

INSPECTION REPORT

MOSSFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Swinton, Manchester

LEA area: Salford

Unique reference number: 105925

Headteacher: Mr R. Gordon

Reporting inspector: Mrs O.M.Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 27 – 30 January 2003

Inspection number: 246538

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: Mossfield Road
Pendlebury
Swinton
Manchester

Postcode: M27 6EH

Telephone number: 0161 2817988

Fax number: 0161 7281730

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J. Simnett

Date of previous inspection: 10 – 14 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10859	Mrs O. Cooper	Registered inspector	Music Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further.
9505	Mr D. Haynes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22740	Mrs M. Leah	Team inspector	Geography History Foundation Stage	
3191	Mr J. Curley	Team inspector	Science Special educational needs	
30935	Mrs K. Mc Arthur	Team inspector	English Design and technology English as an additional language	
23081	Mrs C. Waine	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32402	Mrs Z. Kwaitkowska	Team inspector	Art and design Physical education Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

North West Education services
Cheshire House
164 Main Road
Goostrey
Cheshire
CW4 8JP

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mossfield Primary is an above average sized community school situated in the relatively deprived area of Pendlebury in Swinton. The school caters for 416 full-time pupils; 213 boys and 203 girls, which includes the 32 children in the nursery. There are a few pupils from ethnic minority groups, two Bangladeshis, two Pakistanis, two French, one Chinese, one Indian and a refugee from Sri Lanka. Seven of these pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English, their first language being Urdu, French or Chinese. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average; the majority having severe learning difficulties and a few having behavioural difficulties. An above average proportion of pupils is entitled to claim free school meals. Overall attainment on entry to the school is below average for the age of the children. There was a significant influx of pupils, at short notice, in September 2001, following the closure of a neighbouring school. Most of these pupils entered Year 5 or 6 and led to some inevitable disruption, increased pupil mobility to a high level and had an adverse effect on overall standards. Difficulties were also experienced in appointing additional teachers. The school is involved in the Health Promoting Schools initiative, and in the Excellence in Cities initiative, which funds the learning mentor to support pupils with specific difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a satisfactory school with more strengths, than areas requiring improvement. Whilst overall standards at the end of Year 2 are average, by the end of Year 6 they fall below average, partially due to the influx of pupils, but could be higher. Teaching is satisfactory overall and is good in the Nursery and infant classes. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, the full integration of the additional pupils has been completed successfully and the positive climate for learning maintained. Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour support their learning. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes (Foundation Stage) is good.
- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and helps pupils to make good progress.
- Leadership and management by team leaders and most subject co-ordinators are good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave well.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and design and technology by the end of Year 6.
- Attendance rates and punctuality.
- The use of time within the school day.
- The planning of the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997 and has made satisfactory improvement since given the hindering factors. The action plan in response to the key issues raised in the previous report has been completed and the key issues remedied. Classrooms are brighter, with attractive displays; community links are now satisfactory; the length of the school day has been increased for infant pupils and the governors and staff are fully involved in planning for school improvement. The large amount of time that had to be given to accommodating and settling the additional pupils hindered the pace of development in other areas. The school is now in a position to move forward more rapidly. The strengths found in the Foundation Stage and infant classes have been maintained as there has been less disruption. A new management structure has been implemented successfully and the senior management team has a strong influence on the drive to raise standards.

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	D	E	E	C
Mathematics	C	D	D	C
Science	C	D	E	D

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

Attainment is below average on entry to the Nursery, particularly in language and social skills. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and the large majority are on course to reach the level expected for their age in all areas of learning on entry to Year 1.

The school's 2002 results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics and compared well with those of similar schools. Standards in science were also average on the basis of teachers' assessments. Pupils achieved well to reach these standards from the below average attainment on entry. Current standards of work in Year 2 are very similar and pupils continue to achieve well. Standards are average in all other subjects.

The school's 2002 results of national tests at the end of Year 6 as shown above were not typical for this school and were not high enough. In most years overall standards have been average. The 2001 results reflected the lower overall ability of the year group, rather than a decline in standards. However, pupils who left the school in 2002 underachieved, particularly in writing. There has been a trend of underachievement amongst girls, which is still evident. Current standards show some improvement, but remain below average in English, mathematics and science, with writing skills affecting standards in other subjects. A few higher attaining pupils are not achieving as much as they could as they are insufficiently challenged, but overall achievement is now satisfactory as the school has already started to remedy the weaknesses. Standards in all other subjects are broadly average, except for information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology where they are below, mostly due to the time allocated to teaching these subjects. The school did not meet its targets in English or mathematics in 2002, but is on course to achieve the higher targets set for 2003. The trend in the school's improvement over the last five years is broadly in line with the national trend.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are happy to come and want to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school, although boisterous at playtimes. There have been no exclusions for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils' personal qualities are well developed. They willingly accept responsibility. Relationships with each other and with staff are good.
Attendance	Poor. Well below the national average and in the bottom 10 percent of schools. Punctuality is also poor.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
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Quality of teaching	Good	Good	satisfactory
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Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The teaching of English and mathematics and of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of writing skills has improved following further training for teachers and some teaching assistants. Numeracy skills are developed well through brisk mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of lessons but there is some over reliance on a commercial programme of work in mathematics, and worksheets in English, which slows progress for higher attaining pupils. There has been insufficient emphasis on the teaching of writing skills until recently and some junior pupils are not confident writers. The overall strengths in the teaching are in the management of pupils and the use of ongoing assessment of pupils' attainment, which helps in planning the next stage in their learning. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, but areas for improvement in satisfactory lessons include raising expectations of pupils by increasing the pace and challenge in lessons. The teaching meets the learning needs of most infant pupils well, and junior pupils satisfactorily. There are occasions, however, when the needs of pupils with special educational needs or in the early stages of learning to speak English are not sufficiently met as teaching assistants do not support them during whole class sessions. The teaching meets the needs of all these pupils satisfactorily. Overall learning is good in infant classes where pupils make good progress in acquiring knowledge and developing their skills. In junior classes learning is satisfactory, although pupils have good knowledge of their own learning from the targets set for them in lessons and individually.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. All National Curriculum subjects, religious education and personal and health education are taught and statutory requirements are met. However, the way time is allocated to subjects leads to long intervals between teaching units of work in some subjects. Some lessons are far too long and pupils lose interest and concentration.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils have individual education plans, but they vary in quality, with some targets being too broad for small steps in progress to be measured.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Good support in their first language for some pupils in the early stages of speaking English. Good support through individual tasks in some classes, but insufficient help given in others.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, but for cultural development remains unsatisfactory as it was at the time of the last inspection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are in place, but no training for staff. There are good procedures for monitoring behaviour. Arrangements for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory, with good use being made of the information available. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are not checked rigorously by the learning mentor and this is unsatisfactory.

The school actively encourages parents to work in close partnership for the benefit of their children but many are unwilling to do so.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Leadership and management by the team leaders and most subject co-ordinators are good and positively influence the drive to raise standards. Full integration of the pupils who transferred schools has been managed well by the headteacher, but the time given to this has reduced the rigour in monitoring other aspects of the school's work and in establishing a longer-term vision for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. There is an efficient committee structure and satisfactory procedures for monitoring the work of the school. All statutory responsibilities

	are met, except for some omissions in the school prospectus.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The subject co-ordinators and senior management team monitor the work of the school closely through analysis of test data and pupils' performance. They are now beginning to track the progress of each pupil from year to year, but this is still in the early stages.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The governors have good systems to oversee the budget and obtain best value for money. Specific grants are used for the intended purposes, but the learning mentor is not having sufficient impact on attendance rates or punctuality. Staff are not always deployed in the best interests of all pupils and there is some wastage of time. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

There are sufficient teachers and teaching assistants for the number of pupils on roll. Resources for learning are adequate except for outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage. The accommodation is satisfactory, but many window frames are rotten and in need of replacement.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The teaching is good. • Their children are expected to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework set is insufficient. • A wider range of activities outside of lessons.

The inspectors agree that most pupils like school and that teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is satisfactory overall. There is some underachievement amongst higher attaining pupils and girls in junior classes. Overall the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Inspectors judge the range of activities outside lessons to be good, with a wider range than in many other schools. Arrangements for setting homework are similar to those found in most schools, although the range of activities set for junior pupils' homework is limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In most years the children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is below the average for the local authority and below that expected for their age. Occasionally the attainment profile is lower leading to apparent fluctuations in attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Children in the Nursery make very good progress and in the Reception classes make good progress in all the areas of learning. This good and very good progress is a result of the good teaching and effective interaction from their teachers and other adults. By the end of their year in a Reception class the large majority of pupils are on course to reach the level expected in all areas of learning, but few are likely to exceed them. Children who have English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make the same rate of progress as their peers as they receive support from adults, often working in small groups.

2. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, results were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and were above the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing. In mathematics 25percent of pupils reached the higher level, but this was below the national average. The school has made good improvement in raising standards in reading and writing in the last two years and in mathematics in the last year. The boys' performance in reading in 2002 was the best ever and significantly higher than that of the girls, which is against the national trend. Teachers' assessments in science showed pupils' attainment to be broadly in line with the national average although the proportion reaching the higher level was below average. The overall results were affected by a significant number of pupils who only just reached the expected level.

3. Current standards of work amongst Year 2 pupils are broadly average for pupils' ages in reading, writing, mathematics and science, with the improvement in 2002 being maintained. The large majority of pupils are achieving well due to the good teaching, but a small number of higher attaining pupils could achieve more in English and mathematics if they were given sufficiently challenging activities. The proportion of pupils on course to exceed the expected level is also similar to 2002.

4. The overall results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were well below the national average. However, standards were better in mathematics, as they were below the national average, whereas those in English and science were well below. These results were partially affected by the influx of pupils, some with very low levels of attainment and movement out of the school. Despite the school's best efforts they could not raise their standards of attainment in one year, especially in science, where the pupils joining the school had done very little work in the previous two years. Other factors were the attitudes of some pupils, poor attendance rates for a small number of pupils and a flu virus, which was at its peak during the tests. Pupils who had been ill came especially to take the tests and did not reach the levels predicted. Despite all the hindering factors, the school's results were in line with the average for similar schools in English and mathematics, but fell below the average in science. Comparison of the end of Year 2 and Year 6 results for pupils remaining in the school show the influx of pupils was not the sole cause for declining standards. Approximately half the pupils underachieved in writing, a much higher proportion than in reading and mathematics. When the results for pupils who joined the school were taken out, standards were close to the national averages in mathematics and English, although higher standards in reading compensated for the lower standards in writing. The school acknowledges standards at the end of Year 6 were not high enough and has set challenging targets for 2003.

5. Current standards of work in Year 6 are below those expected nationally in English, mathematics and science, although pupils are now achieving satisfactorily. The level of mobility in and out of this year group is over 50 percent, with 11 pupils joining at the beginning of Year 5 and the proportion with special educational needs is almost 30 percent. Nevertheless, the proportion on course to reach the expected level by the end of the year is higher than in 2002 and there are indications that the steps taken to raise

standards are beginning to take effect. Pupils' writing skills are affecting their ability to record their work in other subjects and good progress made during class discussions and from direct teaching is not evident in their written work. The performance of girls is an issue, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Too often the girls sit back and do not put up their hands to answer questions and teachers allow the boys to dominate question and answer sessions or class discussions. Where teachers identify this, direct questions to the girls and have high expectations, then they make better progress. Taken overall the boys do better than the girls; their performance in English is very close to that of the girls and closer than found nationally. In mathematics boys do slightly better and the gap between them and the girls is wider than found nationally.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their targets and good progress in the Foundation Stage. Some of the individual education plans have targets that are too broad and pupils' progress is not so easy to track. The school has not identified any pupils as being gifted or talented in any subject, although observations indicate some pupils are potentially talented. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and good progress in the Foundation Stage classes where there is more support from adults. In some lessons these pupils are not sufficiently supported by the teaching assistants, for example during lesson introductions or direct teaching, they do not sit next to them to help them understand the vocabulary being used. In other lessons they are well supported with individual tasks, some using computers or tapes in their native language and then in English. There was an example of a pupil who was unable to be included in a lesson because the learning mentor did not arrive as expected and no message was received so the class teacher could make alternative arrangements. This is unacceptable. There is no evidence of a significant difference in the attainment of pupils from different minority ethnic groups.

7. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are continuing to have a positive influence on standards. Pupils have opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, but further opportunities are needed. Sufficient emphasis is placed on developing subject specific vocabulary and this develops well. By the end of Year 6 pupils speak clearly, but lack confidence in addressing larger audiences, for example in assemblies. Most are able to express their ideas and opinions, but use a limited range of vocabulary. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and mostly to each other and taken overall standards are average. In reading, pupils begin to develop strategies to read unfamiliar words and make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress between Years 3 and 6, although it is better in Year 6. Where pupils are withdrawn for teaching in small groups, their rate of progress is better, for example, Year 6 pupils are focusing on improving their comprehension skills and good on-going assessment of their attainment helps set tasks closely matched to their needs. Current standards in Year 6 are broadly average. Writing skills develop well in Years 1, 2 and 6 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 5 where a significant number of pupils are not enthusiastic writers and the presentation of their work is unsatisfactory. Standards in writing are currently below average in Year 6. Pupils do not make sufficient use of their literacy or numeracy skills in other subjects when worksheets are used and then coloured in, instead of requiring pupils to record independently what they know and understand. Basic numeracy skills develop well in brisk introductory mental arithmetic sessions but where some lessons are over long pupils have difficulty in retaining their concentration and the good pace evident at the beginning of lessons is lost.

