

INSPECTION REPORT

WATERSHEDDINGS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105635

Headteacher: Mrs L Tatham

Reporting inspector: Lynne Read
21199

Dates of inspection: 6 - 9 May, 2003

Inspection number: 246504

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Broadbent Road
Oldham

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Moses

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21199	Ms L Read	Registered inspector	English English as an additional language Religious education	What sort of school is it? Schools results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school let and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9520	Mr J Leigh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values, personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21910	Mr G Longton	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21910	Mr R Bonner	Team inspector	Science Physical education	How well does the school care for its pupils?
22482	Mr B Potter	Team inspector	Information & communication technology Design and technology Music Education inclusion Special educational needs	
17877	Mrs C Ingham	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Watersheddings Primary School is situated in the Derker area of Oldham. Incomes are low and the area is recognised as one of social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. Watersheddings is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds and a small number have British-Caribbean, British-African, Asian or mixed ethnic heritages. The majority of pupils speak English as their first language. Other languages spoken by just over 2 per cent of pupils include Urdu, Spanish and Cantonese. When they enter the nursery class the children's prior learning is very poor. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational need is above the national average. Special needs identified at the school include moderate learning or speech and language difficulties, sensory or physical impairment or emotional and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils who are recognised by the local education authority as requiring additional funding to meet their needs is above the average. A significant number of pupils leave or enter the school part way through their education.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Watersheddings provides a good standard of education for its pupils and has some very good features. It is an inclusive school where all pupils have full access to all parts of school life. Pupils achieve well in their lessons, effectively supported by the good quality of teaching throughout school. There is very good leadership that is focused on constant improvement. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils, of all levels of attainment, achieve well.
- Teaching is good across all age groups and much is very good or excellent.
- There is very good leadership.
- There is a very good emphasis on developing pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils have very good attitudes to learning, behaviour is very good and there are excellent relationships throughout school.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good.
- The school provides a stimulating atmosphere for learning and systems for ensuring pupils' health and safety are very good.
- Parents hold the school in high regard.

What could be improved

- Attainment in writing, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Resources for English, ICT and religious education.
- The checking of pupils' performance in science and information and communication technology.
- The management role of the subject leaders so that they have opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997 and, on balance, improvement is good. Circumstances at the school have changed considerably since then. The attainment on entry is much lower, the numbers of pupils with special educational needs has tripled, the 'barrier-free' environment allows the school to educate pupils with complex special needs and there is a re-integration project that supports pupils who have been excluded from other schools. The school has developed policies and schemes to guide teachers' planning, all statutory requirements are met and procedures for checking pupils' progress have been effectively improved in English and mathematics. Initial gains were made in the provision for ICT but major problems with the resources are limiting pupil progress. The monitoring role of the subject leaders is clear but requires further development. Progress in lessons has improved well, along with the quality of teaching. Achievement is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	B	E	D
Mathematics	E	D	E	C
Science	E	D	E*	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

very low E*

The results of 2001 reflected the school's efforts in raising standards and were recognised through the government's achievement award. The lower results of 2002 do not represent a drop in the school's performance but do reflect the attainment profiles of the Year 6 and Year 2 group. Of the Year 6 pupils who took the tests in 2002, there was a higher-than-average percentage who had special educational needs, nearly 20 per cent had arrived at the school between Years 3 and 6 and a very high percentage had attained the lower grade of Level 2 when they were seven. The school's detailed tracking records show that the vast majority attained what their teachers expected. During the inspection, attainment in mathematics for pupils in Year 6 was judged as average and much improved. In English, reading was average but writing skills were below. In science attainment was improved but was still below average. Evidence from lessons seen and from a scrutiny of work show that pupils, including those with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language, are making good progress. Indications are that this Year 6 group will attain higher standards in the 2003 tests and will meet the targets set for the school. An average percentage of pupils are working at the higher levels in mathematics and English lessons.

There remain fluctuations in the predicted outcomes for the other year groups that directly reflect the pupils' prior learning when they enter school and the different percentages of pupils with special educational needs. In the 2002 national tests for Year 2 pupils, results were very low; nevertheless, pupils achieved as their teachers expected considering that an exceptionally high number had special educational needs. Inspection findings are that attainment is much improved although remaining below average. Pupils achieve well from the very low starting point on entry to the nursery. There is no difference in the rate of progress in lessons between boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic groups. Attainment by age eleven in ICT is below expectations and in all other subjects is at least average. In music at the end of Year 2 and in art and design throughout school, pupils' attainment exceeds expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They are very well-motivated in their lessons and maintain very good levels of concentration. Pupils take pride in their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The standard of behaviour is very good. Pupils show great respect and consideration for others. From the Foundation Stage upwards, children and pupils collaborate very well, readily sharing ideas and resources.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent among all groups and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and to the pleasant learning atmosphere. Pupils are confident and show developing maturity as they take responsibility for their own conduct.
Attendance	Attendance rates are average when compared to schools nationally. Most pupils arrive in good time for lessons but a small minority of families have persistent

	difficulties with timekeeping.
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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 at the school is now good and much is very good. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection and is responsible for the improved achievement. Skills in speaking and listening, reading, and numeracy are promoted effectively from the nursery upwards but there is not enough emphasis on writing when studying other subjects. The 'team teaching' approach is successful in providing focused work in English and mathematics for the separate age groups and for the higher and lower attaining pupils. It also allows pupils to take advantage of teachers' specialist subject knowledge, for example in physical education or art and design lessons. Very good opportunities for collaboration are provided and these promote social skills very effectively, as well as enhancing learning generally. Teaching assistants provide informed and sensitive support for pupils who have special educational needs. Target groups provide good challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Relationships between all staff and pupils are excellent and promote learning very effectively. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well catered for; teachers concentrate on developing the necessary vocabulary and communication skills for all. Throughout the school, lessons have clear aims and targets so the pupils know what is expected. As a result, they respond enthusiastically and are keen to do well. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning by providing useful feedbacks during lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a good range of learning activities in the Foundation Stage. The breadth of the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 meets all requirements and is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. They have individual education programmes and targets that are shared with parents and regularly reviewed. All pupils share in the varied opportunities offered by the school. Target classes and focused sessions enable pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Sound provision ensures that they make good progress that is at least equal to that of their peers. They benefit from the school's emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good. School rules and procedures encourage pupils to respect other people's views, values and feelings. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and are polite and helpful. Social development is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Adults in the school care for pupils' individual needs very effectively. Very good strategies and reward systems underpin the promotion of very good behaviour. Established policies and routines ensure a very good standard of safety. Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is constantly checked and the information gathered is very effectively used to plan the next targets for learning. Assessment in science and ICT requires further development.

Parents have a very high opinion of the school and express great confidence in the headteacher and her staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is the driving force in maintaining the school's caring ethos and in striving for improvement. Management is satisfactory overall but there are some areas for development. The subject leaders check planning and completed work in Years 1 to 6 but do not have enough opportunities to observe lessons. Management in the Foundation Stage is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides sound leadership and management. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, especially in relation to trends of attainment. They gather a good amount of information through visits to school, talking to parents and from the headteacher's reports. They ask relevant questions and keep up-to-date with developments in the school improvement plan.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have a sound overview of pupils' performance. The information gathered from evaluation is used effectively in school development planning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall; there are strengths and one issue to address. Spending is linked to priorities in the development plan and governors monitor expenditure effectively through the detailed budget reports that they receive. Best value is routinely sought and grant funding is well used. The school has a reserve of money while there are shortages of resources in key areas such as English and problems with resources for ICT.

The accommodation is satisfactory overall but both the library and the computer suite are small. Resources are of good quality but there are some shortages. Staff provide a very stimulating learning environment for their pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school and are expected to work hard. • The teaching is good; children make good progress. • Behaviour is good and the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The type and amount of homework and information about the work set. • The range of activities provided outside of lessons.

The team agrees with parents' positive views. With regard to the issues arising, the range of activities outside of lessons is broadly similar to that in other primary schools of this size and is satisfactory. The amount and range of homework is satisfactory although the pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not regularly take books home. The team finds that this is an area for development. There have been some problems in the past with the timetabling of homework but these have now been resolved. The team appreciates that this may have caused some dissatisfaction at the time and was responsible for many of the 'tend to disagree' entries in 'the school works closely with parents'.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There have been some important changes at the school since the last inspection that have a direct impact on levels of attainment. The level of pupils' prior learning is much lower and there are more pupils entering or leaving the school part way through their education. Watersheddings is now a barrier-free school where pupils of all levels of attainment, including some with complex special educational needs, are welcomed. There is also a re-integration scheme where pupils who have been excluded from other educational institutions are supported in re-entering school life. These factors have a direct effect on test results that tend to fluctuate from year to year. The school was presented with an achievement award for improved results in 2001. Standards dropped in 2002 but are set to rise again in 2003. The school works hard to track each individual's attainment and to ensure that all pupils are on target to achieve their best. During the inspection, achievement was judged as good.
2. Children enter the nursery at age three. The majority have poor levels of prior learning and experiences, especially in relation to language skills, the understanding of mathematical concepts and general knowledge. They make very good progress in personal and social development and in their physical and creative skills. In these three areas, children reach the expected goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1. Good progress is made in communication, language and literacy, mathematical understanding and knowledge of the world but the majority of children are well below the expected levels on entry to Year 1.
3. In the 2002 National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment was very low for reading, writing and mathematics when compared with schools nationally and those in similar circumstances. The number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group was well above average at 40 per cent. When they entered nursery, this group's attainment was exceptionally low. A further 10 per cent of pupils had come into school after the start of Year 1 and therefore had not had the benefit of the school's good provision in the Nursery and Reception class. An analysis of the results shows that the vast majority gained a good Level 2 with only around 10 per cent at Level 2C. The results were no surprise to the school; staff had accurately predicted the outcomes from the detailed tracking system in operation. During the inspection, the percentage of pupils on line to attain the expected level 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science was judged as much better but still below the national average. A more detailed picture shows that around three quarters of pupils are working at the expected Level 2. In reading, mathematics and science around one quarter are working at the higher Level 3 with 15 per cent doing so in writing. Attainment in the classroom in speaking and listening was average. These figures represent substantial achievement from the low baseline on entry and, based on previous years' trends, are around the average for similar schools.
4. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils read confidently and particularly enjoy sharing a book with the class. Pupils talk about the characters, re-tell the plot and predict what will happen next. When writing, sentences are correctly structured and usually demarcated using capital letters and full stops. Most pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds in the English language in order to read but not so effectively when trying to spell words. In mathematics, pupils calculate answers using pen and paper methods and mental strategies. They have sound levels of understanding in most areas of the science curriculum but skills of scientific enquiry are below average. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is below expectations. Skills, knowledge and understanding in art and music are above average. In all other subjects, attainment meets

the expected standard. This represents good achievement in pupils' physical and creative capabilities as well as their academic skills.

