuring and calculation. In general, data handling is accurate and most pupils record their work well. Pupils produce sensible graphs that plot, for example, currency rates and temperatures.
90. Pupils' attitudes are good. Pupils work with interest and enthusiasm in most lessons, and often overcome quite difficult challenges. They show perseverance and cooperate well when working in groups. Behaviour is often very good. Most pupils

are developing initiative, and the higher attaining pupils tackle tasks quickly and accurately.

91. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Main strengths include the effective linking of new work to previous learning, as in two Years 1 and 2 lessons, when, in one, a successful recap of how to weigh ingredients and in the other the recapping of the concept of double. There is good use of questions to extend or reinforce learning. Resources are deployed effectively. For instance, the widespread use of individual whiteboards fosters independence and the excellent use of new technology promotes learning very well in a Years 5 and 6 class. Good pace and challenging tasks capture pupils' interests and help to maintain concentration and there is good development of mathematical vocabulary, as in one lesson where pupils in Years 5 and 6 used the everyday word *corners* and then developed this to *vertices*.
92. Management and control of pupils are usually good and pupils respond positively. This means that in most lessons pupils have a degree of independence and are encouraged to collaborate. Teachers make many judgements about pupils' levels of attainment, and these effectively shape the composition of working groups and help teachers plan work for each pupil. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well. Much good practice exists, but the use of numeracy in the work of other subjects, though satisfactory, is less well developed. In science lessons, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 sort materials and pupils in Years 3 and 4 measured shadows and from the data produced graphs. In history, timelines are regularly developed. These instances show that good links do exist with other subjects. However, they are not as wide as they might be.
93. Management of the subject is good. The two subject leaders are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and good teachers of mathematics. Their link with the local authority adviser is fruitful. Particular strengths include their good subject knowledge and understanding; good collections of pupils' work to guide thinking and discussion amongst the full staff; and good tracking of pupils' levels of attainment. Resources meet the demands of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

94. Although standards achieved in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 are in line with expectations, inspectors judge standards to be above expectations in both infant and junior classes. Standards are rising in relation to experimental and investigative science, which has been a teaching focus, and there has been satisfactory improvement in provision since the time of the last inspection.
95. By the end of Year 2, pupils can recognise different materials and their purpose. They know cardboard is strong, will hold things if in the shape of a box and can be bent to change its shape. Pupils look carefully and describe well what they see. They can carry out an investigation to try to stop ice melting with some level of independence, many with a basic understanding of the need to be organised as they work. Pupils work cooperatively, share ideas and make sensible predictions about what will happen if ice is placed near a sunny window ledge. All pupils make good progress.
96. By the end of Year 6, pupils can plan and carry out an investigation independently. They use a good range of scientific vocabulary and have a good grasp of the principle of making a test fair when investigating weight as a force on pieces of rock. They can use a Newton force meter and other resources appropriately and with confidence, reading measurements with accuracy. Pupils record their findings in a variety of

ways. Good use is made of ICT to download text and image, for example, to research information about the solar system. Pupils make sensible predictions and can explain their findings confidently to others. Their interest and keenness to begin an investigation can sometimes cause pupils to forget to check their methods and review their results. For instance, pupils who were investigating how much an elastic band stretched when pulled down by weight did not repeat their test for errors. This haste to take part in practical activities can also result in poor quality presentation as a record of pupils' work on occasions.

