

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MILLS HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chadderton, Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105648

Headteacher: Darran Lee

Reporting inspector: Steve Bywater  
18463

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> January 2003

Inspection number: 246507

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 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Baytree Avenue  
Chadderton  
Oldham

Postcode: OL9 0NB

Telephone number: 0161 624 1133

Fax number: 0161 620 6531

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Tony Brownridge

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Steve Bywater 18463	Registered inspector	Music Physical education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
Colin Herbert 09652	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents? How high are standards? (attitudes and behaviour)
Philip Martin 23262	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Derek Pattinson 19120	Team inspector	Mathematics History Religious education Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Judith Jones 08212	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Design and technology Geography Special educational needs	
Sara Storer 30785	Team inspector	English Art and design	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Mills Hill is much bigger than other primary schools and is situated in a popular residential area around two miles from the centre of Oldham. Most of the 523 pupils on roll live close to the school. The nursery has part-time places for up to 60 children (currently 49 attend) and most transfer to the reception class. Pupils enter the reception class in the academic year in which they are five and transfer to a number of secondary schools at the age of 11 years. The number of children receiving free school meals is 5 per cent which is below the national average. When children enter the nursery class, most arrive with skills which are best described as average for their age. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is less than might be expected of a school of this type. The majority of these children have learning or physical difficulties but some have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Three children have statements of special educational need. Forty pupils speak English as an additional language and four of these children are at an early stage of English language acquisition and receive additional support from a support assistant. Most of the children from ethnic minority groups are from Pakistan, Bangladesh and India.

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

This is a good school with some very good features and a small number of areas for development. Its major strengths lie in the very good leadership of the headteacher and in the high quality education offered by the nursery and reception classes. Other strengths include the generally good teaching which ensures pupils make good progress and have positive attitudes to their work. A rich curriculum promotes pupils' personal, moral, social and cultural development well. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are above national expectations although higher attainers could be challenged more in most classes throughout the school. Along with the strengths in leadership displayed by the headteacher and team leaders, there are weaknesses in the management roles of some of the governing body and some key staff. Parents are justifiably pleased with the education their children receive at Mills Hill Primary School. The school provides good value for money.

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

- When compared with national expectations, standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Overall, the teaching is good (very good in nursery and reception classes) and pupils make good progress overall.
- The school provides a full and relevant curriculum. The provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Provision for pupils' moral, social, personal and cultural development is good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He creates a very good ethos and is determined to raise standards.
- Pupils have a good attitude to learning. Relationships within school are very good and pupils behave well.

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

- The achievement of higher attaining pupils and the use of assessment to inform the planning of pupils' work.
- The development of the roles of governors in the monitoring and evaluation of school developments and the governors' role as critical friends.
- The use of computers to support work in all subjects.

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

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

Since the last inspection in February 1998, the school has made good improvements. Until the current headteacher took charge of the school the improvements were slow, resulting in unsatisfactory progress of some pupils. However, since this appointment, the local education authority and staff have begun to address the issues and progress has been brisk. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has improved as a result of the monitoring of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' personal development by the headteacher and some key staff. However, the management role of governors still has some way to improve. The school has given greater emphasis to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is now one of its strengths. The progress of higher attaining pupils and assessment, weaknesses at the time of the last inspection remain an issue and are recognised by the school as a focus for development.

## 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	B	E	B	D
Mathematics	B	C	B	C
Science	C	C	B	C

**Key**

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

In the 2002 national tests for 11 year olds, pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science was above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards in English were marginally below average but standards in mathematics and science were in line with the average. The school has improved its performance over recent years in line with most other schools but the recent improvements have been more marked. The school is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses. Inspection evidence confirms the main findings of the 2002 test results in that at the age of 11, standards in English, mathematics and science are above national expectations. At the age of 7, standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with national expectations. Evidence also shows that the attainment of children on entry to the nursery is at the level expected for their age. Children make especially good progress in the nursery and reception classes and by the start of Year 1, the majority of children have attained the early learning goals in all areas of learning; a few achieve beyond this. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school in all subjects and by the ages of 7 and 11, standards are in line with national expectations in art and design, design and technology, history, information and communications technology, music and physical education. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about standards in geography because no lessons and little work were seen. In religious education, pupils achieve the levels determined by the locally agreed guidelines.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to work are good. They enjoy school and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They recognise that their behaviour can affect others and behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils develop confidence and self-esteem and become responsible and mature as they move through the school.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall, the teaching is good and very few unsatisfactory lessons were seen. In the nursery and reception classes, the teachers organise a very good range of well organised activities. These capture children's interest and ensure that children with special educational needs and those who are higher attaining are sufficiently challenged and supported. Throughout the school, teachers have good relationships with pupils and generally manage them well. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is mostly good. However, although the teachers plan work which is suitably challenging for the majority, there are occasions when higher attainers and pupils who are struggling are given the same work. This was clear from work seen prior to the inspection as well as during the inspection week. Teachers do not use assessment consistently to help them plan lessons and marking is inconsistent. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn in the lessons and, as a result, pupils are clearly focused and concentrate well. The school benefits from a number of support staff who provide pupils with focused support in smaller teaching groups. As a result, pupils with a statement of special educational needs or English as an additional language do well. Most teachers have a talent for asking searching and challenging questions which require pupils to think deeply about their answers.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a rich learning experience for pupils. This is enhanced by visits into the local and wider communities and visitors who broaden pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. Good for pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school sets sound individual targets for pupils with learning difficulties. Classroom assistants, who work closely with teachers, ably support many pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Teachers take care to explain tasks carefully and repeatedly to ensure pupils understand what it is they have to do. When necessary, the school makes good use of support staff to provide help for those pupils who need additional help.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils' social development is very good; moral and cultural development is good. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted satisfactorily. Pupils develop a good understanding of their own culture through subjects such as history and music. Their knowledge of other cultures is also developed well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for child protection and welfare. Other aspects including pupils' attendance and punctuality are being monitored rigorously. The school has excellent assessment systems in the Foundation Stage and a good range in English and mathematics. However, they are not secure in other subjects. Assessment is not used well enough to plan work that challenges higher attaining pupils.

Parents rightly think highly of the school. The school has a sound partnership with parents and together they support children's learning satisfactorily. A strong ethos has been established.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is a very good leader who has a clear picture of what the school does well and where it needs to develop. The strong and shared vision and sense of purpose ensures all staff work together to achieve the school aims.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. Governors are insufficiently involved to show a firm commitment to raising standards. Governors need clear strategies and routines to ensure continued and consistent improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has correctly identified the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and has taken action to deal with these issues.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There is a clear link between development planning and finance. Priorities are relevant to school. Best value principles are understood by the headteacher and are at the heart of the financial planning process. The school provides good value for money.

The school is satisfactorily staffed and opportunities for staff development are good. Accommodation is satisfactory and used effectively. There are sufficient resources overall but some minor deficiencies in a number of subject areas. The school makes good use of all grants available. The governing body relies too heavily on the headteacher to inform it of what is going on.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school enables their children to make good progress. Teaching is good and children like school.</li> <li>Their children behave well at school.</li> <li>The school is very easy to approach and works closely with parents.</li> <li>Staff have high expectations for their children.</li> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>The provision for their children's personal development is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The information about how well their child is getting on and the amount of homework which their children receive.</li> </ul>

Parents returned 203 questionnaires (39 per cent of those sent out) and 20 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. A large majority of parents have a positive view of the school and a small number of parents provide valuable help in class. Inspectors judge the information about children's progress and homework is satisfactory. In supporting the parents' very positive views, the only area where inspectors differ from parents is that there are occasions when teachers' expectations could be higher.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Standards of work seen during the inspection in English, mathematics and science are above national expectations by the end of Year 6 and this matches the standards achieved in the 2002 national tests for 11 year olds. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
2. Strengths in standards achieved are:
  - the 2002 national tests for 11 year olds which were above average in English, mathematics and science;
  - the 2002 national tests for 7 year olds are above average in writing;
  - the standards achieved by higher attaining musicians in Year 6;
  - the progress of children in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>.
3. Areas for development are:
  - to increase the proportion of 7 year olds achieving the higher Level 3<sup>2</sup> in the 2002 national tests for 7 year olds in reading which was well below average and in mathematics which was below average. Teacher assessments also showed attainment in science was below the national average. In terms of similar schools, the proportion of Level 3s was well below average in reading, mathematics and science;
  - to improve the progress of higher attaining pupils in most classes by raising teachers' expectations and ensuring that work is better matched to their prior attainment.
4. In the 2002 national tests for 7 year olds, standards overall were in line with the national average in reading and mathematics and above the national average in writing. However, when compared with similar schools, standards were below average in reading and average in writing and well below average in mathematics. In the teacher assessments in science the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was above the national average but the proportion of pupils achieving a higher Level 3 was below average. In the 2002 national tests, it was the proportion of Level 3s which reduced the school's scores and inspection evidence confirms that there is some under achievement amongst the higher attainers. Girls and boys generally perform similarly to the national trend and the school is monitoring this carefully.
5. In the 2002 national tests for 11 year olds, pupils' standards when compared with the national average were above average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools standards in English were marginally below average but average in science and mathematics. Although girls consistently outperform boys in English, boys usually outperform girls in mathematics. This is typical of the national trend and the school carefully analyses performance data in order to check for any concerns or anomalies. Teachers provide extra support for targeted pupils in order to raise standards and, as a result, all pupils including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as their classmates in the junior classes. The greater proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in English,

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include: knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

<sup>2</sup> The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, are expected to reach Level 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

mathematics and science represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Improvements are in line with the national trend. Targets are suitably challenging and the school does well to meet them.

6. The full range of inspection evidence shows that on entering the nursery, children's standards of achievement are average overall. In personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical language, they are above those expected for their age. On leaving the reception class, the majority of pupils are successful in achieving all the early learning goals<sup>3</sup>. A significant number achieve standards above those expected for their age. Since the last inspection, standards have been at the least, maintained.
7. Standards at the end of Year 2 are currently in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Year 6 are currently above national expectations in English, mathematics and science.
8. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils with English as an additional language, make good progress as a result of the many opportunities to take part in discussions. Standards in reading are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not make the expected progress as they do not read sufficient books of difficulty from outside the reading scheme. By the end of Year 6, most pupils make good progress and standards in reading are above average. Standards in writing are average by Year 2, and above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils enter Year 1 with an enthusiasm for writing which is the result of the rich and varied opportunities for free choice in writing in the Foundation Stage. However, higher attaining pupils make only satisfactory progress because they are not given enough opportunity to extend their writing. This is also the case in Years 3 to Years 6, where higher attaining pupils are often marking time and not being stretched.
9. Standards in mathematics and numeracy are in line with national levels by the end of Year 2 and are above national expectations by the end of Year 6. By the age of 7, pupils are aware of the proper mathematical words to use and become adept at solving number problems using mental calculation and paper methods. They have a secure understanding of shape, space and measure. By the age of 11, most pupils make good progress and carry out a range of complex calculations. They learn to use mode and range when handling data and interpret gathered information in different ways. Higher attaining pupils do not always make the best progress possible because they are sometimes given work to complete, which they already understand, before proceeding to more challenging tasks.
10. Standards in science are similar to those expected by the time the children leave Year 2 and are above average by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. This reflects the results of the most recent National Curriculum tests. The pupils make good progress as they go through the school. The inspection team was not able to see any science lessons in Year 2, but work scrutiny shows that they are covering the required curriculum but are not drawing enough ideas from higher levels. In one class, pupils have not completed enough recorded work, an important part of scientific enquiry. These are the main reasons why more pupils do not reach higher levels. Pupils build on their knowledge and understanding in Years 3 to 6 and make good progress because of good teaching. However, pupils' progress is better at the end of the juniors and it is at this time that standards of attainment are raised. In some classes, pupils do not always get enough

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<sup>3</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

opportunities to ask their own questions or devise ways to answer them. This reduces their progress in understanding and using a range of methods of scientific enquiry.

11. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations at the ages of 7 and 11 but more use could be made of computers to support learning in a number of subjects. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school in all subjects and by the age of 7 and 11, standards are in line with national expectations in art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education. Higher attaining musicians do well in their instrumental playing but throughout school musical composition is a weakness. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about standards in geography because no lessons were seen. In religious education, pupils achieve the levels expected for their age as determined by the locally agreed syllabus.
12. The standards of attainment of pupils with special educational needs on entry to the school are below national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Of the three pupils with a statement of special needs, one pupil has made very good progress, whilst the other two have made good progress. Other pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans (IEPs) and satisfactory progress in lessons.
13. There are no differences in achievement amongst different ethnic groups and the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress along with their classmates.

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

14. Overall, pupils have positive attitudes to school and to their learning and they are well behaved in and around school. In some aspects of school life both attitudes and behaviour are very good. The relationships between pupils and each other and between pupils and adults are very good. This is an overall improvement since the last inspection. A very high proportion of those parents who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting also had positive views on the behaviour of their children.
15. Strengths in this area include:
  - pupils speak enthusiastically about school and enjoy participating in lessons;
  - behaviour in lessons is good overall and often very good;
  - no oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism was observed during the inspection;
  - pupils get on very well with each other and with adults in the school;
  - pupils have a very good understanding on the impact of their actions on others and a similar respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others; and
  - pupils react well to the very good opportunities for them to take responsibility in school.
16. An area for improvement is:
  - to provide more opportunities for pupils to show initiative in class.
17. In the nursery and reception classes, very good relationships and trust between the children and staff allow children to explore ideas and they develop as confident and independent learners. The children know that everything they do is valued and they are not afraid to take risks.
18. From the moment that they arrive in the morning pupils from all classes are enthusiastic about their activities in school. In the playground or in the breakfast club pupils of all ages

are keen to talk to visitors about their favourite aspects of school life or the football team that they support. The enthusiasm of pupils extends into the classroom. For example, in a Year 1 physical education lesson pupils tried hard to respond to the activities of taking off, jumping and landing. They were keen to applaud the efforts of their friends when they performed well. Additionally, in a Year 6 personal, social and health education lesson the pupils enjoyed participating in a discussion about drugs. In group discussion on the topic they were keen to share their views with each other.

19. The pupils' behaviour is at least good and often very good. In the classroom the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were good or better in 77 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 24 per cent of lessons. It was particularly good at Key Stage 1. Standards of behaviour in the playground, breakfast club, in the dining hall at lunchtime or in assembly are very good and all pupils were very polite and well mannered towards visitors as they moved around school. These aspects of school life are closely linked into the good provision of moral development and very good provision of social development provided by the school. There was no indication of any racist behaviour whatsoever during the inspection. It is rare for pupils to be excluded.
  
20. Relationships between all members of the school community and the personal responsibility taken by pupils have improved since the last inspection. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and always show respect towards all members of the school community and other adults that they meet. For example, when Year 4 went to the swimming pool on the coach, all pupils made a point of saying 'Goodbye' and 'Thank you' to the driver as they left. The quality of these relationships has a positive impact on pupils' learning, as they are all included in all school activities. There was no evidence of graffiti or vandalism in or around school and pupils take good care of the accommodation. Pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily integrated into lessons. They receive positive feedback from teachers and support staff that encourages them to work well. Relationships between special needs pupils and support staff are good.
  
21. The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school are very good. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility in the Circle of Friends or as house captains or members of the Student Council where they discuss items of importance and ensure that all pupils have someone to play with in the playground. Year 6 pupils who attend the outdoor activities centre at Grasmere also have the opportunity to take part in exciting outdoor activities. These experiences allow them to develop team skills early in their last year at school. Pupils are also aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves and make generous donations to a variety of charities such as the Greater Manchester Shelter, Children in Need, Harvest of Hope and Poppy Day. The sponsorship of a child from Senegal provides pupils with an understanding of other cultures. All these activities have a positive impact on pupils' personal development. However, the opportunities for pupils to take initiative in class are limited as often teachers carry out tasks such as the distribution of books or other resources, which could be completed by the pupils.
  
22. Levels of attendance have been improved since the last inspection. They are now above national average and the school is well on its way to beating the target set by the local authority. This improvement is due to:
  - the introduction of first day contact in the event of absence;
  - the regular support provided by local authority agencies in following up absences; and
  - the introduction of class awards for good attendance.

23. Unauthorised absence is marginally above national average but the school is working hard to reduce it and meet local authority targets. Punctuality to school is satisfactory.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. Overall, the teaching is good. Although there were three unsatisfactory lessons, 96 per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better, 63 per cent were good or better and 20 per cent of the lessons were either very good or excellent. Teaching in nursery and reception classes and teaching in some Year 5 and 6 classes was of a very high quality. Teaching is weaker in some Year 3 and Year 4 classes and in classes which have been disrupted by teacher absences, especially in Year 2. It is important to add that there is more to the judgement about teaching than simply the lessons delivered by teachers for the four inspection days. The scrutiny of pupils' work produced prior to the inspection showed a number of shortcomings and this explains why progress of higher attainers is not as good as it should be and why teaching and pupils' progress in the infant classes has been only satisfactory over time. This work provides clear evidence that some teachers do not always perform as highly as they did for the inspection. However, the proportion of good teaching has improved since the last inspection.
25. Strengths include:
- very high quality teaching in the Foundation Stage;
  - a relatively high proportion of good or better teaching;
  - good teaching of the basic skills;
  - generally good management of pupils;
  - good use of resources and support staff.
26. Areas for development include:
- pupils in some classes being given identical work in many subjects. This is often too easy for higher attaining pupils and too difficult for lower attainers;
  - in Year 4 there are occasions when control is not as effective as it should be and pupils are not as productive as they could be;
  - the overuse of worksheets in some lessons also restricts higher attaining pupils from writing and working independently;
  - in many classes in the juniors, marking is unsatisfactory because it often takes the form of a tick only and does not explain how pupils can improve their work.
27. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. It gives children a very secure foundation on which to base future learning. The teachers and supporting adults know the children well and plan a range of activities that give them the opportunity to develop fully a wide range of skills. Teachers prepare children well for their education in Year 1. Planning around individual themes chosen by children in the nursery and reception classes enables the teachers to focus upon developing the basic skills of discussion, investigation and research. In both reception and nursery classes, teachers and support staff pay serious attention to developing children's language and social skills. Both class teachers hold high expectations that children will behave well, think and listen as well as work hard at all they are given to do. Adults form a strong and supportive team, all ensuring that children enjoy their tasks, concentrate and persevere. The management of children is very good. Teachers encourage children to be independent and work hard to raise their confidence and self-esteem. Because children choose their own activities, they are actively involved with their own learning and work hard. Children know what they have to do and why they are doing it. There is clear sense of common purpose where support staff help teachers to track behaviour, attitudes and progress when children are listening or involved in practical activities. This information helps teachers plan future lessons and ensures children with special educational needs are identified quickly and provided with support.

28. In the infant and junior classes, teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. The main strengths in literacy and numeracy lessons include Year 6 pupils responding eagerly to the teacher's lively, enthusiastic approach to writing a balanced report. She uses imaginative, well prepared material used effectively with humour, variation in tone and pace which leads to real enjoyment and very good learning. In well-structured numeracy lessons, the teachers ensure that pupils are clearly focused and interactive as they concentrate on finding methods and strategies to solve problems. In mental mathematics sessions, pupils show high levels of interest and are keen to achieve at speed. Skilful teachers' questioning in both literacy and numeracy lessons which promotes pupils' understanding and tests their understanding. Pupils know that their contributions are valued and respond enthusiastically when they are challenged.
29. The weaknesses in both literacy and numeracy lessons (and many other subjects) resulted from low teacher expectation, slow pace and inappropriate lengthy introduction at the start of the lesson and missed or very rushed final sessions during which consolidation of learning was ineffective. Many teachers fail to use assessment information to match work to the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, in some lessons higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently and, as a result, they do not make enough progress. In other lessons, lower attaining pupils do less work and this does not help to develop their understanding.
30. The organisation of lessons is mostly good and a strength in many lessons is the whole-class teaching, which almost always includes good exposition and explanations and good questioning. This promotes thinking and requires pupils to expand on their answers. Teachers work conscientiously to provide interesting starting points; for example, visits, visitors and well-chosen resources engage pupils in their learning. Teachers go over work from previous lessons to consolidate pupils' understanding and to ensure that new work is built on solid foundations. Pupils are fluent, confident and enthusiastic in their responses. One of the main reasons for this is that teachers have sensitive and caring relationships with their pupils and work hard to raise pupils' self-esteem and pride in their achievements. Teachers use praise and encouragement regularly to enthuse and motivate them. Almost all teachers manage and control pupils well, but in Year 4 there are occasions when control is not effective.
31. A good feature of teachers' planning is the use of links between subjects. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding, and to realise that learning in one subject is not an isolated experience. For example, there were particularly good links between music and religious education in Year 6 and between science and music in Year 1. Literacy skills are promoted well through subjects such as history and religious education. Teachers do not use computers regularly enough for research and to enhance the work in other subjects and, as a result, pupils are not using computers naturally as part of their studies.
32. During the inspection, teachers provided challenging targets for most pupils and ensured that pupils were aware of them. Learning objectives were mostly clear and described in the lesson planning. In some lessons teachers planning showed a little confusion between what pupils were expected to learn and what pupils were expected to do. Teachers share the objectives with the class at the beginning of the lesson so that pupils are focused. When looking at pupils' work from prior to the inspection, it was clear that all pupils in the class received identical work in many subjects. One of the reasons for this mismatch of work is that teachers do not have clear enough systems to record what individual pupils can do. The marking of pupils' work is often inconsistent. Whilst it regularly praises, it seldom tells pupils how to improve their work. The overuse of worksheets in some lessons also restricts higher attaining pupils from writing and recording their work independently.