5. Results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils were well below the national average for English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, results were average in mathematics, below average in English and well below in science. There were some important factors that affected the outcomes. One quarter of the pupils had special educational needs, and 18 per cent had arrived between Years 2 and 6. A very high percentage of the group who had attained the expected Level 2 at the end of Year 2 had actually attained the lower grade and had a long way to go to achieve the average standard by the end of Year 6. During the inspection, achievement was judged as good. In lessons, around 70 per cent of this year's group of pupils are working at the average level 4 in English and science with around 20 per cent at the higher level 5. Attainment in speaking and listening and reading is average overall but in writing, it is below average. In mathematics, some 80 per cent are attaining at the average Level 4 with one quarter working at the higher level. Using past indicators, the attainment seen during the inspection in all three subjects is about the same as that in similar schools.
6. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fiction texts fluently and find information from non-fiction books effectively. Their writing is logical, sequenced, and most pay good attention to grammar. Some higher attaining pupils are confident enough to use more sophisticated sentences containing detail to interest their readers. Most, however, use simple sentences largely because they do not have enough confidence or experience to apply the skills they have learned in lessons. For spelling, pupils rely heavily on remembering the visual pattern of the word or splitting words into syllables. They do not use other spelling techniques readily. In mathematics pupils have a sound understanding of number. Their skills of mental computation are developing well and they have a useful range of strategies to use when problem solving. In science, pupils have a developing knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes. Skills in experimenting and in evaluating the results in order to draw conclusions do not meet expectations. Pupils demonstrate developing skills in all areas of ICT but attainment is below expectations. They use CD ROMs and the Internet for research, develop multi-media presentations and know how to develop a spreadsheet. However, overall skills in this area are not as secure as they could be because of a lack of 'hands-on' time that is restricting progress. There are above-average standards in art and design. In the other subjects, attainment matches expectations and reflects the good progress made.
7. Over the last five years, attainment results at the end of Year 6 have varied according to the differences in pupils' prior learning when they enter school and the percentage of special needs or slower learners in each year group. These trends are clearly evident through the school's tracking system. Predictions, supported by inspection evidence, show that fluctuating results will remain a feature at the school for the immediate future. Overall, the trend in improvement is around the same as the national pattern. There is a small difference between the test results of boys and girls, with the latter achieving better results at the end of Year 6. Inspection findings do not point to any factor within the teaching or provision that favours either gender. Teachers work hard to involve both boys and girls in lessons and find books and topics that will interest them. There are no differences in the attainment of pupils from different backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language benefit from the school's emphasis on speaking and listening skills. They achieve as well as those whose first language is English.
8. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress, bearing in mind their prior learning and levels of attainment. This is largely as a result of the targeted teaching, of the well directed input of teaching assistants, and of their own good motivation. Pupils progress well through their learning programmes that provide experiences across

the full curriculum. For example, one child with mobility difficulties took full advantage of a physical education lesson, with very good support from the teaching assistant.

9. Pupils' skills in reading and numeracy are effectively consolidated through work in other subjects. Writing assignments are sometimes included in topic work but this is left to the teacher's discretion since there is no specific guidance built into the planning scheme. Overall, the quality of writing completed during English lessons or when studying other subjects is below average.
10. In 2002, the school's results fell short of the targets set with the local education authority for attainment in English and mathematics. On the basis of the inspection evidence and assessment records, this year's targets should be met in both subjects. Since the last inspection, there have been good improvements in achievement considering that the attainment on entry is now much lower than in 1997. In spite of this fact, the percentage of pupils now working at the expected Level 2 in Year 2 and Level 4 in Year 6 has improved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and have improved further since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher and her staff work extremely hard to develop the personal attributes of the pupils and this area is a major strength of the school. Pupils are very eager to enter their classes at the start of the day. They move around the school calmly and with purpose. Pupils are keen to help visitors for example, in giving directions around the school, opening doors and taking plates away at lunchtime. They take great delight in talking about their work. Pupils concentrate very well and involve themselves fully in the range of curricular and extra-curricular activities that the school provides. Pupils are most enthusiastic to get as much out of school as possible. There is a great deal of mutual respect; pupils are courteous to each other and to adults.
12. Teachers ensure that lessons are interesting, challenging and well paced; all of which generate enthusiasm for learning. This was seen in a personal, social, health and citizenship lesson in Year 4, where excellent attitudes to learning were seen. Pupils listened attentively and discussed sensibly in their groups. With great interest they listened to two Year 5 pupils, who talked about their role as school road safety officers. The pupils were very forthcoming in asking searching, relevant questions in order to gather the information they needed. In school assemblies pupils enter the hall silently and find a space to sit with no need for adult prompting. This creates a calm, spiritual setting for the worship.
13. Teachers use praise extremely effectively and pupils' efforts are constantly recognised, appreciated and celebrated by the school. As a result, pupils think carefully about their conduct, they are aware of their actions upon others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. They share wholeheartedly and genuinely in the weekly award ceremony and wear their 'golden award' and 'perfect' badges with great pride. Those who are talented are recognised and encouraged to talk about their successes in assemblies and in class.
14. Pupils are very happy at school and smiling faces are a feature throughout, making it a friendly and supportive place in which to work. Pupils form excellent, constructive relationships with each other and with their teachers. They collaborate very well, are keen to answer questions and are not afraid to contribute and test out their ideas. Pupils are confident in putting forward their point of view. For example in a very good meeting of the school council, members discussed the provision of better playground equipment, how to enliven the school interior and the litter problem in the playgrounds. They made sensible recommendations and decided how they would effect action. Pupils show initiative and are willing to take responsibility for the wide range of jobs they are offered. Some Year 6 pupils are given "turn to us" status and readily offer help for pupils and adults.

15. Behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and during play and lunchtimes. There were no permanent exclusions of pupils in the last school year. No oppressive or unacceptable behaviour was observed in the inspection week. In returned questionnaires, 95 per cent of parents agreed that pupils are well behaved and 99 per cent agreed that the school is helping their children to become mature. The inspection evidence supports this view.
16. Attendance is satisfactory and is broadly in line with national averages. The vast majority of pupils are punctual although, despite the best efforts of the school, a small minority still arrive late for lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. During the inspection, 58 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen and the majority of teaching was good. Across the school, just over one half of the teaching was good and in one in three lessons, it was very good or excellent. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school and is directly responsible for the good rate of learning. There have been good improvements in the quality of teaching since the time of the last inspection, with a higher percentage of very good and excellent practice.
18. The Foundation Stage consists of the full and part-time nursery children and those in the Reception class. As a result of the good teaching and very strong emphasis on personal development, children progress well and the majority of them achieve the early learning goals in personal and social development and in creative and physical education. A notable strength of teaching in this class is the range of interesting activities provided for pupils' development across all the recommended areas of learning. Lessons very cleverly consolidate and extend children's developing skills, knowledge and understanding, especially in language and literacy, personal development and mathematical work. For example, during inspection week the theme was based around living things. Children had opportunities to observe and count creatures, to create mobiles linked to the topic and to read books. This approach helps them to develop new vocabulary as well as their understanding. The teacher and adults work very effectively together, paying great attention to establishing routines and to developing confidence and independence in their pupils. This sets a very firm foundation for later learning.
19. The majority of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Reading strategies are taught as the whole class share a big book. For example, pupils are encouraged to identify new words in the text by using the clues in the pictures or finding words that will fit into the sentence. This explicit teaching leads to good progress. Good teaching of reading strategies uses games and practical sessions to extend pupils' skills in blending sounds in the English language but this is not extended sufficiently to cover the teaching of spelling. The teaching of mathematics is a strong feature, with group activities well designed to build on the mental mathematics starter session. Teachers use a good range of resources and teach different methods directly. For example, they teach pupils to count on and back in multiples of 2's 5's or 10's to help with addition or subtraction problems and to estimate the answer as a means of double checking their work. This means that pupils have a good range of different methods to use when working independently. Teachers set work at different levels in English and mathematics in a way that builds successfully on pupils' prior learning so that good progress is maintained. Regular teacher assessments ensure that pupils are learning at the expected rate. Pupils are given learning targets to show them what they need to improve. Encouraging feedback is often given orally during lessons so that pupils know how they are getting on.

20. As pupils move into Years 3 to 6, they continue to receive good teaching. The basic skills in English grammar, punctuation and style are taught well. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils learned about the appropriate style and language to use as they wrote an explanatory text about rivers. Similarly, in Year 3 pupils followed the conventions of letter writing, organising their paragraphs to make their ideas clear. Pupils understand the principles of good English but do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing and consolidate what they know. The teaching of spelling does not sufficiently cover all the possible techniques and therefore pupils are relying heavily on visual memory, which some find difficult. Teachers place a good emphasis on mental arithmetic in their numeracy lessons, using some interesting activities to motivate pupils. Through open-ended questions they encourage pupils to investigate and work things out for themselves. In science, teaching is satisfactory overall but there is scope to develop pupils' experimental skills by putting more emphasis on practical work into the termly planning. There are few planned opportunities for pupils to discover for themselves through planning and conducting their own experiments.
21. Teachers, throughout school, have consistent approaches that support learning very well. At the beginning of the lesson, pupils write in their books what they are going to learn, thereby providing a clear focus and purpose for learning. Lessons are often concluded with a focused session to assess whether they have attained the goal. This provides very useful information for the teacher that guides planning for the next lesson. Questioning techniques are very good and teachers inspire enthusiastic participation in oral work. They value all answers and efforts, thereby encouraging pupils to work hard and to do their best. Teachers' daily planning is detailed and effective and there is very good class management. Carefully chosen resources are organised and are readily available; pupils' books and other consumables are always to hand, and classroom routines are well established. As a result, no valuable learning time is lost. Classrooms are bright and inspiring. Teachers find ingenious ways of prompting their pupils; reminders can be seen on wall displays, on the ceiling and hanging from mobiles. The 'word walls' are well used as aids for spelling and pupils are often seen scanning the room for help with mathematical problems. The target groups provide focused work for specific groups of pupils, either higher or lower attaining pupils, and are successful in promoting good progress.
22. Teachers have undergone training in the use of ICT in the classroom and are confident in their approach. A suitable emphasis on applying these skills across the curriculum is planned for but technical problems often restrict the computer access time that pupils have. In the Nursery and Reception class, children are constantly encouraged to apply their skills in communication, language, literacy and mathematical understanding in all their work and the cross-subject themes form a major strength of the teaching programme. Between them, the teachers across the school have a wide ranging level of expertise and experience that they readily share with colleagues to support planning and lesson preparation. Some specialist teaching sessions make good use of expertise, for example in physical education or art and design. The leading teachers in the Foundation Stage, for English and mathematics offer a good model of practice for colleagues.
23. Good teaching serves the needs of pupils with special educational needs very well. Teachers ensure that work is matched to the individual's level of attainment and prior learning and that pupils receive the support needed to achieve well. Over time, this helps them to build up their self confidence and esteem and ultimately allows them to work with an increasing degree of independence. This was well illustrated in a lesson seen for a small group of Year 3 pupils. It included the areas for learning which were presented to the main class but the teacher had very carefully adapted the pace and the targets. As a consequence, these pupils were able to achieve their learning goals. Teachers monitor the progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language. They are always careful to explain new technical vocabulary and insist that correct terminology is used from an early stage. These pupils make good progress.