8. Current standards of work among Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are broadly in line with those expected in art and design, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all of these subjects. In science, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) standards are in line with those expected in Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily, but are below those expected in Year 6. Pupils' progress and achievement in ICT have been affected by the theft of computers and difficulty in accessing the National Grid for Learning. In science, the influx of a significant number of pupils who had done little work in science previously is still having some impact on standards. Pupils are currently achieving satisfactorily in these subjects in Years 3 to 6. The way time is allocated to teaching design and technology is having an adverse effect on standards and pupils' achievement between Years 3 and 6 is unsatisfactory. The full impact of the school's measures to raise standards is evident up to Year 3 where the mobility of pupils has less effect, but which increases from Year 4 upwards, for example the level in the current Year 5 is 41 percent.

9. The school sets itself realistically challenging targets based on secure assessment information. Following the influx of pupils the school reviewed its targets downward in 2002 but did not meet them. The targets for 2003 are higher and the school is currently on course to achieve them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The attitudes, values and personal development of pupils attending school regularly and on time are good and contribute well to the positive learning environment that exists within the school. The school's aims and values are simply stated and appropriate to the area and contribute to the positive atmosphere in the school. During nearly all lessons the majority of pupils concentrate well and show enthusiasm when the quality of teaching makes the lesson interesting. Those pupils that do attend on time are keen to enter school and settle quickly into the daily routine without undue intervention from the class teacher. The poor punctuality of some pupils has a disruptive effect on lessons and the effective use of time.

11. Behaviour is good overall, although boisterous at playtimes. On few occasions is it necessary for pupils to be reminded of the rules. Starting in the Foundation Stage and continuing throughout the school the teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and the pupils live up to these expectations most of the time. Behaviour and the attitude to learning in lessons are good though the standard varies with the quality of teaching. Moral development is good and pupils know the difference between right and wrong and what is expected of them. Behaviour around the school, in assemblies and at play, although boisterous, is good. No incidents of bullying or harassment were seen and this type of behaviour is not reported as a problem by either parents or pupils. The school is an orderly community. Internally there is no evidence of vandalism and that on the exterior of the building is not attributable to pupils. Learning resources and property are treated with respect. Social development is good and is evident in a natural courtesy to adults, which was well demonstrated by pupils from all year groups as they walked about the school and during lunch times. Pupils relate well to each other and to all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, with no rivalry between pupils from the two schools or those from other races. Pupils were at ease when they talked about their likes and dislikes and about behaviour of children around the school. Merit assemblies are held regularly where individual pupils receive recognition with the awarding of certificates for improved attitude or performance. Such rewards are received with pride.

12. The school offers a range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for the day to day running of the school, including being part of a buddy scheme. Currently all the buddies are boys, which is not desirable. Buddies befriend other pupils and can report both positive and negative incidents they observe to the head teacher. Most opportunities to accept responsibility are for Year 6 pupils with only limited opportunity for younger pupils. These pupils help in class and return the registers to the office after each registration. All pupils are included in taking these responsibilities over time. The school offers a good range of after school activities that include, art, dance, drama and team sport clubs. These activities are well attended and are open to both boys and girls of all abilities. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions in lessons and they receive appropriate praise, which promote the development of personal qualities. This was evident in a Year 3 physical education lesson when pupils were encouraged to develop their own exercise routine. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the feelings of people of different cultures, ages and religions. The school supports a small number of national and international charities and pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves.

13. For the reporting period overall attendance at 90.0 percent is very poor and well below the national average, a level that is much lower than that found at the previous inspection. This was partly attributable to an influenza virus that affected many pupils and a small number of persistent non-attendeers. The punctuality of pupils is also poor; this was not identified as a problem at the previous inspection. There were no exclusions during the reporting period. Poor attendance and punctuality hinder the progress of those pupils concerned.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but is better in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, where it is good overall, than in Years 3 to 6. The overall good quality of teaching found at the time of the previous inspection has not been maintained. This is because of the high staff turnover and proportion of recently qualified teachers in junior classes. Of the 79 lessons seen, one was excellent, a further seven were very good and another 37 were good. Thirty-four lessons were satisfactory and none were unsatisfactory. All class teachers receive some support from teaching assistants, some working with pupils identified as needing a boost to their performance, which is beneficial for both the teachers and the pupils.

15. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is better in the nursery, where it is often very good, than in the Reception classes. The activities are well planned for each session, cover all the areas of learning and provide the children with opportunities to take some responsibility for their own learning by choosing activities themselves. The adults work well together as a team and maximise the opportunities to interact with the children to promote their learning.

16. In Years 1 to 6, the example of excellent teaching was in Year 4, where very careful planning and preparation led to interesting, enjoyable activities which provided first hand experiences. The teacher and a group of pupils dressed in Indian clothes and acted as a family living in Chembakolli. They talked about what they would be doing at certain times of the day and asked what children in England might be doing, eating or wearing. This led to direct comparison of the two different localities. The lesson ended with an Indian feast where pupils could sample a wide range of hot and cold dishes. All pupils were so interested their questions covered a wide range of topics and they made very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of other localities and cultures. A pupil who is just beginning to speak English was able to participate as she shared information about her village in Pakistan with her support assistant who translated it into English for the other pupils. The very good lessons seen were in English and mathematics in Year 2 and religious education in Year 6. The key features were the brisk pace, level of challenge and good questioning skills, which made the pupils think about their responses. Areas for improvement in satisfactory lessons are in the pace, challenge and teachers' expectations of all pupils.

17. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6, except for literacy skills in Year 6, which are taught well. However, there is room for further improvement in the teaching of writing skills throughout the school, particularly through other subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies continue to have a good effect on the quality of teaching and further training undertaken in teaching aspects of English has been beneficial. Teachers are secure in their understanding of the strategies and the framework for teaching them. Small focus groups of pupils withdrawn from classes are taught well, with detailed records kept of the progress made and individual learning needs, so that the activities set are closely matched to the next step in learning. Some of the teaching assistants have been trained in using the additional national strategies to support pupils falling behind and this is helping these pupils to make better progress. In both literacy and numeracy lessons, the introductions are followed by purposeful direct teaching. However, in a small number of lessons seen, the higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged by the tasks set. In mathematics, this was often due to the use of commercially produced workbooks and every pupil starting to work on the same page. The time towards the end of lessons is used well to reinforce what has been learned and for teachers to evaluate their teaching.

18. Teaching and learning in science are good in infant classes and satisfactory in junior classes. In all other subjects the teaching in all year groups is satisfactory, although in design and technology there is insufficient evidence on which to base a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6. The teaching techniques being used in literacy and numeracy are being transferred effectively to many lessons in other subjects. The purpose of each lesson is shared with pupils at the beginning and often referred to as the lesson progresses. This helps pupils to understand how well they are working towards their targets. The key strengths in the teaching throughout the school are in the management of pupils and in the use of ongoing assessment. The deployment of teaching assistants is a strength in most classes. However, in a few lessons they do not provide sufficient support during introductory sessions when they sit apart from the pupils and do not join in. They have to leave some mathematics lessons part way through to support

pupils requiring additional support with literacy and this is not as effective as it could be, as the time given to additional literacy support is minimal. There is a heavy reliance on the use of worksheets in some subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6, which are insufficiently challenging and, in religious education, for example, these are then coloured in to fill the time left in the lesson. This shows teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough in these lessons. Teachers' expectations of the way pupils present their work are also too low in some classes.

19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils receive extra attention from their class teachers to help them make progress towards their individual targets. The class teachers use the individual education plans when planning lessons to ensure the learning needs of these pupils are met. Teaching assistants are usually deployed well in supporting these pupils, helping them to understand what they have to do and to complete their work successfully. Teachers provide weekly plans showing how each pupil will be supported and these are checked by the special needs co-ordinator.

20. Some support is available for pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English, but as the number of pupils is increasing this is insufficient and does not enable these pupils to be fully included in all lessons as far as they could be. Questions are often directed to these pupils to involve them more fully, and help improve their speaking skills. They may be withdrawn from lessons to receive language support from teaching assistants or local authority ethnic minority support staff. However, the school staff have received no training to help them plan and prepare specific tasks.

21. The teaching meets the learning needs of most pupils and enables them to make at least satisfactory progress over time in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding, although a few higher attainers could achieve more. Progress is better in infant classes than in the juniors, where the attitudes of girls in general tend to become less positive and teachers sometimes allow them to sit back and rely on the boys to answer questions. Pupils have a good knowledge of their learning from the targets set in each lesson and the individual targets inside their book covers. They know what they have to do to achieve the next National Curriculum level and are aware of what levels they hope to reach by the end of Year 6. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and pupils do not always know exactly what they have to do to improve their work.

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

22. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, as it did at the time of the previous inspection, but is no longer well balanced between subjects. It provides a good range of learning opportunities for the children in the Foundation Stage but it is unsatisfactory for those in Years 1 to 6. There is some poor use of time during the school day, with some time wasted and some lessons that are very long, whilst others are too short. As at the time of the previous inspection, art and design and design and technology are particularly affected. Added to this, in some classes, subjects are not taught regularly enough to develop knowledge and skills systematically. There has been satisfactory improvement in producing new policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Some of these are new and not yet fully embedded into the curriculum, particularly that in design and technology, which is not yet ensuring that pupils develop skills and knowledge progressively. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory and has sufficient emphasis on sex education, relationships and drug misuse. An equal opportunities policy is implemented satisfactorily, with no significant difference in provision because of gender, disability, race or culture. However, in some lessons more questions are directed to boys than to girls and the pupils with English as an additional language do not always have enough support to help them understand the teacher or their tasks.

23. The children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a good curriculum that effectively develops their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the recommended areas of learning. Teachers plan diligently to provide them with interesting and practical lessons that promote their learning well.

24. The amount of teaching time for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 now matches the nationally recommended teaching time, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. However, throughout the school, some time is wasted during the school day, such as when:

- the half an hour allowed for collective worship, which is longer than in many schools, is not all used and pupils return to the classroom 10 to 15 minutes before they go home or to lunch;
- pupils sit waiting 10 minutes for assembly to start following their music lesson;
- a teacher sensibly uses only part of a very long period for physical education and then time has to be filled until pupils go out to play; and
- staff meetings extend beyond the lunch hour.

25. The school correctly places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics and implements the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies appropriately. In response to a fall in standards, the school allocated extra time to lessons in English and mathematics but this has been at the expense of other subjects. It has resulted in a narrow curriculum, with little variety and only limited opportunities to develop pupils' interest, skills, knowledge and understanding in some subjects. Nor does it provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to express themselves practically and creatively. This is aggravated by the way in which the curriculum is planned in some year groups. For example, pupils in Year 6 only study history in the summer term, a year since their previous work, which means that they do not build on their previous learning systematically. Additionally, timings of lessons within the school day are out of balance. Lessons in numeracy and literacy are often scheduled to last for one and a quarter or one and a half hours. This is longer than for pupils in most secondary schools; it makes it hard for pupils and teachers to maintain the good pace of learning evident in the early part of lessons and sometimes results in loss of concentration and some restlessness. It also means that insufficient time is left for some other subjects, such as art and design, which sometimes is taught in two half-hour lessons on separate days. This is very difficult in such a practical subject, as it does not allow pupils the opportunity to reflect on their choice of resources, plan their designs or develop their ideas sufficiently. The use of specialist teachers of music enhances the curriculum for that subject. However, the deployment of teaching assistants in supporting pupils in literacy and numeracy is not effective when they leave numeracy lessons part way through to support those needing additional support in literacy, and then return at a later stage in the lesson.

26. Short term planning has improved since the previous inspection and teachers make good evaluations of lessons, which they then use to plan the next lesson. However, this is not as well developed in mathematics because some teachers rely too heavily on following the plan provided by the commercial programme of work.

27. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across the whole curriculum and the school states an intention to develop pupils' writing skills in other subjects, such as history. However, because of the limited teaching time in these subjects this is not happening often enough. This is also the case with numeracy, where there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and further develop their skills in meaningful situations. In literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils' skills in recording for themselves what they have learned are limited by the use of many commercial worksheets and workbooks. This was also the case in Years 3 to 6 at the time of the previous inspection. As at the time of the previous inspection, teachers do incorporate the use of computers into lessons in other subjects, but this is not as widespread as it was then because of on-going problems with the Internet, thefts of equipment and a few shortages of programs for the new computers.

28. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils have individual education plans mainly to improve their literacy and numeracy skills or to improve behaviour and social skills. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from classes for support in small groups on specific aspects, for example comprehension skills. This provision is good. These pupils as well as those with English as an additional language are included in all class lessons and experience the same curriculum. There is no programme of work specifically for pupils with English as an additional language because staff have no training that would enable them to do this. Classroom assistants and the local ethnic minority support staff

help them to access learning activities, either in class or in withdrawal groups. However, there is limited support available.