97. Overall, pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also make similar progress. Planning is good, showing how the subject is covered in a two-year cycle and is closely linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Relevant key vocabulary is clearly indicated in the plans, together with the focus of the final element of each lesson. The subject leader is developing systems to record an assessment of pupils' specific scientific skills to complement current records of attainment in the concepts covered.
98. Pupils have good attitudes and are keen to learn. They particularly enjoy practical investigations and studying life processes and living things. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 expressed wonder when they saw an ice balloon emerge and were excited to have the chance to look at their own piece of ice closely. Behaviour is good in lessons and well managed, particularly in practical sessions when a number of resources and pieces of equipment are available to use.
99. Standards achieved are directly related to the quality of teaching, which is good overall. Teachers give clear explanations about concepts and challenge pupils through the use of probing questions. All pupils' responses and predictions are valued, often being used as teaching points. Teachers regularly encourage pupils to work as 'real scientists'. There are good cross-curricular links with other subjects. Teachers often reinforce skills learnt from other lessons, for example in literacy. However, there is some over-use of worksheets, which can restrict higher attaining pupils to extend their ideas. Worksheets do not allow pupils to develop their own independent methods of recording as they progress through the school, to help them to organise their ideas, explorations and findings.
100. Subject coordination is very good. The recently appointed subject leader has secure subject knowledge, inspires and effectively supports colleagues. However, there are too few opportunities to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning and evaluate their impact. Resources are in good supply and cover all concepts. Storage of resources is difficult in the space available in the school and resources are sometimes inconveniently sited on a very high shelf where staff cannot get access to them easily. This puts the onus on the subject leader to gather equipment for others and may prevent teachers developing incidental science in class from pupils' comments or interests.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Attainment is above expectations for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Since the time of the last inspection, standards reached in the junior classes have been maintained. Standards in the infant classes have improved overall. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress. Curricular planning has improved throughout the school. The subject leader has introduced a good planning system which supplements national subject

guidance. This provides good support for teachers and is reflected in the quality of work seen in the school.

102. Pupils work imaginatively with a wide range of materials. They practise and develop skills in two and three-dimensional work, which incorporates sculpture, collage painting and observational painting and drawing. Computer programmes are also used to create designs and pictures. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are inspired by the designs they see in nature. They explore the colours and textures they find in drawings, rubbings and collage work. In one lesson, pupils used a good variety of coloured fabrics, plastics and flexible materials to create woven designs. Some impressive development of skills can be seen in the work of pupils in Years 3 and 4. Their designing and making of special chairs from rolled paper culminated in very good observational drawings and the painting of chairs reminiscent of the style seen in Van Gogh's famous painting. The work of pupils in Years 5 and 6, with textiles to depict scenes from an Egyptian legend and headdresses reflecting Caribbean and Asian cultures, adds to the extensive portfolio of the school's work.
103. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and thoughtful evaluation helps teachers to build on what pupils have learned from previous lessons. The work of well-known artists is used effectively to demonstrate or encourage discussion about techniques, colour or line. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, discussed these aspects of Lowry's work when beginning their topic on urban landscape. Resources are organised well so that pupils are able to choose those they want to help them to express their ideas. Relationships in classrooms are very good and pupils work confidently because they know that their work is valued by the adults in school. This encourages pupils to reflect on each other's work critically and to suggest ways in which it might be improved.
104. Good leadership and management and a strong commitment from the subject leader to promote art in the school contribute significantly to the quality and standards seen.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Pupils' attainment is average in infant classes and above in junior classes, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make similar progress to their class mates. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand how a simple sliding mechanism works to make the eyes move on a paper animal mask. They know that this mechanism can be used in a book to show something that is hidden and to surprise the reader. Pupils make sensible guesses about how two pieces are fixed together and explain what they think is the best method. They recognise safety issues and know that pins are not suitable to secure a slider onto a paper mask that will be put on a pupil's face. Small resources to cut, stick, make holes and fix are used with growing confidence. Progress in infant classes is satisfactory.
106. By the end of Year 6, pupils are more sophisticated in their designs. They know the importance of the design process to investigate, plan, make, and then evaluate the finished product. Pupils know how to reinforce structures such as shelters, having researched different designs in the local community. In Years 3 and 4, pupils study the important features of a money container, in order to replicate them later in their own designs in felt material. Pupils show good practical skills as well as the ability to collaborate, share resources and ideas with partners and annotate their work appropriately. They can be selective in their choice of finishing technique and think carefully about the effect of decorative stitching to appeal to different age groups.

107. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in infant classes and good in junior classes, where there is more expectation for pupils to create a quality product and design specification. Overall, teachers' planning is detailed, follows the nationally recommended guidance and gives an appropriate balance to the elements of designing and making. The subject is taught in blocks of time, using a two-year planning cycle. This works well, often closely linking with topics studied in other subjects. There are several good examples of pupils' work on display around school. Quality displays highlight the context of the work, use key terms such as *design specification* and explain what pupils learned in the process. A study of Vikings in Years 5 and 6 led to a study of the structures of a Viking boat and the production of a vibrant display of models.
108. Coordination of the subject is satisfactory and there is an up-to-date policy in place. The recently appointed subject leader has audited resources to prioritise for the future. There are few opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in order to ensure that the school's policy and scheme are meeting the needs of all pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

109. By the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment is average. Achievement is generally satisfactory and all pupils develop subject knowledge, understanding and skills at an appropriate level. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Standards and provision have been maintained since the last inspection.
110. By the end of Year 2, pupils describe their route from home to school. This is a good achievement because the area around the school is a complex one. Most pupils recognise and record accurately the similarities and differences of local places that are attractive or unattractive. Their work about Africa, and Kenya in particular, allows them to compare well the foods, animals and the environment. Good links are made with numeracy and ICT when data is collected about favourite leisure activities.
111. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built successfully on previous knowledge, skills and understanding. In their work on local studies, pupils show a good understanding of the human geography of the school's neighbourhood. Investigatory work yielded useful factual information and fosters reflection. For instance, carrying out a traffic census not only provided information about number of vehicles, but it also marked out Withington as a busy suburb. When devising questions for a local survey they encountered civic issues: *Do you think the council could do something else to reduce traffic?* As a result, pupils recognised choices, for example, the closing or remaining open of the High Street. The comparative area study with Stanton-in-Peak promotes good geographical language, such as *commute*, *rural* and *urban*. The comparative study with St. Lucia helps pupils make informed judgements about relative weather conditions, land use, language and position on the globe.
112. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are planning well the programme to be followed and they make every effort to introduce practical work, comparative studies and opportunities to use their good basic skills from other subjects. Equally, vocabulary is a significant focus for teaching, and pupils are quick to make their contribution. In a lesson about St. Lucia involving pupils in Years 5 and 6, the word *humid* was used and the class teacher asked for a definition. The reply

was *hot, damp* and *sticky*. Resources are used well, for example, the photographs of different locations.

113. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader is keen and enthusiastic. She is developing well the range and amount of resources and making it easier for her colleagues to access them, by providing each teacher with an individual folder containing their needs for topics. Judgements about pupils' levels of attainment are accurately made at the end of each topic and used to help record progress at the end of the year.

HISTORY

114. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is average. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The good language skills and support provided by the school ensure that those pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress. This overall picture is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection.
115. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of vocabulary that is linked to other eras. They know about some important historical events, such as the Gunpowder Plot and the Crimean War. Most know the chronological order of these events. They know about Guy Fawkes and link his story to the traditional bonfire festival. Their work on the Victorians has brought them into contact with children's life at the time and, in particular, with toys. Most importantly, they have worked on and understand the similarities and differences in dolls then and today, for instance, relating to materials, looks and movement. Pupils comment on artefacts and re-tell the story of Florence Nightingale.
116. By Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Vikings. Some good work relates to the difference in the meaning of *invader* and *settler*. Good links with literacy and numeracy are established through the brief study of Latin and Norse influences on present-day English and in the use of Roman numerals. The introduction also of archaeological methodology adds further interest to the work pupils get on with and provides good elements of investigative work.
117. Overall, there are sound links and developments relating to literacy, numeracy and ICT. For example, literacy skills are used and developed in the nurse's diary that pupils in Years 1 and 2 write whilst they are learning about the wounded in Scentari; numeracy skills are needed when the pupils develop a timeline that stretches from 3000 BC to the present day; and pupils view images of artefacts that are stored on CD-ROMs and they word process their descriptions and conclusions about them.
118. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. All of the lessons observed were good, or very good. Lessons are well planned, move along at a brisk pace and pupils are effectively managed. The teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and this enables them to ask challenging questions. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 lesson about the Vikings, learning was moved forward by questions such as: *How can we find out about these people who lived a long time ago?* Pupils' responses show that many of the pupils have a general appreciation of evidence and how to find it. In the same lesson, good use was made of an interactive whiteboard. Learning is enhanced by the large, clear images that are projected onto it. Details of artefacts are easily picked out and discussion flows from what the pupils can see. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were discussing the video recording that they had watched about evacuation in World War II. Again, the teacher's questioning was good: for

example, *How were children evacuated?*, *How did the evacuees feel?* and *Who did the evacuees live with?* Good evidence was provided by original letters from an evacuee and pupils' responses showed that they empathised with the children going away from home.

119. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader checks pupils' work and maintains a useful collection for reference. A particular focus has been the links with literacy. Teachers' work is also checked through their lesson planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. Pupils' attainment is average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make similar progress to their class mates. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when the subject was a key issue for improvement, attainment was below average in both age groups and learning opportunities to develop pupils' skills were limited. An extensive range of hardware and software is now in place to meet the demands of the curriculum. Teachers' skills in the subject have greatly improved and teachers provide a very good model to pupils.
121. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is average. Standards are rising because of focused teaching and a well-structured scheme and subject action plan. Pupils demonstrate good use and control of the mouse. They log on, load, save and retrieve their work and have good awareness of the various aspects of the computer. Pupils successfully enter text; they choose their own text style and size of font, and print out their final piece after self-correcting and re-drafting.
122. Pupils use other technological resources. They investigate direction and movement using a programmable toy. Use of a digital microscope helps younger pupils observe the patterns on a snail's shell. They know that the Internet is a source of information to find out about people from the past such as Florence Nightingale. Evidence in pupils' work folders shows that pupils can organise data to produce bar charts and download pictures to enhance their writing. Samples of pupils' work are not always dated to track their progression of skills over time. Keyboard skills for entering text on the screen are under-developed. For many pupils this can be a laborious process, limiting the amount they achieve in a lesson.
123. By the end of Year 6, pupils are more fluent in basic computer operations, mouse control and use of menus. They understand the potential of the software they use for a variety of purposes across the curriculum. Pupils are selective about the pictures they download from the Internet. In religious education about Sikhism, they have downloaded information about the importance of the holy book for Sikhs. Pupils know how to find information by putting key words into a *search engine*. In a study of the Vikings, small groups record sound onto a multi-media presentation with good results. Pupils in Year 6 have a good repertoire of software applications and knowledge, which they can use independently and for a variety of purposes. Other resources such as a heat sensor and digital camera are also used with confidence and care.
124. Teaching and learning are good in both infant and junior classes. The very good modelling by teachers in lessons has a good impact on the development of pupils' skills and the good progress they make. In the computer suite, pupils are provided with appropriate challenge and are well supported by adults. When teachers effectively revise previous learning about persuasive texts, this gives pupils

confidence and enthusiasm for tackling the next stage of the activity. Lessons are well planned and have good pace. Good use is made of technical support in lessons. Teachers have completed the nationally required training and this is contributing significantly to the raising of standards throughout the school.

125. Display and a scrutiny of pupils' work in all year groups show that the subject is used effectively as a learning tool in most subjects taught. Various programmes and software applications provide interesting ways for pupils to extend their learning and aid the use of language, thinking and social skills, for instance working with others on a task.
126. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable subject leader. There is a relevant subject policy in place with secure guidelines for Internet use, which have been shared with parents. However, samples of pupils' work are not always dated to track pupils' progression of skills over time. The subject leader is piloting the use of laptops in the classroom and is keen to develop this in the future. Good support is given to staff and, following discussions with the assessment coordinator, a section for learning opportunities in ICT is now included in teachers' medium term plans.
127. The school's timetabled use of the computer suite allows all pupils designated sessions to develop skills and regular access for some literacy and numeracy sessions. Computers in classrooms and the library are switched on for focused small group work with an adult, which is particularly effectively in infant classrooms. All hardware and software resources to support the nationally recommended scheme and units of work have been purchased and the number and range of resources have improved since the time of the last inspection. Nevertheless, the school is well placed to initiate further improvements, in particular using email and interactive white boards.