24. The type and amount of homework set is satisfactory and teachers include a guide for parents. Some problems with timetabling of homework have now been addressed so that pupils and parents know on which day it will be set. Books go home regularly in Years 1 and 2 and this makes a good contribution to learning. No similar system exists at present in Years 3 to 6 because so many books were lost or damaged. Therefore opportunities for pupils to extend their reading experiences and gather good ideas for writing are insufficient. Teachers make good use of the local environment and good community links, especially in the teaching of science, geography, history and physical education. Parents' returned questionnaires show that 97 per cent are of the opinion that 'teaching is good' and 99 per cent agreed that 'the school expects pupils to work hard'. The same opinions were repeated at the parents' meeting and inspection findings agree with this view.

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

25. The school has a broad and balanced programme of learning that covers all subjects and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The planning for religious education follows the guidelines of the Agreed Syllabus for Oldham. All statutory requirements are met.
26. There are policies and schemes of planning in place to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are being covered. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well established and have been extended or modified to suit the needs of the pupils. The recommended intervention strategies that are designed to support pupils who are experiencing some difficulty with reading and writing are not currently used. Other forms of intervention are in place but these are not as focused or sufficiently resourced.
27. There have been very good improvements in curriculum planning since the last inspection. The planning scheme ensures equal coverage of subjects. In most areas, other than English and mathematics, there is a two-year programme. This ensures that there is no repetition of subject matter and that skills are taught in a progressive way for pupils in classes where there is more than one age group. Termly planning is now good. Teachers use this guidance to prepare their weekly lesson plans which are well matched to the ages, needs and abilities of pupils.
28. Over the past two years the school's major priority has been the development of the English and mathematics curriculum. The local authority consultant has provided advice and training in the teaching of mathematics. The school is hoping to secure similar support for English this year. Teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is good. Plans clearly identify oral and practical activities and recorded tasks. They include explicit learning targets and effective assessment opportunities.
29. Pupils have good opportunities to use their numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects, especially in Years 3 to 6. For example, in geography lessons they produce graphs to compare temperature and rainfall in India and Britain. They use time lines in history to show a sequence of events. Reading and speaking skills are also well applied across a range of study but there are limited opportunities for pupils to write at length when recording work in other subjects. Writing assignments are not planned into the curriculum and are set at the discretion of the teacher. Some good work was seen, for example, Year 2 pupils imagined themselves in the role of a Victorian character travelling to the seaside on holiday, and wrote an interesting account of their experiences. There is a need to extend this type of work to other subjects on a more regular basis. Teachers are currently developing links across subjects of the curriculum that are proving very effective and worthwhile. For example, in a good Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils read and made notes

about the Egyptians. Because they had already covered some work on the topic in their history lessons, most of the vocabulary was familiar and they were able to access the information readily.

30. The quality of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The planning fully reflects the national guidance and principles and places a strong emphasis on the children learning through practical experiences. There is a good balance between the tasks that children choose for themselves and those which the teachers lead. All children benefit from participation in the varied range of interesting, imaginative, and often exciting, learning activities. Very thorough planning successfully guides teaching and learning. It is based on the recommended 'stepping stones' of learning for this age group and includes regular assessments of children's attainment. In this way, teachers keep a close eye on progress. Themes are used effectively to make links across the areas of learning. The staff evaluate the effectiveness of the learning opportunities given to the children, in order to ensure a balance of creative, physical and intellectual activities. The children in the Reception class are organised into groups for literacy and numeracy that are based on prior learning. This ensures that activities are planned at an appropriate level of challenge or support.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are set achievable targets which are shared with parents and incorporated into teachers' planning. All pupils, regardless of academic or physical ability have full access and inclusion to all areas of the curriculum and school life. This is a central feature and major strength of the school. Teachers and support assistants ensure that pupils have the resources they need to meet their targets. For example, one pupil played a full part in an assembly using a special tape recording machine and the help of a friend.
32. The curriculum for personal education is very good. The programme ensures a balanced coverage of issues relating to citizenship, healthy living and the development of social skills. For example, adults ensure pupils understand the importance of personal hygiene, insisting on pupils washing their hands before meals and after practical activities. Pupils are given bottled water and have 'brain gym' sessions to keep them refreshed and to help their concentration. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively which is another factor in the good standards of personal education.
33. The provision for extra curricular activities is satisfactory and activities are well supported. They include sporting opportunities with training in football, netball and judo as well as clubs for chess, drama, art, dance and recorders. The school makes considerable efforts to enrich the curriculum through visits to places of interest and community links. Pupils experience a variety of outdoor 'adventure' activities and, during the school's Arts Week, pupils took part in a wide range of activities including cookery, drama, poetry reading, theatre group productions and a visit to the local art gallery.
34. The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good. Staff effectively promote an atmosphere of care, concern and consideration for others.
35. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. During 'circle time' pupils share their thoughts and feelings and talk about aspects of their own personalities. They are encouraged to consider the less tangible aspects in the world and recognise special things in their lives such as families and friends. There is a sense of reverence during assembly time as pupils reflect on the theme of the day and say their prayers. They appreciate that this is a special time and often uplift the proceedings with their enthusiastic singing. The school makes use of its pleasant grounds to observe the wonders of nature. Pupils in a Years 3 and 4 class were fascinated by some mini beasts they had discovered there. They showed great care and respect for the creatures as they ensured that all were safely returned to their correct environment. Lessons in religious education, art and music

promote spirituality effectively. Pupils explore values and beliefs from different faiths and recognise how these can affect every day life. They express their emotions through artistic means and in music-making.

36. Moral development is promoted very well. Moral values are interwoven into the daily life of the school and help pupils to make informed choices. The school's clear policy for encouraging good behaviour is underpinned by simple but important rules. Behaviour in the classroom is guided by rules that the pupils themselves devise. Moral values such as fairness, honesty and respect are stressed within school assemblies and where ever the opportunity arises. The school has very good systems of rewards and sanctions that promote a strong sense of right and wrong. Teachers are skilled at talking with pupils to help them see the consequences of their actions and the effect of their behaviour on others.
37. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent. The school provides a supportive framework in which pupils can flourish. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and all adults provide pupils with very good examples on which to model their own social behaviour. Pupils are expected to work co-operatively, share ideas and support each other as needed. They respond sensitively to their friend's special needs and offer help almost instinctively. Older pupils are given opportunities to contribute to the smooth running of the school by undertaking responsibilities, for example, organising the hall for assemblies, manning the telephone at lunch time and helping to organise the dance and art clubs. There is a very effective school council made up of members from the nursery upwards. This gives pupils an active voice in the running of the school and contributes to their development as good citizens. Pupils appreciate the plight of those less fortunate than themselves through their fundraising. Overall, pupils are very well prepared to play an appropriate part in society.
38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Stories, music, art and literature from around the world are used thoughtfully throughout the school to celebrate the diversity of cultures and faiths in society. The 'linking project' starts when children are in the Reception class and allows them to make friends with pupils from different backgrounds so they develop a respect for each other's values and beliefs. This is especially valuable in an area that has seen much social unrest and serious racial incidents. The school encourages pupils to learn about famous artists from Britain and around the world, such as Lowry and Monet. In geography they contrast their own way of life with that of children in India, expressing similarities and differences. Pupils have a secure knowledge of their own heritage. For example, in history they study Oldham during the Victorian era, contrasting the lifestyles of the rich and the poor.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress. Staff have worked hard to make good improvements since the last inspection. When children enter the school in the nursery or Reception class their attainment levels are checked and pupils in Years 2 and 6 undertake the National Curriculum assessment tests. The results of these tests are checked to make sure that there are no significant differences between pupils of different ethnicity or gender. The school also carries out a range of additional tests in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5. The systems that the school uses to identify the standards of attainment for English and mathematics are good and effective procedures enable teachers to track the rate of pupils' progress through the school. These detailed records are kept to show how pupils' learning is developing and to allocate additional support for pupils who are not making the progress that they should. Assessment information is also used well to identify pupils for extra 'booster' sessions, those in the higher attaining target groups and the Easter school. The school analyses well

pupils' responses in the national tests in English and mathematics, identifying particular strengths and areas that require further improvement. As a result of this analysis the curriculum is adjusted, with greater emphasis being placed on the areas where pupils have experienced some difficulty. Particularly good progress has been made in entering assessment information into a computer database so that it can be analysed and accessed more easily.

40. In most other subjects assessment and record keeping are in the early stages of development. In science, there is little identification of specific strengths and weaknesses to inform teaching and identify areas for subject improvement. The school has successfully identified the progression of skills to be taught in ICT but these are not systematically assessed or recorded. Therefore, in science and ICT, assessment and recording are unsatisfactory. In other subjects, for example history and geography, teachers check how well pupils have achieved at the end of each topic. Overall, in these subjects, assessment procedures are satisfactory.
41. Since the previous inspection assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage have been a focus area for development. The systems and procedures now in place track the children's progress over time very thoroughly. On entry to the Nursery and Reception years the staff make assessments of pupils' prior learning through observations and discussions with parents and carers. Through regular monitoring, the staff identify the children's achievements, know where they are experiencing some difficulty and make good use of the information to plan future activities. A group target system has been introduced in communication, language and literacy and mathematics and these targets are shared with the children and written in their workbooks. Progress towards the targets is regularly checked and extra support is given when progress is slow. Specific activities are selected for assessment opportunities to produce an all-round view of each child's progress. For example, during a physical development session, children's skills in balancing were assessed and noted. Staff take great care when assessing the children's recorded work. Almost all pieces of work are annotated to show whether the child was aided or worked independently and include comments to indicate the child's response to the activity.
42. Assessments are very well used to produce individual learning plans for pupils who have special educational needs. Plans contain achievable targets that are translated into lesson activities. The school has not fully developed its policy for gifted and talented pupils but, through informal methods, staff recognise and celebrate their achievements. This was clearly shown in the weekly award assembly when pupils were congratulated on their achievements in rugby and chess. The few pupils who have behavioural or emotional difficulties have targets to help them manage their behaviour and teachers develop plans to support them in a non-confrontational way.
43. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. There have been good improvements since the last inspection. There is a most effective health and safety policy, with appropriate procedures in place. An example of this is the comprehensive range of risk assessments that covers such areas as safe lifting and handling of those pupils with physical disabilities. There are regular inspections of the school by the headteacher, caretaker and the governors. First aid procedures are satisfactory with appropriate numbers of fully trained staff available. Especially relevant to this school, the staff have good guidelines and training to help them cope with a range of medical conditions and in dispensing medication.
44. The school provides a most secure, caring and welcoming environment. Staff know the pupils and their families well and show a genuine interest in their welfare, which results in excellent relationships. The efforts made to include children with disabilities in all activities are quite outstanding. Staff seek out mobility aids, communication devices and provide highly effective one-to-one assistance. There is constant supervision of all pupils during

playtime, lunchtime and before and after school. The 'hand-over' arrangements for younger pupils at the end of the day provide good security and peace of mind for parents and carers. There is a designated, trained person for child protection and staff are well informed about procedures. The school works effectively in partnership with all the appropriate agencies to secure pupils' welfare.