33. Teachers are all aware of the pupils with special educational needs in their classes, and they make satisfactory provision for them. There is good practice where class teachers provide a work plan for support assistants, which outlines tasks pupils are to undertake and how and when support is to be delivered. However, there is insufficient provision of work to match the needs of special educational needs pupils throughout the school, other than those who have a statement of special educational need. Individual education plans vary in quality. For those pupils with statements, teachers provide a detailed overview of all aspects of the pupils' needs, their learning objectives and activities to be pursued. This is not the case for other pupils on different stages of the Code of Practice<sup>4</sup> where learning objectives and activities to be undertaken lack specific detail. The school has already identified this as an area for development. Support for pupils in withdrawal groups mainly focuses upon literacy. Pupils follow structured programmes to develop their reading and spelling skills.
34. The pupils who speak English as an additional language are well known to teachers who take care to ensure that instructions are carefully given and repeated if necessary. Those pupils who need most help are often supported individually or in a carefully selected group of pupils to ensure they are fully included in all lessons. The whole ethos of the school ensures that pupils support each other. Additional advice from the local education authority support team and a support assistant ensures that pupils make good progress in developing their use of English.
35. Homework is adequate and supports pupils' learning. In the response to the parents' questionnaire, 81 per cent of parents are satisfied with the homework given to pupils.

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

36. The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils in which all subjects required by the National Curriculum are securely represented. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection when too little time was spent on history and religious education in Years 1 and 2. Planning shows that there is sound coverage of statutory requirements. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. The curriculum places satisfactory emphasis on the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills within English, and number skills within mathematics. An equal opportunities policy is consistently implemented, with no significant difference in achievement because of gender, disability, race or culture. The teachers' questioning and allocation of jobs within the classroom shows no bias towards any group and the school is increasingly inclusive of all of its pupils.
37. Strengths in the curriculum, which aid learning, are:
- there are good amounts of time for English and mathematics, and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are embedded in the school's work;
  - there are good links between subjects, which help to make the curriculum more relevant for pupils;
  - literacy and numeracy skills are increasingly developed and used in other subjects;
  - the curriculum for children under five is very good;
  - the curriculum is enriched by a large number and good range of educational visits and expert visitors, which help to bring subjects alive for pupils;
  - the link that the school has developed with a local care home;

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<sup>4</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development.

- the number of organisations that use the school and provide a beneficial lettings income;
  - the partnership that the school has developed with local secondary schools;
  - there are good links with the community which enrich learning;
  - there are good links with partner institutions which benefit pupils;
  - the provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good;
  - the provision for pupils' social development is very good.
38. Areas for development, which prevent pupils from making the best possible progress, are:
- there are very few opportunities for pupils to use and develop information and communication technology skills through other subjects;
  - pupils who receive music tuition at the same time each week do not always catch up on work they have missed.
39. The pupils in the Foundation Stage benefit from a very good range of learning opportunities that develops their knowledge and understanding well across all the recommended areas of learning. Children take part in a wide range of planned and structured activities and experiences, which give them a very positive start to their education.
40. The curriculum is soundly organised for pupils with special educational needs (SEN), enabling them to make at least satisfactory gains in learning over time and to access all areas of the National Curriculum. Provision for pupils with a statement of SEN is good and fully reflects the recommendations made in their statements. For other pupils with SEN, work is usually matched to their needs in English and mathematics, and where support staff are available, they are well used. This enables them to steadily develop their literacy and numeracy skills. All teachers work with the SEN co-ordinator to write and review individual action plans. However, work is not always well matched in subjects other than English and mathematics, and progress is more variable, although it is satisfactory overall.
41. A satisfactory number and range of well-led clubs and activities appeal to the interests of older pupils. Clubs, such as football, netball and dance, are well supported and greatly appreciated by pupils.
42. Teachers give good emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils become good citizens by supporting local and national charities. They learn to respect each other's points of view well through regular discussions about issues which concern them, such as, through discussions about friendship. Pupils develop a good awareness of the need for rules based on safety, protection and fairness. Teachers regularly give praise to enhance pupils' self esteem and encourage them to do their best. Older pupils have special duties, which helps to increase levels of initiative and responsibility. Sex education is included in the school's health education programme, in line with agreed policy. Older pupils learn about the use and misuse of drugs. The health education programme makes pupils aware of a healthy diet, hygiene and exercise for maintaining a healthy life style, but not yet as part of a coherent, carefully structured programme.
43. The community now provides a good contribution to pupils' learning and there has been an improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection.
44. Pupils make numerous visits to local places of interest such as Bretton Park Sculpture Park, Chester, Saddleworth Museum and Bramall Hall. Additionally pupils at the start of their time in Year 6 have the opportunity to visit the outdoor centre at Grasmere for a residential stay. A strong link has been developed with a local care home and in addition to giving great pleasure to the residents it informs pupils about those who are less fortunate or able than themselves. Community visitors include representatives from local

firms, road safety and drugs awareness representatives, an archaeologist and a local historian. A very good link has been developed with a local secondary school where a modern foreign language teacher visits to introduce French and Spanish to pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school links these activities clearly into the curriculum which helps to ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils to their new school and these in turn have a positive impact on pupils' learning, development and transition into Year 7.

45. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. The quality of assemblies is satisfactory and they comply with statutory requirements and raise awareness of issues, which affect pupils' lives. Prayers and hymns are linked to a theme and enable pupils to be increasingly aware that they are part of a wider community. The school provides regular opportunities to explore their feelings about issues, which affect them in discussion time. Pupils share joys, sadness, views and opinions in a trusting and caring atmosphere, in which their contributions are respected and valued. Music is used appropriately to establish calmness as pupils enter and leave assemblies, with older pupils given opportunities to experience the joy of celebration through music. Some classroom displays have an aesthetic quality, which generate an emotive response, especially for younger pupils. Some visits enable pupils to experience at first hand the beauty of the natural world. However, during the inspection, there were few opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder in lessons.
46. The school promotes pupils' moral development well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. All adults in school provide sound moral leadership and give pupils a clear sense of direction about moral issues. All work hard and successfully to reinforce good standards of behaviour, and to develop mutual respect and understanding. The school's system of rewards and sanctions, including 'Golden Time', are clearly understood, consistently applied and are liked by pupils who follow them. This also helps to promote a moral stance based on right and wrong, good self-discipline and care for each other and their school. Teachers make good use of assemblies and discussion time to establish collective moral and social values. The positive approaches to the moral development of pupils result in mostly good behaviour and good attitudes to learning.
47. The school now provides a very good range of experiences to promote pupils' social development. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the last inspection when this important area was judged unsatisfactory. All who work in school are good models of social behaviour because they show respect for and relate well to others. Pupils are encouraged to work well together by taking part in special events, such as Christmas productions, and visits, and through group work in some subjects. There is an active school council, which successfully helps to foster care and consideration among pupils and to develop responsibility. For example, it is actively involved in organising fund raising. A recently introduced 'buddy' system is helping younger pupils settle into school routines. The house system is helping pupils to work together and establishes corporate identity. Visits and after-school activities enable some pupils to expand their personal interests and experiences, and contribute to the high quality relationships, which exist in school. However, some teachers miss opportunities to develop initiative and personal responsibility.
48. The cultural development of pupils is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils learn about and celebrate the culture of the area through the school's good community involvement, through local visits, such as to museums, and through the study of the works of famous local artists, such as Lowry. Pupils are given insight into previous cultures, through studies of specific dynasties, such as the Tudors, in history. They learn about other cultures through their developing understanding of faiths other than Christianity in religious education, through special events, such as Africa Week, in geography lessons, through learning simple Spanish and through carefully chosen stories

in assemblies. A good range of reading material helps to make pupils aware of the richness and diversity of other cultures. Art makes a satisfactory contribution through the work of other artists. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. For example, pupils learn about and celebrate festivals, such as Ramadan, Divali and Eid.

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

49. The school now takes good care of the emotional and physical needs of its pupils and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There are now good procedures in place for the promotion and monitoring of attendance and behaviour. At their meeting parents expressed the view that their children were well cared for by the school.
50. Strengths in this aspect are:
- Mills Hill is a caring school with good and effective procedures for child protection; this aspect of school life is underpinned by the very high quality relationships that exist;
  - the good and successful promotion and monitoring of attendance that has had a positive impact in raising attendance rates; and
  - the very good procedures for ensuring the absence of oppressive behaviour, sexism or racism in school and the good procedures for promoting good behaviour;
  - the quality and use of assessment in the Foundation Stage;
  - procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development;
  - the provision for pupils with statements for special educational needs.
51. Areas for development are:
- to promote a greater involvement of the governing body in health and safety matters to ensure their ownership and interest in this important aspect of school life;
  - the assessment of pupils' achievements across the whole curriculum;
  - the use of assessment to guide planning;
  - the leadership of assessment.
52. The school maintains appropriate records for first aid, fire drills, accident recording and the emergency contact of family and friends in case of an emergency. The procedures for child protection are effective and the designated teacher ensures that all members of staff have an appropriate understanding of it. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for internet security and understand the dangers of 'strangers in chat rooms'. The school looks after pupils well at dinnertime and in the playground and midday supervisors are an effective and important part of the school community.
53. However, the governing body has an insufficient involvement in health and safety matters and should ensure that it carries out regular inspections of the school premises.
54. The school promotes and monitors attendance well. The office staff carry out effective tracking and monitoring of statistics and first day contact has recently been initiated. Additionally, the school makes good use of the local authority attendance team in tracking any absences. This has had a positive impact in that rates of attendance are improving. The school promotes and monitors behaviour well through the good provision for moral development and the way that it is implemented. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good.
55. Excellent procedures are in place in the Foundation Stage for assessing children's learning and interests. All teaching and support staff monitor and record pupils' daily progress across the six areas of learning thoroughly. This information is used immediately

to guide the next day's planning. As a result children are well motivated and learning is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The assessment of pupils' academic attainment and progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is however, unsatisfactory. This is because systems are not in place across the whole curriculum to collect and use assessment information. This is an outstanding issue from the last inspection. The school is beginning to improve this area of its work by concentrating on English and mathematics. In these subjects assessment information is used well to set targets. Results of national tests are analysed and the expected progress of each pupil is plotted. The headteacher is active in meeting with individual teachers to ensure pupils are making the required amount of progress. In English and mathematics pupils are given group targets to help them improve their reading, writing and mathematics. However, the use of these targets by teachers to improve pupils learning is inconsistent throughout the school. The use of assessment to guide planning is still an outstanding issue from the previous inspection. In English and mathematics the match of work for the higher attaining pupils' lacks challenge and, as a result, pupils' work is not extended.

56. The school provides good support for pupils with statements for special educational needs (SEN). Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with SEN are satisfactory and meet the requirements of the revised Code of Practice. The SEN co-ordinator administers assessments using a range of standardised reading and spelling tests and diagnostic tests. Support Assistants undertake some assessments using checklists and observational strategies. The SEN co-ordinator has produced helpful guidelines for support assistants to support them in this regard. Outside agencies, such as the Primary Special Needs Service and Speech and Language Team undertake additional assessments when required. Their assessment reports provide specific guidance for class teachers and support assistants upon which to base their teaching and support for individual pupils. There are regular formal and informal reviews of special needs pupils. All pupils who have individual education plans are reviewed on a termly basis. The SEN co-ordinator meets at least once a week with support staff to review the progress and support for pupils. The headteacher also holds regular review meetings with class teachers.
57. The assessment co-ordinator is very well supported by the head and carries out specific duties in line with the schools targets for improvement. However, the co-ordinator lacks initiative and the ability to evaluate how well assessment is used to inform learning.
58. The school has good procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development. The teachers know their pupils very well and have very good relationships with them. The pupils' views and concerns are regularly discovered through circle time and discussions. The behaviour logbook, the schools reward system and the active role of the school council promotes very good behaviour across the school. The annual report to parents provides good information about their child's progress in all subjects and includes written comments from pupils. The reports also record targets for improvement. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

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

59. The school promotes itself well to its parents and the vast majority of those who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting have positive views about almost all aspects of school life. These parents hold the school in high esteem. There has been an improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection.