29. The school enriches its curriculum by taking pupils on a good range of visits to local venues, such as an art gallery and museums and by providing an interesting range of clubs. This enhances the pupils' knowledge and understanding and brings learning to life. A satisfactory range of expert visitors, such as a "Viking" also adds interest to learning. There are satisfactory links with the community that enrich learning. For example, the vicar and other local faith group members support teaching in religious education, sharing their beliefs and customs with pupils. Local schools also contribute satisfactorily to the curriculum. For example, a local Beacon school is leading a project on creative writing, one of the school's priorities.

30. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, overall. That for spiritual development is satisfactory and for moral and social development is good. Insufficient improvement has been made to pupils' cultural development, which remains unsatisfactory. There has been little change since the previous inspection.

31. The school does not have a policy for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and teachers do not plan systematically to develop it across the whole curriculum, so missing opportunities to do so. Lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education give some opportunities for learning but these are inconsistent in regularity and quality across the school. A new policy and programme of work to improve this are being developed by a new co-ordinator.

32. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Staff encourage pupils to develop a sense of self worth through praising their efforts and successes, which encourages pupils to do their best. This is reinforced by stickers and rewards, with a merit assembly each week to celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements. Some good work by pupils is celebrated in displays around the school in public areas, but this is insufficiently developed to reflect work in all subjects. For example, most displays in mathematics are created by teachers as a learning resource. The school meets the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship, providing time for prayer and praise but does not provide enough opportunities for personal reflection and response. Visiting faith members who lead acts of worship make an effective contribution to spirituality.

33. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Staff implement the school's positive code of conduct consistently and remind pupils how to behave well. This leads to the good behaviour of pupils, which shows that pupils have a clear sense of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils know the rules regarding acceptable behaviour at lunchtime, playtimes, and in lessons. They learn about moral issues in some subjects, such as geography, when they study life in poor countries and about pollution in the environment. Staff set a good example for pupils of care and consideration for others and pupils reflect this in their own actions. Teachers give pupils opportunities to take on responsibility across the school as they grow older, and they accept these happily. For example, Year 6 pupils act as "buddies" in the playground, although these are all boys, and undertake a good variety of tasks around the school. Pupils show a good level of responsibility to the wider community by contributing to charities, including Operation Christmas Child. Pupils are encouraged to show initiative, such as in the production of a school magazine by a small group of Year 6 pupils. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and to work collaboratively in some lessons. A good range of visits linked to the curriculum and well-supported clubs provide social opportunities for pupils. These include a residential visit for Year 6 pupils, where they develop independence and social skills of living together away from home.

34. The provision for cultural development has not improved since the previous inspection and remains unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have a good enough understanding of European culture or that of the wider world, through studies of famous artists and composers. The exception to this is the study of the local artist, Lowry. Pupils develop a good understanding of his life and work through history and art, including a visit to the local Lowry Gallery. Although there is an interesting range of clubs, none provide for those pupils who may be interested or talented in music. Insufficient opportunities are taken to develop understanding of cultures of the wider world or of life in modern multicultural Britain. An excellent

exception to this was the lesson in a Year 4 class, where the teacher acting as a parent talked of her life and customs and prepared an Indian feast for pupils, who were fascinated and learned much about Indian culture.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The overall level of care provided by the school for its pupils is satisfactory. The child protection policy is clear and the head teacher is responsible for child protection, his experience and knowledge of pupils and their backgrounds provides an adequate level of protection. Teaching and especially non-teaching staff need awareness training of child protection issues. Class teachers know their pupils and their family backgrounds very well and provide care and support during lessons; this was particularly evident during circle time. Record keeping and communication within the school is satisfactory and contact is maintained with outside specialists and their services are used as required. First aid provision is good and the children know what to do should the need arise. The site manager and team of cleaners maintain a high level of cleanliness and any aspect of maintenance is attended to promptly. This helps create a safe learning environment and also instils high values in the pupils that are reflected in their respect for property and learning resources. Most classrooms are tidy and bright and promote a positive learning environment but communal parts of the school are less bright and appear cluttered. Health and safety awareness throughout the school is satisfactory. The Site Manager submits a weekly report on the state of the premises but health and safety issues or accident reports do not feature as a regular item in the governors' meetings. Whole school safety inspections and risk assessments are carried out but only at a general level and not with a clear focus with records that lead to the inclusion of items in the school's short term or any long-term development plan.

36. The school has few rules and pupils know what is expected of them. Personal, social and health education lessons address well aspects of personal hygiene, behaviour and racial equality. Safety in lessons is emphasised by the class teacher and this was clear in a Year 3 physical education lesson when the correct movement of equipment was insisted upon. There are satisfactory procedures to prevent pupils having unrestricted access to the Internet. Procedures for encouraging good behaviour and preventing bullying are good and no incidents of harassment or bullying were seen during the inspection. There are good procedures at the end of the teaching day concerning the collection of younger pupils by parents. A satisfactory level of supervision is provided when the children are at play, however, there is no play equipment and supervisors are not proactive in leading structured or guided play. The supervisors interact well with pupils and the procedures available and the standard of supervision provided maintains a consistent approach to behaviour management.

37. Registration is quickly taken but in some classes there can be as many as ten percent of pupils arriving after registration closes, which is unsatisfactory. Registers are maintained correctly, returned to the office after each registration, so any late comers have to report to the office. The learning mentor was appointed to the school in recognition of the support needed by some pupils and their families, but this appointment has not overcome the low attendance rate and poor punctuality, as it should have done. The learning mentor visually scans the attendance registers daily and should follow up any unexplained absences, but this does not happen on a regular basis. The procedures in place for monitoring absence are unsatisfactory. No analysis of absence by reason has been made and only this year (2003) has any detailed analysis of attendance been made even though attendance has been poor for at least the previous three years. This level of punctuality and absence is having a negative impact on standards the school achieves. There is no formal attendance or punctuality improvement policy that is clearly visible to pupils, parents and staff. The learning mentor is available throughout playtimes and lunchtimes to support pupils who may be drawn into conflict with others. This support is not as effective as it should be and is not preventing incidents from happening through early interaction with pupils concerned.

38. The school has improved its arrangements for monitoring the academic performance of pupils and they are satisfactory. Optional national tests and standardised tests are used to assess pupils at different times of the year. The school is making good use of the assessment information available to set targets for classes and individual pupils, to identify pupils falling behind and needing a boost to their performance

and to highlight gaps in teaching or the curriculum. The school has introduced systems for assessing pupils' individual performance in English, mathematics, science and ICT from year to year, to check sufficient progress is being made. These are not yet fully embedded in the school's work and are cumbersome. Assessment procedures in most other subjects are satisfactory and manageable. Pupils' personal and academic development are assessed frequently and recorded in the Foundation Stage classes. However, in swimming there is no on-going assessment and as the pupils are experiencing the third change of teacher this year, this is having a negative impact on their progress. Class teachers appraise the learning of pupils well in lessons and use the information effectively to amend their weekly plans or to aid planning for the following week. The aim of the school is to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential, including pupils with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language. Whilst the progress of these pupils is tracked in the same way as other pupils, no separate record is kept of the achievement of different minority groups or of pupils with special needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents' views as expressed in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting were positive. Parents particularly appreciated that their children liked school, that they were well informed about their child's progress, there was an expectation of hard work and that their child was becoming mature and responsible. Areas of concern to a small percentage of parents centred on the amount of homework and the range of after school activities. Only seven per cent of parents returned the questionnaire and the five parents that attended the meeting could not be considered a true representation of parents of children attending the school.

40. Parents regard the school, and in particular the class teachers as very approachable. The school offers parents an opportunity each term to meet class teachers and discuss the progress of their children; this is more than the requirement. The school has a flexible timetable for these meetings to accommodate working parents. The quality of written information provided for parents is satisfactory. A comprehensive school newsletter at the start of the school year informs of general events. A simple newsletter is produced during the spring and summer terms. Occasional year group newsletters detail activities that will be undertaken by some classes but this is not consistent across the school. The annual report to parents on pupils' progress is satisfactory; it contains details of progress in English, mathematics and science, and in all other curriculum subjects. The report does not contain comment on personal development or behaviour and there are no areas for improvement identified. Pupils' absence is detailed in the report but no comment made even if absence is over ten per cent and there is no reference to the pupil's punctuality. The school prospectus does not have necessary basic information about the school such as the telephone number or national and school test results.

41. The school has good links with parents. Open days are held where parents partake in activities shared with their children. Parents are welcome to assist in school during the teaching day but very few do so. There is a good response from parents for social events or events shared with their children. During the inspection 22 parents attended an infant assembly and over 30 a junior assembly but they are less supportive at other times. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed from the moment the school has initial concerns about their child's progress. There is no particular link with the parents of the few pupils who speak English as an additional language, although one parent has provided support for a pupil with whom she shares a first language, which is helping the pupil to make better progress.

42. The school prospectus is an easy to read factual document, comprising most of the necessary information parents require. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home and their impact on the life of the school is satisfactory. A minority of parents confirm work undertaken at home and inspection found that the amount of homework is appropriate to the age of the pupil and is well managed. The Parent Teacher Association is no longer active but there is evidence around the school of resources funded by the organisation. Overall the impact that parents have on the work of the school is satisfactory, but they could do more to help raise attendance rates.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, with some strengths but areas in need of improvement. The headteacher and senior management team have successfully maintained a positive climate for learning in difficult circumstances. The closure of a neighbouring school, subsequent influx of pupils and promotion or retirement of experienced, key members of staff have adversely affected the overall leadership and long term vision for the development of the school. The headteacher had to accommodate additional pupils at very short notice, unaware of just how many pupils would be coming, appoint new teachers and cope with the views of parents who were unhappy at the closure and did not wish their children to come to Mossfield. Similarly, some parents of pupils already at the school opted to remove their children and send them elsewhere, as they did not wish them to mix with children from what they perceived to be a poor school. This caused tremendous disruption at the start of the school year in September 2001 and impacted on the results of National Curriculum tests in 2002. Classes had to be reorganised, which upset pupils already in the school as they were parted from their friends, mobile classrooms had to be brought in, additional resources purchased and a total of five new teachers appointed, as no teachers transferred with the pupils. The first advertisement did not attract any applicants and this was only a matter of weeks away from the start of the academic year. All the teachers appointed were new entrants to the profession who are entitled to half a day each week away from their class for professional development and, finding competent supply teachers to cover their classes added to the burdens and the disruption for pupils.

44. Because the school had a deficit budget at the end of the 2001 financial year, the governors decided not to appoint a new deputy headteacher, but to alter the management structure in the school and appoint team leaders from the existing staff. This has been successful and they have been trained and empowered to lead and manage their phases and are making a good contribution to the drive to raise standards. The headteacher had to focus his attention on the successful integration of the pupils from the two schools and maintaining the standards of behaviour and he has been effective in this, but at the cost of maintaining the rigour in monitoring other aspects of the school.

45. All the changes have been managed well; the pupils get on well together and the staff have formed a cohesive team despite the difficulty of having three different buildings. The senior teacher has a heavy workload with responsibility for special educational needs, pupils who have English as an additional language and assessment, with only a limited amount of time away from class responsibilities. The new Code of Practice for special educational needs has been fully implemented, but no training has been undertaken in supporting pupils with English as an additional language to help in fulfilling this role effectively and at a time when the numbers are increasing. The team leaders monitor the work within their phases well, through lesson observations and assessment information received from subject co-ordinators. The roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators have been developed well since the previous inspection, and all now influence standards in their subjects through monitoring of the planning, scrutiny of work and lesson observations when the subject is a priority for development. There is an action plan for improvement for each subject and for the Foundation Stage to overcome the weaknesses found from their monitoring, and which are being implemented well. The subject co-ordinators also analyse the results and pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests and report their findings back to team leaders and the senior management team. A detailed analysis of the 2002 results showed the influx of pupils was not the only cause for a decline in standards but some underachievement among pupils who had remained in the school. The key issues for action identified in this inspection have all been identified by the school through its monitoring and evaluation procedures and most form part of the current school improvement plan and some improvement is evident, for example, in pupils' writing skills. The headteacher has not maintained the same level of rigour in his monitoring of teaching, which has become too informal, or in checking the consistency in implementing whole school policies.

46. The induction of the newly qualified teachers was good, with each assigned a mentor working in the same year group. The fact that all teaching seen was satisfactory or better reflects the good support

these teachers received and the access to further professional development. The formal procedures for appraising the work of other teachers are good, up to date and supporting the drive to raise standards.

47. The governors are totally committed to the school and fulfil all their statutory obligations, apart from the omission of basic information about the school and test results in the prospectus. Those able to do so visit the school each week to monitor their policies in practice. The Chairman meets weekly with the headteacher to keep abreast of any issues arising and checks the progress of the school improvement plan to be able to feed back to governors at their termly meetings. Governors attend meetings with the senior management team prior to determining the priorities for inclusion in the school improvement plan. They have an efficient committee structure and all governors are kept well informed through the distribution of minutes.