45. There are good procedures to promote, monitor and improve attendance. The school has worked hard to improve punctuality but this remains a problem for a few families. Teachers ensure that registration is very efficient, allowing a prompt start to lessons. Latecomers are integrated into lessons with a minimum of disruption.
46. The school has very good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and eliminate oppressive behaviour, including bullying. The school's behaviour policy is most effective. It constitutes clear school and class guidelines, which have been discussed and agreed by pupils. These are called 'golden ways' and every pupil can quote them. In this way the discipline in the school is not imposed by adults but is owned by all and helps to promote maturity in the pupils. There are some imaginative elements to the positive behaviour strategy in school. For example, good behaviour at lunchtime is recognised by an invitation to attend 'The Captains Table' which is seen as a real treat. There are established procedures for tackling the rare occasion when oppressive behaviour occurs. The school has a clear policy on bullying which includes discussion and parental involvement. Pupils know how to report incidents and know that their teachers will take appropriate action. Parents at the meeting expressed the same level of confidence.
47. There are very good procedures to monitor and support the personal development of pupils. They are most effective because they are based on the teachers' detailed knowledge of individuals. Information is used to develop the personal attributes of pupils. Through discussions they reflect on the consequences of anti-social behaviour. In one class, the pupils drew up a set of rules for the inhabitants of the planet 'Zog' to help them maintain order. The older pupils are beginning to understand what it means to be a good citizen. A group of Year 6 pupils won first prize in a Youth Enterprise competition in which they decorated boxes, marketed them and sold them for charity at a local trade fair. This demonstrates their abilities to make decisions, organise themselves, work as a team and communicate with a range of people.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents and carers are very satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of what the school provides and achieves.
49. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers have the view that:
 - their children like school;
 - pupils are making good progress;
 - they are well informed about the progress their child is making;
 - teaching is good;
 - they would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions and problems;
 - the school is well led and managed;
 - the school is helping their child to become mature.
50. A small minority of parents and carers have the view that their child does not get the right amount of homework and that the school does not provide an interesting range of extra-curricular activities. Inspection judges homework as satisfactory, although it is recognised that there were problems with homework timetables earlier in the year which could well have led to some dissatisfaction. The cover sheet provided with the homework tasks provides useful information for parents about what is expected and when. The vast majority

of parents support and encourage their children to complete their assignments, as they agree to do so when they sign the home-school agreement. Inspection evidence judges that there is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities for the size of the school. The quality, relevance and usability of general information provided to parents and carers is very good. This is a great improvement on the last inspection. Parents particularly value the weekly newsletters, which keep them up to date with school life and forthcoming events. The school prospectus is informative and meets requirements. Parents spoken to during the inspection week agreed that they understood very well what was going on in the school.

51. Annual reports to parents are good and describe achievement linked to National Curriculum levels. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Individual targets are set and reports include provision for pupil comment, which are completed in all years. The school provides several opportunities throughout the year for formal and informal meetings with parents where progress and standards are discussed. Most parents of pupils with special educational needs are supportive, involved and kept well informed through the review meetings they attend. Parents have opportunities to learn about their children's lessons. For example, when the numeracy strategy was introduced, the school held a special session for parents to explain the new approaches. They were also invited to watch the new literacy hour in classes.
52. The school is very welcoming to parents and carers; an open door policy operates and parents are at ease when approaching teachers. The headteacher is very accessible and usually sees parents on request. Staff are readily available before and after school and it is clear that relationships are very good. At the meeting, parents said that they would have no hesitation in contacting the school with a problem and appreciated the staff's efforts in sorting out issues quickly. A small number of parents and carers provide regular help and support in such areas as reading, helping with educational trips, sports day and running sport or craft sessions. Such support is highly valued by the school and makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher provides very good leadership, driving the school forward through strong team work. The strengths of the headteacher's leadership are reflected in the very good provision for personal and social education and the way in which the school lives out its mission statement by ensuring that all pupils, regardless of any special need they may have, are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. She is very highly regarded by parents who value her hard work, approachability and commitment. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher who takes an active role in ensuring that agreed school practice is carried out on a day-to-day basis. Together, they are very successful in promoting an environment where pupils work hard, enjoy excellent relationships, and show respect for peers and adults. All staff are committed to the inclusive aims of the school. They work very hard to provide a bright, secure and stimulating learning environment for their pupils.
54. The governors are supportive and many give their time freely to help in school. Their leadership and management are satisfactory. The chair person is a regular visitor and knows staff, pupils and parents very well. Link governors are appointed to year groups to help them keep abreast of issues and developments. The local authority's adviser attends meetings to help governors analyse the trends of attainment at the school. The parent governors maintain good contact with families, usually on an informal basis, and are a valuable asset in maintaining good communication between home and school. Governors also seek the views of pupils when the school council is invited to meetings. As a result of their active involvement and good communications, the governors are well informed about the strengths of the school and able to identify the priorities for development. They are

regularly updated on the progress and success of the initiatives in the school development plan.

55. There are strengths in the school's management and also some areas for development; overall it is satisfactory. There is a constant cycle of evaluation that informs improvement planning. Governors keep a close eye on spending and ensure that budget limits are adhered to. Recommendations from the last audit report have been successfully addressed. On the other hand, the school is holding a large reserve of funds but, at the same time, there are shortages in resources for English, ICT and religious education. This is not a satisfactory situation.
56. Procedures for the monitoring of teachers' performance are effective with the headteacher taking the responsibility for lesson observations. One morning per week is allocated for monitoring procedures by the headteacher and she has a thorough overview of teaching and learning throughout school. A good range of courses have been attended by staff and the training programme is based on priorities identified through action plans, national priorities and individual targets from performance reviews. The subject managers have a diligent approach to their responsibilities. They check planning and pupils' completed work to maintain an overview of learning and attainment. The assessment manager and those for the core subjects of English and mathematics analyse the results of national and other tests to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and to track progress in all aspects of each subject. They have a secure overview of standards. However, managers of all subjects do not have appropriate opportunities to observe lessons on a regular basis and so do not evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Some paired observations have taken place where teachers learn from each other's practice. Whilst this system has some merits, it does not provide enough information for subject managers to evaluate provision thoroughly and inform the action plans that they produce.
57. The management of special educational needs provision is very good. The coordinator keeps up to date with legislation and developments by attending relevant courses. She works hard to maintain the very good provision for pupils. Comprehensive records are kept and parents are informed about their children's progress. The individual education plans that teachers produce are detailed and provide a good guide for lesson planning. The nominated governor for special needs is a teacher in the school and is very knowledgeable. She provides valuable support through her experience and expertise. Provision for pupils who have multiple and severe difficulties is often excellent. The school ensures that they have the specialist equipment that they need and has good links with outside agencies to provide expert help and advice.
58. Watersheddings is staffed by a suitable number of teachers who are effectively deployed to meet the demands of the curriculum and to support pupils with special educational needs. All the teachers have high levels of professionalism, dedication and commitment. Staff work closely together in a well motivated team. They plan all their work conscientiously, sharing experience and expertise. Knowledgeable nursery nurses and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils' learning. The school is well served by appropriately skilled non-teaching staff, all of whom are committed to its aims and policies. Lunchtime supervisors provide a high standard of care at midday and know the pupils very well. The caretaker is very conscientious in his work, ensuring that the buildings and resources are very well maintained. The standard of cleanliness is commendable. Administrative support is very effective and efficient. The school secretary makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school, discharging a wide and diverse range of responsibilities. Her expertise in finance and efficient use of ICT frees the headteacher from routine matters.
59. The accommodation is spacious, light and well ventilated. Good quality displays of pupils' work significantly enhance the learning environment of the school. There are appropriate facilities for the delivery of all programmes of study contained in the National Curriculum.

The central reference library, however, is limited and the class reading areas are not sufficiently developed to compensate. The grounds provide good facilities for sport, physical education and leisure time.

60. Overall, resourcing is adequate for most subjects but there are some shortages. The computers work on two different systems and this causes difficulties in providing a coherent curriculum for ICT. The stock of reference books in the library is limited and there are very few artefacts and books to support the new planning for religious education. Teachers organise all equipment effectively in their classrooms and ensure good labelling. This allows pupils to access material when needed and encourages them to become independent learners.
61. Taking into consideration the good quality of teaching, good achievement, the very good emphasis on personal and social development, very strong leadership and costs that are below average, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The quality of the school's self evaluation is reflected in the fact that some of the key issues below have already been identified as areas for development. These are marked with a star.
63. In order to improve attainment further and to develop the management systems at the school, the headteacher, governors and teachers should:
- (1) *Raise standards in writing by:
 - a) including opportunities within the termly plans for pupils to write at length in both their English lessons and when recording work in other subjects;
 - b) making use of the recommended intervention strategies in English for pupils who are experiencing some difficulty;
 - c) extending the stock of books in the library to provide better opportunities for research;
 - d) improving the selection of reading material in classrooms or for pupils to take home so that they experience a wider range of writing styles.
(paragraphs 6,9,20,26,29,55,60,90,91,93)
 - 2) * Raise standards in science by:
 - a) providing pupils with more opportunities in their science lessons to hypothesise, plan their own scientific experiments and draw conclusions from the evidence;
 - b) improving procedures to check learning and set targets, using the good model already established for English and mathematics.
(paragraphs 6,20,40,108,109,110)
 - 3) improve attainment in ICT by:
 - a) improving resources so that there is a suitable number of computers that run on a compatible system and an appropriate range of software;
 - b) increasing the amount of time that pupils have on the computers to practise and consolidate what they learn;
 - c) improving the procedures to check learning and set targets, using the good model already established for English and mathematics.
(paragraphs 6,22,40,60,139,140)

- 4) Improve the management role of the subject leaders by:
providing opportunities for them to check teaching and learning in their subject on a regular basis;
(paragraphs 56,95,111,124,136,147,152,158)

In addition when drawing up their action plan, the governors should give consideration to the following issues.

- Improving the range of books, pictures and artefacts to meet the requirements of the new planning scheme for religious education.
- developing a consistent approach to assessment and record keeping in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

58

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

32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	14	33	7	0	0	0
Percentage	7	24	57	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	275
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10	121

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	66

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	24	16	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	17
	Girls	10	8	9
	Total	22	19	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	55 (70)	48 (78)	65 (78)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	15
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	22	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	55 (76)	60 (84)	63 (73)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	22	17	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	15	15
	Girls	10	11	11
	Total	22	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (81)	67 (65)	67 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	15
	Girls	8	10	10
	Total	19	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49 (65)	56 (62)	64 (81)
	National	72 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	263	0	0
White – Irish		0	0
White – any other White background		0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian		0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian		0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi		0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background		0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African		0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background		0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group		0	0
No ethnic group recorded	21	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)	10.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

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	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	198
Number of pupils per FTE adult	4.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	566,361
Total expenditure	572,181
Expenditure per pupil	1,901
Balance brought forward from previous year	72,153
Balance carried forward to next year	66,333

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	305
Number of questionnaires returned	71

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	39	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	44	1	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	44	0	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	26	19	3	4
The teaching is good.	64	33	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	36	1	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	26	0	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	32	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	35	11	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	61	31	3	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	46	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	39	13	7	1

The inspectors' comments can be found in the summary report.