MUSIC

128. Provision is very good and is a key feature in the overall quality of the arts in school. A well-planned curriculum is enriched by extra tuition in playing instruments and opportunities to take part in extra-curricular clubs, concerts and festivals in the local and wider community. The high quality evident at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. The subject makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' cultural development.
129. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils sing melodies well, keep a simple beat and use simple symbols to represent sounds. Based on a poem, *Playing with My Friends*, the pupils use percussion instruments well to reflect how the poem speeds up as it is read. They can evaluate one another's performance and suggest what might be improved.
130. Many pupils, including good proportions of pupils from the various minority ethnic groups, go on to learn an instrument in the junior years. The range of instruments are extensive: brass, including trombone, French horn and cornet, woodwind, including flute and clarinet, and strings, including violin and guitar, as well as percussion, which takes the form of a long-established and highly proficient group of steel pan players. As a result, the pupils' skills of performance and their knowledge of traditional notation develop very well and these pupils achieve standards well above the average expected by the end of Year 6. They make a very good contribution to the quality of class lessons. For example, pupils in the mixed Years 3 and 4 classes composed music to accompany the story of *Orpheus and Eurydice* and were able to match its

change of mood, from happiness through fear to sadness and loss. They used different instruments well, changing from high pitched, soft bells to hard percussive scraping and beating. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 display good skills of ostinato and they can overlay an eight-beat pattern with four-beat and two-beat compositions simultaneously. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes to the subject and are keen to join in.

131. The quality of teaching is good and peripatetic teachers of instruments make a very good contribution to the overall quality. There are examples of excellent teaching by both class teachers and instrument teachers. Their expertise and enthusiasm are transmitted to pupils so that they are keen to enjoy the music the school offers. Teachers have very good skills of pupil management, so that they are confident to allow pupils to be creative, and they expect them to work hard and respond sensibly. In one unsatisfactory lesson, however, the teacher had insufficient expertise to take the learning forward.
132. The subject leader has been managing provision since the start of the current school year and has made a good start in her role. The curriculum is well planned, using a high quality scheme devised by the local education authority. At the time of the inspection, the final year's course work was not yet in operation, having been only recently published. As a result, the level of challenge in the lessons for the current Years 5 and 6 classes is limited. However, this is more than compensated for by the teaching of instruments. Plans to introduce the course are well in hand. The staff make very effective use of a designated room for teaching and the quality and range of resources are good. There are excellent opportunities for pupils learning instruments to perform in the school's large orchestra at regular concerts and festivals. A choir performs in school and locally, as do the steel pan players. The school is held in high regard for its music provision and frequently is invited to take part in prestigious events.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. Owing to timetable restrictions, it was not possible to observe the full range of activities. Consequently, a secure judgement about standards and achievement is not possible. However, in the aspects inspected, such as games, gymnastics and dance in Years 1 and 2, and games and gymnastics in Years 3 to 6, standards are average across the school. This is similar to the judgements of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. However, the majority of pupils do not achieve the standards that they could and attainment is lower than it ought to be.
134. The strengths of the subject include: the good range of outdoor resources; the high quality coaching from outside bodies; and standards in swimming. The areas for development are: the improvement of teachers' knowledge and understanding so that greater emphasis is placed on warm-up, cool down and sharing safety concerns with pupils; increasing the length of lessons to at least 40 minutes to enable teachers to have more teaching time; making the hall a safe place for lessons.
135. By Year 2, pupils in dance lessons display good rhythm and move freely. They interpret well a range of music. For example, in a Years 1 and 2 lesson, pupils moved in a 'jerky' manner when they were being a crab. They showed greater fluency of movement when percussion was played, such as a rainmaker. Owing to time restrictions, however, there were too few opportunities to discuss their own and other pupils' performance. In gymnastics, most pupils are agile, balanced and confident on

apparatus. However, they have some difficulties with safety. For instance, in one lesson, some pupils in Years 1 and 2 tried to move large, heavy apparatus without assistance. In games, pupils throw, catch and pass a ball adequately. However, one Years 1 and 2 lesson only lasted for 20 minutes and that was insufficient to develop ball skills to the right level.

136. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they have good gymnastic skills. Most are confident and creative when moving on the apparatus. They are successfully developing sequences of rolls and jumps on the apparatus and floor. The only games lessons observed had tennis as their focus. Standards were variable and related to the quality of teaching. For example, in the best Years 5 and 6 lesson, pupils showed good skills in hitting, retrieving and volleying the ball. In another lesson, with another Years 5 and 6 class, pupils were much less successful in performance. This was because pupils had far too little opportunity to practise skills for long enough periods because the lesson was too short.
137. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is because: in most lessons, teachers do their best in very difficult situations where time and accommodation are inadequate; there is high quality coaching available to pupils for tennis and from professional clubs in soccer; and pupils, in general, have good and often better attitudes to their work and behave well. In Years 1 and 2, the strengths include planning, pupil management and some useful discussion about other pupils' work. However, the lessons are too short, there is insufficient emphasis on safety and some teachers seem unaware of the importance of a warm-up and cool down. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, the teacher gives good leadership on safety, warm up and maintaining a good pace. The use of skilful Year 6 pupils as good models was seen in a Years 5 and 6 tennis lesson, where one pupil provided good guidance on volleying the ball. In the unsatisfactory lesson in a Years 3 and 4 class, expectations were low and this led to attainment that was below national expectations. The teacher showed a lack of subject knowledge. She had to rush the lesson and important aspects of the teaching were either missed out or too brief to make an impact.
138. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The present subject leader is only 'looking after' the subject for a short period of time, since the departure of the last co-ordinator. However, the teacher has done her best and succeeded in maintaining adequate levels of resourcing and supporting visiting coaches.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is average, as compared to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Both the school's provision for the subject and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. These are similar findings to those at the last inspection. There have been improvements to the range of topics taught, which include an in-depth study of Christianity and several world religions in the junior years, to the quality of the scheme of work, the training of teachers and the resources available. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development, providing them with opportunities to explore other faiths and reflect on the concept of God, as represented by other cultures. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and these involved classes of pupils in Years 1 and 2. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 as no lessons were observed owing to timetabling arrangements. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the quality of their

learning ranges from satisfactory to good over the six classes and is satisfactory overall.

140. In the two lessons seen, teaching was good. Both centred on what it is like to be raised in a Muslim family and a particular feature was the very good use that both teachers made of the knowledge of Muslim pupils in their classes. The pupils' opinions were valued and in one lesson formed an integral part of the teaching, as the pupils helped to explain to the whole class the ritual of washing before prayer and the nature of the prayers themselves. Because of these pupils' personal experiences, they helped other pupils to understand the significance of prayer in the life of a Muslim believer. The lessons were very well planned, included a variety of activities to stimulate the pupils' interest and made good use of a range of resources, including a Big Book, reference books and colourful posters. The work planned for pupils to do was designed to cater for the different levels of attainment of pupils and challenged higher attaining pupils to think of terms that would describe the concept of what is special in people. The activities catered well for the wide range of attainment, though one of the activities had more of a focus on literacy than on religious education. A scrutiny of infant pupils' books shows that they develop an understanding of several festivals important to Christians and Hindus. They develop respect for the beliefs of others and can explain in simple terms words such as *Almighty*, *Powerful* and *Patient* that describe Allah.
141. From a scrutiny of work in junior classes, it is evident that pupils carry out detailed studies of special places, events and people in religions such as Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. There are good opportunities to write at length narratives and accounts, which help the pupils' skills of literacy. Higher attaining pupils are asked to carry out research using the Internet and to go into greater detail about topics they have learned. The quality of presentation varies among classes, however, and there is an over-reliance on worksheets in some topics. In a discussion with a small group of older pupils, the pupils displayed good attitudes to the subject and showed tolerance of the views of others. Their recall of earlier learning was variable, however, and only the higher attaining pupils could describe accurately and confidently aspects of the work.
142. The subject leader, appointed since the time of the last inspection, has very good expertise for the role and leads and manages well. She has developed the scheme of work to match the needs of the school, producing ideas, plans and resources to support her colleagues. She has monitored planning effectively but not pupils' work in order to ensure complete coverage of topics and consistency of standards expected of pupils. There are end-of unit assessments in place to check pupils' learning and a good range of resources centrally stored, boxed and catalogued. Visitors, such as parents and people from the wider community have made a good contribution, talking to pupils about their beliefs, and there are regular visits to church. There have been only a few visits to places of worship involving the other faiths studied.