48. The school improvement plan is a useful working document to aid the drive to raise standards, but lacks detail in the costing of some action plans. In the ICT plan, for example, it just says 'time' under resources needed, with no indication of how much time is needed. Whilst the plan covers one year in detail, the framework for future years is too brief, especially given the possible decline in pupil numbers. The plan refers to 'curriculum evaluation each term', without identifying which subjects will be the priorities for development.

49. Financial planning is satisfactory. The deficit in the budget at the end of 2001 was remedied in 2002 when there was a substantial carry forward. However, the governors are aware that a large sum (approximately £27,000) will be clawed back as the number of pupils on roll is not as high as anticipated following the closure of the neighbouring school. This will bring the amount carried forward to the next financial year within the recommended level. The day to day management of the budget is very efficient. The most recent auditor's report noted strengths in the school's accounting procedures with no areas requiring urgent action. Some recommendations are, however, still outstanding, mainly those relating to omissions in the school prospectus and the security of computers.

50. The school makes satisfactory use of its resources to provide the best possible education for the pupils, although the withdrawal of teaching assistants from numeracy lessons to support pupils having difficulty in reading and writing is not as effective. The funding for pupils with special educational needs and to support pupils with English as an additional language is used appropriately. The funding is mainly used to employ teaching assistants and an adult who speaks Urdu, who provides good support for the majority of pupils with English as an additional language, enabling them to be included in lessons. The funding from the Excellence in Cities initiative to fund the learning mentor is not having the impact it should in improving attendance rates or punctuality as the time is not being used well to have maximum impact.

51. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The school compares its standards against those of similar schools and all schools nationally and can give valid reasons for the decline in standards at the end of Year 6. The school opted not to buy into all of the local authority's services, believing better value for money could be found. This did not prove as efficient as anticipated and the school reverted back to the local authority's service after one year. The school consults with parents on major spending decisions, for example when the need for security fencing became apparent after repeated break-ins.

52. The school has sufficient staff, both teaching and non-teaching staff and adequate resources for learning. The accommodation is satisfactory, although there are many rotting window frames in need of replacement and outdoor equipment for pupils in the Foundation Stage is insufficient. The school does not have full access for pupils with physical disabilities, and governors are dealing with this as best they can. As there has been some talk of a new school, governors are reluctant to spend large sums of money until further information is available. The theft of computers is a problem for the school at present, despite the security fencing. A break-in during the inspection led to the loss of two more computers. One of the office computers was stolen recently. Whilst this hinders the work of administrative staff, the school is not making efficient use of computers to store attendance or assessment information, for curricular planning or to help in writing individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

53. The leadership of the school by the headteacher has declined since the previous inspection when it was found to be very good. No leadership programmes available for headteachers have been undertaken to keep abreast of current good practice. Whilst the influx of pupils took attention away from other aspects, a clear vision for the future development needs to be established and shared with all concerned to secure their commitment to it and to give a coherent and consistent approach to moving the school forward.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. Now that the full integration of pupils from a neighbouring school has been successfully completed, the school needs to continue the drive to raise standards and build on the recent improvements. In order to do this, the headteacher and staff supported by the governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and design and technology by the end of Year 6 by:
 - rigorously implementing the actions plans already in use for developing the subjects;
 - placing more emphasis on developing writing skills through other subjects;
 - reducing the reliance on the use of worksheets and commercially produced workbooks;
 - ensuring girls take a full part in lessons;
 - implementing the marking policy more consistently and referring to pupils' targets in the marking;
 - matching tasks more closely to pupils' learning needs;
 - monitoring teaching and learning more rigorously;
 - ensuring teaching assistants are effectively deployed in all lessons;
 - displaying more pupils' work in mathematics to celebrate success;
 - in science, refining the assessment arrangements to provide more helpful information on each child's progress, setting realistic targets and making better use of computers and software to support learning;
 - in ICT, ensuring the revised curriculum becomes fully embedded, computers are used more in lessons to support learning and by improving the monitoring and evaluation procedures;
 - in design and technology, ensuring sufficient time is allocated to teaching the subject in all year groups.

Discussed in paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 8,17, 18, 21, 27, 70, 73, 73, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 95 – 99, 103,108-111, 122, 124 123,126.

- (2) Improve attendance rates and punctuality by :
 - identifying the reasons and patterns for poor attendance and punctuality and implementing strategies to remedy them;
 - deploying the learning mentor more effectively to help in improving attendance rates and punctuality.

Discussed in paragraphs 13, 37, 50.

- (3) Improve the use of time within the school day by:
 - adjusting the timings of lessons to ensure all are of appropriate length;
 - avoiding slippage of time throughout the school day.

Discussed in paragraphs 24, 92, 119.

- (4) Improve curricular planning by:
 - improving the way in which time is allocated to teaching different subjects across each year so that pupils build on previous knowledge and skills in a progressive, systematic manner and to provide more interest throughout the year.

Discussed in paragraphs 25, 99, 119.

In addition to the key issues given above the governors should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:

- a) Improve the provision for pupils' cultural development.

Discussed in paragraphs 34, 91

- b) Increase the use of management information systems to aid the efficiency in storing and updating information.

Discussed in paragraph 52

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	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	37	34	0	0	0
Percentage	1	9	47	43	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	32	384
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12	124

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	36

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	48
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	20	24	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	19
	Girls	21	22	23
	Total	38	39	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (83)	89 (93)	95 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	38	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (85)	89 (90)	91 (92)
	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	39	33	72

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	21	28
	Girls	18	22	24
	Total	40	43	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (60)	60 (61)	72 (79)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	25	30
	Girls	21	20	26
	Total	44	45	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (60)	63 (72)	78 (72)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	372		
White – Irish	0		
White – any other White background	2		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0		
Mixed – White and Black African	0		
Mixed – White and Asian	0		
Mixed – any other mixed background	0		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0		
Black or Black British – African	0		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0		
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group	0		
No ethnic group recorded	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)	18.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	329

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	833,137
Total expenditure	791,867
Expenditure per pupil	£1841.55
Balance brought forward from previous year	-£10,503

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Balance carried forward to next year	£41,270
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Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

416

Number of questionnaires returned

29

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	28	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	45	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	45	7	0	0
The teaching is good.	55	45	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	48	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	52	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	45	52	0	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	66	31	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	52	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	52	10	0	10

Other issues raised by parents

Four letters were received from parents. The main concern was that insufficient homework was set for pupils, with little variation in what is set. The other request was for before and after school care and more activities outside of lessons.

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

Strengths:

- Children achieve well from below average attainment on entry to the Nursery.
- Standards are average by the time children start in Year 1.
- Teaching is good and often very good.
- The lively, practical curriculum meets children's needs effectively.
- The provision for personal, social and emotional development is very good.
- Good initial links are established with parents.

Areas for improvement:

- The outdoor area is not well developed as a learning resource.
- There is insufficient focus to some group work in the Reception year.
- Teachers' expectations are occasionally too low.

55. Children are admitted to the Nursery in the September of the school year before their fourth birthday. They attend Nursery full time for one year before transferring to the Reception classes in the September before they become five. Currently there are 32 children on roll in the Nursery and a total of 51 children in the two Reception classes.

56. The Reception and Nursery classes follow the early learning goals, the nationally recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or *Stepping-Stones* from which progress and standards can be measured.

57. Nursery staff promote good initial links with families so that children settle quickly into school. Pre-admission visits for parents and children are carefully organised to instil confidence. Staff provide helpful information to enable parents to support their children's learning at home. However, workshop sessions during the Reception year are not always well attended.

58. Overall, pupils' attainment on entry to the Nursery is below the level expected of children at this age and similar to that at the time of the last inspection. An above average proportion of children start Nursery with speech difficulties which affect their ability to communicate clearly. Children in the Nursery are currently working securely on the first *Stepping-Stone* with higher attainers already working towards the second. Children in the Reception class are working mainly on the third *Stepping-Stone* in each area of learning.

59. Children achieve well over the Foundation Stage due to teaching, which is good overall, and frequently very good in the Nursery. Consequently, the vast majority of children are likely to reach the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1 and standards are average for their age. Children with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Staff

are very aware of the needs of children who are learning English as an additional language and make sure that individuals are fully included in all activities so that they achieve well.

60. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and often very good in the Nursery. Teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn to plan interesting practical experiences that meet their needs. All activities have clearly focused objectives, based on the *Stepping-Stones*, which promote the development of skills carefully. In the Nursery, in particular, specific learning targets are displayed alongside each activity so that all adults, including parents, see what is intended and work purposefully with the children. In the very good teaching the imaginative and lively approach and high quality of interaction between adults and children promotes very good achievement. A particular strength throughout the Foundation Stage is the effective teamwork between adults, which enables individual skills of teachers and nursery nurses to be used to best advantage. Assessment of children's progress through observing them at work is efficiently carried out on a daily basis. The information gained is used to plan new work, which usually builds successfully on what children already know. Occasionally, expectations of children in the Reception year are not high enough and some children would benefit from greater challenge. Group work is not always sufficiently focused.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Nursery children enjoy coming to school. Almost all leave their carers happily. Most, but not all, are confident to respond quickly to the teacher's greeting and answer their names as the register is called. They select tasks for themselves as well as joining enthusiastically in class and group activities. They play alongside others, for instance, in the role-play area or at the water tray. Most Nursery and Reception children respond positively to established routines and show awareness of the school's expectations, for example, when they wait their turn at snack time. Nursery children are not adventurous to taste an unfamiliar fruit, and need frequent reminders to say please and thank you. Most Reception children are confident as members of the class. In physical education lessons, they are proud to demonstrate to others and in assembly enjoy showing their paintings to a large audience of children and parents. They are keen to take responsibility for minor tasks like giving out equipment but are less enthusiastic to tidy-up. They are beginning to share apparatus and to co-operate with others as when working with a partner to match numbers in a mathematics lesson. Through listening to stories and through Circle Time¹ activities they are beginning to appreciate the feelings of others. Teaching and learning are very good. Consequently, children achieve very well in this area. All staff promote good relationships. They use praise and encouragement consistently to encourage the children's self-confidence. They show respect for children's ideas in the way they listen to individuals and in the particular care shown in displaying children's work. Routines and rules are carefully established so that children know what is expected and develop positive attitudes to learning. In the Nursery, well planned opportunities, for instance, to feed the birds help children to learn to care for living things. Regulations concerning the teaching of religious education are fully met.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Children throughout the Foundation Stage show increasing powers of concentration in listening to the teacher and to each other. They particularly enjoy stories. Most Nursery children use words and phrases to communicate, but several are not confident to talk to unfamiliar adults (including the inspector). Higher attainers use talk and gestures, for instance, in informal situations like offering a cup of tea in the home play area. Most are beginning to ascribe meaning to marks on paper as they draw circles and lines to make a shopping list. A few higher attainers make good attempts at writing their own name. Many Reception children talk in short sentences and are becoming clear and articulate in class discussion. They recognise several letters by shape and sound, and use letter shapes increasingly in their own writing. They are beginning to sound out simple monosyllabic words like 'jam' when writing labels. Many children use the sound of the initial letter in a word to guess its meaning. Higher attainers recognise several

¹ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

familiar words and are beginning to read with some accuracy from the first readers. Teaching and learning are good overall. Priority is appropriately given to the development of speaking and listening skills across the curriculum as well as in whole class and group sessions. Particularly good use is made of clearly focused activities in the attractive, well-organised role-play areas to promote these skills effectively. In the Nursery in particular, high quality intervention by adults in children's play leads to very good progress. All staff in the Foundation Stage use skilled questioning techniques to help children extend and express their ideas. Basic skills of reading letters and their sounds are taught systematically and children build up their skills effectively in small steps over time. Suitable elements of the National Literacy Strategy are rightly incorporated in to lessons in the Reception classes. These are generally taught well. There are occasions, however, when the teacher's expectations of what children can achieve in independent group work are too low and some children do not always make the progress they might. For instance, some children could make better use of their knowledge of letters and their sounds when writing their own labels instead of copying a given list.

Mathematical development

63. Children in the Nursery and the Reception classes join enthusiastically in number action rhymes and in a wide range of sorting, matching and counting activities. With help, Nursery children count practically up to five objects when acting out a rhyme. They are just beginning to associate numerals with numbers they have counted. One child declares that a zero is the same shape as an egg. Most children are aware of similarities in shapes in the environment. They collect objects, which include round shapes but do not yet use mathematical names like circle correctly. Most Reception children can count objects reliably to 10. They sort plastic creatures accurately by six or eight legs. Higher attainers are beginning to explore addition and subtraction processes practically to solve problems of one more or one less. Most children place bags and parcels in order by size. With help they are starting to realise that the shape and size of the parcels determine the size of the bag needed to carry them. Teaching and learning are good. Staff use their secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children to plan a wide range of clearly focused activities which enable children to learn well through handling objects practically. Good use is made of the computer to reinforce counting and matching skills. Teachers use plenary sessions, when children demonstrate their skills, to consolidate learning successfully and to assess what children know. Elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are used efficiently in the Reception classes but occasionally, group work is not sufficiently focused to support learning well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. All of the children use their senses to explore the world around them. They investigate for themselves in a range of well-planned ongoing activities, or explore in more formal, adult led, class or group sessions. Nursery children show interest in the living world around them, for instance, in feeding the birds. When making their own bird-food cake, they investigate ingredients like seed, suet and crumbs by sight, smell and touch. They observe carefully as the mixture changes when lard is added and the mould is set. They are beginning to ask their own simple questions and make verbal observations. Reception children make careful observations of living things like fish, and investigate the way different objects float or sink. With help they control a programmable toy to carry out simple backwards and forwards manoeuvres. Higher attainers predict with some accuracy where the toy will stop. Teaching and learning are good overall. All staff are well informed and nursery nurses are particularly well deployed to support groups of children in their learning. Adults ask questions purposefully, and encourage children to ask questions of their own. They give positive feedback to encourage children to be independent in their investigations. Nursery staff make very good use of the limited outdoor resources available. However, the school's provision for outdoor learning is generally not well developed. Whilst there has been some improvement since the last inspection, the outside play areas remain unattractive and unstimulating. The range of equipment is limited. The school is aware of this and following the recent installation of security fencing has plans for further development.