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

64. The overall quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good with many instances of very good provision for both Nursery and Reception children. This is the outcome of the good teaching and the consistently good quality of the learning experiences provided for the children.
65. The Nursery and Reception children are accommodated in two mixed-age classes in the Foundation Stage unit. Children enter the nursery in the September following their third birthday, initially on a part time basis. However, when places are available the children attend full time and during this inspection most nursery children attended for the full day. There is good continuity and progression in learning. The majority of children first start in the nursery with poor levels of attainment in relation to those expected. They achieve well in the Nursery and Reception year and attainment in personal, social and emotional development and in physical and creative development is broadly in line with the levels expected. Attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world is well below the levels expected when the children move into Year 1.
66. Since the last inspection progress overall has improved from satisfactory to good. Although the average attainment levels identified in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development in the last inspection have not been sustained, the attainment on entry is significantly lower; consequently the children achieve well from this low baseline. Assessment systems are now fully in place and these are used effectively to inform future learning. There is very effective integration of children with special educational needs and disabled pupils into the unit and this is a significant development. The quality of care and support by the learning support assistants is quite outstanding and makes a significant contribution to the children's progress and development. This is a model of very good practice.
67. The overall quality of teaching is good and is often very good. The staff team includes two qualified teachers, two qualified nursery nurses, one classroom assistant and two learning support assistants with specific responsibilities for special needs. The staff form a very effective team. Teachers work closely with all adults who are fully involved in planning and who make a significant contribution to the children's learning. During each day a good range of activities are planned for each area of learning. There are many strengths in the teaching. These include the staff's commitment, their very hard work in organising the unit, their skills in managing and organising the children and good lesson planning. The staff are skilled in enticing children to take part in the activities so that they take full advantage of what the school has to offer. The emphasis is on practical tasks and staff introduce some imaginative approaches. For example, the children developed their understanding of 'heavy' and 'light' by using a real seesaw to test their predictions.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Nursery and Reception children achieve well in this area of learning and the majority of children attain the learning goals for their age group. This is because the organisation of the unit promotes independence and the mixed-age groups enable Nursery children to learn from the model provided by the older ones. All adults encourage the children to do things for themselves and only intervene when absolutely necessary. A strong sense of community is evident in the unit where each child is treated as a valued member of the class.

69. The staff have high expectations of the children's behaviour; they constantly emphasise praise and positive encouragement. As a result, the children thrive and show an increasing level of self-assurance and willingness to try out new things. In free-choice activities, Nursery children choose who to work with and collect the resources they need without adult support. Most children show good levels of self-discipline at this young age because they are constantly praised for doing the right thing.
70. Children are encouraged to co-operate and share from their first days in school. This has a positive impact on their personal development and prepares them well for their future education. For example, a group of boys making repeating patterns decided who should use which colours to make the pegboard pattern. In the pet shop role-play area children amicably decide which roles they will take. Children readily help those with disabilities. They show good levels of maturity as they provide 'the voice' for the child who cannot speak or make plenty of room for walking frames.
71. Because the children know what is expected of them, they concentrate and persevere. Some Reception children encountered challenge when writing a sentence about their picture, but they persevered to think of the letters for each word. Nursery children involved in making an observational painting of a fish tank did so with great concentration and very effective results.

Communication, language and literacy

72. By the end of the Reception year attainment is well below the expected levels overall but around average for speaking and listening. The children make good progress from the low starting point on entry to the Nursery year and good achievement is sustained throughout the Foundation Stage. The children's learning is enhanced through the skilful intervention of the staff and by the emphasis given to developing the children's skills in communication. On entry to the unit, many Nursery children have restricted speech and diction is unclear. They use only a limited number of words and phrases. Staff take every opportunity to engage the children in conversation. They speak clearly and encourage the children to respond. The staff are sensitive to those children who are reluctant to speak and prompt those whose understanding is far greater than their ability to express their ideas orally. Some children, for example, had great difficulty in explaining their observations of the balancing scales although their actions showed an understanding of the concept of balance. The children quickly develop very good listening skills because they are interested in what the staff and other children have to say. Adults constantly acknowledge children who are listening carefully and this is a good incentive for all.
73. A strong emphasis is given to reading to develop the children's early reading skills. All have a 'book bag' and they choose books from the library to take home on a regular basis. The staff plan regular book-sharing activities and Reception children are encouraged to select their own books and complete their 'diaries' to record their evaluation of the story. Children make a good effort although many find this difficult. Extensive use is made of labelling which also promotes children's reading and self-help skills. In guided reading sessions with the Reception children the staff discuss the story to develop early skills of comprehension. The children are confident to 'have a go' at writing for instance, when they write a caption for their picture. Staff introduce some innovative ideas to motivate children. For example, the teacher writes a question in the 'chatty books' and the children respond. Most nursery children are still at the stage of making marks and have difficulty copy-writing and forming recognisable letters. A few higher-attaining Reception children are beginning to write a sentence and attempt to write their own words using their knowledge of letters. Very few, however, are on line to meet the goals in writing by the end of the reception year.

Mathematical Development

74. Over their time in the Foundation Stage, the children make good progress in mathematical development. On entry, Nursery children have a very poor knowledge and understanding of number. Good teaching in the unit fosters the children's understanding of number, shape and measures through daily practical activities. This is a key factor in the good progress that the children make although, by the end of the Reception year, most children are likely to remain well below the expected levels.
75. The children in the Reception year are grouped according to prior learning for their mathematics sessions. This system is effective and ensures activities are well matched to the children's stages of learning. The children enjoy mathematical activities because they are presented in imaginative ways. They enjoy solving problems and were eager to help the teacher who wanted to make her shopping bags weigh the same. An enterprising higher-attaining Reception child proceeded to empty both bags and said the bags now weighed the same! The staff have introduced the concept of addition to the Reception children and a few higher-attaining ones can calculate addition with the aid of counting equipment and record the results pictorially.
76. The staff carefully structure sessions to develop the Nursery children's counting skills and to extend their mathematical vocabulary. In one session, the children enjoyed helping the wolf puppet to get his answers right. The children took great delight in correcting his counting mistakes. Throughout the unit, there are mathematical displays to support the children's learning such as number lines, large number symbols and a suspended display of three dimensional objects. The children explore shape successfully as they make patterns and build models.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

77. The overall attainment of the children in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year is well below the level expected. Attainment is mainly inhibited by the children's limited general knowledge on entry and limited language skills to communicate their knowledge and understanding. However, the children do make good progress in their learning in each element because of the good teaching, varied provision and use of the outdoor facilities.
78. Well-planned activities stimulate the children's natural curiosity. Activities are currently based on the current theme, 'Living Things'. The children have learned to classify and most can say whether an object is living or not living. In activities based on the local area they have compared different types of houses and investigated different buildings in the local environment. In their construction activities, children develop an understanding of design. They made good attempts to construct houses as a part of their town display.
79. The children are very interested in using computers and these are a very popular choice activity. The class computers are used well to reinforce basic literacy and numeracy skills. Children also have access to tape recorders which they use independently to listen to stories.

Physical Development

80. In all aspects of physical development most children attain their learning goals by the end of the Reception year. The children achieve well because best use is made of the available resources to provide purposeful, energetic and adventurous activity. Staff meet the developing needs of the Nursery and Reception children by organising some physical activity sessions in separate age groups.

81. The Nursery children quickly gain confidence in using the outdoor resources. The children enjoy demonstrating their skills, for example, by keeping the ball bouncing. Children use space effectively, changing direction and effectively dodging others. The staff encourage the children to improve by demonstration of good techniques, which are quickly copied. Within the programme of activities there is a high focus on creative movement and dance. In a very good lesson for Reception children the teacher used a painting as a stimulus for movement. By the end of the lesson the children danced a sequence of movements to represent the characters. They made 'spiky' movements as Jack Frost and 'smooth' movements as the sun.
82. On entry to the unit children's manipulative skills are often very weak. They learn well because the staff plan very specific activities to develop control and dexterity. For example, as the children made animal models from salt dough they very carefully cut the pipe cleaners to make ears, legs and tails and placed these with great care in the right place. Children with disabilities gain a great deal from the provision for physical development because they are fully included in the activities and have the appropriate support.

Creative Development

83. The children's learning is in line with that expected by the end of the Reception year. The children make good progress because the staff stimulate the children's imagination and help them to express their individuality.
84. The children enjoy trying out new ideas and exploring techniques. They mix the colour they want to paint a picture of an animal and investigate different textures through making collages. The children have access to an excellent interactive sensory area where they investigate sounds and taped music. Moving lights, coloured papers, baubles and silver streamers provide a stimulating atmosphere as they make and listen to music.
85. Imaginative role-play is enriched in the very good facilities in the unit. There is good provision for the Nursery children for home play and the 'pet shop' provides a higher level of challenge for the Reception children. The staff ensure these experiences are challenging by regularly introducing different resources to extend the role play.

ENGLISH

86. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were very low when compared to the national average and the average for similar schools. For Year 6, the results were well below average and when compared to similar schools, they were below average. Lesson observations during the inspection indicate that standards in speaking and listening for the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are broadly average. In reading there have been good improvements with standards in Year 2 just below average and Year 6 pupils achieving around the average mark. For writing, attainment remains below average overall but there has been a pleasing improvement in the numbers of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in Year 2.
87. Over time, improvement is good. There is a higher percentage of current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attaining the expected levels. Results at the school vary from year to year and are directly linked to the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in each cohort. Another crucial factor is the number of pupils who join the school during the junior years and have not had the benefit of the good grounding provided at Watersheddings.
88. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. As a result, progress is good and attainment in this area of English is average overall. Pupils express their ideas clearly and listen well to others. All readily engage in

conversation about their work. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils talked about the main character in a book called *Angry Arthur*. They suggested some comparative phrases that they might use in their own writing. For example, they said he was so angry that it was 'like a giant stamping his feet' or 'cars crashing'. In Years 3 to 6 pupils talk at length about a range of topics and respond appropriately to their peers' ideas. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, pupils expressed their feelings about receiving a surprise letter by recalling some words they had learned earlier in the week such as 'jubilant' or 'elated'. Year 4 pupils used their notes on Egypt to make a short oral presentation to the class. They spoke with clarity and assurance, holding the attention of their listeners. Progress for all groups of pupils is good with the higher achieving pupils able to clarify statements and respond to opposing views with courtesy. For example, one Year 5 pupil had the confidence to argue with the majority view about a character that the class were studying. He articulated his opinions clearly, justified them effectively and provided some interesting food for thought.