60. Parents particularly like:
- that their children enjoy school;
  - the approachability of the staff and the school if they have any concerns;
  - the good behaviour of the pupils;
  - the way that the school helps their children to be mature and responsible;
  - the high expectation that the school has of their children;
  - the good quality of teaching; and
  - the quality of leadership and management.
61. All the positive views match the judgements of the inspection team.
62. Some parents do not think that there is an interesting range of activities outside lessons or that they are not well informed about the progress of their children in school. The inspectors do not agree with these parents. They judge that there is a satisfactory range of activities, considering the variety of visits and visitors to school and the links with the community. Inspectors consider that the quality of information available to parents is good, particularly with reference to the annual reports on progress. The quality of information provided to parents with children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
63. The information produced by the school for its parents is good. Regular, informative newsletters, dinner menus for the next month, topic letters and the parents' magazine are all sent home. Additionally, the school gives its parents the opportunity to complete surveys every two years and meetings, which allow discussion on any areas of concern, follow these up. Reports contain personalised developmental information and individual targets such as '... needs to gather information from a wider range of sources', or '... needs to develop higher skills of deduction'.
64. The involvement of parents in school is satisfactory overall. It is particularly strong in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, where parents come into the classroom to work with their children first thing in the morning. This has a very positive impact in that it allows the children to settle easily into their routines. Additionally, the newly formed Friends Association is having a very positive impact in that it has raised over £5,000 in its first year. However, only a small number of parents help out in school on a regular basis and only approximately 50 per cent have signed up to the Home School agreement.
65. The special needs co-ordinator or class teacher informs parents immediately when there are initial concerns; they are invited to school to discuss their child's needs. Parents are invited to all individual education plan meetings and to annual reviews and they respond positively. The special needs co-ordinator has produced guidelines and a questionnaire for parents to assist them in their preparation for review meetings. Parents have found them valuable. Reports of review meetings are satisfactory and vary from those which are subjective descriptions of work covered, to those which evaluate objectively the progress pupils have made.
66. The school values the support given by its parents and it has a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning.

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

67. Leadership and management of the school are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when these were reported to be sound. The headteacher provides very good leadership and very clear direction for the school. He is ably supported by the key stage leaders in the senior management team. However, the governing body has a limited impact on the leadership and management of the school.

68. Strengths in leadership and management are:
- the very good leadership of the headteacher;
  - the delegation to staff with management responsibilities and the way in which most fulfil their roles;
  - the good monitoring and evaluation of teaching in the school;
  - performance management procedures are very effective in securing improvements;
  - the school's development plan is a useful tool for further improvement;
  - there is a good level of shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed;
  - the induction of new staff is good;
  - educational priorities are supported well through financial planning;
  - the school uses new technology well;
  - the school office is well organised;
  - specific grants received by the school are used effectively; and
  - the school now provides good value for money.
69. Areas for development include:
- improving the effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities and in shaping the direction of the school;
  - developing further the roles of the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator.
70. The headteacher has been in post for two years. Before that, the deputy headteacher was acting headteacher for two years. During that time, there were few developments that helped to take the school forward.
71. Since his arrival, the headteacher has demonstrated very good leadership and established a good senior management team. Team leaders are now playing an increasingly important part in leadership and management. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development and improvement. This vision has been crystallised into the school's aims and mission statement which is understood and appreciated by all those who work in the school. These aims are much more than words – they are the basis for the school's development plan. The staff have carefully considered each aim and the details of the plan are designed to help the school to reach these aims. Each has been carefully considered and the financial and time implications of meeting them are included. As a result, the plan focuses very well on those areas that need to be developed.
72. As part of the development of the leadership and management of the school, the headteacher has established an effective senior management team. Those members of the team who are responsible for leading smaller teams of teachers from the different age groups are important in helping to make sure that the school meets its aims. As part of their role, they are involved in reviewing and evaluating teachers' performance, including teaching, and analysing what needs to be done to improve this further. Minutes of meetings show that the work of this team is becoming increasingly crucial in school management and in sharing the vision effectively. However, the role of the deputy headteacher is under developed and should be reconsidered. She is currently insufficiently involved in the monitoring and evaluation roles and in performance management. Her role as assessment coordinator should also be developed further.
73. The role of subject co-ordinators has improved since the previous inspection and they make a good contribution to raising standards. Each co-ordinator has specific, useful targets for improving provision as one of their performance management targets. Co-ordinators have a key role in monitoring and evaluating progress in their subjects. There is

a carefully considered cycle, based on the school's priorities, for monitoring and reviewing teaching and learning which is having a positive impact on standards. However, as at the time of the previous inspection, the fact that higher attaining pupils do not always make enough progress has not been clearly identified by some subject co-ordinators and the assessment co-ordinator.

74. The school has secure procedures in place for the implementation of the revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). All pupils at school action and school action plus are in receipt of individual education plans. The SEN policy is comprehensive and fully meets statutory requirements. The SEN co-ordinator gives good support to teaching and non-teaching staff. She is readily available for advice. Administrative procedures are efficiently managed. Records of meetings however, are inconsistent and the majority do not provide a secure evaluation of progress. The SEN co-ordinator does not formally monitor teachers' planning or in-class provision. There is not a co-ordinated system to monitor and track pupils' progress through the school. Support assistants are clear of their roles and responsibilities. The SEN governor has an up-to-date knowledge of SEN issues. She pursues opportunities to attend training appropriate to her role and responsibilities.
75. The governing body, however, has played little part in creating the vision or in drawing up the action plan for the school. Very few attended the meetings where the vision was discussed or the day during which members of staff began to draw up the development plan. There is little effective communication between meetings of the governing body and much of what there is, is instigated by the headteacher. Consequently, the governing body's role in shaping the direction of the school is unsatisfactory. However, the school's development plan contains a useful section designed to improve the involvement of the governing body. For the most part however, they do fulfil their statutory duties. The headteacher has shared the results of National Curriculum tests and assessments with the governing body and they have agreed the behaviour policy. These are improvements since the last inspection.
76. Taking into account the effectiveness of the education provided, Mills Hill Primary School now provides good value for money. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
77. The school uses its specific grants well. For example, the monies received through the National Grid for Learning initiative have allowed the school to purchase laptop computers. Devolved capital has been ring-fenced to improve various aspects of the school such as new perimeter fencing. Additionally, the school makes good use of new technology with instant access to attendance statistics. The school office is well organised and the school secretary and clerical assistant make a valuable contribution to the day to day life of the school.
78. Since his appointment the headteacher has developed good procedures to match the allocation of finance to various planning projects. The impact of falling rolls has been identified and through good husbandry of funds the school is taking appropriate action to meet a potential deficit in a few years' time. At the moment the carry forward figures between years are well within Audit Commission recommendations. The school has a good understanding of the extent to which the principles of best value are applied. This extends to the purchasing procedures where ease of ordering, through direct internet links, is taken into account.
79. There is a sufficient number of qualified teaching and support staff overall. The provision and match of staff is good for the teaching of music and there is a very positive impact from the input from local education authority specialists. Arrangements for the induction of

new staff are good and teachers who are at this early stage of their careers at the moment feel that they have been well supported through mentoring and lesson observation.

80. The adequacy of accommodation is satisfactory overall. The provision of the new Foundation Stage building is already having a very positive impact on the education of its young occupants. Additionally, other projects that have recently been undertaken, such as double-glazing, have had a positive impact in reducing the school's heating bill. The site manager is an effective member of the school team and he makes a good contribution to fire safety and the completion of various jobs around school.
81. Learning resources throughout school and the books in the library are satisfactory overall. Resources in the Foundation Stage are very good and contribute effectively to the quality of the children's learning. However, the teaching of ICT could benefit from the purchase of equipment for demonstrating and providing lesson introductions for whole classes. Music could be enhanced by more access to tuned percussion and ethnic instruments and design and technology needs more refined tools and construction kits in Years 3 to 6. Additionally, in physical education, the subject could be enhanced by having more small equipment such as smaller balls and bean bags, for example. The resourcing of subjects other than ICT have not been a priority in the past.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

82. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should
- (1) improve the standards achieved by higher attaining pupils and improve the quality of education by:
    - raising teachers' knowledge and expectations of what children should be expected to do to reach the higher levels of learning expected for their age in all subjects. This should include, for example, the marking, assessment and setting of work in all subjects; **(paragraphs 8-10, 26, 29, 32, 98, 101-3, 107, 109, 114, 116, 118, 121, 124, 127, 136, 143, 150, 158, 161, 165, 168 and 172)**
    - making more effective use of assessments to decide which individual pupils are ready to move on to their next stage of learning and which pupils need additional support; **(paragraphs 32 and 55)**
    - ensuring that the assessment co-ordinator takes a clear lead in developing assessment procedures and routine; **(paragraphs 57 and 73)**
  - (2) improve the leadership and management of the school by continuing to clarify and articulate the role of the governors by:
    - ensuring that they fulfil their roles as critical friends and finding out more about the school; **(paragraphs 53 and 75)**
  - (3) improve the use made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in other subjects. **(paragraphs 11, 31, 38, 109, 127, 131, 143, 146, 149, 168 and 171)**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	60

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	15	34	26	3	0	0
Percentage	1	19	43	33	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

### 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)	24.5	474
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Not applicable	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	14

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	40

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	26	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	23	24
	Girls	25	25	26
	Total	49	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (88)	92 (91)	96 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	25
	Girls	26	26	25
	Total	49	50	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (91)	96 (96)	96 (91)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	48	42	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	39	42	44
	Girls	37	34	40
	Total	76	76	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (65)	84 (75)	93 (92)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	38	41	41
	Girls	33	33	36
	Total	71	74	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (81)	83 (77)	86 (69)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

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

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
477	2	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
13	0	0
15	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

### Teachers and classes

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.5
Average class size	30

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	210.5

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	49
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	24.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	1,141,764
Total expenditure	1,166,624
Expenditure per pupil	2,127
Balance brought forward from previous year	60,298
Balance carried forward to next year	35,439

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 39%

Number of questionnaires sent out	523
Number of questionnaires returned	203

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	33	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	54	39	4	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	57	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	48	12	1	6
The teaching is good.	54	40	4	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	41	15	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	34	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	34	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	38	46	11	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	40	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	47	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	42	11	2	7