Physical development

65. Both Nursery and Reception classes use the outdoor area and the school hall to promote physical development. Nursery children are not yet independent in dressing for their outside play session. They pedal bicycles, push along cars, climb, scramble and slide with increasing co-ordination and control. They enjoy using the large space in the hall. They walk, run, jump and hop, and travel over, under and through large apparatus with confidence and with some awareness of others. Reception children show increasing control over clothing and fasteners. In the hall, they adjust speed and direction to follow instructions. They control their bodies to hold a shape, to balance on large apparatus and to land safely. All are becoming increasingly competent in handling tools like paintbrushes. Few, however, have good pencil control and several do not hold pencils correctly. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers manage children positively and effectively. As a result, children respond quickly and persevere to practise and improve their skills. Teachers give clear instructions and demonstrations, which help children to focus their efforts. Particularly good use is made of pupils as examples of good practice. This not only ensures that children know exactly what to do but also raises self-esteem.

Creative development

66. Children enjoy exploring colour, texture and shape through a wide range of media. They express their own ideas as well as looking closely to create, for instance, a painting of a robin in appropriate colours. In the Nursery and Reception classes, role-play in the home corner and post-office clearly reflects children's own day-to-day experiences. With much help and direction, Nursery children use finger puppets to act out a familiar story. In the Reception class, best use is made of the team leader's musical expertise. The children sing an increasing repertoire of interesting rhymes and songs. They enjoy exploring how the dynamics of sounds can be changed. Individuals compose their own short rhythm. Teaching and learning are good. Resources are attractive and are well prepared and children are encouraged to make choices. Activities are clearly focused and expected learning outcomes identified so that children work purposefully. Relationships are good and children are encouraged to have confidence in expressing their ideas. Occasionally, teachers' expectations are not high enough. For instance, in a whole-class music session, children could have extended their skills further by not only listening to each other's simple rhythms but also in attempting to copy them accurately.

ENGLISH

Strengths:

- Good coverage of all aspects of English ensures that pupils experience a range of literature and texts, and learn to write for a variety of purposes.
- Reading is taught well, and pupils use their reading skills confidently in all curriculum subjects.
- Thorough analysis of pupils' performance in tests has resulted in a strong focus on improving pupils' writing and the implementation of a rigorous programme of action to raise standards.

Areas for development:

- Standards achieved by older pupils, particularly in writing skills.
- The level of challenge, to enable more able pupils attain higher levels in their tests.
- The way handwriting is taught, in order that pupils learn to form their letters correctly.
- The presentation of pupils' work.
- The use of writing in other curriculum subjects.

67. The previous inspection found that standards were above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. For pupils aged seven, standards then declined until 2001 when they began to rise again in both reading and writing. In the 2002 tests, results were in line with the national average, and above those of similar schools in reading and writing. However, fewer pupils achieved the higher levels in writing. Current standards of work are broadly in line with those expected nationally for pupils aged seven, although higher in reading than in writing. Pupils make good progress from the time they enter the school and achieve well. Their speaking and listening skills are satisfactory, but spelling and handwriting standards could be higher. Opportunities to write independently are limited by the use of many worksheets. Pupils of all abilities are often given the same work to do, which does not help them to make

as much progress as they could or give enough challenge to the higher attainers. Pupils who have special needs and those who speak English as an additional language progress at a similar rate to their classmates, often receiving extra support in lessons. The few pupils who are at an early stage of English acquisition receive regular support from specialist language teachers, but only for a short time each week, even so this makes a significant contribution to the progress they make.

68. In the 2002 national tests, results for pupils aged eleven were well below average, and their performance since the age of seven was also well below what it should have been. However, pupils' results were in line with those of similar schools. The school's results in English have declined since 1999, but overall, have followed the national trend. In 2002, a combination of factors contributed to the well below average results, including the admission of a large number of pupils from another school, absence due to sickness and the mobility of higher attaining pupils. The school recognises that there has been underachievement from Year 3 to Year 6 and that pupils have not been expected to achieve high enough standards. The co-ordinators for English led the drive to raise standards by conducting a thorough analysis and audit of pupils' performance in reading and writing. Standards in reading are higher, and writing was identified as the main area for improvement. Pupils had difficulties in organising their writing, using punctuation and spelling correctly, and in writing for a range of purposes. The quality of teaching varied, and teachers did not always expect high enough standards from their pupils. An action plan was prepared to focus on improving and extending writing skills. Tracking systems, individual and class targets and strategies have been implemented throughout the school. For example, older pupils are taught in ability groups, and additional national materials used to boost the performance of selected pupils. Whilst the school recognises that improvement will take consistent efforts over time, standards are gradually beginning to rise.

69. Currently, the writing of pupils in Year 6 is below the expected standards overall, although reading skills are average. These pupils were also affected by the factors previously outlined above. The implementation of the literacy action plan and focus on developing and using writing skills in a purposeful way, additional support through booster classes and the use of tracking systems has had a positive effect on raising standards. Pupils now in Year 6 made satisfactory progress in Year 5, and this has continued so they on course to meet their target of 65 per cent at the expected level in the national tests in 2003. A small number are likely to exceed this level. Pupils who have special needs make satisfactory progress.

70. For both Year 2 and Year 6, the national tests in 2002 showed that boys were attaining better than girls, and there is evidence of decline in the performance of girls in English since 1998. The school is aware of this, but has not been able to identify specific reasons apart from a lack of aspiration amongst the girls. Boys tend to be more vocal during oral work, and some teachers have taken steps to overcome this by targeting questions specifically to girls, but this is not consistent throughout all classes.

71. Standards of **speaking and listening** are broadly in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all ages display a limited range of vocabulary, many lack confidence and use short sentences when speaking in formal situations. At present, there are no planned opportunities in lessons for pupils to widen their experience of speaking in a variety of settings. Year 2 pupils spoke quietly, but used full sentences, when describing Little Red Riding Hood and the whole class listened well. When teachers read in a lively, expressive manner, for example in Year 2 and 4, their pupils listen avidly, and vary their own voices well to add interest when they read aloud. Year 6 pupils gave suitable reasons to support their answers when saying which poem they preferred: "I found the Jabberwocky really interesting because of the rhyming and nonsense words." Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are confident orally and contribute eagerly to discussions, but do not always listen well to each other. Lower attainers still lack confidence and use a limited vocabulary. In classes where speaking and listening skills are not actively promoted, pupils are hesitant and lack the confidence to speak clearly. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as their second language participate appropriately, although the few pupils whose knowledge of English is minimal can only listen as yet. There are some informal opportunities for discussion in other subjects, for example when planning projects in design and technology. The pupils who attend the after-school drama club have opportunities to create and perform for others, and pupils of all ages perform in school concerts in front of a large audience.

72. Standards in **reading** are just above those expected nationally for pupils in Year 2, and in line for pupils in Year 6. Letter sounds are taught from an early age, and pupils in Year 1 enjoy using letter ‘fans’ to make new words with a shared sound, for example ‘skin’ and ‘skip’ or ‘will’ and ‘spill’. Support staff are well deployed to support pupils with special needs and those who are still learning English. By the time they are in Year 2, the great majority of pupils are well motivated to read because they enjoy the books and stories they hear. They continue to practise letter sounds regularly, and look for patterns in the middle letters of words, ‘cart’, ‘dart’ and ‘shark’ for example. All pupils know a variety of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words, including ‘sounding out’ and ‘break it down’ and ‘looking at the pictures’. Lower attaining pupils successfully blend sounds in new words with 3 or 4 letters, and higher attaining pupils confidently use evidence from the text to predict what will happen in the story. The great majority of pupils read to their parents or older siblings at home, and those that are supported in this way make better progress as they move through the junior classes. Most pupils enjoy talking about the books they read, but struggle if they are not given books that match their ability. The school’s ‘Reading Route’ system of colour-coded books helps pupils consolidate their experience at each level. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils correct any errors they make by inferring meaning from the text. Their ability to skim and scan a text quickly for information is less well developed. Lower attaining pupils are well supported by being heard by an adult every day. Their progress is slower because they read hesitantly without fluency, and this hinders their ability to understand what they read. Older, more able pupils read fluently at a high level, holding the listener’s attention well by building up the drama. They like to bring their own books into school, moving confidently on to current teenage fiction, or adapted versions of classic books such as ‘Wuthering Heights’. Many pupils enjoy books by the authors JK Rowling, JR Tolkein and Dick King-Smith, and typical choices of genre include sports, fantasy and adventure books, or anything ‘with a good story’. A few pupils say they visit the local library. They have limited opportunities to research from books or the Internet. The school libraries are well organised, and the infant book area is bright and comfortable. There is a library club, at present for Year 3 pupils only, where they learn to classify and catalogue the books and manage the library. Both libraries are situated in the school halls, well away from the classrooms. Limited access means there are too few opportunities for regular class or individual use, and for teaching library skills.

73. Standards in **writing** are broadly in line with those expected in Year 2, but below for pupils in Year 6. Writing is the main focus in the drive to raise overall standards. Younger pupils make good progress. However, they make slower progress in their ability to write independently. This is because they are given too many worksheets to complete, which does not allow them to practise and extend their skills or learn how to organise their thoughts and ideas. However, improvements are beginning to be seen. All pupils can retell a well-known story at some length, and lower attaining pupils write accurate accounts of the school play, ‘The Smallest Angel’. The content of pupils’ writing is structured well to include a beginning, middle and end, but often shows limited vocabulary, and little use of adjectives to make the writing more interesting. Higher attaining pupils write in longer sentences, use different connectives including ‘but’ or ‘so’, and use punctuation correctly, including speech marks but not question marks. Spelling progresses slowly. Although many pupils are developing a legible, joined handwriting style, the standard varies and does not improve as well as it could. Evidence in pupils’ handwriting books suggests that practice is not regular enough, and pupils are not taught how to form letters accurately from the beginning, to write on the correct lines or to make the size of letters consistent.

74. The work of pupils in Year 6 shows that they can write for a range of purposes and use different styles including instructions, biographies (“My mum”), play-scripts, poems and reports, for example “A bat’s life”, and write articles in journalistic style. Less time is spent learning grammatical conventions, and this shows in pupils’ writing when punctuation is often limited to full stops and capital letters. The way pupils structure and phrase their sentence is of variable quality, for example “He seen a enormous castle”, and pupils use few complex sentences to make their writing more mature and interesting. Pupils use full sentences when answering questions and their responses show clear understanding of what they have read. When reading ‘The Jabberwocky’ from Alice through the Looking Glass, pupils use the rhythm, sounds and context in the poem to explain the meaning of some nonsense words. Their handwriting has not progressed well. Although most pupils can write legibly in a joined style, their work is often marred by

carelessness and poor presentation. The school handwriting policy does not make clear which of two schemes are to be taught, and this leads to inconsistencies in both style and quality. All classes have spellings to learn for homework each week, and teachers model the use of dictionaries in lessons. However, by Year 6, many pupils still make simple errors such as 'nock' for knock, or 'fayce' for face, and do not put their knowledge of spelling patterns into practice.

75. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in Years 1, 2 and Year 6. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, and all teachers implement the literacy strategy satisfactorily. The co-ordinators have given good leadership in improving teachers' expectations of what their pupils should achieve. The strengths in teaching include good use of questions, lively lessons moved along at a good pace that keep pupils involved, clear and well-organised lesson planning and good knowledge of the subject. Teachers always share the lesson focus with their pupils so they know what they will be learning, and give clear instructions to ensure pupils know exactly what to do. In the best lessons, teachers build on their pupils' existing knowledge, and break learning into manageable, progressive steps. Classroom assistants have planned activities and work well with small groups of pupils. However, they sometimes observe passively during the opening session of lessons, rather than actively supporting pupils who are learning English or those who have special educational needs. Some lessons are too long, up to an hour and a half, which means pupils begin to lose interest, become restless and make less progress. If the teacher directs the pupils too much, they have insufficient opportunities to plan and take responsibility for their learning, and again, progress is limited. There is some underachievement by higher attaining pupils because they are not always given work that challenges their ability. Good relationships and lively interaction between pupils and their teachers contribute well to lessons. Humour is often used well to stimulate pupils' interest, for example with lower attaining pupils in Year 6 when discussing 'The Jabberwocky'. Pupils generally behave well in lessons, because they enjoy their learning and staff manage their behaviour well. Social development is promoted when pupils work with partners or a small group, and they co-operate well and support each other. Pupils in Year 6 showed a real sense of excitement when the teacher showed them her own very old copy of 'Alice Through the Looking Glass' that had belonged to her grandmother. Pupils read a variety of texts from different cultures and periods of history in their literacy lessons.