89. Pupils make good progress in reading. Attainment in class is just below average in Year 2 and broadly average in Year 6. Guided reading sessions are well used to teach essential skills such as using sounds in the English language to build up new words, or picture clues to help understanding. By the end of Year 2, most pupils talk about the plot and characters in a story, predicting what will happen next. They recognise the features of both fiction and non-fiction books and know how to use the contents section to find information. Pupils take reading books home regularly and many are well supported by parents. This makes a good contribution to learning. By Year 6, the majority of pupils read fluently and recall the main points of the story. They locate information efficiently using sub-headings, diagrams and captions, effectively employing scanning and skimming techniques. The school is developing links between subjects and this is supporting reading very well. For example, some Year 6 pupils were reading about rivers. Their understanding of technical terms was good because they had met words such as 'meander' in previous geography lessons. Skills of inference and deduction are developing well. This was illustrated when Year 5 pupils explained that one character's bad behaviour was probably due to his unfortunate home life. Pupils state their preferences for favourite books and authors although their reading experiences are generally narrow. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress, due to the good quality of teaching and the positive attitudes fostered by the school. Those who have special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate in relation to their prior learning.
90. The school has worked hard to improve standards in reading. Classes now have daily dedicated reading sessions where skills are taught and consolidated. However, the range of reading books and resources is limited. Many of the early reading books are old and do not provide pupils with opportunities to practise the full range of reading strategies. Reading games and practical resources such as magnetic letters or wipe-off boards are few. The range and quality of fiction and non-fiction books in some class reading areas are insufficient and there is no established system for taking books home in Years 3 to 6. The selection of information books in the school library is insufficient to support independent study. Most of the resourcing problems have been identified through the school development plan and swift action is needed to enhance reading skills further and to provide pupils with a wider range of ideas for writing.
91. Standards in writing seen during the inspection were below average but are improving. In Years 1 and 2, pupils practise writing in logically sequenced sentences. They apply their knowledge of letter sounds to some extent. However, they are far less confident at splitting words into letter sounds in order to spell than they are at building sounds together to read a new word. This is largely due to a lack of emphasis in the teaching. By the end of Year 2, around three quarters of pupils are using capital letters and full stops correctly to demarcate sentences. Some pupils are also beginning to use speech and exclamation marks. Year 1 pupils have had the benefit of the improved Foundation Stage provision and many are able to write in logically sequenced sentences, sometimes using the correct

punctuation. This is a promising indicator for the future. In Years 3 to 6 pupils write confidently in different styles, including poetry. The majority have a secure grasp of basic punctuation and grammar. The higher attaining pupils show good awareness of the reader and choose words carefully for greater effect. They include subordinate clauses to add detail and interest. One such group chose interesting connecting words as they wrote about the course of a river. The standard of spelling in books is below average overall. This is largely because pupils rely too heavily on remembering what the word looks like. Other spelling techniques such as splitting words into their root, prefix and suffix or working out the word's derivation are not emphasised enough. Handwriting is usually of a satisfactory standard.

92. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual programmes of learning are used to plan work and pupils have focused support sessions to help them meet their targets. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and analysed to check whether they are making the expected gains in learning. Results show that boys and girls and pupils from all ethnic groups are achieving equally well. The learning support programmes that are recommended by the National Literacy Strategy for pupils who need a boost to their reading and writing are not in place. Alternative interventions and support are provided but are not as focused and learning sometimes drifts away from the literacy targets. Suitable challenges are provided for the higher attaining pupils through the target groups. During the inspection, some Year 6 pupils were working well within the programme of study for the higher-than-expected Level 5 in reading and writing.
93. The teaching of speaking and listening and reading skills is good and satisfactory overall for writing. Teachers take care to explain the meanings of new or technical words and seek to extend pupils' vocabulary. The 'chatterbox' sessions that are built into many lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to share ideas and develop their communication skills. The guided reading sessions are well planned and prepared and take learning forward at a good pace. However, pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their skills by taking books home or using class reading areas. Teachers are skilled at using quality texts to extend pupils' writing skills. They work with classes and groups to analyse the author's techniques and then support pupils as they try out different strategies for themselves. This part of the teaching is good. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise what they learn through writing assignments in English and other subject lessons.
94. Marking is good in this subject. Detailed comments point the way forward for pupils and congratulatory remarks show them how well they are progressing. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly and use the information to plan the next learning targets. This is very effective practice. There is a good emphasis on self-evaluation. Pupils know the intended learning outcome and often review their successes at the end of lessons. The learning environment in classes provides very good prompts and information for pupils as they work. Group targets are prominently displayed, together with relevant reminders about grammar, style, punctuation and spelling. A good selection of dictionaries and thesaurus are freely available and effectively used by pupils.
95. The subject managers for English provide good support for colleagues and have a useful overview of standards in the subject. The current action plan covers some of the issues highlighted in the report. They do not, however, have regular opportunities to observe lessons and therefore do not have an accurate view of teaching and learning. As a result, their expertise is not used to the full. For example, with their support, the intervention programmes could possibly have been adapted rather than abandoned. The use of ICT to support learning is satisfactory. Pupils draft, edit and present their work using the word processing facilities, extend their communication skills by producing Powerpoint presentations and use computers for research work. In Year 6, the teacher made very good use of the overhead projector to enlarge text for a class discussion. There are some

shortages in the resources for English. The class teachers often make their own materials but this is an extra burden to an exceptionally demanding workload. Overall, the school has made good improvements in provision for the subject since the time of the last inspection but there are some elements left to address.

MATHEMATICS

96. In the results of the 2002 national tests standards in Year 2 were very low when compared to schools nationally and those in similar schools. This was due to the very high number of pupils in the group with special educational needs and their very low level of mathematical understanding on entry to the school. In Year 6 in 2002, standards in the national tests were well below all schools nationally but level with those in similar schools. This result was lower than that in 2001 when the school received an achievement award for raising standards. Fluctuations in results reflect the differences in profiles between year groups and not changes in pupil achievement or the school's provision, both of which are good.
97. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment remain at a level below average by the end of Year 2 but an average number of pupils in Year 6 are now on course to attain Level 4 and above by the end of the year. Progress in lessons and achievement over time are both good. This is the positive result of the changes made to the curriculum and to the pattern of teaching in mathematics in the last two years. Overall improvements have been good since the time of the last inspection.
98. Year 2 pupils calculate using the four rules of number and practise their skills when problem solving. They try hard when working with their multiplication tables but need to practise these more at home. They interpret data from a table, for example, plotting the temperature inside and outside the classroom for one week and then finding the hottest and coldest day. They make graphs of pupils' pets and favourite toys and know the properties of 2D shapes. Pupils in Year 6 have covered a wide range of mathematical topics. They solve word problems involving money and interpret data from line graphs and pie charts. All pupils are familiar with fractions and decimals. Very good work on probability, rotational and reflective symmetry was seen in their books. Pupils are secure in their use of correct mathematical language.
99. Teaching and learning are now good overall with very good teaching by a mathematics lead teacher and excellent, inspired teaching in Year 6. Teachers comply fully with the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. They identify what will be taught in each lesson and how pupils will be supported in their learning. These objectives are shared with pupils so that they know what is expected of them. At the end of lessons, time is spent reviewing what has been learned so that teachers have useful information from which to plan the next part of the teaching and learning programme.
100. Numeracy skills are practised when pupils work in other subjects. For example, in geography, Year 6 produce graphs of annual temperature and rainfall statistics in Britain and India so that they can compare the climates of both countries. They also use six figure coordinates in their mapping work. Pupils in Year 3 produce time lines to help them understand the sequence of events as they study ancient Egypt.
101. There are excellent relationships in lessons, so creating a purposeful, pleasant working atmosphere. The learning support assistants are deployed particularly well to support learning for individuals and small groups of pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the support assistant worked with five pupils, revising the names and properties of two and three dimensional objects. The teacher was able to concentrate on her other pupils while yet another group of ten pupils from the very large class attended a booster group where

the teaching was aimed at the higher level of attainment. The focused attention helped pupils to make very good progress.

102. Pupils enjoy mathematics and try hard to complete the tasks set. Behaviour is very good. Pupils co-operate with each other well, offering to help if a friend is in difficulty. Pupils listen carefully and are keen to answer questions. They are increasingly using ICT skills to help their mathematical understanding. For example, in a Year 3 lesson a student teacher worked in the small computer suite with a group of pupils. They improved their knowledge of money, deciding how to make amounts using different coins. In several classes, teachers use overhead projectors to illustrate examples clearly. Computer facilities are not used to the full because they work on two different operating systems. At the moment, many computers are not compatible with the software and the computer suite is small, being able to accommodate only five pupils at a time.
103. The subject managers are developing the subject well. A very high priority has been given to improving standards of planning, teaching and learning in the subject. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning and, with help from the local education authority, teachers have received training to improve their performance. Assessment is now well organised and the results gathered are used very well. For example, this year's targets have been based around the development of mathematical language and the speed of mental calculation. Pupils are now aware of what they must do to improve to reach higher performance levels. Current action plans show that the managers are accurately targeting what still needs to be done. Their next focus is to develop a whole school system for targeting gifted and talented pupils.
104. Homework is set on a regular basis, though many parents do not always ensure that it is completed or returned to school on time. Interesting tasks are prepared for pupils to complete and satisfactory resources support the work well. The school is now well set to improve further in mathematics.

SCIENCE

105. The findings of the inspection are that the percentage of pupils working at the expected level 2 in Year 2 is below average. However, the percentage of pupils currently achieving at the higher Level 3 is broadly in line with the national average. These standards are lower than those recorded at the time of the last inspection. However, pupils now have much lower levels of prior learning when they enter the school. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in Year 6 is below the national average but is over 20 per cent higher than at the time of the last inspection. Older pupils experience particular problems in the areas of predicting, hypothesising and drawing conclusions. Nevertheless, pupils in Years 1 to 6 are making good progress in their learning because of the good teaching and support they receive. The standards currently being achieved by Years 2 and 6 pupils are higher than those recorded in the teacher assessments and tests in 2002.
106. The results of the teacher assessments in science in 2002 indicate that the proportion of seven-year-olds achieving at the expected Level 2 was very low in comparison to the national average, whilst those achieving at the higher Level 3 was below the national average. In comparison to similar schools the proportion of pupils achieving at the expected level was very low, whilst those achieving at the higher level was average. In the 2002 national tests, the standards achieved by 11-year-olds in science were very low in comparison to the national average and well below average when compared with similar schools. These standards were significantly lower than the previous year after a trend in rising standards over four years. Standards fell last year because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 and Year 6. Over time boys have been

doing slightly better than girls in the subject but there is no difference in progress in the classroom.

107. By the age of seven, pupils plan and conduct experiments and record their results in charts. For example, they plot how long it takes for a vehicle to travel a measured distance. Average and higher-attaining pupils successfully group and describe the properties of materials. Below-average attaining pupils lack the necessary recording skills to achieve this successfully. An analysis of completed work indicates that most pupils can predict the outcomes of their experiment, giving good reasons. They test objects to see if they float or sink, and keep an accurate record of the results. Most understand that some materials such as ice and wax change when they are heated and are beginning to realise that some changes are reversible while others are not. Most pupils know the names of different parts of plants, and name the conditions that plants need to grow.
108. By the age of 11, pupils test materials to discover which ones act as good thermal insulators. They have a sound understanding of the need to eliminate variables that might make the results unreliable. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the characteristics of living things. They know the functions of the skeleton and some of the major organs of the body, such as the heart. Pupils describe how to separate simple mixtures using filtration or evaporation. They have a satisfactory understanding of physical processes, understanding that light travels in a straight line and describing how shadows are formed. There are weaknesses in evaluating evidence and drawing appropriate conclusions.
109. The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons during the inspection were good. Lessons are generally well planned and organised. Teachers share the learning objectives so pupils understand what they are expected to achieve. During the introduction to these lessons, teachers make good links with previous learning, and ensure that the work carefully builds upon pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a very good lesson in a Year 4 class, the teacher presented the work in a lively and interesting way that engaged and maintained the interest of the pupils. She set high expectations and, in response, the pupils tried hard and made good progress. The session at the end of the lesson is often used effectively to revisit the learning objectives, check pupils' understanding and point them to the next stage in their learning. A close examination of pupils' previous work shows some areas for development in the teaching. In some classes, for example, there is an over-dependence on worksheets, which limits the opportunities pupils have to record work in their own way. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory overall but is variable. In the best examples it informs pupils of the quality of their work and provides pointers for further improvement, but in some cases work is simply marked with a tick.
110. The curriculum is satisfactory overall but there are strengths and weaknesses. There is clear guidance for the teaching of the subject that takes into account the mixed-age classes in Years 1 to 4. There is often good provision for pupils to develop skills of investigation through conducting experiments and presenting their findings. However, pupils throughout the school are not provided with sufficient opportunities to plan their own experiments or to think about the equipment that they might need. The school is currently seeking to draw links between different subjects and this approach can contribute well to pupils' learning. However, some of the links with science and English focus too much on literacy, and the development of scientific skills is being undermined. There is satisfactory provision for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in this subject. For example, pupils use instruments such as force meters, and display their findings on charts and graphs. The use of computers to support pupils' learning is under-developed. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to research scientific topics using the Internet and CD ROMs, but there is no equipment available for pupils to measure and collect data. In physical education lessons, teachers make good reference to the effect of exercise on the body, and this effectively supports pupils' learning in science. The assessment procedures to

record and chart pupils' progress in science as they move through the school are unsatisfactory. Teachers appropriately assess pupils' learning in Years 2 and 6, but there is little analysis of pupils' performance in these tests. The tracking of progress in other year groups is not rigorous enough and targets for improvement are not set.

111. There are some strengths but also some unsatisfactory elements in the management of the subject. The subject manager monitors teachers' planning, but she is not provided with sufficient opportunities to observe teaching and learning in the classrooms, or to assess the standards that pupils' achieve. She checks and orders resources to ensure that teachers and pupils have everything they need but does not control a budget. Her action plan is focused on improvement but there is no allocated time or budget for supporting teachers in the classroom.

ART AND DESIGN

112. Based on the three lessons seen, written plans, artwork on display around the school and the many examples of pupils' work in portfolios, standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are good and above the levels expected for their age. Since the last inspection standards have improved from satisfactory to good. The rate of progress has improved because teaching is good and staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. In addition, the introduction of the national planning guidelines for art and design has helped to promote continuity in learning. The subject now has a high profile in the curriculum.
113. The work in Years 1 and 2 builds on the previous work in the Foundation Stage. In Year 1 pupils make good progress in aspects of observational drawing, colour mixing and when using collage materials to create pictures. In a good lesson in a Years 1 and 2 class, pupils used their knowledge of art techniques, symmetry and imagination to complete a half-finished picture. The results showed some very good observational skills and ability to recreate the colours. These pupils were also beginning to develop an understanding of perspective. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils make good progress because they experience an extensive range of activities using different techniques and a wide range of materials. In a good lesson when pupils worked with modelling materials, they demonstrated an understanding of the properties of clay and had developed skills of moulding, rolling and joining. During one Year 6 lesson, the pupils demonstrated a good knowledge of famous artists as they discussed the different ways in which backgrounds may be represented. They astutely compared the line and tone of the work of Van Gogh with that of Lowry by comparing 'Starry Night' and 'The Canal Bridge'.
114. The quality of teaching is good and there is good progression in learning from one lesson to the next. Teachers place a good emphasis on evaluation and encourage the pupils to adopt a positive attitude towards improving their work. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, the pupils readily repeated their attempts to make a copy of a textured pattern to improve the finish of their clay pots. Teachers provide demonstrations and clear explanations so that pupils know how to proceed. When making a base for a clay pot, the teacher demonstrated how to join the material by using 'slip'. Most pupils did so with much success.
115. All pupils have sketchbooks and these are used more consistently in Years 3 and 4 than in other years. The pupils know the purpose for sketching is to capture their ideas and explore effects to enable decisions about how they may present their artwork. The use of ICT to support the pupils learning is developing well. Throughout the school pupils have opportunities to use graphic programmes to draw and paint shapes, pictures and patterns. There are some effective examples of computer generated artwork on display in the school.

116. Most pupils enjoy art and design; they are keen to learn and experiment. They concentrate well, show persistence when the task is difficult and evaluate the results of their work. Pupils collaborate very effectively. Their class collage depicting scenes from the story 'Rainbow Man' shows great attention to design and texture.
117. The breadth of the curriculum for art and design is good. Teachers ensure that art is integral to other subjects, for example, in history when the pupils make comparisons between conventional and digital cameras. There are also useful links with geography and design technology that reinforce learning. The well-planned lessons have a significant impact on the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A particular emphasis is placed on cultural links. This is well promoted during Arts Week when crafts people visit the school to work with the pupils. For example, a Colombian artist made salt dough figures with some pupils whilst others looked at Aboriginal or Indian art.
118. The subject manager is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has given good support to staff to improve the quality of work in the school. Future targets include monitoring teaching and learning and developing assessment procedures. Pupils benefit significantly from the availability of a good range of resources, from which they are free to choose.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with national expectations. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. These judgements are based mainly on photographic and display evidence since the teaching of design technology did not take place during the period of inspection. The subject time allocation is blocked into half terms so that pupils can have extended sessions to plan, make and evaluate their work. For this reason no judgement upon the quality of teaching can be made.
120. Evidence from the work seen for Year 2 show pupils have gained knowledge and skills in design and making and that their learning is appropriate for their age. Processes are beginning to be understood and followed, for example, pupils identify what materials they are going to use after considering their suitability for the task. They evaluate the effectiveness of their plans and consider how they could have made them better. There is good attention to health and safety matters when using tools. Pupils experiment with different ways of joining. When they made glove puppets they tried out sewing, gluing and stapling to see which worked best. In one project, pupils designed a playground, testing their models as they proceeded to identify and rectify any faults.
121. The quality and range of completed work in Years 3 to 6 illustrates attainment that matches expectations. Examples of models made by Years 3 and 4 pupils indicate a clear understanding of what makes a structure strong and secure. Pupils in Year 5 made musical instruments, copying examples from India and Pakistan. They are well constructed and the decoration shows a good awareness of cultural influences. The fairground rides from Year 6 show confident joining techniques and a good attention to finish. Other plans and work verify that pupils understand, and make appropriate use of, sliding mechanisms and levers.
122. Pupils who have special educational needs do well in this practical subject. Recorded tasks are adapted to suit their needs and teachers ensure that appropriate tools are provided. Those who speak English as an additional language make progress that is equal to their peers. Teachers check that all technical language is understood and the collaborative work provides good opportunities for them to interact with other members of the class.

123. There are some useful links with other subjects. Pupils made good use of their observational drawing skills in the food technology topic concerned with the importance of fruit and vegetables in the diet. Literacy skills were used when children wrote an account of 'How to make a jam sandwich' and numeracy skills are evident in the accurate measuring of length and angles. Pupils employ their scientific knowledge when they make a circuit to light the lamp on their model lighthouse.
124. The subject is satisfactorily managed and the co-ordinator aims to extend the links with other subjects. There is little opportunity for the manager to monitor teaching and learning in classes and assessment procedures are in the early stages of development.

GEOGRAPHY

125. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attainment in geographical knowledge and skills matches national expectations. Standards are similar to those reached by pupils at the time of the previous inspection.
126. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 quickly gain an interest and enthusiasm for geography lessons. Suitable use is made of the school grounds to promote learning. For example, pupils make a simple plan of their playground and discuss things they like and dislike about it. They take a particular interest in the travels of Barnaby Bear, learning the different methods of transport he uses as he travels round Britain and the different clothes he needs as he visits other countries in the world. They were particularly thrilled with a video, made especially by their teacher, showing Barnaby visiting Blackpool by train. It made an interesting start to their work on comparing a seaside place with their own town.
127. By the time they reach the age of eleven pupils have experienced a broad range of topics, covering the National Curriculum programme of study. They have a good knowledge of several countries in the world, for example, Years 3 and 4 pupils make a detailed study of Chambakolli in India. They investigate schools, health care and housing, contrasting life in the village with that in Oldham. Year 6 pupils were observed learning about the water cycle. After a very interesting introduction by their teacher, they engaged in individual research from books and atlases. By the end of the lesson, pupils were able to explain the cycle using the correct geographical language.
128. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good, both inside and outside of the classroom. The evidence from pupils' notebooks as well as from lesson observations indicates that most pupils take a keen interest in the subject. They demonstrate a mature attitude to their work, discussing the tasks they have been set in a constructive manner and helping each other in a very friendly way.
129. Teachers display a secure knowledge of the subject and make lessons interesting and very enjoyable. Lessons usually finish with a group discussion when pupils are given the opportunity to describe what they have learned in the lesson.
130. Two managers have the responsibility of developing both geography and history. This works well as the subjects are often interwoven. They are currently aiming to improve the use of pupils' literacy skills in both subjects. Resources are satisfactory overall. The use of ICT for research and recording purposes is limited. The library does not provide adequate opportunities for individual research. Assessment is in the very early stages of development. Teachers keep a record of the work covered but this does not clearly indicate the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired by pupils.
131. The subject helps pupils to understand the diverse range of cultures and the different ways that societies are organised across the world.

HISTORY

132. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain standards that are similar to those expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress encouraged by their teachers and learning support assistants. This is broadly similar to the result in the previous inspection.
133. Seven-year-olds understand that history is concerned with a study of the past. This is developed, for example, through looking at a series of photographs of how people travelled and the type of clothes they wore on their holidays in the years 2000, 1950 and 1900. Pupils also learn about famous people in history such as Guy Fawkes and Grace Darling.
134. By the time they reach the age of eleven pupils have a sound knowledge of different periods of history. During the inspection Years 3 and 4 pupils were observed beginning a study of ancient Egypt. At the beginning of the lesson the teacher gave pupils one minute to work with a partner to see what they already knew about the topic. This created instant excitement and enthusiasm in the topic and helped to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. There are good links with other subjects. For example Year 6 pupils had combined their history project with their mathematics work, working out the budget for a Victorian family of eight people and converting it into the money in use today. Pupils had also used the 1841 and 1891 census figures to produce a graph of the most common tasks in their area and find out the percentage of people employed in each job. This type of work promotes skills of historical enquiry very effectively. Displays of work throughout the school show that pupils make good use of art to illustrate their findings, showing much attention to detail.
135. Pupils throughout the school achieve well due to their very good attitudes to learning, their willingness to work closely together and the good standard of teaching in the subject. The higher attaining pupils produce written work of a good standard, especially in the present Year 6 class, but many pupils find written work quite difficult and their presentation leaves much to be desired.
136. The managers lead the subject satisfactorily and provide willing support for colleagues. They check planning and completed work to check that the curriculum is covered but do not have opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in classes. Resources are adequate but reference material in the main library is limited. Assessment is at an early stage of development. There is scope for more independent writing in history to further develop literacy skills and to extend the use of ICT when recording work. History makes a significant contribution to the pupils' understanding of local and national heritage.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Standards of work for pupils at the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6 are below those expected. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection in spite of concerted efforts to improve matters. Resources have improved considerably over the five years. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a mixture of computers in use in the school, often with one system incompatible with another. This means that software is not compatible with all computers and different systems require different operational skills, which present a problem for teaching. Furthermore, systems are not always reliable. During the inspection, a breakdown with the printers prevented pupils from printing and using the information they had accessed from the Internet. The school has created a computer suite and, although an improvement, it is very small and accommodates only five computers. These factors result in the fact that opportunities for regular use are too infrequent for the large majority of pupils to satisfactorily learn, practise and develop their skills.

138. Significant improvements have taken place regarding the use of ICT across the whole curriculum. An examination of pupils' work revealed very good use of the Internet for research in such subjects as history, graphics work in art and some writing and re-drafting in literacy. On balance, the issues identified at the last inspection have been partially addressed but the major resourcing problem is currently limiting the potential for further improvement.
139. By the end of Year 2, a satisfactory proportion of pupils show they can open and save a programme and have knowledge of the different fonts, colours and sizes they can use to present their work. They identify where and how ICT is used in the wider world. Evidence shows how they use electronic facilities to record the results of their investigations. Following their survey about 'what we like in the playground', pupils produced a graph on the computer to show their findings clearly. Only a minority of pupils have the confidence to independently accomplish the range of activities that are expected by the end of Year 2. A few higher-achieving pupils from Year 2 are very keen, interested to learn and have mainly satisfactory standards. However, these standards are not representative of the majority.
140. By the end of Year 6, a few pupils are confident in the subject and achieve average standards. Often this level of attainment is matched to those pupils who have the opportunity to work on computers at home, so enhancing opportunity for experience and practice. A small group, very ably and confidently showed their 'Powerpoint' presentation linked to their Youth Enterprise work. Pupils collect, sort and organise data using the computer and develop spreadsheets. They have satisfactory basic keyboard knowledge. The main gaps in learning centre around the use of sound and animation, and of sensing equipment such as temperature or light sensors. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal opportunity of access within the limitations of the resources. Progress is generally unsatisfactory over time.
141. Over time, the teaching of skills is satisfactory; it is the amount of hands-on practise time that is unsatisfactory. In Year 2 the pupils learned basic skills in the use of fonts. The teacher had spent some time organising the resources for the lesson which is not a satisfactory situation in the busy schedule of the school day. The lesson seen in Year 6 required minimal teaching but was appropriate material for the age group, enabling pupils to gain experience of problem-solving programs. There is a good deal of evidence, much coming from Years 3 and 4, that the programme of study is covered, but sometimes the pupils have to complete the tasks by manual methods if a computer is not available.
142. The manager has an action plan for improvement but further consideration needs to be given to ensure conformity in the resources the school provides. All opportunities are taken for the use of the Internet and e-mail. The school adheres to its policy for the safe and responsible use of these. At present, assessment procedures are under consideration but no great steps have yet been taken in their implementation. They are therefore unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

143. Standards attained at the end of Year 2 are above national expectations and standards at Year 6 match national expectations. These findings are an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
144. By the end of Year 2 pupils' good standards are reflected in their knowledge, enthusiasm, effort and behaviour. They listen attentively and reproduce both long and short sounds by using their voices or percussion instruments. They show good control of pitch and perform either individually or in a group, responding to the conductor's signals. They listen attentively to music and express their preferences. Pupils know the name of most

instruments and handle them with appropriate care. They learn the value of rehearsing to improve their performance.

145. By the end of Year 6 many pupils understand musical terms and subject-specific language such as dynamics, tempo, rhythm and pulse. They have enjoyed frequent opportunities to listen, and enjoy, a wide range of music. During Years 3 to 6 some learn to play the recorder to a confident standard, as was seen in a good extra-curricular session. There is informed choice of music in the daily assemblies; it is played as pupils enter and leave the hall. Almost all sing the hymns tunefully and with good diction and timing. Pupils are aware of the different cultural approaches to music. They appraise Spanish and African music and study some unusual instruments from India and Pakistan. By the time they leave the school, many will have had opportunity to perform on such occasions as the Christmas concert or in school performances. Frequent opportunities to create, listen, appreciate and perform ensure pupils reach expected standards but there is less emphasis on composing.
146. The quality of teaching is good overall and in one lesson seen it was excellent. In this case, the teacher had very good subject knowledge and this resulted in excellent planning and preparation. The pupils were totally engaged by the interesting activities which ensured their excellent contribution and learning. The lessons seen for the older pupils were good. Teachers make very good use of the planning guidance that has been adopted to provide a broad range of experiences.
147. Music plays an important part in the life of the school, sometimes played as a soothing influence when pupils are engaged in practical activities. The resources are satisfactory and enable the full curriculum to be taught. The curriculum leader is aware that more opportunities need to be provided for pupils to compose their own music. There is little subject monitoring and assessment and recording procedures are very basic. They do not clearly show the skills and knowledge that pupils are acquiring. The subject has not featured in school improvement planning for some time although the manager is aware of the need to develop the composing element further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. The attainment of pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with expectations. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their previous learning. At the last inspection, above-average attainment was recorded. Since then, there has been a review of time given to subjects across the curriculum and some very generous allocations for physical education were reduced in line with national guidelines and to provide a better balance across the activities that the school provides. Pupils make good progress and have positive attitudes to the subject.
149. By the end of Year 2, pupils are acquiring and developing skills of receiving and sending. Most throw and catch a large ball and beanbags accurately, displaying satisfactory hand to eye co-ordination. Pupils appraise each other's performance, suggesting ways in which they could improve, for example, by 'cupping the hands and pulling the ball in towards their body'. Pupils show good awareness of the space around them and satisfactory control of their movements as they hop, skip and jump. They have some understanding of the importance of exercise and the effect of exercise on the body. In a lesson in a Year 2 class, pupils suggested that exercise 'gives you more muscles', and 'it makes your blood go around faster'.
150. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate their skills when hitting, throwing and catching a ball in lessons and when they participate in games of football after school. They have a clear understanding of the rules of the game and the principles of attack and defence. They

display sound awareness of space and co-ordination, as they pass the ball to members of their team. In lessons, pupils explain the importance of warming up before an activity and the benefits of exercise on health and fitness. For example, pupils in Year 4 explained how their bodies needed oxygen and that they required more oxygen when they ran. Pupils in this class showed satisfactory levels of co-ordination as they worked on their running style. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, most pupils swim 25 metres with a significant number swimming much longer distances.

151. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers ensure that the pupils are fully warmed up at the start of lessons and cooled down at the end. Lessons are well planned and structured to include all pupils, including those who have difficulties with mobility. Teachers display good subject knowledge through their explanations and directions to pupils at the beginning of lessons. They intervene well as the lesson proceeds providing good guidance on how pupils might improve their performances. Teachers often encourage pupils to demonstrate good practice, and this enables others to see how they might improve their work. Teachers have a supportive approach to the pupils and their learning, which promotes confidence and self-esteem. The teachers manage and organise the pupils very well and set high expectations. In response, pupils have positive attitudes; they try hard and work effectively together. In a lesson in a Year 2 class for example, pupils worked well in groups as they practised their throwing and catching skills.
152. The school has an up to date policy and scheme to guide teachers' planning. Pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of extra-curricular clubs of a sporting nature, and these activities are well attended. They include netball, rugby, football, rounders, chess and cricket outside normal school hours, and sporting competitions are organised against other schools. A parent offers valuable support in running several of these activities. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 participate in activity challenges when they visit an outdoor education centre. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 have benefited from football coaching by local professionals and a dance company worked with the Year 6 class to enhance skills. The school does not formally assess or keep records of pupils' levels of achievement or the progress they make, although teachers note the areas of work covered. The subject co-ordinator is keen and knowledgeable but is not a budget holder and does not have a monitoring role across the school. Resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory. There are satisfactory grounds around the school for outdoor sports but the hall is rather small for the large numbers of pupils in the current Years 5 and 6 classes.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. Attainment in religious education, for pupils at the ends of Years 2 and 6 meets all the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the breadth of study has improved considerably, providing pupils with a good insight into the different faiths that are represented in modern society. Progress is good and those pupils who have special educational needs, or who speak English as an additional language, participate fully during class discussions, progressing at the same rate as the rest of the class.
154. During Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about Bible stories and the main Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter. They explore the meaning of the parables and can talk about their significance for us today. In one interesting lesson, pupils looked at churches around the world. They identified common features, learning the correct vocabulary such as 'spire'. They demonstrated a sound understanding of religious belief and worship as they concluded that there are churches in so many different countries because 'they are important to Christians'. Work on world religions begins early as pupils learn about the life and teachings of Mohammed. They draw detailed pictures of a mosque and begin to explore Islamic traditions and beliefs. This work is enhanced by the 'linking project' through

which Year 1 pupils have opportunities to make friends with pupils of different faiths and to appreciate how belief often influences people's way of life.

155. During Years 3 to 6 pupils gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of world religions, extending their studies to include the Jewish faith. They explore the use of signs and symbols in religion. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study the significance of the cross and the star of David, showing a good understanding of a difficult concept for this age group. Pupils learn more Bible stories, concentrating on important characters from the Old Testament such as David and Goliath or Joseph. They discuss what makes a good leader, expressing some mature views. Those in Years 3 and 4 describe a leader as 'helpful, loyal and courageous whilst those in Year 6 decided that a hero is 'someone that you respect'. Pupils show good empathy with people in difficult situations and have a secure understanding of human rights. They enjoy learning about the work of famous leaders such as Martin Luther King and Ghandi.
156. Pupils' attitudes in lessons and assemblies are very good. They take part eagerly and listen well, showing a very good respect for beliefs, opinions and traditions that are different from their own. Most offer views and opinions confidently and their responses to questions are thoughtful. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Lessons often cover elements of citizenship and play an important part in equipping pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.
157. The quality of teaching is good. The range of topics studied is interesting and teachers bring the subject to life by planning different activities, including meaningful discussions, debates and drama. There is an appropriate emphasis on oral work that provides many opportunities for pupils to express their views and opinions and to ask relevant questions. This makes a good contribution to their skills in speaking and listening. Teachers work hard to present difficult concepts to their pupils, checking carefully that each part of the lesson has been understood before moving onto the next. For example, in Year 6 the teacher engaged the pupils in some interesting discussions about rituals, firstly exploring the traditions linked with birthday celebrations and then moving onto religious rituals such as Christenings. When the pupils showed that they had grasped the idea, she then went on to the main part of the lesson which was based on ritual objects in the Jewish faith. Similarly, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher skilfully presented the concept of 'The Trinity' to her pupils. She began by looking at the different roles that people have in life. Pupils quickly saw that a father can also be a son and a friend and this vital key helped them to work through the rest of the lesson. There is a good spiritual element to lessons that successfully encourages pupils to develop their own set of values and to appreciate their importance within the family, their school and the wider world. The daily acts of worship supplement learning and provide further opportunities for reflection.
158. The subject manager has a basic overview of learning in the subject. At present, she has no opportunity to observe lessons at first hand but does regularly consult with colleagues to check the effectiveness of the new planning scheme. An audit of resources is included in this year's action plan for the subject and this is urgently needed since the range of books, pictures, artefacts and computer software is not sufficient to match the requirements of the new lesson plans. Learning in the classroom is not too adversely affected by the shortages because teachers borrow or make what they need but this is an unsatisfactory situation when the school has some money in reserve.
159. Overall, religious education lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' social, moral and spiritual development. The aims of the school are well represented in this subject.