Figures may not equal 100% due to rounding

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**

83. On entering the nursery, children's standards of achievement are average overall. In personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical language, they are above those expected for their age. On leaving the reception class, the majority of pupils are successful in achieving all the early learning goals. A significant number achieve standards above those expected for their age. The quality of teaching, learning, and provision, has improved from good to very good. Children in the Foundation Stage with special educational needs make sound progress, as do those who speak English as a second language.
84. In the last two years, there have been a number of changes to the school's provision for the Foundation Stage. The combining of the whole school into one site has seen the nursery and reception moving into new accommodation in 1999. This has created a very good learning environment for children. All the adults involved work very well together in creating a warm, safe, secure and stimulating environment. There is a very good range of learning activities. Children attend nursery for either morning or afternoon sessions, and their first experiences in school are exciting, happy and constructive. This is maintained in the two reception classes where children attend for a full day. Learning activities have been organised in a less formal way than previously. The curriculum is based on the philosophy of the Foundation Stage's mission statement and national guidance. Children are given free choice to explore all the learning areas and to take responsibility for their own learning. Adults move around both indoor and outdoor classrooms, skilfully asking pertinent questions and helping children to consolidate and develop their learning. Children come together as a whole class or group at regular times during the day when the teacher leads more focused activities.
85. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and organise challenging tasks appropriate to their abilities. The praise and encouragement given by teachers and the high expectations they have for children result in high levels of success and achievement. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of individual pupils' needs. This forms the basis of their very effective planning which addresses all of the areas of learning. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good and all staff share a sense of common purpose. Assessment procedures are excellent, children's achievements are recorded on a daily basis and are used to plan learning. All assessment information, including photographs and samples of children's work, is collated in individual files for each child. These have been received very positively by parents, who feel they facilitate their involvement in their child's school experiences. Parents and school work closely together in the Foundation Stage. There is a good programme to inform new parents about the school and work undertaken in the Foundation Stage.
86. Strengths in this area are:
- very effective teaching, which leads to very good learning;
  - excellent assessment procedures which ensure that activities are appropriate for each child;
  - very effective planning which addresses all learning areas and children's individual needs;
  - high quality leadership and a range of learning opportunities and resources;
  - very good relationships between adults and children, and between children themselves.

87. Areas for development are:

- further extend an understanding of the practice in the Foundation Stage to the rest of the school.

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

88. The quality of teaching, learning and progress made by the children is very good. By the end of reception, children's attainment in this area is above that normally expected for children of this age. Teachers are caring, supporting and encouraging, this is seen in praising children's efforts and achievements. Children show courtesy and consideration to each other, following the good example set by staff. Teachers reinforce these positive attitudes and show that their thoughtfulness is valued. They use positive comments such as *'I liked the way you shared with...'* Teachers carefully plan opportunities for pupils to play and work together. All three classrooms have welcoming role-play areas. When dressing up, children happily take turns as doctor and patient, also showing their abilities to dress and undress independently. The children are accustomed to well-established routines and this aids the development of their independence skills and promotes good behaviour. As children arrive at school, they hang up their coats and take their own name card. With their parent or carer they answer the question of the day and place their response in the 'Yes' or 'No' pots before choosing an activity. The routine provides an orderly and purposeful start to the day. Similarly, when music is played, children immediately stop what they are doing and tidy their work and equipment away. Their level of independence is impressive. In both teacher-led, and free choice activities, the children concentrate well and many are productively involved for quite long periods on particular tasks. The children are polite and responsive to their teachers, to helpers and to visitors. They confidently approach visitors and excitedly share their news or achievements.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

89. The quality of teaching in this area of the curriculum is good. As a result, the children learn well and they make good progress. In all classes in the Foundation Stage staff place a strong emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills. They give children many opportunities to discuss their work individually and in larger groups. Teachers develop vocabulary effectively through focused sessions. For example, when the nursery teacher read the story of *Peterkin meets the Star*, she effectively used questioning to develop children's vocabulary and comprehension skills. She used questions such as *'Why do you think he is sad?'* and *'What do you think is going to happen next?'* Children listened carefully to the questions and replied with confidence, making thoughtful comments about the story and pictures.
90. All classrooms provide a very good range of fiction and non-fiction books. Children's attitudes to reading are positive and all children enjoy looking at books, both on their own, or sharing with an adult. Children in reception enjoy making their own books and have a clear understanding that print carries meaning and is read from left to right and top to bottom. They illustrate and *'write'* the name of their story on the front cover and inside they draw pictures and some words in sequence. They are confident to re-tell their story to a larger group, with each story having a beginning and end. In nursery and reception classes, staff encourage children to think of themselves as readers and writers, whatever their stage of development. For example, in a reception class, the teacher supported a less able pupil who wanted to write his best friend's name. In their handwriting, children develop appropriate pencil control. Their work shows good progress, developing from simple mark making in nursery, to writing their own name and simple sentences by the end of reception.

## Mathematical development

91. The quality of teaching, attainment and learning in this area is very good. By the end of reception, a significant number of children have exceeded the early learning goals for mathematics. In the nursery, children learn to use mathematical language with confidence. When playing with a wooden train set they counted orally the number of carriages up to 10. When the carriages fell off the track, the teacher intervened and asked *'How many carriages fell off?'* The child confidently replied *'six'*. He went on to tip another off the track saying, *'That makes seven in the water now'*. The more able children can count accurately to 20. Children can recognise and name a triangle, circle and rectangle; they can count the number of corners and sides. The teacher makes good use of opportunities to teach and reinforce counting. For example, at the end of an afternoon session, four children remained in class waiting for a parent or carer. The teacher asked the children to count how many were left, and of those, how many were girls and how many were boys. When a further child left, a little boy stated *'There's only three left now'*.
92. In reception, children build on the work done in the nursery. They have good opportunities to engage in practical and investigative work and the teachers provide a wide range of activities to extend their skills and understanding of number. They particularly enjoyed an activity with monkeys in a basket. The use of praise and encouragement and effective use of questioning are significant factors in the development of the children's mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. Outdoor play is used as an opportunity to develop mathematical language and skills. For example, in hopscotch, children can write the numbers one to 10, and on landing on a square say *'I'm five'* or *'I'm four'*.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

93. The quality of teaching, attainment, learning and progress is very good. A well-planned curriculum offers children experiences that provide them with very good opportunities to learn about their world. Children have an understanding of where they live and of different places in the United Kingdom and the world. For example, in role-play a pupil said *'We're off to Ibiza on our plane'* and proceeded to pack his suitcase to take on to the plane. Another child in reception, when he looked at a globe said *'I know what's right at the bottom - it's the South Pole'*. Children take interest in day to day events in the world. Two children asked a visitor if he had heard the news that a policeman had been killed the previous night, expressing concern and sympathy. Computers are accessible in all classes. Children confidently use the mouse and experiment with simple games linked to literacy and numeracy. More able pupils in nursery shut the computer down at the end of the day. Children enjoy explaining and investigating. They used a horseshoe magnet to explore the outside area and to see which things *'stick'*. In reception, children develop very good designing and making skills. They confidently select appropriate materials and develop techniques and skills to build, construct and join materials together. Two little girls worked together to make a box for sweets using an empty carton, corks and tissue paper, using sticky-tape and glue to join it together. They discussed and modified their work as they went along. As part of learning about healthy eating, children have fruit every day.

## Physical development

94. The quality of teaching, learning and children's progress is very good. There is a very good range of large and small outdoor equipment which is used effectively to promote children's physical development. Children have a very good level of awareness of the safety aspects of using any large equipment; they are further reminded by staff on a daily basis. Six reception pupils working together used crates, planks and tyres to make a construction to move around on. They showed very good balance and body control. They

checked that the planks were dry before using them, as they are aware that wet planks can be slippery. Children play tennis cooperatively and are able to hit a ball with a bat over a low net. Children ride bikes with confidence and follow arrows on the road layout on the playground. In undertaking a variety of tasks, children skilfully use and control small tools, such as pencils, brushes and scissors with care. They spread glue with a reasonable amount of precision and use other joining materials successfully such as sticky-tape, masking tape, and paperclips.

### **Creative development**

95. In this area of learning, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. By the end of reception the attainment of most children is in line with the expectations of the early learning goals. More able children in the nursery are able to mix primary colours to make a colour of their choice. They are able to say, for example, that red and yellow make orange. A little girl in reception asked for materials to make a wax-resist picture. She used wax crayons to draw a house and then mixed runny paint to colour-wash the picture. Children independently choose materials to make models and decorations. One child independently chose to make a New Year decoration using re-cycled Christmas cards, strips of card and felt-tip pens. She joined them together with sticky-tape. The enthusiasm and interest of teachers in music making has an infectious impact on children. They choose and use percussion instruments to accompany music on a tape. They enjoy using a tape recorder and microphone to record and play back their compositions. The children enjoy singing; they are tuneful and learn many songs and rhymes by heart, remembering words well. They listen carefully and their concentration is very good. The children are particularly able and enjoy role-play. They use props and other resources with good imaginative skills. Children creatively use outdoor construction materials and props as part of their role-play and sustain aspects of different characters for a considerable time.

### **ENGLISH**

96. Pupils enter Year 1 with average standards and make good progress in speaking and listening throughout the school. This has been maintained since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are average and pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading and writing are above average and pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress across the school and this is an area for development. The school has done well to maintain standards in English by the time pupils leave Year 6.
97. Strengths in the subject are:
- good achievement and progress by the end of Year 6;
  - the overall good quality of teaching;
  - the very good leadership and management of the subject;
  - the use of writing across the curriculum;
  - positive attitudes to learning.
98. Areas for development are:
- to improve opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to extend their reading and writing;
  - to improve the use of assessment and build on the work of group targets;
  - to improve individual and independent reading opportunities in Year 1 and Year 2;
  - to improve the consistency of marking so that it informs pupils how to improve their work.

99. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are above average. The pupils listen very carefully to their teachers and each other. As a result pupils know and understand what they are to do and can hold conversations with each other. They are confident in joining in class discussions and sharing their views. Teachers encourage pupils to talk by introducing puppets in Year 1. Pupils enact fairy tales and work together in the puppet theatre. By Year 2, pupils can talk about their favourite books and characters confidently showing a love of books. As they move through the school, the teachers develop the pupils' range of vocabulary well by introducing words from a range of subjects. In a Year 2 music lesson, pupils were encouraged to use the correct names for musical instruments and describe the methods of playing instruments. In a Year 4 personal, social and health lesson, pupils expressed their opinions thoughtfully and were able to evaluate their own lifestyles in front of an audience. By the end of Year 6, pupils use the language of debate very successfully, to present a balanced argument about the use of mobile phones. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the many opportunities to take part in discussions. Speaking and listening is a strength of the English curriculum and has been maintained since the last inspection.
100. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Parents are involved in their children's reading from an early age and reading diaries form a vital communication link between home and school. The pupils enjoy books and handle them with care and respect. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils become increasingly familiar with a range of books. They read simple fairy tales and plays in shared reading time with their teachers and begin to understand the main features of a play. Year 1 pupils recognise the characters, narrator, and the dialogue of *The Three Little Pigs*. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Groups of pupils are taught to sound out their words in Year 1 and Year 2 and, as a result, learn to read more successfully. All pupils have a guided reading time with their teacher and, as a result, pupils learn about authors and different types of literature. Pupils practise reading and re-reading texts and, as a result, develop their word recognition. This needs to be extended to allow individual pupils to choose their own reading material on a more regular basis in order to promote independent reading at home and school. Pupils are not given enough opportunity to read a range of books of increasing difficulty and, as a result, not enough pupils are becoming fluent readers. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils whose interest and enthusiasm is not channeled into reading independently at school. By the end of Year 6, accelerated progress leads to above standards in reading. Pupils have more opportunity to read a wide range of literature to include fiction and non-fiction in all subjects. As a result, pupils' interest in books is well maintained and the majority of pupils become fluent readers. The pupils know a wide range of authors and discuss and compare story openings. The development of everyone reading in class (ERIC) is now promoting the teaching of reading skills. The quality of reading has been maintained since the last inspection by the time pupils reach Year 6.
101. Inspection evidence shows writing standards are average by Year 2, and above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils enter Year 1, with an enthusiasm for writing. This is the result of the rich and varied opportunities for free choice in writing in the Foundation Stage. This is developed in Year 1, where links with other subjects are strong and a range of writing opportunities is available to pupils. As a result pupils fluently write and record songs, make lists, write instructions and begin to write character profiles. Teachers ensure there is a purpose to writing and often writing is linked to familiar stories. For example, in Year 1 and Year 2, pupils write sentences to describe characters in fairy tales. Pupils begin to use capital letters, full stops and work hard to remember finger spaces. The teacher collects from the pupils a list of vocabulary; as a result the pupils use these words in their

phrases and sentences. Lower attaining pupils and pupils identified as having special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and teachers who offer additional time. As a result good progress is made. However, higher attaining pupils make only satisfactory progress because they are not given enough opportunity to extend their writing. This is also the case in Years 3 to Years 6, where often pupils are marking time and not being stretched. This is an area for development and an outstanding issue from the previous inspection. Strategies are in place to address this issue.

102. The introduction of group writing targets is beginning to improve the use of assessment to help match work to pupils' needs. Early indications of success can be seen in Year 2 and Year 6. Here teachers ensure pupils are familiar with their targets and plan to help pupils take responsibility for their own learning. For example in Year 6, pupils are expected to read and make sure they use the targets to improve their own writing. The majority of lower and average attaining pupils make good progress by the end of Year 6, because of the opportunities to write in other subjects across the curriculum. This allows for the full range of writing styles to be used. For example in Year 3 geography, pupils write accounts of their locality. In Year 4 science, pupils write non-fiction texts about how creatures adapt to their environment. In Year 6, pupils write newspaper reports after reading the diaries of Samuel Pepys. Information communication and technology is used well to produce front covers and enhance the presentation of work. Pupils learn to use writing frames very effectively to structure their own independent work. In Year 6, pupils apply the correct structure and use the language of debate to write a balanced argument. Drafting and redrafting are taught in Year 3 and, as a result, pupils edit their own work well in order to improve sentences and vocabulary. The use of teachers marking is inconsistent throughout the school. Teachers do not give pupils enough feedback on how to improve their work.
103. The quality of teaching is good overall with strong features in Year 6. This promotes positive attitudes to learning and good levels of interest in literacy throughout the school. As a result, pupils work hard and concentrate for sustained periods. The teaching of basic skills is good. The scheme of work for literacy supports teachers planning and links the teaching of writing to literature. Teachers use a range of teaching methods to ensure speaking and listening are practised in most lessons. Good questioning ensures pupils are actively involved and a brisk pace is maintained. Teachers set good examples for writing to ensure pupils' own writing is well structured. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage pupils' behaviour very well. Teachers have high expectations and use praise and encouragement to motivate pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make very good progress. Teachers' use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory and, as a result, higher attaining pupils are not making enough progress. In the majority of lessons, higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough to extend and develop their work. This is an outstanding issue from the previous inspection.
104. The very good leadership and management of English have led to significant improvements in a short time. There is rigorous and systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and effective action to remedy weaknesses identified. A long-term vision for the future is in place with the commitment from key staff to improve standards. The introduction of the literacy strategy, whole class reading, target setting, and a Year 3 pilot project are good examples of the action the school is taking.

## MATHEMATICS

105. Standards in mathematics are in line with national levels by the end of Years 2 and are above national requirements by the end of Year 6. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory gains in learning as they move through the school and many older pupils achieve well. This is a similar picture to the findings of the last inspection, and the school has made steady improvement in line with the national picture since then.
106. Strengths in the subject are:
- above average standards for pupils aged 11 years;
  - teachers match most work carefully to pupils' different needs;
  - planning is well focused, which enables teachers to build carefully on previous learning;
  - mathematics is taught in other subjects, which helps to ensure that it has a high profile.
107. Areas for development are:
- to ensure that the most able pupils are given work which is matched to their ability;
  - to help the co-ordinator to become more effective by enabling her to regularly monitor teaching and learning;
  - to ensure that all teachers assess what pupils know and understand after each lesson so that they can build carefully on what they have learnt;
  - teachers' marking and pupils' presentation, which are unacceptably varied.
108. By the age of 7, pupils use mathematical names for common two- and three-dimensional shapes. They are starting to use standard units to measure the length of objects. They solve simple number problems using mental calculation and paper methods. They become adept at doubling, halving, counting in twos, fives and tens in ascending and descending order and predicting the next number in the sequence. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of addition and subtraction facts to ten and make increasing use of mental strategies to find answers. By the age of 11, pupils show recognition of proportions by using fractions to describe them, begin to use cancelling to reduce a fraction to its simplest form, and work out the percentages of quantities, using calculators when required. They learn to use mode and range when describing data sets, and represent, group and interpret gathered information in different ways. They identify and describe number patterns and relationships such as 'multiple', and have begun to develop their own strategies for solving number problems, such as those involving long multiplication.
109. Teaching is judged as satisfactory over time and overall, but good and very good teaching was seen during the inspection. Where teaching is good or better, teachers' high expectations result in challenging work, and pupils put more effort into getting it right. Purposeful questioning develops clear understanding of new knowledge. A good choice and use of resources ensures that learning is effective. High levels of enthusiasm from the teacher, good relationships, secure subject knowledge and a brisk pace help to keep pupils motivated and involved. Weaker features of mathematics lessons include inconsistencies in the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. For example, introductions to lessons are sometimes too long, which reduces the amount of time for pupils to consolidate their learning. The 'mental starter' part of the lesson is not always lively and challenging. The final summary part of the lesson sometimes does not give pupils the opportunity to share problems they have encountered. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes given work to complete, which they already understand, before proceeding to more challenging tasks. However, there needs to be an increased emphasis on problem solving activities to help develop thinking skills. In some classes the teachers

tend to use 'time filling' worksheets rather than making the subject more relevant for pupils by introducing more 'real-life' mathematical experiences. Teachers do not use information and communication technology enough to support learning. They sometimes do not share at the start with pupils what is to be learnt during the lesson. Teachers' marking and pupils' presentation, which are unacceptably varied.

110. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour is good. This is a direct reflection on the satisfactory teaching and has a positive influence on standards by 11 years. Pupils of all abilities respond positively to well-organised lessons in the knowledge that their teachers value them and their efforts. Many older pupils show a good capacity to work independently and clearly enjoy the challenge of the subject when they are given tasks which match their ability.
111. The subject is soundly led and there are clear plans to sustain development. She carefully analyses the information gained from tests to discover and help overcome weaknesses. However, more needs to be done to monitor teaching and learning and to ensure that all teachers assess what pupils know and understand after each lesson so that they can build carefully on what they have learnt.

## SCIENCE

112. Standards in science are similar to those expected nationally by the time pupils leave Year 2 and are above average by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. This reflects the results of the most recent National Curriculum tests. The pupils make good progress as they go through the school. Pupils of all ability levels, including those with special educational needs, make similar progress to their classmates. Those pupils who come from backgrounds in which English is not the mother tongue also make good progress. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
113. Strengths in the subject are:
  - the above average standards achieved by pupils at the age of 11 years;
  - the good quality of teaching and learning in the juniors;
  - pupils' good attitudes and behaviour;
  - the variety of approaches taken by pupils in recording their work.
114. Areas for development include:
  - assessment procedures are not used effectively in planning work and setting targets for pupils' attainment;
  - there is some inconsistency in teaching the skills of scientific enquiry.
115. The majority of infant pupils reach the expected standards by the end of Year 2, but not enough reach higher levels. However, at the end of Year 6, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels is above average.
116. The inspection team was not able to see any science lessons in Year 2. The teaching judgement of good in the infants is based on a scrutiny of work that pupils have already completed as well as on the lessons seen. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory with some good elements. This quality of teaching leads to good quality of learning. In Year 1, teachers teach science to small groups. This is effective because they can make sure that each pupil is fully involved and understands the content of the lesson. When learning about sound, pupils were given good opportunities to try things out and make shakers to produce loud and quiet noises. They evaluated their work well, listening to each other's shakers and deciding what kinds of noise they made. Pupils

recorded their work effectively in pictures. Pupils were keen to be involved in the investigations, worked hard, and co-operated well with each other and the teacher. This helped them to make good progress in the lesson. An examination of infant pupils' work shows that they are covering the required curriculum but are not drawing enough ideas which challenge the higher attainers. In one class, pupils have not completed enough recorded work, an important part of scientific enquiry. These are the main reasons why more pupils do not reach higher levels.

117. Pupils build well on their knowledge and understanding in Years 3 to 6 and make good progress because of good teaching. However, pupils' progress is better at the end of the juniors and it is at this time that standards of attainment are raised. The good quality of teaching observed encourages and draws on pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers manage pupils well to foster and use these positive attitudes to good advantage. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher effectively drew out what pupils knew about the Earth, Sun and Moon through a series of questions and activities that required pupils to share their ideas with a partner and larger groups. The teacher used the time available well, giving enough time for thought and discussion, but moving the lesson at a good pace to keep pupils involved. As a result, pupils were interested and listened to each other, sharing ideas and viewpoints. Older pupils worked well together when investigating friction. This reduced the adverse impact of a shortage of resources such as force meters during the lesson. In this way, science teaching makes a positive contribution to pupils' social development. Younger pupils were very enthusiastic in a lesson when they tried out different materials to find out which would best prevent an ice-cube from melting. The teacher had provided a sound range of resources that supported the lesson. Pupils were keen and attentive, so made good progress in developing their investigative skills. This was also evident in Year 3 when pupils investigated what happened when different ends of a magnet were held against each other. However, pupils do not always get enough opportunities to ask their own questions and devise ways to answer them. This reduces their progress in understanding and using a range of methods of scientific enquiry. In some lessons, teachers use scientific instruments appropriately, for example, force meters and thermometers. Science teaching also makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. They learn about scientists from the past. When learning about micro-organisms, pupils learned about Edward Jenner's contribution to human knowledge. Teachers use a commercial scheme appropriately. This helps to ensure that pupils cover the required areas of the National Curriculum.
118. The subject is soundly led and managed. The co-ordinator has recently taken up the post and has begun to re-organise the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills and a strong feature of their recorded work is the variety of ways they communicate the information. For example, younger pupils in the juniors describe the erosion of rocks by writing about how Roger Rock turns into Simon Soil. Older pupils use desktop publishing with text and pictures to produce a recipe for growing plants, demonstrating good science and good information and communications technology. This encourages creativity and maintains interest, enhancing learning. However, the use of information and communications technology is inconsistent and, on balance, it is underused. Similarly, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use numeracy skills. Pupils collect information and display it in the form of a bar graph, for example, how many different bones pupils in a Year 4 class have broken. However, there is little development of this work and pupils in different years produce graphs of a similar type. At the time of the last inspection, assessment procedures were unsatisfactory and underused in planning. There has been a small degree of improvement in that there are now procedures for assessment, usually provided by the published scheme used in school, at the end of each topic. However, these procedures are still underused in planning and setting targets for pupils' attainment. There is little analysis of what is done well and what needs to be improved.

## ART AND DESIGN

119. Standards in art and design by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but evidence collected from looking at pupils' work shows that by the ages of 7 and 11 pupils make satisfactory progress.
120. Strengths in the subject are:
- examples of art and design across the curriculum;
  - a scheme of work to support the teachers planning;
  - the quality of display.
121. Areas for development are:
- assessment ;
  - opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about the media they wish to work in;
  - the evaluation of standards by the co-ordinator to improve skills throughout the school.
122. In the one lesson observed and from the range of pupils' work seen, teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons in line with a clear structured scheme of work and this ensures pupils experience working in a variety of media. Pupils' enjoy art and are keen to work practically. They handle artefacts carefully and work together co-operatively. By the end of Year 2, pupils' can make observational drawings of faces and create portrait paintings. In Year 6, this is developed to include studying the work of 'Modigliani', resulting in paintings influenced by his style. In Year 4, pupils work on pattern work and create their own wrapping paper designs using wax resistant technique. They produce colourful and detailed designs celebrating bonfire night and Christmas. In Year 1, mask making is used to retell the story of 'The Three Little Pigs. Here design and making have equal value and are extended in Year 6, during a study on 'containers'.
123. By the end of Year 2, pupils explore a range of media including fabric, clay, paint and pencil. In Year 2, a visit to a sculpture park inspired pupils to make their own sculptures. Pupils use colour, textured materials and objects well to make calendars, which show a growing awareness of pattern in nature. This is an area of improvement since the last inspection. By Year 6, the links with other subjects are strong and, as a result, the quality of work improves. Art and English are complemented well through the knowledge of LS Lowry's biography and the study of his work. This results in a set of very good pastel and charcoal compositions of figures and cityscapes that show how the use of tone and shape creates mood. More opportunities for pupils to make independent choices about the media they use should be developed throughout the school. In Year 1 pupils choose from a range of materials but from Year 2 to Year 5, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to explore their own ideas and choose the media they wish to work in.
124. The quality of displays throughout the school is good and celebrates individual and group work. The art co-ordinator has recently produced a detailed scheme of work that supports teachers planning successfully. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, the school does not have effective procedures in place for the assessing and recording of pupils' attainment and progress. This is an outstanding issue from the previous inspection. There is no monitoring or evaluation of standards but the co-ordinator is aware of the need to find out how well pupils are learning.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieve standards that meet the expectations for their age, as at the time of the previous inspection. As a result of good teaching, pupils make good progress throughout the school.
126. Strengths in the subject are:
- a good range of well planned activities for progressively developing pupils' understanding of design and technology;
  - pupils' abilities to develop a design specification using annotated sketches.
127. Areas for further development are:
- to develop and implement assessment procedures;
  - to develop use of ICT and;
  - increase resources, particularly more refined tools and construction kits in Years 3 to 6.
128. Teachers place a correct emphasis on the designing and evaluation of the subject. This ensures that most pupils meet expectations in their ability to plan, label parts and list components. Good clear instructions and explanations ensure that pupils understand the requirements of the task and, as a result, they quickly get on with their work. Good use of questioning encourages pupils to carefully consider the materials and tools they are using. They continually evaluate their products throughout the making process and complete a final evaluation.
129. In Year 1 pupils learn to make vehicles with moving parts as part of a group project. Their plans show that they can describe stages of making and label the finished product. Pupils in Year 2 design and make a model of '*Incy Wincy Spider*', choosing independently from a good choice of 'making and joining' materials. They use scissors with good control and use glue carefully to join the parts together. They make sound progress in using and consolidating existing skills.
130. Pupils continue to use their skills in planning, designing, making and evaluating as they move into Year 3. They make a box to contain sweets for a Christmas present and demonstrate their understanding of the need to consider the purpose of the finished product. They are able to measure, make and cut out accurately. All pupils increase their skills and techniques as they move through the school to Year 6. For example, pupils in Year 5 complete a design plan for making a musical instrument. They use a wide range of materials to make imaginative musical instruments to be shaken, beaten and plucked. They complete an evaluation of the finished product. Year 6 pupils understand the issues a manufacturer must consider in slipper design to ensure the production of an identical pair. As a result of careful step-by-step demonstration by teachers, pupils are able to go through the different stages and successfully make a template for a pair of slippers. They are able to identify properties and reasons for their choice of materials, for example, a warm, soft fabric for comfort and warmth.
131. The co-ordination of design and technology is satisfactory. A scheme of work has been developed based on national guidelines and this supports teachers in their planning and ensures progression of skills. The co-ordinator's role in monitoring teachers' planning, pupils' work and teaching and learning has not yet developed. Teachers' assess pupils as they work but their assessments are not related to national levels of attainment. There are no school portfolios, and school staff do not meet to judge and award levels of attainment to pupils' work. Teachers make good links between English, mathematics and art, however insufficient use is made of information and communication technology. There are

weaknesses in resources, particularly in the need to increase the number of refined tools and construction kits in Years 3 to 6.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

132. Geography was not being taught at the time of the inspection. Consequently there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the standards of attainment, teaching and learning.

133. Strengths in the subject are:

- good links with other subjects, particularly literacy and numeracy.

Areas for development are:

- the development of assessment procedures;
- extension of range of resources.

134. By the age of 7 pupils have a sound knowledge about their local area and how this compares with life on a Scottish island. They develop some basic skills of observation of maps and pictures and can identify the key features in both localities from maps. By the age of 11 pupils describe the differences between hills and mountains. They have a sound understanding of the differences between the two, in terms of weather and physical features. They name and locate mountain ranges on maps of the United Kingdom and the world.

135. Fieldwork investigations outside the school make a good contribution to the development of pupils' geographical enquiry and skills. Pupils in Year 5 study river speed and erosion and are able to identify its source and living things that live in the river. In Year 6, pupils use their residential visit very well to study two different localities. The contribution of geography to pupils' literacy development is good. For example, Year 6 pupils kept a journal inspired by a visit to William Wordsworth's cottage. Numeracy links are also extended as Year 4 pupils complete charts to illustrate how they use their time over a day. However, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology.

136. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. At the present time the co-ordinator has not monitored teaching and learning in classrooms, this was an issue reported at the last inspection. However, time has been identified to enable him to do this in the future. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is currently unsatisfactory. There are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school. Teachers do not plan work to reflect pupils' different abilities.

## **HISTORY**

137. Standards in history are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.

138. Strengths in the subject are:

- history is secure within the curriculum, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection;
- the wide range of visits help enrich the curriculum;
- that it is taught through other subjects to help develop knowledge and understanding;
- that it makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

139. Areas for improvement are:

- that higher attaining pupils are not always given work, which matches their ability;
  - that there are no procedures to assess historical knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils move through the school, as at the time of the last inspection;
  - that resources require extending and auditing, although this has already been identified as an area for improvement;
  - the extent to which information and communication technology is used in history.
140. The pupils gain satisfactory knowledge about different eras of history as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how things have changed over time. For example, they consider what they did the previous week and compare this with when they were babies. They learn about the importance of Remembrance Day and why poppies are worn. Pupils in Year 5 learn about the turbulent private life of Henry the Eighth, compare the homes of rich and poor people in Tudor times, and learn about famous people, such as William Shakespeare. They use information sources, such as inventories, to find out about the past. They learn how knowledge of the world changed in Tudor times through a study of world maps, in a good link with geography.
141. Teaching and learning are sound overall in both infant and junior classes. However, both good and unsatisfactory teaching was observed in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Strengths in teaching include secure subject knowledge, good questioning and clear instructions to aid learning, an enthusiastic approach and good use of praise, which helps to generate interest and involvement among pupils, and good use of resources to help improve understanding. Overall, pupils usually respond quite well to history lessons, especially when teachers choose resources which interest them and work is appropriately challenging.
142. Information is communicated in different ways, such as through story, picture, map and diagram, to increase interest and aid learning. Weaker features of teaching, such as in Year 4 during the inspection include a lack of a clear learning focus for the lesson, control of pupils' behaviour and missed opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. These negative features cause some pupils to become restless and prevent them from making the best possible progress. The major weakness, however, is that children in the classes are often given the same work and higher attainers are not always challenged sufficiently.
143. The subject is soundly led and there are clear plans for the subject's continued development. This can be seen from the way that local history is emphasised to help bring the subject alive for pupils. Teachers display history work and resources to good effect in order to motivate pupils and to consolidate learning. The use of information and communications technology to support history teaching is unsatisfactory and could usefully be extended. It is also important to develop an assessment procedure which will enable teachers to plan work more carefully for pupils of different abilities in order to challenge and extend higher attaining pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

144. Standards are average at both the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school as a result of sound teaching. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as a result of sound teaching. Those pupils who come from backgrounds in which English is not the mother tongue make similar progress to their classmates. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
145. Strengths in the subject are:

- there are a good number of computers available for pupils' use;
- there are some good examples of information and communications technology (ICT) being used to support learning in some other subjects;
- the subject is well led and managed.

146. Areas for development include:

- there is not enough equipment for demonstrating and lesson introductions for whole classes;
- assessment procedures and their use in planning work and setting targets for pupils' attainment are unsatisfactory;
- the technology is inconsistently used to support teaching and learning in other subjects.

147. The quality of teaching is sound. Teachers plan lessons with clear purposes and usually use appropriate methods to reach these objectives. Teachers' knowledge of how to use ICT to enhance teaching and learning is sound overall and, in some cases, good. As a result, pupils make sound progress. In a Year 1 lesson for a small group, pupils made good progress in learning to use a program to create a picture of a house, linked to their work on the 'Three Little Pigs'. The teacher was able to teach Year 1 in small groups. This helped to ensure that each pupil had individual attention and made good progress, finding and starting the program and using a mouse with a good deal of control. In a less successful lesson, most pupils did not make enough progress because only a few were actively engaged in using computers. They were, with help, able to access the server and subsequently to launch a program and used the keyboard to enter details on a passport displayed in the program. The remaining pupils were required to carry out a less demanding pencil and paper task. The lesson would have been enhanced by the use of more laptops. By the end of the lesson, pupils understood that CD-ROMs contain information that can be researched and, with help, could start programs and enter information. Pupils enjoy using computers and work hard, for example, when creating pictures. Other pupils note the activities and are keen to try themselves. This helps them to make satisfactory progress.

148. Teaching continues to be sound for pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, lesson introductions are sometimes hampered by the lack of suitable equipment for demonstrations to the whole class. In one case, the teacher used a large drawing of a particular screen which reduced this adverse impact and helped pupils to make sound progress in learning. This lesson built well on a previous one in which pupils learned to program a floor device to move in certain ways. Lower attaining pupils were supported well by the classroom assistant and had further opportunities to develop their understanding. In a lesson for older pupils, the teacher reminded them of the work they had been doing on a program that simulated controlling and sensing events and providing instructions to make things happen. Once again, the lack of suitable equipment for demonstration purposes hampered progress at the start of the lesson. Nonetheless, pupils made sound progress because of their interest and enthusiasm that was fostered by the lesson content.

149. Discussion with pupils and an examination of their work show that they are covering what they are expected to. There are some good examples of how its use in other subjects supports learning in ICT. Pupils have created spreadsheets and used formulae, for example, when calculating the price of sweets. In a good example of work in design and technology, pupils have taken photographs of different slippers and used these in a document evaluating their appearance and use. Year 6 pupils are beginning to combine text and pictures to create multimedia presentations about the locality. This supports their work in geography. They have not yet incorporated sound and animation effects into

these. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work in different subjects across the age range shows that the technology is not yet used to support learning consistently in a wide enough range of subjects. Some pupils talk about the uses of ICT in the world outside school, suggesting, for example, that drawing programs could be used for engineering drawings, or that a shopkeeper might keep accounts using spreadsheets. However, only a few readily discuss the use of ICT in this way.

150. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has drawn up an effective action plan for the subject's development and has identified the strengths and areas for development. Recently, the school has purchased a good number of laptop computers for use in both infants and juniors. These are supplemented by one desktop machine in each classroom so there are enough computers for teaching the subject and for learning in other subjects. Judgements made during this inspection are similar to those made at the previous one. As at that time, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and do not give teachers enough information about how well individuals and groups are learning. There is therefore a lack of information useful for planning work for pupils and setting targets for improvement. However, the use of government recommended guidelines for teaching has helped to make sure that pupils of the same year group but in different classes have similar lessons. These guidelines also help to ensure that pupils' work builds on what they already know. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

## **MUSIC**

151. Standards in music are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, a significant number of pupils in the juniors receive instrumental tuition. They make good progress and attain at a higher level. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school and enjoy their music lessons. These judgements match those made at the time of the previous inspection.
152. Strengths in the subject include:
- music is now more secure within the curriculum now that a scheme of work has been implemented. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection;
  - many pupils in the juniors have good opportunities to learn and play instruments and join a choir;
  - there is a good interlinking with other subjects which helps to develop pupils' joy of music;
  - that it makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual development and a good contribution to their social and cultural development.
153. Areas for improvement are:
- that there are no procedures to assess pupils' general musical knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils move through the school, as at the time of the last inspection;
  - the lack of emphasis given to helping pupils develop their composition and performing skills is weak in some classes;
  - that resources need to be enhanced.
154. Pupils in Year 2 have secure listening and appraisal skills, as they showed in a good lesson when they discussed how instruments are played, for example by striking them or plucking strings. Pupils confidently named a tambourine, castanets and guiro. They made good progress as they accurately identified changes in tone, dynamics, pitch and volume and the range of sounds produced by various instruments and identified many on a large chart.

155. Pupils in Year 3 listen to and sing traditional African and French folk songs and discuss differences and similarities. This promotes a respect for different cultures and gives them a chance to evaluate critically the music from different places. In Year 4, pupils recognise differences in the music of brass bands typically found in the North West and the Northumbrian pipes from the North East. They discuss with interest the feelings that these instruments evoke and talk about their preferences. Higher attainers talk with good knowledge about the 'treble clef' and 'sharp sign' showing good musical vocabulary and understanding. However, as in many classes, the difference in skills, knowledge and understanding between those who play instruments and those who do not is very significant. In Year 6, pupils build well on their previous learning as they listen to the music of American composer Aaron Copland. Pupils discussed their preferences of a song and the orchestral piece of music with mature and sensible reasons. Many pupils enjoy singing in the class lessons but do not transfer these skills when singing in the whole school assemblies. More care should be taken with posture, breathing and diction when singing; these are weaknesses. In Year 2 and Year 6, there was evidence of pupils performing using classroom percussion instruments but there was no evidence of pupils composing music in any class.
156. A very positive feature of the school's music making is the provision made for higher attaining musicians who play flute, clarinet, brass, cello and violin. Pupils receive high quality teaching from the local education authority staff. They develop their performing skills and skills of reading conventional music notation well. The playing of some of these musicians in the assembly was impressive. Around 90 pupils in the juniors enjoy singing in a choir under the leadership of a specialist teacher from the local education authority. This supports their social development as they listen and work well together.
157. The quality of teaching seen was good throughout the school. Teachers are supported by a scheme of work that provides clear guidance, so that work becomes progressively more demanding as pupils move throughout the school. Lessons are generally well structured but the pace of the lesson is very much linked to the confidence and security that a teacher feels about music. The scheme provides a good range of recorded music which teachers generally use well. Occasionally teachers tend to rush through the lesson without giving the pupils sufficient opportunity to perform for long enough. Most pupils genuinely enjoy the subject.
158. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory but there are weaknesses. This is because the co-ordinator does not monitor or evaluate what happens in music and there is currently no assessment of classroom music. Because the co-ordinator does not monitor developments and she does not fully recognise the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Some resources are lacking, particularly the range of ethnic instruments is inadequate and there are too few tuned percussion instruments.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6, as at the time of the last inspection. In Years 5 and 6, many pupils exceed national expectations
160. Strengths in the subject are:
- the quality of teaching, and the response of pupils, which are good;
  - that it makes a good contribution to pupils' social development;
  - that it is secure within the school's curriculum and taught regularly in each class;

- that pupils are aware of the need for rules, health and safety guidance and the need to warm up and cool down.

161. Areas for development are:

- that there are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school;
- that information and communication technology is not represented;
- that there is a lack of small equipment.

162. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 travel and balance well on both the floor and the apparatus. They perform simple skills with agility showing good control of their movements when balancing, running and jumping and changing directions. In the junior classes, pupils have good levels of co-ordination and are agile and balanced in their movements. For example, Year 4 and 5 pupils balance using different parts of the body and then link a sequence of movements together with their partners. A strength in many classes is that pupils make perceptive evaluations of their performances and those of others and are keen to refine ideas in response to suggestions for improvement. In two good lessons in Year 3 and Year 6, pupils listened carefully to music and then translated their feelings into movement. Such opportunities for reflection make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils of all ethnic groups perform as partners and co-operate happily in groups. Their social development is good in physical education lessons.

163. All pupils in Years 4 have swimming lessons and most pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres by the time they leave school. Some swimmers perform at a high standard. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' ball skills in hockey, rugby, basketball and netball improve as they develop their skills of dribbling and dodging, passing and catching. The school caters well for outdoor and adventurous education through its successful residential experiences for pupils in Year 6 at Grasmere in the Lake District.

164. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. The best teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge, an emphasis on pupil demonstrations, high expectations of pupil behaviour and the effective use of available resources. This leads to pupils' enthusiastic responses, good standards of concentration and positive attitudes to their work. For example, Year 5 pupils were disciplined and focused when preparing a movement sequence. Teachers are well aware of the needs of all pupils and ensure that they are fully included. For example, talented classmates or support staff often support pupils with special educational needs, and the teacher ensures that directions are suitably clear for pupils who speak English as an additional language. All teachers prepare their lessons well, have good relationships with pupils and communicate their enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers set challenging tasks and use praise and give advice to motivate pupils. This ensures that pupils persevere with tasks and practise their skills. Comments such as 'that's a good firm shape', and 'what good twirls', promote pupils' confidence, self-esteem and pride in their performance. Overall teachers make effective use of the hall, dress appropriately for the subject and are conscious of health and safety matters. Consequently pupils show an appreciation of the importance of warming up and relaxing after exercise and set out equipment with care. The quality of pupils' relationships is good and results in pupils co-operating well in pairs, groups or teams. They are sensitive when evaluating each other's performances.

165. The curriculum co-ordinator has only just taken over the subject. She has a good understanding of the strengths of the subject and is committed to improving standards. The current policy statement and scheme of work ensure that teachers are aware of the

skills to be taught in each term and that pupils are provided with activities in an appropriate sequence that builds upon their previous learning. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and non-existent in some classes. As a result it is not possible to monitor pupils' progress effectively. The accommodation and storage facilities are good but more small balls and bean bags for example would ensure that pupils can practise skills more easily. Physical education makes an effective contribution to the social and health development of the pupils as well as promoting the importance of fitness. There is a suitable range of extra-curricular activities that are taught enthusiastically with the support of a number of staff.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6, as at the time of the last inspection.

167. Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality of teaching, and the response of pupils, which are often good;
- that it is well led with clear plans for its further development;
- that it makes a good contribution to pupils' personal as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

168. Areas for development are:

- that there are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school;
- that information and communication technology is not represented enough;
- that work is rarely matched to pupils' precise needs, especially for more able pupils;
- to improve the range and organisation of resources.

169. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge of world religions including Christianity as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils have studied church furniture, know chalice, pulpit and altar, following a visit to a local church, and learn about the christening ceremony. Pupils know that Jesus was a storyteller and can recall the story of the 'Good Samaritan'. They consider how they feel when they visit their special place. By the end of Year 6 pupils can recall books from the Old and New Testaments. They study items such as pooja sets and prayer mats to find out about aspects of the Jewish religion. They learn about the value of prayer and write their own simple prayers. They learn how music might be a way of expressing worship for believers.

170. Assemblies and whole class discussions play an important part in developing and modifying pupils' own beliefs and values, and make a good contribution to pupils' religious education. For example, they encourage pupils to consider life's experiences, discuss emotions, such as anger and sadness, and how their actions impact on others. By these means and through the organisation of successful initiatives like 'Africa week', religious education makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development.

171. Teaching is at least satisfactory and is often good. Good teaching was seen in Years 2, 3 and 6 during the inspection. Good features of teaching, such as seen in the co-ordinator's class, include good relationships and secure subject knowledge. Teachers provide well planned learning opportunities such as that visits to a local mosque, and visitors, such as invited clergy, who help to bring the subject to life for pupils and give them insight into religions other than Christianity. This promotes pupils' cultural development. Such lessons help to create a brisk pace and the teachers' focused questioning extends learning. These characteristics help to provide high levels of challenge and ensure that all

pupils achieve well. Weaker features seen include no clear focus for learning, lessons which are too heavily teacher dominated, and an unwillingness to insist that all pupils listen when the teacher makes important points. Information and communications technology is insufficiently used to support the subject. These features prevent pupils from achieving and responding as well as they can. However, overall attitudes to learning are good because most teachers try hard to make the subject interesting.

172. Religious education is secure within the school's curriculum and taught regularly in each class. There are good links with English, with drama and discussion used increasingly as well as written work to extend learning. The subject is well led with clear plans for its further development. This includes the development of a consistent approach to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school and an improvement to the range and organisation of resources.