76. Pupils with special needs and those learning to speak English are appropriately supported. The school's Literacy Action Plan has been firmly implemented in order to raise standards, particularly in writing, and ensure consistency in the quality of teaching throughout the school. It will take sustained effort over time for this to be fully effective. One aim of the Action Plan is to ensure good examples of pupils' writing are valued and displayed but few examples were actually seen around the school. There was very little evidence of pupils using ICT. Pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 have 'quality control' sheets in their books, to help check and improve their own work. Pupils are made aware of their individual targets and, in some classes, pupils' targets are also kept in their books, but pupils need to be reminded to work towards them. The 'tracker' system allows teachers to monitor their pupils' progress closely, and progress in lessons is evaluated regularly. The school is gradually extending the range of fiction books available in class libraries. Some reading books are very used and shabby.

77. The two co-ordinators give good leadership and management, and have a clear vision of improvement. They are fully aware of standards throughout the school. They are leading the drive to raise standards through careful analysis of pupils' performance, by example in their teaching, and in the implementation of a rigorous action plan. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

78. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop and use their literacy skills in other subjects, which is recognised in the Literacy Action Plan. Pupils do not write at length, and the handwriting in most displays showed the need to improve standards. There is a little independent writing in religious education, when pupils retell the Bible story of Zaccheus and write accounts of Hindu Gods. Pupils in Year 3 write simple instructions clearly, for example how to make a cheese and tomato sandwich. Year 4 pupils

produce booklets about the Indian village of Chembakolli, but the writing is very brief. Some pupils in this year group used the computer well to redraft their written accounts of life in Ancient Egypt.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths in mathematics are:

- teaching is good in Years 1 and 2;
- the direct teaching of basic skills of numeracy is good;
- pupils respond well to their teachers and develop good attitudes to work;
- assessment information is used well to highlight areas for improvement, check on pupils' progress and set targets for the school and individuals;
- ICT is incorporated into many lessons;
- the subject is well led and managed.

Areas for development are:

- standards are below average at the end of Year 6;
- higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged and could achieve more;
- teachers rely too heavily on a commercial scheme of work;
- teachers do not give enough guidance to pupils when marking their work.

79. Inspection evidence shows that current standards are average at the end of Year 2 but below average at the end of Year 6. Standards are very similar to those in national tests in 2002. The school has undergone considerable change since the previous inspection but, despite the many difficulties faced, has managed to improve its results in national tests at the same rate as most schools nationally. The school has recognised that there has been some underachievement in the past and has implemented a range of strategies to improve pupils' performance. These have improved standards at the end of Year 2, which had been declining, but have not yet had a full impact on the pupils in Year 6. There has been satisfactory improvement in standards, the curriculum and assessment since the last inspection.

80. Standards at the end of Year 2, and compare well with those of similar schools. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well, but higher attainers could achieve more. The high levels of movement in and out of school adversely affect overall standards. Pupils make good progress in learning basic skills of numeracy because these are taught well and pupils have good opportunities to apply them in lively mental sessions at the start of each lesson. At the end of Year 2, most pupils work confidently with numbers to 100, with a small group of higher attaining pupils working with larger numbers. They use their skills satisfactorily when adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing numbers to solve simple problems. They calculate quickly in the opening mental arithmetic sessions and become increasingly confident in their answers. Pupils learn and understand about an appropriate range of shapes and measures. They learn to collect data and present their information in simple graphs, sometimes using computers to aid the presentation.

81. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. At the end of Year 6, most have sound understanding of large numbers and use their knowledge of the four rules of calculation confidently in mental arithmetic sessions. They apply their knowledge and skills with increasing confidence when solving problems. Pupils build appropriately on their knowledge and understanding of shapes and measures and enter data into databases, producing a range of graphs and charts. However, there are very few pupils attaining beyond the level expected at this age and a large group of lower attaining pupils who work at a lower level than that expected. This brings the overall attainment below average. The lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have additional opportunities for small group teaching and work on a specialised computer program and are supported appropriately in class to help them make satisfactory progress. However, higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as much as they could because they work on the same topics at the same level as others in their class. In some lessons, pupils with English as an additional language are supported appropriately and make good progress in their

understanding and skills but in others they have no additional support and find it hard to comprehend their tasks.

82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 where lessons are conducted at a good pace and have an effective focus on practical experience and understanding. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall and good in some lessons. Throughout the school, teachers manage their classes well and pupils respond by concentrating on what the teacher says and working hard on their tasks. Pupils enjoy numeracy lessons, and join in with enthusiasm, particularly in the mental opening sessions and whole class teaching session. The quality of planning varies between classes. Whilst teachers' planning for the week is good and builds well on previous learning, lesson plans and pupils' worksheets are usually those from the commercial scheme, which are not always closely matched to the pupils' needs. Some teachers evaluate their lessons very well and amend the planning for their class in view of the previous day's learning and provide their own worksheets to meet pupils' needs. Others do not use their evaluation of previous lessons to amend the commercial plan. In these lessons, pupils work on the same sheets or workbook page at the same level and higher attainers waste time on tasks that are too easy. Some extra work is usually provided for them but they do not always reach this or have time to finish it if they do. At the start of lessons, teachers tell pupils what it is they are expected to learn so that they can focus on this. They review how much pupils have learned at the close of the lesson, which helps them assess progress and helps pupils understand how well they have done. Marking is not as effective; in some classes, throughout the school, teachers write pointers to help pupils achieve their personal learning targets; in others, work is simply ticked with a congratulatory comment or marked wrong with no guidance on how to improve. When learning support staff are available they are effective in maintaining the concentration of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language, helping them to take a part in whole class sessions and to complete their tasks. However, there are occasions when there is no support for these pupils and they do not make as much progress as they could. The limited amount of time for other subjects, such as geography and design and technology, makes it difficult for teachers to plan to develop numeracy skills in other subjects.

83. Leadership and management are now good. A thorough analysis is made of test results and effective action is taken to improve standards, but this is fairly recent and not yet fully evident in pupils' achievement and results. For example, when the school noted some underachievement, action was taken. This included the introduction of a new structured programme of work and a range of assessments to check how well pupils are achieving, the use of mathematics computer programs and the setting of targets for individual pupils so they know what they have to do to improve.

84. The combination of these initiatives is already having an impact on pupils' progress but there is some over-reliance on the commercial scheme of work and the assessment procedures are onerous for teachers. There are many records of results of tests and teacher assessments but these do not provide a simple clear overview of how pupils are progressing through the school. The school has plans to improve this through the use of computers. Teachers set targets for individual pupils but these have only just been implemented and are not yet having an impact.

SCIENCE

Strengths:

- most of the work is based on investigations;
- pupils are taught how to write up their investigations and present their findings in a clear and logical way;
- all aspects of the National Curriculum for science are covered;
- pupils talk with enthusiasm about scientific topics.

Areas for improvement:

- standards are below average by the end of Year 6;

- the assessment system does not include National Curriculum levels in order that pupils' progress can be quickly and accurately tracked;
- not enough use is made of ICT to support the subject.

85. Standards in Year 2 are average and considering the below average level at which the pupils enter the school achievement is good. This is just below the standard reported at the last inspection mainly because the number of pupils reaching the higher level is below average although it is improving. Standards in Year 6 are below average. Although pupils are now achieving satisfactorily, there has been underachievement in the past, particularly for pupils who transferred schools and came with low levels of attainment in science and who take longer to reach the level expected by this age. Insufficient emphasis on setting realistic targets for improvement for classes and groups of pupils, particularly higher attainers, is hindering the drive to raise standards. The school is developing its assessment procedures to include tracking of each pupil's progress and this should help to raise standards. Insufficient use is made of ICT and equipment such as temperature probes and sensors to help raise standards.

86. Teachers' assessments in Year 2 in 2002 showed standards were average when compared to all schools, but above average when compared to schools with a similar intake. The proportion exceeding the expected level at age seven was below average. The results were similar to those in reading and writing but below those in mathematics. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards were well below average at the expected level and the higher level when compared to all schools nationally, but below average when compared with similar schools. Results in science were similar to those in mathematics and English.

87. An important factor in helping pupils reach the expected level is the emphasis on developing their investigative skills. For example, in Year 1 pupils investigate forces by using toy cars and, learn about the effects of pushing and pulling them and begin to record the results of their experiments successfully and clearly in simple graphs and charts. In Year 2, the pupils build on the knowledge and skills they have acquired, can set up a fair test with help from their teacher and predict the outcome. From a graph of the results they can check the accuracy of their prediction. By Year 2, pupils record their results independently in graphs, such as when they investigated which was the most absorbent paper towel and how many were needed to mop up a teaspoonful of water. The pupils are involved in a wide range of scientific topics covering all areas of the National Curriculum and the teachers ensure that the pupils learn and use an appropriate scientific vocabulary.

88. In Year 6, all the lessons are effectively based on investigations and the pupils present their findings in different ways. For example in one lesson pupils were investigating how to separate materials, using a variety of equipment. They successfully sorted an array of drink cans into those made of aluminium and those of other metals by using a magnet. They divided rice from pasta by using a sieve. They soon thought out a way of separating a mixture of sand and salt by using water to dissolve the salt and then using a filter paper to separate the sand and the salt solution. Finally they recovered the salt by evaporating the water. The pupils then recorded their work clearly and logically in their notebooks. All the pupils were fully included and involved in the experiment. A group of pupils with special educational needs were supported appropriately by a teaching assistant who helped them to record their findings and so complete the task successfully. This ensured their progress was similar to their peers. It is because of this type of organisation of learning that such pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress. In a discussion with the pupils it is clear that they understand the concept of a fair test. For example they explained accurately how they would set up a fair test to discover which of three tennis balls was the best bouncer. When they were shown a diagram of a test about insulators they quickly pointed out that it was not a fair test because the variables were not the same. In talking to the pupils it is apparent that they have acquired a wide range of scientific knowledge. The pupils have also learned to use scientific language and are familiar with words such as photosynthesis, translucent, evaporate, and germinate. Their writing skills affect their accuracy in recording their work and in explaining their conclusions.

89. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 with some good teaching seen in several classes. The teachers aim to teach the pupils how to think and

investigate in a scientific way and they are usually successful. Pupils are, therefore, familiar with the concept of a fair test. For example, in Year 3 pupils were investigating magnetic fields using paper clips and knew that to be a fair test they had to attach the clips to the magnets in the same way. The teachers' knowledge of science is good and they use it well to plan interesting lessons to motivate the pupils. There is good use of questioning to encourage the pupils to think in a scientific way. Questions are carefully selected to suit the ability group to which they are directed. Teachers have a caring attitude to their class and handle reluctant pupils well and with understanding. Consequently behaviour is good and pupils co-operate willingly. This makes an important contribution to the improving standards. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils, often the lower attainers or those with special needs, in practical and written tasks. For example in one lesson a support assistant paid her weekly visit to the class so that a pupil with little English could be given help in his mother tongue. Lessons are well planned and the appropriate equipment is always available. As a result, time is not wasted and pupils do not become frustrated due to poor facilities for investigation. The pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used and consolidated in science when using calculations, presenting findings on graphs and writing up experiments, but this is an area for improvement in many lessons. Information and communication technology is not used often enough to support the subject even though some equipment like sensors is available.

90. Management of the subject is now satisfactory, although much of the development has been recent. There is a comprehensive programme of work and an overall plan so each teacher knows which topics are being taught. The subject co-ordinators examine the teachers' planning and a selection of pupils' books each half term, to check progress being made. However teaching and learning in the classroom are not monitored on a regular basis. The subject action plan includes analysing test papers to identify strengths and weaknesses, whereas it would be more appropriate to carry out the analysis and write an action plan to overcome the identified weaknesses. The thorough analysis revealed, for example, that pupils were having difficulty in understanding forces like air resistance and also in understanding some science vocabulary. These areas were targeted and there has been an improvement in pupils' knowledge and skills. Assessment procedures are still in the early stages of development and not as helpful as they could be. It is not easy to see pupils' progress over time, as the records are individual and do not make clear reference to National Curriculum levels. Science makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual and social development through investigating aspects of nature like seed germination and through collaborating during scientific experiments. Taken overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths:

- a good variety of methods and skills are taught;
- a wide range of materials and processes are used;
- displays of work are of a good standard.

Areas for improvement:

- more planned opportunities for three-dimensional work;
- more emphasis on the contribution of art and design to pupils' cultural development;
- improving the time allocated to lessons to allow enough time for creative work to take place.

91. Opportunities to observe lessons during the inspection were limited, therefore judgements are based on a small sample of lessons, discussions with the subject co-ordinator and a scrutiny of work on display. Standards of work in Year 2 are broadly average, with pupils achieving satisfactorily overall and well in some areas. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make the same rate of progress as their peers as they have full access to the curriculum. Teachers build successfully on the skills taught in the Foundation Stage. Displays of work show many examples of the wide range of materials and techniques used successfully. Pupils use paint well and are beginning to develop skills in three-dimensional work. For example, snowmen made from clay were later painted and decorated with cotton wool. However, examples of three-dimensional work were limited, and as identified

at the time of the previous inspection, this is still an area for development. Pupils visited the Lowry centre, studied the work of this local artist and successfully modelled their paintings on his style. However, examples of artists' work from other cultures beyond Europe had not been studied. Pupils use their developing computer skills to support work in art by designing teddy bears, drawing snowmen and generating self-portraits.

92. By the end of Year 6, standards are average for the pupils' ages. Pupils continue to develop their skills and techniques and achieve satisfactorily. Insufficient time is allowed for creative work across the year groups. Examples of pencil drawings of Shakespearean characters on a Macbeth display, however, showed evidence of good drawing skills by Year 6. Observational drawings using charcoal, pencil and chalk in Year 4 demonstrated the pupils' ability to concentrate well. In all this work, however, developments of visual elements of tone, form and space were limited. Sketchbooks supplied to pupils have not been used to teach these important elements. Drawings of various sweet wrappers in Year 5 demonstrated good attention to detail. However, in lessons observed about pattern, the majority of time was spent filling in questions on a worksheet, rather than on artwork. Poor literacy skills of some pupils slowed their progress and left no time for the completion of artwork required. Some examples of three-dimensional clay work were seen, such as the relief maps of India, but other work of this type consisted of sticking squares of coloured paper on large drawings. The study of Impressionist artists, in various classes, led to paintings being produced in the style of French artists, but little individuality such as in the mixing of paint. There is insufficient emphasis on the contribution of art to pupils' cultural development. Evidence of this type of learning was seen in Year 4, where pupils had completed rubbings of Egyptian artefacts, following a visit to Manchester Museum.

93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good aspects. Teachers plan lessons well and provide good resources. In a lesson on pattern, for example, an Indian dress was used as an example of pattern from another culture. However, this introduction did not extend to include displays and discussions about patterns from around the world. Pupils enjoy their lessons and work independently. They usually concentrate well and are keen to do their best. All pupils are given equal opportunities to enjoy art, and pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are adequately supported. The weaknesses in the teaching arise from the way the subject is timetabled into half hour lessons in some classes and the ineffective use of sketchbooks to show the progression in the development of pupils' skills and techniques.

94. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Teachers have received training in the main aspects of display and have responded to this with good results. The weakness in the use of sketchbooks has been identified and there are plans to remedy this. No monitoring of teaching has taken place as yet, which would have identified the unsatisfactory allocation of time to some lessons. Taken overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils' good behaviour in lessons.
- Good opportunities to work together and collaborate when planning designs.

Areas for improvement

- Regular coverage of the design and technology curriculum in all classes to ensure pupils build progressively on their knowledge, skills and understanding of the full design process.
- Standards, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

95. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were in line with those expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. For pupils in Year 2, and up to Year 4, standards of work are now average, but standards are below average by Year 6. Design and technology is not included on the Year 6 timetable at present, and only one class had carried out a design activity during the current school year. The whole school

curriculum 'map' does not include coverage of design and technology, but scrutiny of displays and planning showed that lessons were taking place in all classes up to Year 5, usually alternating with art and design. Achievement over time in the school is unsatisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress up to Year 4, but after this progress is unsatisfactory. This is also true for pupils with English as a second language and pupils with special educational needs, who are fully included in lessons.

96. Pupils in Year 1 studied the houses near the school before they built small models using construction kits. They labelled the materials, and used the school's digital camera well to make a record of their work. In Year 2, pupils were looking at different vehicles, prior to designing and making a car. The teacher introduced the lesson by using the pupils' own drawings of cars, and they showed good recall of the parts of cars, remembering the chassis and the wheels from when they had previously looked at car components. They had some opportunities to improve their speaking and listening skills when they suggested possible drivers for their cars. They named different materials that they would use to make their model and showed a basic idea of how to plan the design process.

97. Year 3 pupils followed the full design process well to produce a frame for a photograph of themselves, taken with the digital camera. They prepared a design brief for the process, and carefully evaluated their final products, saying how they could be improved. The frames were a simple design, but the pupils' lack of skill with tools meant that some results were rather clumsy. This was also seen in the models of shadufs made by Year 4 pupils to support their history studies of Ancient Egypt. The joints in the models were not well constructed, but the shadufs did show their original function as water carriers. The pupils in Year 5 researched and designed biscuits. They had previously enjoyed tasting and analysing different types of biscuits, and their brief was to design a biscuit suitable to be eaten at a celebration. The teacher focussed the pupils' attention well on the particular purpose of their product, and they used specific vocabulary including 'ingredients' and 'flavourings'. However, pupils lacked imagination and had limited ideas. Only the group who were working on a biscuit suitable for a wedding completed the activity, and the overall designs were unsatisfactory. Year 6 pupils have used construction kits, but there was no evidence of their knowledge of a design process, or of the use of a power source to make the models move.

98. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching, because only three lessons were observed, due to the way design and technology is timetabled in the school. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the lessons seen in Years 3 and 4. The evidence gathered from scrutiny of the limited amount of work displayed showed satisfactory teaching. However, pupils are not taught a wide range of skills, for example how to join materials such as art straws, or strengthen corners and this lowers the quality of their designs. When the introduction to the lesson is too long, pupils lose interest and enthusiasm because they want to be active in the design process. In the lessons seen, behaviour was good, because pupils enjoy practical activities. Pupils collaborate well in groups and share equipment and ideas, and have some independent responsibility for selecting and choosing suitable materials. There is too little emphasis on the evaluation of finished designs and products to help pupils improve their work.

99. There is a temporary co-ordinator who has a satisfactory overview of the subject's requirements, and scrutinises teachers' planning, but has made no input to raise standards. The school has adopted a nationally recognised scheme of work that should ensure all pupils study the subject regularly in the course of the school year. However, some classes do not include design and technology regularly in their curriculum, and pupils are not able to build and develop their knowledge and skills progressively through their time in school. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the time of the previous inspection.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

Strengths:

- teaching is never less than satisfactory and pupils make sound progress;
- pupils are enthusiastic about the subjects and their behaviour in lessons is good;
- the curriculum is enhanced by interesting educational visits and visitors.

Areas for improvement:

- imbalance in long term planning;
- provision for the higher attainers;
- teachers' expectations of the way pupils present their work.

100. Standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are average. In geography, average standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. In history, standards are not as high as they were. This is due mainly to the organisation of the curriculum. The increased priority given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy has detracted from the provision in history. The school's long term plan, whilst providing sufficient coverage of history and geography overall, allocates blocks of time to each subject. The way topics are organised is leading to an imbalance in some year groups. For instance, the only work in history in Year 6 since September is a minor investigation of the life of a famous scientist. Year 6 pupils will not carry out a broader, in depth study until the summer term when the curriculum includes both The Victorians and Britain post 1948. This is not conducive to the steady acquisition of skills needed to reach the previously above average standards. Nevertheless, the vast majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily in learning about places and about the past. Pupils with special educational needs are usually supported effectively in class and make sound progress. Teachers ensure that the increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum. They make satisfactory progress overall, and achieve well and sometimes very well in lessons when specialist or well-briefed individual help is available.

101. In geography in Year 2, pupils show sound knowledge of the local area. They are aware of the different types of housing, and of features like traffic lights on their route to school. They are beginning to extend their knowledge of far away places by following the travels of a teddy bear. They suggest appropriate transport to reach places like France or Wales and are beginning, with help, to find these places on a globe or a map. Their knowledge of different locations is not yet of sufficient depth to enable them to make significant comparisons with their home town. Pupils in Year 6 have sound understanding of the way mountains are formed. On a map they can locate and name famous mountain ranges across the world, and know that mountains in Britain are comparatively small. They describe several ways in which landscapes have changed over time, for example, through the effect of weather, and are becoming aware of the changes, good or bad, brought about by people. Higher attainers use subject specific language like 'altitude' and 'summit', with confidence. They use information sources including books, videos and maps to carry out specific research, but do not generate suitable geographic questions for independent study.

102. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a sound sense of the past. They are becoming aware of change over time, for instance, by comparing old and new toys. They identify a good range of useful sources to find information about local artist L S Lowry. Almost all know why he was famous and can talk about his connections with Swinton. Through observations of his paintings, higher attainers draw conclusions about life in the locality when he was alive. The pupils' understanding of aspects of the past beyond living memory is weak. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 demonstrate sound knowledge about some aspects of Tudor England. They make relevant comparisons between, for example, homes and occupations then and now. They are unsure of changes within the period. Higher attainers identify important events like Henry VIII's divorce and subsequent break with Rome. They are aware of the consequences of this on the lives of Roman Catholics. Almost all pupils are becoming competent in using a range of sources to find out about the past. Not all are aware that some sources are more reliable than others. They are beginning to identify questions to ask and to select and link information from books and from the Internet. Very few are independent in organising their own in-depth study with appropriate use of terms and dates.

103. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is satisfactory overall. One outstanding geography lesson was seen in Year 4. Teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects to plan lessons with clear objectives, which are frequently shared with the pupils. This focuses the pupils' efforts as they try hard to succeed. Teachers manage pupils effectively with praise and encouragement. Pupils respond with enthusiasm. They listen carefully in whole class sessions, settle quickly and apply

themselves well to group tasks. Teachers use questions skilfully to help pupils extend their ideas. Expectations of the way pupils present their work are too low. In the small amount of work in books, handwriting is often poorly formed and layout is careless and untidy. Pupils do not take a pride in their work. Tasks are not always planned to match the differing attainment of groups in the class. This results in a lack of challenge for the potential higher attainers. In the excellent lesson, the teacher's very lively imaginative approach through role play and dressing up to prepare an Indian feast, involved all pupils actively in their learning. As a result, pupils made excellent progress in appreciating many facets of life in an Indian village and in making relevant comparisons with their own experiences.

104. The subject co-ordinators are now managing the subjects well. Through careful audit, they have a clear view of the school's position and of the way forward, but are not able to influence standards in history because of the way time is allocated. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place. They provide information on individual and group attainment, which is used to plan new work. Overall improvement in geography is satisfactory, but in history is unsatisfactory.

105. Geography and history make good contributions to the pupils' social and moral development as pupils consider issues such as pollution and re-cycling, ways of life and attitudes in different societies. Aspects of cultural development are supported satisfactorily through topics on ancient civilisations and on British history, but opportunities to explore current cultural issues in depth through the 'What's In The News' topic vary very much between classes and are often missed.

106. Whilst ICT is used effectively in Year 5 to carry out research about Tudor exploration or to analyse data from a traffic survey, overall, insufficient consistent use is made of ICT to support learning. Links with literacy and numeracy are satisfactory but would benefit from further development to provide a more cohesive curriculum.

107. Good use is made of field studies in the locality and of educational visits, for instance, to Larkhill Place, to Roman Chester, or to the Lowry Centre to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Visitors including 'a Viking' and a 'Grandpa' bring the subjects to life. However, the full impact of these stimulating experiences is sometimes lost when due to the pressures of the curriculum, there is no opportunity to discuss or build on the experience until the next week's lesson.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- pupils are confident in using computers;
- teachers incorporate ICT into many lessons to support learning;
- the subject is well led.

Areas for development:

- the use of e-mail;
- the use of ICT in measuring and controlling events and problem solving;
- the role of the co-ordinators in checking quality and standards.

108. Standards are average at the end of Year 2, but below average at the end of Year 6, where they are improving as teachers' expertise with the new equipment and programs grows. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall, including that for pupils with English as an additional language or those who have special educational needs, who are fully included in lessons. Sound improvement has been made to the curriculum and resources since the previous inspection but problems with resources have impeded development until recently. Theft of computers affects the rate of progress in some classes and the school has not followed the recommendations of their auditor in making them more secure, which is unsatisfactory.

109. Pupils in all year groups have satisfactory skills in operating computers and use them confidently and independently. At the end of Year 2, pupils understand how to edit their work on computer, print it out and save it. They can enter data into computers and present information in simple block graphs. The Internet is used successfully to locate information, for example, when studying LS Lowry, the teacher accessed the website for them and they used hyperlinks to move between sections to find their information. This also provided a good opportunity for them to develop their reading skills. Pupils use graphics programs confidently to produce simple pictures and mathematical patterns but these are insufficiently developed into work on designs. By the end of Year 2, pupils successfully control the movement of a simple robotic toy. Pupils build on their previous experiences satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6, retrieve, move and edit their work successfully. Computers are used in literacy lessons to practise skills learned and present finished pieces of writing. Pupils have some opportunities to use them to draft their initial work, thereby learning how much easier redrafting is on computer than by hand. They are only just beginning to insert pictures into their work and do not amend them, such as by changing size or position. They are beginning to insert sound and images from a given bank into their work to create multimedia presentations but do not download video clips, art, photographs or sound from the Internet to enhance their work. Pupils locate information from CD-ROM or the Internet but have not yet had the opportunity to use e-mail because of complications with the Internet connection. They build on data handling appropriately in Years 3 to 6, by using spreadsheets. For example, Year 5 pupils enter costs when planning a party to a limited budget and learn how to amend their data for a change in circumstances. By the end of Year 6, pupils use spreadsheets independently and present their findings in a variety of graphs, such as when they investigate their own test results. Pupils in Year 6 locate information on the Internet confidently to support their learning in other subjects and can control and move an object around the screen. However, they have not yet measured or controlled external events through the computer, by using electronic equipment, such as sensors that measure wind speeds or heart rates. Pupils do not have sufficient experience in solving problems based on evidence and past knowledge using decision-making programs. Throughout the school, two mathematics programs are used to reinforce learning and to assess pupils' achievements. These are particularly successful for lower attaining pupils.

110. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and good in some lessons, and pupils make sound progress in using ICT as an everyday tool for learning. Direct teaching of skills is planned well to help pupils build up their knowledge and skills progressively. However, the impact of good explanations and demonstrations is reduced by the fact that because there are only two computers in some classrooms, pupils cannot practise what they have been taught until later in the week. The school has purchased a bank of laptop computers to alleviate this problem but they have to be timetabled between classes. They are not always available if two classes have been timetabled to teach ICT at the same time. Teachers plan well to use computers in other subjects but because of the shortage of time for some subjects and a few shortages of relevant programs, this work is not as well developed, as it should be. Teachers organise work well and manage their classes positively and pupils respond well to this, working independently, or collaborating with others sensibly. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher asked higher attaining pupils to be 'the teacher' in paired work and explain the work to others. This supported the progress of both pupils, the higher attainer having to think hard about how to instruct the other pupil. There is evidence of computers being used to support pupils' learning through redrafting work in English, presenting information in graphs and charts in mathematics and science, of researching information in history, geography and to a limited extent in religious education. In art and design, pupils create graphic pictures and patterns and in music they develop their skills in composition.

111. The subject is now well led and the co-ordinators are effective in supporting their colleagues with the new technology. They have provided staff with a clear plan of how ICT can be incorporated into other subjects, although there are a few shortages in resources for some subjects, such as electronic sensors for science. The co-ordinators maintain an overview of the coverage of work and standards by viewing samples of work in pupils' computer files. However, because of computer problems many of these were obliterated and have to be built up again. There is a system of assessing pupils' progress to help teachers measure success and plan the next steps for learning but this is cumbersome and does not allow teachers to track the progress of their classes easily. Management time in the past has not focused on evaluating the quality of teaching and learning but has largely been spent on sorting out problems. The school now

employs a technician to deal with any difficulties with equipment so that the co-ordinators can develop their management role more effectively. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

MUSIC

Strengths:

- the teaching of singing by subject specialists;
- the leadership and management of the subject.

Areas for improvement:

- composing and using notation are weaker elements of pupils' knowledge and understanding of music;
- there is no instrumental tuition for pupils wishing to play instruments.

112. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily, which was also the position at the time of the previous inspection. In singing, standards are higher as a result of the good teaching by subject specialists. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is a second language and potentially talented musicians also achieve satisfactorily and participate fully in lessons, although there are no opportunities for potentially talented musicians to receive instrumental tuition. Pupils expressed a desire for such tuition.

113. It was only possible to observe one lesson with infant pupils, but their singing was also heard during assemblies. The subject co-ordinator uses her skills well when she teaches one lesson a week with each infant class. Pupils learn to listen to and appreciate music and acquire knowledge of the sounds made by different instruments and decide, for example, if they are high or low sounds. During an assembly pupils were eager to choose which hymns to sing, demonstrated good pitch and control of their voices and joined in with enthusiasm. The planning includes all elements of music, but the focus this half-term is on singing.

114. Most junior pupils are taught by visiting music specialists. In the lessons seen in Years 3 and 4, the visiting teacher made particularly good use of her voice to demonstrate to pupils how to improve the pitch and control of their voice when singing. Most pupils listened carefully and followed her example, trying hard to reach high notes in ascending scales during the vocal warm-up. The teacher's high expectations of pupils' behaviour and posture led to good progress being made, and are key factors in the standards pupils attain. By the end of Year 6, pupils can sing two and three part songs and rounds confidently, maintaining their own part successfully. During discussions with Year 6 pupils it was revealed that less emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' skills in composing music, which was also noted in the previous report. Whilst they have had opportunities to play instruments and have sound knowledge of orchestral instruments, they have little understanding of notation. Listening skills are satisfactory, but their knowledge of famous composers and the music they have written is very sketchy. Music by famous composers is played as pupils enter and leave assemblies, but no reference is made to this and valuable opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge are lost. A computer program has been implemented successfully in Year 3 to introduce pupils to notation and support the development of skills in composing, which is an improvement since the previous inspection.

115. The teaching seen during the inspection was good, but taken overall the teaching and learning are satisfactory. In lessons taken by class teachers, a commercial programme of work is used to support teaching. This leads to a lower level of participation by pupils as pre-recorded tapes have to be rewound and sheets given out to pupils for them to follow the activities on the tape. A key strength of the teaching by subject specialists is the involvement of pupils in evaluating their own performances and setting themselves targets for improvement in the next lesson. For example in Year 4, pupils decided they needed to improve the alignment of the three parts when singing. Accurate use of musical vocabulary throughout the lessons leads to pupils acquiring new vocabulary. Pupils in Year 3, for example, learned that a repeating musical pattern is an ostinato. Lessons contribute well to pupils' speaking and listening skills and to their social and cultural development.

116. At the time of the previous inspection the subject was led by a temporary co-ordinator, but this has been remedied recently. The subject is now well led and managed and the co-ordinator is having a positive influence over the development of the subject, having been trained to carry out her role effectively. Monitoring of the teachers' planning revealed some gaps in the coverage of elements of the subject, advice was sought through the local authority's advisor and the scheme of work amended appropriately. The improved curriculum was only implemented recently and has not yet impacted on standards at the end of Year 6. The implementation of the revised curriculum is to be monitored before the end of this academic year. Taken overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths:

- pupils are offered a wide variety of activities to aid learning;
- the subject makes a good contribution to physical fitness.

Areas for improvement:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to evaluate their performances;
- improving the time allocated to some lessons and ensuring all lessons take place;
- swimming lessons, where pupils' progress is limited.

117. During the inspection, gymnastics, games and swimming lessons were observed. Discussions were held with junior pupils and short written comments by a small number of pupils seen. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected nationally and have been maintained since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, are fully included in lessons. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a wide range of physical skills, such as travelling safely, throwing and catching and linking their movements to demonstrate increasing control. Pupils at the end of Year 6 have benefited from a variety of activities where they are able to put some of the previously learned skills into practice. They take part in football, rugby, basketball, netball and extra-curricular dance. Pupils are well aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies, as teachers remind them of this in lesson 'warm-ups' and when cooling down at the end.

118. Pupils' attitudes to the subject and their achievement are satisfactory overall. While many have good attitudes and responses to physical demands, too many older pupils do not have appropriate clothing in school and cannot, therefore, participate in lessons. Parents reported all pupils in a class being denied their lessons on occasions, which is unacceptable. Other older pupils are proud of their involvement in the Salford Schools' football league. In most lessons, pupils work co-operatively in pairs or small teams and are willing to demonstrate their sequences or skills to others. Pupils are usually attentive to the teachers and follow instructions immediately. They are willing to practise in order to improve their skills. However, when potentially talented pupils are insufficiently challenged, they lose interest. In a Year 2 lesson on throwing and catching, pupils made good progress as the demands of the activities increased throughout the lesson and achievements, such as improved catching, identified by the pupils in their evaluation at the end. In the swimming session observed, progress was unsatisfactory, as the prior attainment of the pupils was not taken into consideration in the activities planned. This was because the pupils were experiencing their third teacher and no assessment of previous attainment had been recorded. This is a decline since the previous inspection when swimming instruction was excellent.

119. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good features. Where learning targets are clear, pupils know what is expected of them. Where teachers plan effectively, lessons build on activities previously learned at the start of lessons. In Year 3, for example, pupils practised jumps and twists and then incorporated them well in their gymnastic sequences. Pupils' progress was assessed and notes made by the teacher to ensure progress and continuity in future lessons. However, during most lessons pupils do not have adequate opportunity to discuss and evaluate their progress and so improve the

quality of their performance. Some lessons lack pace in parts or involve too much repetition of previously learned tasks. A good games lesson in Year 2 had brisk pace, challenging activities and was of appropriate length. Teachers pay due regard to health and safety and set a good example in their own dress. Support is available for less able pupils and those with special educational needs, but as at the time of the last inspection is not always deployed appropriately. In some year groups lessons are too long and finish early. This happened in Year 1 where the time until playtime had to be filled in with a story.

120. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The subject co-ordinator assists colleagues in planning lessons and provides guidance when necessary. Assessment procedures have been implemented, but these are not always completed by teachers, as they should be. The co-ordinator has not observed any lessons in order to get a firm grasp of the quality of provision throughout the school as the subject has not been a priority. Taken overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths:

- pupils learn about a wide range of faiths;
- the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Areas for Improvement:

- further opportunities for writing and broadening of ideas;
- increasing the use of first hand experiences and of ICT for individual research by Year 6;
- encourage spiritual development by providing more time for reflection and individual and class prayer.

121. Judgements overall are based on a small sample of lessons observed, on the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils in Years 4 and 6 and with the subject co-ordinator. Pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Since the last inspection, standards have generally remained the same.

122. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and understand the reasons for Christian festivals such as Easter and Christmas. They are familiar with stories from the Bible and their knowledge includes other religions such as Islam. Much of the teaching is developed through discussion and drama, which adequately supports pupils' learning, but sometimes this is due to inadequate writing skills and the lack of opportunities to develop them. Opportunities for younger pupils to gain first-hand experience through visits are also limited.

123. By Year 6, pupils have a wider knowledge of other faiths such as Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism. They are becoming aware of the rights of individual believers and the need for rules for living together. For example, in a Year 5 class the pupils were writing their own rules for society after reading the stories of Moses and the Ten Commandments. The discussion and careful questioning by the teacher that followed enabled the pupils to reflect on the consequences of breaking rules. In a Year 4 class, the pupils were studying the story of the Muslims reaching Medinah. They put themselves in the position of the people in the story and wrote about a situation when making a correct decision could make them unpopular. They expressed their feelings when reading out their work and demonstrated understanding of the personal implications. However, the time allocated did not allow all pupils to complete the written work and gain maximum benefit from the ensuing discussion. Scrutiny of the pupils' workbooks showed there has been too much reliance on worksheets, and time wasted colouring them in.

124. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Most show interest in the subject and answer questions enthusiastically. All pupils are included in lessons and those with special needs receive appropriate support. Sometimes, however, the support staff are unavailable at the start of lessons when their input would benefit pupils in their understanding of what is expected of them. Pupils are generally attentive and support each other well. This was demonstrated in Year 4 when one child with English as an additional language was offered

support from his fellow pupils in understanding elements of the lesson and this led to good progress. By the end of Year 6, teachers have developed good relationships with pupils and effective strategies to deal with pupils who have a tendency to be disruptive. However, the calming effect of prayer and reflection is not fully utilised.

125. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The lessons seen were whole class lessons where pupils were invited to contribute their ideas when questioned by the teacher and many did so enthusiastically. Teaching was good where stories from the Bible were related to modern day life to which the pupils could relate. In one Year 6 class, for example, pupils read the Bible and studied the story of the Good Samaritan. Pupils then developed their own version as a comic strip using modern day characters. They gave interesting, thought-provoking reasons for choosing certain people to be characters in their story and described their varying reactions. Some of the pupils required teacher support to complete the task, due to inadequate literacy skills. Teaching in Year 4 was less effective where pupils were not actively involved and the lesson lacked variety. The wide use of parables, such as The Sower and The Prodigal Son in lessons, enhanced the pupils' personal development as they analysed the outcomes of events. Pupils were, however, given little opportunity for further spiritual development through prayer at the beginning or end of lessons and no examples of opportunity to reflect on the wonders of the world were observed during the inspection.

126. Teachers make satisfactory use of artefacts. In some classes, religious displays are limited to books, when artefacts would enable pupils to have a clearer understanding of different faiths. Pupils in a Year 5 class have added to the displays by making cards for Hannukah, and masks and lamps for the celebration of Divali have enriched a Year 1 display. Activities to further enhance pupils' experience are not provided and some teaching lacks variety. Teachers miss the opportunity to develop pupils' awareness of the cultural aspects of other faiths. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge but, as at the time of the previous inspection, visits to the local places of worship, which would bring to life this knowledge, have not been recently organised. The use of computers and the Internet has not been extensively developed, therefore individual research and investigation by pupils is limited. The school has a wide selection of books on various faiths but no evidence was seen of how they were used.

127. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator was appointed to the role very recently. A start has been made on evaluating the school scheme, looking at teachers' planning and assessment and auditing resources. The school recognises that some aspects of the scheme require further development and the co-ordinator has action plans to undertake this task. Taken overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection.