

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **NEVILL ROAD INFANT SCHOOL**

Bramhall, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106062

Headteacher: Mrs K. Rosie

Reporting inspector: Mr Jean-Pierre Kirkland

4483

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2002

Inspection number: 252201

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Nevill Road Bramhall Stockport
Postcode:	SK7 3ET
Telephone number:	0161 439 4817
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M. Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4483	Jean-Pierre Kirkland	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography Music Religious education Educational inclusion Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9928	Alan Dobson	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?
30691	Kathleen Coupland	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology	
10120	Philip Crookall	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Nevill Road Infant school has 163 pupils on roll, with a further 38 children attending the Nursery on a part-time basis. The school, which shares its site with the Junior school, is situated about 3 miles to the south west of Stockport town centre. Although the school is located in an area of very favourable socio-economic circumstances, it draws its pupils from a range of backgrounds, with a substantial proportion of pupils coming from housing for rent by the local authority. The numbers known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. About 10 per cent of pupils currently on the school's special educational needs list – over half of these have been identified as having specific learning difficulties, medical problems or behavioural difficulties. No pupils have a statement of particular need. Pupils coming from homes where English is not the first language are very few, about 4 per cent; the vast majority of these pupils are not at an early stage of understanding English. Standards of attainment on entry to the school's Nursery and reception classes are broadly average. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave at times other than the normal starting and finishing times is very small.

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

This is a very good school with a number of outstanding features. All pupils achieve very well across the subjects of the curriculum. Achievement in reading is excellent. Standards are well above average in writing and mathematics, very high and in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally in reading, and above average in science. Teaching is very good overall. Leadership and management are outstanding. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Enables pupils to reach very high standards in reading, high standards in writing and mathematics and above average standards in all other areas of the curriculum;
- Enables pupils to make very good progress throughout the school, due to very good teaching and learning;
- Ensures children make a very good start to their learning in the Nursery and reception classes;
- Provides a rich and stimulating curriculum to engage pupils' interests and enthusiasms effectively;
- Reaches out to its parents very effectively so that they are fully involved in their children's learning;
- Continues to improve and raise standards through outstanding levels of leadership and management.

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

- There are no issues of significance for the school to address.

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

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

Improvement since the previous inspection in 1998 has been very good. Very successful leadership and management have resulted in better achievement and higher standards. The high standards have been sustained in writing and mathematics; standards have improved in reading, science, design and technology, geography, history, music, religious education and physical education. There have been other improvements such as the addition of a new Nursery to the school, an improved library and a richer, broader curriculum. The key issues identified in the previous inspection have all been addressed successfully. The school has very good capacity to improve further.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	A	A	A*	A*
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	B	A	A

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

Children in the Nursery and reception classes achieve well. The majority are likely to reach the expected standards by the end of the reception class, and be ready to start the National Curriculum.

Pupils' performances in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were well above average overall. Pupils excel at reading, where results are best – over double the pupils in the school reach above expected levels, with a small proportion reaching standards normally expected of Year 6 pupils. This places the school in the top 5 per cent of all primary schools in reading. Standards are well above average in writing and mathematics. Once again, the proportion of pupils who reach above expected levels is almost double the national rate. Teacher assessments in science show above average standards reached, but once again with a high proportion of pupils doing much better than expected. Pupils achieve very well, given their average starting points. In reading, achievement is excellent. Higher attaining pupils achieve particularly well across the board. Lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties make very good progress towards their individual targets. Inspection findings confirm all these results and achievements for the current Year 2 pupils. Standards are above average in all other subjects showing good achievement by pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils love coming to school and work very hard
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. All behaviour is of a high quality and there have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. All pupils learn to take on board responsibilities in a wide-ranging number of areas. There are very harmonious relationships throughout the school, due to its effective policies to combat racism and bullying.
Attendance	Good and above the average for all infant schools. Punctuality is good.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is very good and better than when the school was previously inspected. Children get off to a very good start in the Nursery and reception classes where the very good teaching introduces them to a wide range of learning experiences. Skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, using numbers and information and communication technology (ICT) all develop effectively. This successful foundation is built upon well in Years 1 and 2. The literacy and numeracy skills develop at a very rapid rate. Teachers plan effectively. They ensure the work matches the needs of all the different groups of pupils in their classes, so that all learn at an appropriate rate. Pupils are very well managed, with many opportunities to work in small groups or in pairs. Pupils learn the skills of investigation in science and how to improve the presentation of their work using ICT. Higher attaining pupils do very well as the work set challenges them effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported and they learn very well in small manageable steps. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are given very good support as and when needed, in specific areas of learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good and fulfilling statutory requirements. Pupils experience a broad and rich curriculum throughout the school. The curriculum is carefully designed to ensure that all pupils can learn very well without hindrance. Extra-curricular activities make a strong contribution to pupils' overall learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified very early on and there is good sustained support provided in order to enable them to make very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Although very few in number, these pupils are very well supported and given appropriate work in order to enable them to make the best possible progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The excellent school policy and its implementation for personal development provides pupils with a very good learning environment where individuality and achievement are recognised and celebrated.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Child protection procedures and all aspects of health and safety are very good. There are very good methods used for judging progress and standards and this knowledge is used very well in planning the next stages of learning.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	Very well. Parents are fully involved in the education of their children and are kept very well informed of progress. Inspectors felt that the reports sent home missed some information on how parents might help their children improve further.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The high quality of both leadership and management throughout the school focuses on improving overall educational provision and raising standards within the context of a happy school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors provide effective support and understand the strengths of the school and how they want it to develop. There are some omissions from the governors' annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has a very realistic view of where it is now and where it needs to go. All spending decisions are looked at critically and then reviewed in the light of how they have affected standards.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school ensures that its resources are fully employed in helping pupils to learn. Accommodation is good and the spacious classrooms promote effective learning, especially of group-work. The school employs a wide range of learning support assistants who make a significant contribution to the learning process in all classrooms.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents have very high regard for the school in all of its work.</li> <li>The areas pleasing parents most are the standards and achievement of children, the relationship with the parents and the school and the quality of leadership and management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were no negative comments of any significance</li> </ul>

Inspectors wholeheartedly endorse all the positive comments made by parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

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

1. The school's results and pupils' achievements are very good overall and have improved since the previous inspection. They are now significant strengths of the school, the main ones being:

**Children achieve well in the Nursery and reception classes.** The levels of attainment when children join the school's Nursery varies from below average to above average, with average levels overall. Progress is consistently good through into reception, where it remains good. Children begin to acquire the skills of listening, working independently and recognising numbers. They have a wide variety of choice in the activities on offer in the Nursery and this leads to some very good independent learning, under the staff's watchful eyes. These skills are built on effectively in the reception classes. Children are given a similarly broad and wide curriculum that focuses effectively on the academic areas of numeracy and literacy with knowledge and understanding of the world. They begin to become aware of scientific elements in their lives – the names of plants and animals and their habitats. They begin to learn how to use computers and programmable robotic toys. This latter enables them to develop an understanding of how to give instructions and what happens when mistakes are made. Creativity is encouraged throughout Nursery and reception, whether this be through mixing colours and painting or through singing. Creativity is linked very strongly and effectively as children learn to put movements in dance to nursery rhymes. Staff are careful not to neglect personal and social development, which comes through debate and discussions as well as some basic religious education centred around Bible stories or festivals. By the end of the reception class, the majority of children are ready to begin the National Curriculum. A proportion in the region of 25 per cent are likely to reach this point early, while a slightly smaller proportion are unlikely to be ready in all areas of learning and development.

2. **Pupils' performance at the end of Year 2 is well above average in the most recent national tests taken in 2002.** Pupils excel at reading where results are best – over double the pupils in the school reach above expected levels, with a small proportion reaching standards normally expected of Year 6 pupils. This places the school in the top 5 per cent of all primary schools in reading. Standards are well above average in writing and mathematics. Once again, the proportion of pupils who reach above expected levels is almost double the national rate. Teacher assessments in science show above average standards being reached in Year 2. However, the proportion of pupils reaching above expected standards is very high. These high standards have been sustained since the previous inspection. What has improved is the proportion of pupils reaching above expected standards by the end of Year 2. Inspectors judged the current Year 2 pupils to be reaching similarly high standards. In reading, pupils are fluent and read the text without errors and with expression. Good attention is paid to punctuation. Writing standards are also well above average. Inspectors found very good quality writing with clearly presented letters neatly joined in many instances and using a full range of appropriate punctuation. Standards in mathematics are also well above average. Many pupils in Year 2 are confident using numbers up to 1000 which is very good for their age. They recognise patterns in numbers such as odds and evens and they can count on and backwards without making errors. In science, the standards have improved from average in the national tests last summer to above average for the current Year 2 pupils.

3. **Pupils' achievements are very good overall with above average standards across the school.** Achievement – progress over time – is very good, given the average starting points in reception. In reading, achievement is excellent. Achievement is good in all other subjects, with boys and girls achieving equally well. Standards are above average in all subjects and this shows a good rate of improvement since the previous inspection. Standards have risen in design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. In art and design and ICT, the high standards in the previous report have been sustained. Higher attaining pupils achieve particularly well across the board. Many are avid learners and they have knowledge and understanding of grammar and skills of problem-solving in numeracy which are far better than expected. Skills are developed well in many other areas, such as dance, map reading and creative art work. Lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties make very good progress towards their individual targets. Small steps to learning, mainly in literacy, enable pupils to learn how to recognise word sounds, how to spell them, and how to read more fluently. Some pupils are being identified as gifted or talented in various subjects. The school ensures that planning includes good quality extension work to challenge their thinking and creative talents so that they make very good progress. Similarly, the few pupils with English as an additional language also achieve very well. Staff take great care to ensure their needs are met and to give them work which they can do effectively. The school follows the progress of each of its pupils by carefully recording progress made and setting this against the expected progress. If any pupils excel, or fare worse, then appropriate action is taken – either more complex work is provided by staff, or additional support is given. This ensures that high standards are constantly the driving force in the school for the benefit of all pupils.

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

4. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and a strength of the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The very good levels of personal development noted in the previous inspection have been maintained. Attendance continues to be above the national average. Principal strengths in this area include:

5. **The pupils have very positive attitudes to school life.** They are keen to go to school, a point confirmed overwhelmingly by parents, and once there settle down very quickly. This is especially true of the younger children in the Nursery and reception classes. They enjoy their learning and are very eager to experience the widest possible range of experiences. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know very well that school is for learning. They enjoy joining in and lessons are usually characterised by alert faces and hands shooting up to answer questions. When given tasks to do pupils work hard and do their best. They take a real pride in what they produce and this is evident by well laid-out work in their books and neat handwriting.

6. **Behaviour is very good throughout the school, leading to improved learning.** Pupils know the Golden Rules very well and think they are fair. Awards for good behaviour are highly valued, particularly Golden Time – a period of time when pupils choose activities of their own on a Friday. All classrooms, including the Nursery and reception, have an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Occasional incidents of challenging behaviour are managed well and generally ignored by the rest of the class so that learning is not disrupted. Movement around the school is very orderly. Assemblies have a very calm feeling and pupils are respectful during prayers. Dining is civilised and very good table manners are evident. Playgrounds have a happy and friendly feel. No signs of oppressive behaviour were apparent during the inspection. Pupils expressed confidence in the staff's ability to sort out any problems. There have been no exclusions in recent years. The inspection confirms parents' very high opinion of behaviour in the school.

7. **Relationships in the school are very good.** Pupils get on well with each other and with the many adults in the school. In lessons pupils understand well the need to take turns and share. When working in small groups they collaborate together very well, thereby enhancing the quality of learning. In class discussions, including the Nursery and reception, they generally listen carefully to each other's views and ideas without shouting out, and learn to share their attitudes, opinions and values. The pupils are very polite and are well mannered. They make visitors very welcome. They listen well and learn more as a result.

8. **The pupils show a high degree of maturity for their age.** The many opportunities provided to develop personal qualities are accepted enthusiastically by the pupils. They love helping in the running of the school, for instance by being classroom monitors - identified by wearing a red sash and environment monitors – wearing a green sash. All pupils have the opportunity to be monitors and they carry out their tasks very conscientiously. They build their self confidence by developing very good speaking skills, for instance in class discussions and in story time - period just before afternoon lessons, when any pupil can tell a story to the rest of their class. They are keen to participate in school clubs and to perform in public, for instance in the Christmas concert when every pupil is involved. Pupils are beginning to understand the concept of personal targets and how these can help in their learning. The system of pupils being able to nominate others for awards is taken seriously and works extremely well, both in building self-esteem and allowing pupils to show appreciation.

9. Collectively these very positive attitudes are a major contributory factor to the high standards achieved by the pupils.

10. **Attendance at the school is good.** The rate is consistently better than the national average for infant schools. Punctuality is generally good. Registration is efficient and lessons start on time. As a result, there is little discontinuity to pupils' learning.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

11. Teaching is very good overall from when children enter the Nursery to the end of Year 2. A third of teaching was judged as very good, with a half being good and the small remainder satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching at all. This is a significant improvement since the school was previously inspected. The main strengths in teaching and learning include:

12. **There is very good planning by teachers and support staff and basic skills are taught and learnt effectively.** Lessons have clear aims which are shared with all pupils at the outset. Sometimes these are written up on the board, whereas at other times they are shared verbally. Pupils are therefore given a clear target for which to aim during the lesson. Numeracy and literacy aims are often displayed as visually attractive targets. Learning of basic skills in these lessons is very good. Teachers use mental warm-up sessions to fire pupils' imaginations and then set them off on interesting tasks such as using coinage or estimating the weight of objects. Planning to challenge different groups of pupils effectively around the room is most effective. Pupils learn new vocabulary well. This occurs not only in English lessons, but in many other subjects, where words such as 'lowlands' and 'jetty' in geography, 'electrocute' in science and 'Rangoli patterns' in religious education all widen and extend language effectively. Homework is carefully planned and it plays an important part in reinforcing learning in Years 1 and 2 as well as in the Nursery and reception classes. Children take home simple reading books, enabling parents to become effectively involved. Here and elsewhere, pupils also take home mathematics games. Later on, as pupils move into Years 1 and 2, more work is taken home including spellings and more advanced reading material. These additional opportunities enhance and extend the classroom learning effectively.

**13. Teachers in the Nursery and reception have very good levels of subject knowledge, understanding very well how children learn and have high expectations of them.** The teaching staff use a wide range of very good techniques for children to enable them to focus their attention, thereby capturing their enthusiasms early on. The regular use of a glove puppet in Nursery and reception classes acts as a very stimulus to learning. For example, in a reception class music lesson, where there had been a range of learning experiences already in place with marching, singing and making different sounds, the teacher kept the pace going by producing the puppet to follow on into the next session effectively. Pupils became very engaged and focused once again, and they rapidly learnt the words and actions of a complex new song. Knowledge and understanding of the world is taught in a similarly stimulating manner in the Nursery, with staff using glove puppets to illustrate local wildlife such as squirrels and badgers following a walk around the grounds. In another Nursery lesson, children soon learnt the names of objects by enacting the story of 'Incey Wincey Spider' using sieves and funnels. This very good understanding of how children learn, and the variety of stimulating activities provided ensures that children have a very good start to their learning. It also ensures that they have acquired the basic skills necessary for beginning the National Curriculum when they finish in reception

**14. Learning is very good because staff stimulate pupils' interests, manage pupils effectively and use very good teaching strategies** Teachers manage pupils very well. Those who are less attentive or have a tendency to lose concentration more easily are watched carefully by staff. Often, additional support is provided so that they are helped to work effectively. There is a very good balance kept between teachers talking and pupils doing practical or other activities. For example, in Year 1 physical education, the teacher allowed a good period of time for a warm-up to stretch and loosen muscles, then moved swiftly on to exercises and gave pupils ample opportunities to learn from each other by watching especially good or interesting demonstrations from each other. In Year 2 science, the teacher gave plenty of time to allow pupils to investigate the hazards of electricity. This was followed by some creative time to design a poster related to these dangers, thereby reinforcing the learning effectively.

**15. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language are very well supported.** The school has adopted policies to recognise the different learning needs of all pupils. These policies are effective in practice. Pupils who are lower attaining or have learning difficulties are very well supported, especially in English and mathematics, but also in other areas of the curriculum. Once a learning difficulty has been identified, the school ensures that appropriate support is available. This is occasionally done through special lessons in literacy for example. Pupils make very good progress as they follow the small steps identified carefully in the individual education plans in use. In other lessons, teachers take care to give each group of pupils work which they can manage, but which is adequately challenging. Other adult volunteers and students play a full integral role in supporting these and other pupils. Those pupils with a special gift or talent are similarly identified and, where appropriate, given extension work of a challenging nature. For example, this year in the national tests, a small but significant group of pupils reached the standards in reading normally expected of pupils in Year 6. Pupils who have English as an additional language are given extra support, especially in literacy lessons. They too, make very good gains in their learning as a result.

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

16. The curriculum offered to pupils is very good and ensures strong links between subjects. A broadly based, cohesive curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and enables them to make very good progress and achieve very well throughout the school. The provision for pupils' personal development has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Provision for moral and social development is now excellent and spiritual and cultural development is very good. The main curriculum strengths are:

17. **The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is well planned.** All areas of the curriculum are covered and there is a smooth transition as pupils move from the reception classes to begin the National Curriculum. The curriculum in the Nursery and reception classes is very good. There are many frequent opportunities to stimulate and interest children, such as using the school grounds for science based lessons, or reinforcing language by linking nursery rhymes to physical education. Planning is good in all subjects throughout the school and medium term teachers' planning is checked effectively by subject leaders. Teachers in the same year meet weekly to plan their day-to-day lessons. There are strong links between subjects, and learning is broad and relevant. Good examples occur in the use of ICT in many subject areas to support learning, and the opportunities made to extend literacy through other areas of the curriculum.

18. **Effective strategies for literacy and numeracy are in place.** The school has responded effectively to the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. In addition to adopting the literacy hour, the school provides time for guided reading and support for pupils requiring individual attention in small groups. Pupils have opportunities to develop their literacy skills when writing about investigations, for example a food poem in a healthy eating topic. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills, especially in the mental sessions at the start of lessons. Data handling skills are used to record results from tallying and favourite food questionnaires.

19. **Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.** The school offers a very good range of after school activities including football, choir and a 'Sports-club'. Saturday morning football is run with great success by parents for parents and pupils. Choir meets on Wednesday lunch times and over half of Year 2 pupils participate. The 'Sports-club' requires a subscription and is open to all pupils, who receive coaching in cricket, lacrosse, tennis, football, hockey and basketball. Educational visits make use of the local environment and facilities and include the local church, farms and wildlife sanctuaries as well as the nearby Bramall Hall, which is within walking distance.

20. **There are equal opportunities for all.** There is a very effective policy to ensure that every pupil has access to the whole curriculum, including those with special learning needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds. These pupils are well provided for, and higher attaining pupils, including gifted and talented pupils, are also identified and receive appropriate learning experiences. Sports teams include both genders on merit.

21. **Provision for personal, social, and health education is very good.** Personal, social and health education provision is firmly embedded into the school curriculum. Good use is made of discussions and the weekly sessions ensure coverage of issues such as drug abuse, healthy eating, friendship and bullying. There is a carefully planned curriculum using initiatives to boost pupils' self esteem and to increase the consideration of others. Provision is very good and meets legal requirements.

22. **Links with the community are good.** The school has good links with the community with representatives from the churches and public services making visits to talk to the pupils and demonstrate their role and equipment. Visits by Fire Brigade officers and involvement in a Pedestrian Safety survey are recent examples. There are strong links with neighbouring schools, particularly with the adjacent junior school, but also with other schools who plan and work together on specific initiatives.

23. **The school provides an excellent framework on which high moral and social standards are built.** The general atmosphere of the school is dominated by a sense of caring and wanting to develop the pupils beyond the laid-down academic curriculum. This attitude is very apparent in the school's policies and procedures, the most impressive being the excellent pastoral policy, which is at the heart of the school's ethos. Its aim is to provide a happy and secure environment. Pupils, including children in the Nursery and reception, are treated with great respect and are always valued as individuals. Honesty, tolerance and a clear recognition of the difference between right and wrong permeate throughout the school. Assemblies are used very effectively to drive home strong moral messages, for instance that good triumphs over evil. Developing good social skills is seen as very important throughout the school. All opportunities are very well used, for instance in class discussions where pupils learn to listen to other pupils' ideas and opinions, as well as to the high importance the midday supervisors give to good table manners. The weekly assemblies devoted to awards regularly reinforce to pupils the value the school places on caring, sharing and friendship. Harmony and racial tolerance are very successfully embedded into the school's procedures. The formal teaching of personal and social education is treated very seriously. It is a time-tabled subject with clear weekly lesson plans covering all year groups and also incorporates healthy eating and citizenship. It provides very good learning opportunities that help pupils make effective links between different curriculum subjects.

24. **The provision for spiritual development is very good.** Assemblies cover a wide range of themes and the judicious use of music provides a very calm atmosphere where pupils can easily reflect during the act of worship. Prayers relate well to the subjects being considered. Religious education lessons give pupils a good basic insight into Christianity and other religions. The school gives very great weight to promoting pupils' self-esteem and a feeling of self-worth through class discussions, award assemblies and by the many general comments made to pupils during a normal school day, particularly by the headteacher.

25. **The school takes very seriously providing pupils with an awareness of their own and other cultures.** art and design, music history and geography are all well embedded in the curriculum. Good use is made of events to broaden pupils' understanding. For instance, during the inspection, Guy Fawkes was put into a clear historical and religious context in an assembly and aspects of the Hindu festival of Diwali were examined in science and religious education. An appreciation of nursery rhymes is developed in dance. There is a choir and after Christmas, recorder groups begin for those in Year 2, both of which are popular with the pupils. Differing lifestyles are well covered for instance, pupils have recently had the opportunity to experiment with Chinese musical instruments and practise Chinese calligraphy and a parent talked about life in Africa. Good use is made of local area to familiarise pupils with their local heritage such as visits to Bramall Hall.



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

26. The school cares for and looks after its pupils very well. Its procedures for ensuring good behaviour and regular attendance are very good. Very good records are kept of pupils' personal development. The way the school keeps track of pupils' progress, and the way it uses this information to set challenging targets is also very good. All these judgements show an improvement since the previous inspection.

27. **The school takes very great care of its pupils.** The staff know the pupils very well, for instance the headteacher knows the name of every child. Pupils are very well supervised at all times. Staff show respect to the pupils and listen very seriously to any concerns. Midday supervisors are friendly and very caring. Playgrounds are safe and friendly. First aid cover is very good. Parents are right to feel confident that the school is safe and secure.

28. **Procedures for Child Protection are very good.** The responsible person has been trained and all staff are fully aware of the latest guidance. Reference files are kept up to date and the procedures for noting and recording any concerns are very clear.

29. **The school treats health and safety very seriously.** The school benefits from a very active governor who is involved in regular inspections of the premises and the preparation of good quality risk assessments. The school has excellent procedures for fire drills – a point criticised in the previous inspection. For instance, great care is taken not to cause undue anxiety amongst the youngest children by arranging an initial quiet practice before bells are actually used. All the necessary safety checks on electrical and other equipment are carried out annually.

30. **Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are effective.** Registers are well kept and regularly monitored. Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of good attendance and the need to be punctual. The school's disapproval of holidays in term time is well publicised. Although the school follows up rigorously the reasons for absence, this is retrospective; it does not make early contact with parents when pupils are absent without reason.

31. **The school has excellent procedures for promoting good behaviour.** The pastoral policy is basis of the school's approach to encouraging good behaviour. Its cornerstones of respect, honesty and empathy with the pupils are very effective in creating a climate where pupils are very clear on what is expected of them. The procedures for encouraging and recognising good behaviour, and the teaching of what is appropriate behaviour through for instance, stories, discussion and assemblies are extremely effective. The school's golden rules are very well publicised. The procedures are seen to be fair - pupils are always given the opportunity to make amends if their behaviour falls below the expected standard. There is consistency of application - all staff follow the same system and pupils know exactly where they stand. Bullying and racism are not tolerated and are covered by separate good quality policies. Very detailed records are kept of every incident, no matter how minor.

32. **The school procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are excellent.** Staff know the pupils very well. Extremely detailed records are kept on how each pupil is developing and these are updated annually covering a wide range, from general attitudes to special aptitudes and outside interests. The sections on personal development in the pupils' reports are of very good quality.

33. **Current inspection findings show that the procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance are now a strength of the school.** Senior staff rigorously check national test results and they use the information very effectively when amending planning of lessons and the curriculum. Good records are kept and regularly updated with progress being tracked in detail in English, mathematics and science. These are significant improvements since the school was previously inspected. Such very good improvements are helping to ensure that pupils' learning is better and teachers have a very clear understanding of how each pupil is progressing in each subject. Work is set for groups of pupils that is entirely appropriate to their needs, giving them the right amount of challenge to ensure that they are learning at a rate that is ideal for them. This is encouraging learning and pushing standards higher.

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

34. Given the extremely positive response of the parents regarding the school; the high level of good quality information given to parents and the general encouragement for parents to be involved in the school, **the inspectors judge that the home - school partnership is very effective in improving standards.** It is an improvement in many ways since the previous inspection. The main strengths in this area include:

35. **Parents consider Nevill Road Infants to be an extremely good school.** They are very supportive of the way their children are being educated. The school has a good reputation locally. Over 50 percent of parents responded to the questionnaire, a significant increase on the number responding at the time of the previous inspection. The response was overwhelmingly positive with all questions scoring over 90 percent approval and most over 95 percent. Parents particularly like the headteacher, the approachability of the staff, the good teaching with high expectations, the good progress made by their children, the way their children mature, the good behaviour and the way the school works closely with parents. The pre-inspection parents' meeting was equally supportive. There was no common thread to the very small number of negative comments.

36. **The quality of information parents receive is very good overall.** The prospectus is interesting and informative although it does not fully meet legal requirements. The school is aware of the omissions. The A-Z information booklet is extremely useful for parents giving details of all the school procedures that parents are likely to have queries about. Parents are kept very well informed on what is about to be taught - each half term they receive outline plans for the main subjects together with ideas on how parents can help. This very effectively allows parents to be closely involved in their child's learning. Good quality regular newsletters ensure that parents are kept up to date on the life of the school. Parents are kept very well informed on their child's progress with a simple but very useful overview report in the middle of the Autumn term, a meeting with the teacher in the Spring term and a full written report towards the end of the Summer term. The reports are of good quality. They are very well laid out, easy to read and give a clear indication on how their child is attaining against national expectations in the core subjects. This allows parents to monitor progress easily from one year to the next.

37. **Parents play a large part in the life of the school and the way it develops.** Governors who are parents are very actively involved in running the school. Very many parents regularly help in classrooms, school clubs and on educational visits. This help makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. It is well organised with good supporting documentation. Parents appreciate being invited to class assemblies and to other performances at school, such as the Christmas concert. These events provide pupils with valuable opportunities to perform in public. The Friends' Association, run jointly with the neighbouring junior school, is extremely successful in fund raising.

38. There are two areas where the school has minor issues to address:

**Reports sent home omit to tell parents how they could improve children's work:** despite being of good quality overall, reports sent home to parents miss the opportunity to inform parents how they might help their children improve further. Although some reports explain what the child needs to do in order to improve, this is not standard practice and the advice is not written with a view to involving the parents in their child's learning.

39. **The governors' annual report to parents is lacking in legal information:** the governors' annual report is unusual – it is an interesting read about many aspects of the school, but contains little of the information that is legally required. This is unsatisfactory.

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

40. Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The major strengths are:

41. **The leadership of the headteacher is inspiring.** Parents recognise this and comments made to the inspectors include *'The more she has settled into the job, the better she has become'*, *'She makes the school'* and *'Children absolutely love her'*. Governors recognise her as a real strength of the school commenting on how she had *'grown in her job'*. Staff recognise the very strong team spirit she has built up within a very happy school. She has raised academic standards and at the same time developed a climate where pupils develop very positive attitudes to school and society. She is an extremely caring person who sets an excellent example to the staff and pupils. She has a clear vision on achieving even higher standards and a determination to get there. She works hard to realise the school motto – TEAM – together everyone achieves more.

42. **The school is extremely well managed.** The headteacher has her finger on the pulse of the school. She has set up procedures that work extremely well towards the aim of improving standards, for instance the introduction of the excellent pastoral policy has led to better behaviour and more positive attitudes to learning. She knows how to operate the wider education system very well for the benefit of the school and the pupils. The school development plan has clear priorities and is agreed with the governors. The overriding aim is improving standards, currently by introducing target setting in English, mathematics and science. Action plans for each teacher are direct extracts from the school development plan and are very regularly checked. The headteacher and her deputy (who was on maternity leave during the inspection) form a very strong senior management team. Teaching and learning are very closely observed and this rigorous system is having a direct impact on raising standards. The system of Year group leaders is very effective in ensuring that teachers are very well supported by their colleagues, policies are successfully implemented and that standards are being maintained consistently across the year group. Subject leaders manage their individual subjects very effectively by focusing on areas identified for improvement in their planning.

43. **The governing body is effective in its work.** It is well organised and fulfils all its responsibilities apart from ensuring that its annual report to parents complies with statutory requirements. There is a good committee structure and very good use is made of the knowledge and expertise of individual governors. The governors have a very good measure of the school's strengths and a clear idea on the way they want the school to develop further. Many governors are extensively involved in the school on a day-to-day basis.

44. **The school takes stock of itself thoroughly and very seriously.** Classroom observations are conducted by the senior management team, the year group leaders and when possible by subject leaders. In addition, colleagues observe each other and this is used

as an aid to the professional development of staff. This rigorous focus on improving lessons has contributed to the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. Pupils' work is regularly scrutinised to ensure that high standards are being maintained. Pupils' results are analysed and action taken when necessary. For instance to improve the pupils' speaking and listening skills, greater use is now being made of class discussions. The school checks its performance very well against other schools in the local area, the local education authority and the national figures. The involvement with three other infant schools and eight primary schools in a local 'Network Learning Community', a recent initiative, allows the school more opportunities for sharing good practice.

**45. There is very good financial management and use of resources to promote higher standards.** The contingency money kept in reserve has been larger than normal due to falling numbers of pupils and the effect this has later on when staffing the school. Currently, all the money carried forward is fully accounted for. Induction procedures for new staff are very good. Newly qualified teachers are quickly and effectively involved into the strong team spirit that permeates the school. They and the temporary teachers are provided with very good support. The school is an effective provider of initial and graduate teacher training. Finances are tied to new developments and improvements wherever possible. Spending decisions are reviewed in the light of their impact on learning and standards. The accommodation is good overall, and there is a new Nursery and an expanded library. The dining room is housed in the adjacent junior school and this allows the hall to be fully time-tabled. The school has a good stock of learning resources with no significant deficiencies in any subject. These resources are used very effectively to promote better learning across the curriculum. The school is very well cleaned and maintained and this too enhances the overall learning environment.

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

46. There are no key issues for the school to address.

The governors however, should consider the following two minor points for inclusion in their action plan:

- Ensure that all statutory information is included in the governors' annual report to parents. (Paragraph: 39)
- Improve the quality of pupils' reports by including information for parents that shows them how to help their children do better. (Paragraph: 38)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	14	22	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	33	51	16	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 two, percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	163
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	17

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	25	34	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	23	24
	Girls	34	33	31
	Total	59	56	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (90)	95 (100)	93 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	22	21
	Girls	32	31	31
	Total	55	53	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	90 (94)	88 (94)
	National	85 (85)	85 (89)	89 (89)

*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	136	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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



### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	24

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80.75

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	38
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	424 903
Total expenditure	422 839
Expenditure per pupil	2 273
Balance brought forward from previous year	33 147
Balance carried forward to next year	35 211

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	201
Number of questionnaires returned	114

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	25	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	55	42	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	36	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	49	3	0	3
The teaching is good.	62	34	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	54	8	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	35	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	47	50	3	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	64	35	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	42	6	0	10

## **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**

47. The provision for children in the Nursery and reception classes is very good and a strength of the school. This is an overall improvement since the previous inspection, when the school had no Nursery provision. In the Nursery, there are two part-time classes, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. There is no difference in the provision for either. There are three reception classes, as more children join the school than currently attend the Nursery. Assessments made when children come into Nursery show them to be average overall but with a very wide range of attainment. Inspectors found that the overall standard is likely to be above average when they move into the reception classes. Strengths in the early years include:

48. **Very good teaching and learning of basic skills.** The very good teaching in all classes enables children to make very good progress. As a result, the majority of the children are likely to reach the expected levels at the end of the reception year in all areas of learning and about a quarter of them are expected to reach these levels at an earlier date. A slightly smaller proportion is unlikely to reach this level.

49. **There is a very well thought-out and balanced curriculum.** Teachers provide a curriculum that is carefully structured so as to develop children's knowledge and skills systematically. A wide range of learning opportunities extends and enhances children's learning, enabling them to achieve very well. For example, reception class children have an activity day annually where they explore how things work, using wheels as the base, linking various areas of the curriculum effectively.

50. **Very effective leadership and management are strong features of the Nursery and reception classes.** Along with the headteacher, a Nursery and a reception teacher share leadership and management. This works very well. There is a shared commitment to very high standards. All members of staff in this age range work as a very professional team.

51. **There are very good links and relationships with parents and pupils.** Very effective links are established with parents before the children enter the Nursery and this assists teachers and children to build very good relationships. Transfer into reception classes is handled very sensitively.

52. **Staff assess children's work very rigorously.** Assessment information is very well used, enabling teachers to plan effectively to meet the wide range of children's needs and improve individual pupils' progress. The children are very well managed and they are encouraged to become independent, active learners. Children with learning difficulties and those who excel are quickly identified and are fully integrated into all activities taking place in the Nursery and reception classes. Their progress in small steps towards their targets is as good as the rest of the class.

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

53. These skills are developed very well. The atmosphere in all classrooms is harmonious and busy. Children are very well behaved and respond very well to the teachers and all other adults who have high expectations of them. In the Nursery children grow in confidence in speaking and listening and learn to take turns, for example, when riding on wheeled toys. In reception, children play and work happily together in small groups. They ask

questions politely and take on responsibilities for tidying away and ensuring an orderly line when entering and leaving the classroom. All children show a very good attitude towards playing and learning.

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

54. In all classes the staff tell stories in an exciting way and the children listen carefully and join in enthusiastically. In the Nursery, when well-known tales, such as Goldilocks are related, children answer questions with growing confidence and most make sensible suggestions as to what may follow. Writing is encouraged, with tables set out to tempt the children to make marks. In the reception classes most pupils hold a pencil correctly, form their letters accurately and know the names and sounds of letters and the most commonly used words. Many children have started to read simple texts and a few are already fairly competent. Parents help with this, hearing the children read at home and taking care that the books are returned regularly.

### **Mathematical development**

55. All children are provided with a good range of practical activities, which have been most carefully planned to enable them to make progress systematically as they develop their mathematical awareness. In the Nursery, children very much enjoy singing number rhymes accompanied by drama. They are eager to demonstrate their understanding of the language associated with comparing measures as they order the size of the bowls for the three bears, and use sand and water. In the reception classes, children use mathematical language of 'more' or 'less' to compare numbers successfully and make nine curly caterpillars to sit on an autumn leaf. Most count effectively to 20, and a significant number can count to 40 and also recognise and name two- and three-dimensional shapes. Achievement is very good.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

56. The consistently very good teaching in all classes ensures there are very strong links with many other areas of the curriculum. Children in all classes are provided with a variety of tasks in which to explore, using all of their senses. In the Nursery, children explore with magnifying glasses the contents of the nature tray and know that the 'conker' is the fruit of the horse chestnut tree. They describe the shell as being soft and furry inside but spiky on the outside. They identify the squirrel, dormouse and badger as being woodland animals and know that the badger is different from the others in that he is a night-time animal. Children in reception classes also experiment with their senses as they test the effects of hot and cold water on coloured sweets. This generates a lively discussion, as children predict and make observations and then record their findings. Good use is made of the nearby locality where reception children visit an allotment to gain ideas for designing one of their own. They describe it as 'a garden which is used for growing fruit and vegetables' and know that the various crops must be well spaced out to allow for growth. In all classes tape recorded stories and games improve listening skills; and ICT programmes help children develop their letter and number recognition.

### **Physical development**

57. The very good planning and management of pupils ensures that children have an abundance of opportunities to develop appropriate manipulative skills as they handle pencils, scissors paint brushes and construction equipment. The grounds of the new and attractive Nursery provide children with a safe and secure environment in which to engage in vigorous and imaginative play. Nursery children use wheeled toys skilfully as they take turns to negotiate an obstacle course. They display growing control over balance as they follow

instructions to 'stop at a red traffic light', and 'for pedestrians on a crossing'. Reception children are now also adequately provided for and they demonstrate their increasing control as they send and receive a ball in a playground lesson. All staff take care that the children play safely and children understand the need for rules to ensure safety.

### **Creative development**

58. Displays, which are of high quality in all classes, encourage the children to think creatively and make sense of their learning. Areas for imaginative play, for example 'the house of the three bears' in the Nursery is very well resourced and promotes pupils' creative, literacy and numeracy development very well. In reception classes, children explore the medium of paint and experiment with mixing colour to produce different shades, in conjunction with their study of a rainbow and the topic of colour. In a music lesson, children's listening skills were well promoted as they were introduced to a large wooden glockenspiel, enabling them to learn to recognise and sing high and low notes.

### **ENGLISH**

59. English is a strength of the school, with standards which are well above average by the time pupils reach Year 2. Reading standards are particularly high with more than double the number of pupils achieving above national averages, and above standards of pupils in similar schools. Writing standards are also well above national averages and those of similar schools. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection and, because a greater proportion of pupils is now achieving as high standards, progress has been good. Achievement of pupils over time is very good, with excellent progress in reading. The strengths of the subject are:

60. **Very good teaching and learning observed.** The very good teaching is a major factor in the very good progress made by pupils throughout the school. All teachers have good subject knowledge and enjoy their teaching. They plan well and use a wide variety of materials and techniques. Lessons follow the structure of the National Literacy Strategy with group tasks appropriate to their attainment level and the previous knowledge they have acquired. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and make very good progress in areas such as writing more evenly and correctly, using punctuation appropriately, and in reading. In all lessons teachers ensure that pupils speak clearly and articulate well, using appropriate language. As a result, learning is greatly enhanced.

61. **All pupils make very good progress in lessons in speaking and listening and writing and excellent progress in reading.** All pupils enjoy listening to stories. They listen intently and join enthusiastically in discussions. Most pupils have good speaking skills and a wide vocabulary for their age. Speaking and listening skills are taught and learnt well and are a planned part of the weekly curriculum. The school has introduced many worthwhile initiatives to continually maintain and improve the quality of reading in school. For instance, each week all pupils join in shared reading times with their teacher, and also read regularly with other adults. This is very good practice, accounting, to a large extent, for the very high standards. The literacy strategy has been successfully embedded into the curriculum and the school has used its introduction as a valuable opportunity to review and improve book provision. There are many good quality reading books available in each classroom, along the corridors and in the library, which provide good opportunities to read plays, stories, poetry and information books. Plans are also in hand to increase library provision further to provide additional opportunities to improve pupils' library skills.

62. **Literacy skills are developed very effectively in other subjects.** This has been accomplished successfully by establishing links across the curriculum, with opportunities

made for writing at length where possible. By Year 2, pupils write pieces of work consisting of several sentences, punctuated with full stops and capital letters and with an accurate story sequence. They choose words skilfully for effect and know how to write in different forms for different audiences. In a healthy eating topic, pupils wrote a food poem using alliterative properties of words. ICT skills are used to read books in the reading scheme portrayed on the computer. In science, literacy skills are effectively developed as the story of Guy Fawkes is linked to gunpowder.

63. **Planning is very good.** Teachers plan lessons together ensuring that the recommendations of the literacy strategy are in place and providing suitable activities for pupils of differing abilities. The very good planning ensures that all pupils take books home to read with parents and the school welcomes this parental contribution as a partnership to improve pupils' progress in reading. For those pupils who find reading more difficult, additional teaching times are planned and arranged to improve basic reading skills so that, for example, they become more confident when sounding out new words. Handwriting is an area of focus for planned development with the introduction of a new joined-up style. Already the benefits are apparent in the high standard of presentation of pupils' work.

64. **Very good attitudes and behaviour lead to better learning.** Pupils show enthusiasm for reading and behave well in class. They enjoy the opportunity to talk together, as in circle time, they listen with interest to the contributions of other pupils and offer clearly explained suggestions of their own. Pupils work hard at their handwriting and take great pride in the appearance of their work which is of high quality and is a contributory factor to the high standards.

65. **Excellent leadership and assessment are prime factors in raising standards.** The subject leader is very knowledgeable, well informed, enthusiastic, determined to promote high standards and pass on her love for her subject. She encourages all her colleagues to foster a love of books and to show how much they contribute to their own lives. She monitors and assesses pupils' progress and the learning materials available to them, continually searching for improvements to the subject provision and resources. A new library policy written is currently before the governors prior to implementation in the new library accommodation. Assessments of pupils' work are analysed effectively and the resulting information is used to set targets and to track progress of individual pupils, resulting in improved standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

66. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are well above average. Given their starting points, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. Standards are better now than at the previous inspection due to the much larger numbers of pupils obtaining better than expected grades. The main strengths in the subject are:

67. **There is very good teaching and learning leading to the well above average standards.** Since the previous inspection, results in the national tests have improved. Although a broadly similar percentage of pupils reach the expected levels in the tests, the proportion gaining the higher levels is significantly better now. In the 2002 tests, this amounted to over half of the pupils entered and represents almost double the figure reaching this level nationally. This is the direct result of the very good teaching and learning. Teachers have modified and adapted the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively to provide a very good springboard for learning. Quick-fire mental sessions at the start signal high expectations of response from all pupils. Teachers direct their questions, suitably modified, to all levels of pupils so that each is equally challenged. Pupils are expected to explain the strategies they have used to reach their answers, making them think about the patterns and

sequences in each exercise. This reinforces prior learning very well, and consolidates learning for the lower attainers. Higher attainers are very effectively challenged in group work. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on estimating heaviest and lightest, this group was given a set of scales graded to 1000 grams, and all the pupils were quite comfortable working in these more complicated numbers. Work in books reveals a similar picture. The higher attaining pupils are often adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing numbers, which are well above the expected levels for their age. Teachers keep very good records of what pupils know and can do, and they use this information to place pupils in small groups with work set which meets their needs effectively. Lower attaining pupils, and those with learning difficulties, often with a valuable support assistant, begin to learn number patterns such as pairs, odds and evens taking small significant steps. They are given visual help, such as drawings or simple diagrams to help them understand the process of problem solving. As a result, this group were often correct and did not confuse mass with actual weight. The basic skills of numeracy are taught and learnt very well in all classrooms, including measuring in design and technology and counting in music.

68. **Pupils make rapid progress.** Teachers move their pupils on from one activity to another quickly. Those pupils who like mathematics, and there are a lot of them, never become bored. They enjoy challenges and are keen to solve problems. Since beginning the National Curriculum mathematics course at the end of the reception class, pupils have made great strides forward. Their current knowledge and understanding in Year 2 is already well above average. Their work shows that they are acquiring a very good understanding of number, how to measure in standard units of a metre and to distinguish between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. This is very good progress since the reception class. The higher attainers begin their mathematics being able to work in numbers up to 20, with some working up to 100. By Year 2, progress has been very good and they work up to 1000 effectively. Lower attainers, whose earlier work shows poorly formed numbers, some written backwards, make equally very good progress. By the time they are in Year 2, they have started to write their numbers clearly and correctly, they are adding up and subtracting to 100, and some are estimating correctly and accurately.

69. **The subject is very well led and managed.** This, too, has an important impact on learning. The subject leader is on the ball and imparts this enthusiastically to colleagues. Parents have been fully involved and the contribution to learning from home is also very good. Mathematics games are a favourite and the subject leader has also enthused parents by laying on training and 'games' sessions for them and their children. Pupils' work is carefully and regularly assessed. The subject leader examines the planning of all lessons, looks at pupils' books and goes into some of her colleagues' lessons. She uses all the information she acquires to set new targets for improvement, by identifying those areas where practice is relatively weaker. This has resulted in good, sustained improvement in provision as well as improved overall performance by pupils.

## SCIENCE

70. Standards in science are above average overall when pupils reach Year 2 and this is an improvement to the finding of the previous report. Achievement is good. Strengths in the subject are:

71. **There is good teaching and learning and leadership and management.** The science leader is a specialist in this subject and uses her very good knowledge to assist all staff with their delivery of science. Planning for all areas of science is very thorough and systematically identifies how all pupils are to be provided for. Those with learning difficulties are given good support and pupils who are more able are provided with extension activities to enhance their learning. Pupils are well challenged, often by questioning and discussion. Very

good use of resources focuses pupils' attention and extends their learning. In the two lessons seen, younger pupils acquire understanding of sources of light and knew of the dangers of looking at bright lights, especially the sun. They suggested the badger as an example of a 'nocturnal' animal and the owl as an example of a bird that prefers the dark. Older pupils correctly identify the differences in how light travels through opaque, transparent and translucent materials. In a discussion on the hazards of electricity, pupils learnt to recognise that the danger of overloading a socket could result in an explosion. In an extension activity, higher attaining pupils noted whether objects are 'mains' or 'battery' operated and discussed the safety aspects required when assembling Christmas fairy lights. Good connections are made to literacy and history as in the topical story of Guy Fawkes and the gunpowder plot.

**72. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and learning.** Academic progress is now monitored rigorously; by the time they leave the school pupils reach standards that are above average with a high proportion of pupils doing much better than expected. The school's very good attention to tracking the progress of individual pupils enables the needs of all pupils to be met by extension activities and links with the junior school. Pupils' work is consistently well marked and helpful comments are included which set targets for improvement.

**73. Pupils have positive attitudes and good behaviour.** They work very well together in lessons. They develop their social and literacy skills well as they work well in pairs and happily share their views. By the end of their time in Year 2, most pupils present their work very neatly; handwriting is joined up and evidence collected in science in the form of diagrams, charts and graphs is clearly labelled showing pupils' understanding of the importance of orderly recording of their observations. All this leads to better learning.

**74. All classes make good use of the local environment.** Pupils learn the skills of investigation and collect evidence through observation and measurements to answer questions. Year 1 pupils visit the Chestnut centre for local wildlife and all pupils visit Bramall Park in their study of animal habitats. Older pupils also visit Manchester museum where an abundance of resources assists teachers in their assessment of how well pupils learn about electricity.

## **ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

**75.** It was only possible to see one art and design lesson during the course of the inspection, but evidence from displays of pupils' work, discussions with the subject leader and with pupils, shows that standards are above those usually found and achievement is good. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection for art and design and an improvement for design and technology. Strengths in the subject are:

**There is a good range and good quality learning opportunities.** Planning for the subjects is detailed and covers a wide range of learning opportunities. The subject leader is an art and design specialist and is on hand to advise and guide colleagues at all times. She keeps a record of all recent work on disc and in well-displayed portfolios. She shares this with adults and pupils to promote understanding of different techniques and also as a good form of assessment of pupils' work. Pupils have been involved in a good range of techniques and media and produce work of a high standard. This has been exhibited at Stockport Gallery Primary Art Exhibition. Pupils have also designed and painted the exterior of the mobile classrooms, as well as creating a very good large mosaic by the Nursery entrance. Visitors to the school to talk about Chinese culture, the technique of batik and the work of a potter promote interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Candle-holders and trinket boxes have been made and pupils have clearly studied the work of other artists and sought to produce work in their style. In the one lesson seen, pupils in a Year 1 class explored malleable materials used to make sculptures. They rolled out dough, pinching, and squeezing it as they moulded their



individual sculptures, making impressions with a selection of different tools. Other children attempted to build three-dimensional shapes with construction sets while a third group create a firework picture using an ICT program. A fourth group experiment with torn paper techniques to create a bonfire picture. Classroom displays make the topic come alive. For example, a good range of books and pictures, depicting light and dark, link art and design with science and history, as children study the topic of light and colour and the bronze and metal sculptors of Henry Moore.

76. **There is good availability and use of resources.** The school has a good range of resources, which are accessible and clearly labelled for both adults and pupils to use. The school is fortunate to be able to use the kiln in the adjoining junior school when working with clay. Year 2 children make detailed observational drawings of fruit, first the whole fruit, then segments and finally individual sections. They design and make puppets, using split pins for arms and legs, and dress them according to their own choice.

77. **Assessment in these subjects is good.** It is ongoing; in design and technology pupils frequently assess their own work alongside the teacher. In art and design, pupils complete termly observational or imaginary drawings in order to record progress.

### **GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY and MUSIC**

78. Due to the timetable arrangements, it was only possible to observe one lesson in each of these subjects during the inspection. Overall, standards in all three subjects by Year 2 are above average. Achievement is good. There has been an overall improvement since the previous inspection. Strengths in the subject are:

79. **Pupils have good knowledge in all subjects.** Pupils in Year 2 were keen and eager to share with inspectors their knowledge and understanding of these subjects. Over time, they have acquired a good understanding of important elements in all three subjects. In geography, pupils know the four points of the compass and can describe different features between a rural and an urban setting. In history, they recognise what things are old and what are new. In music, they explain in detail how stringed instruments are played and how they differ from wind instruments. The levels of knowledge and understanding are above those normally found in pupils of these ages.

80. **There is good planning to develop skills effectively.** No judgements can be made on the quality of teaching and learning in each subject due to the lack of opportunities during the inspection. However, evidence from planning shows that teachers prepare good quality lessons in all three subjects, with an emphasis on developing skills appropriately. In history, pupils develop an understanding of the differences between times gone by and the present, by comparing life at the time of Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London with today. In geography, pupils learn effectively the differences between life on a rural Scottish island and in their home area. In music, pupils become aware through experimentation of the different sounds that a wide range of musical instruments can make.

81. **Good use is made of different teaching strategies and of resources to motivate pupils.** 'Hands-on' experience is a keynote of these subjects. The initial interest and enthusiasm of pupils is stimulated well when teachers use a wide range of resources to promote further involvement in learning. Teachers use large-scale maps and panoramic pictures in geography to act as a focus for learning. Pupils began to identify similar features by comparing the sketches on the picture with an aerial map of the island leading to the very good acquisition of map-reading skills. In music, pupils were allowed to hear sounds but not see the instruments making them. They then had to identify what the instrument was, and if possible, experiment with it to make a different sound. This led to them acquiring a good

knowledge of the names of instruments, while learning to play them loud or soft. In history, a good link was made to art and design as pupils developed their creativity effectively by painting their own versions of the Great Fire of London.

82. **There is a good focus on raising standards from each subject leader.** The subject leaders keep detailed files of their involvement with each subject. These show that planning is regularly looked at so that pupils are given a rich and interesting curriculum. Staff have attended relevant courses and shared their expertise with colleagues. Areas of improvement are identified and worked upon to ensure pupils have better learning opportunities. There are plans in hand to ensure that subject leaders have opportunities to go in and observe some of their colleagues teaching, with a view to improving the quality of learning.

83. **Learning is extended effectively beyond the classroom.** In music especially, the school provides a wide range of additional activities for its pupils to enhance classroom learning. These include a choir, visiting musicians who involve pupils in playing instruments, as well as involving parents and other visitors who have specialist knowledge. In geography, good use is made of the local area, so that pupils discover features of the locality first hand. In history, all pupils visit Bramall Hall to explore its historical features.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

84. Overall the standards in ICT in Year 2 are above average. Achievement is good. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. The strengths of the subject are:

85. **Pupils have good knowledge and understanding.** Pupils have confidence and assurance in using the computer and learn well. They are able to use the correct language and refer to 'shift', 'space bar' and 'erase' with understanding. Mouse control is well developed and by the end of Year 2. For example in geography, they 'drag and drop' pictures selected from a list to plan the siting of buildings on a town plan, they use a paint program to draw self portraits and use a data handling program to compare graphical displays of information. Links with literacy are also strong with good foundations in word processing skills.

86. **There is good teaching throughout the school.** The quality of teaching in ICT is good throughout the school. It is based on secure subject knowledge and good lesson planning. All members of staff will have completed training early in the New Year. Teachers' expectations are high and staff use effective methods to achieve their objectives. The policy and planning provide a good base for day-to-day lesson planning, which is carried out jointly by teachers of parallel classes.

87. **The good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils leads to better learning.** Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour is high. They work well in pairs sharing ideas and taking turns to operate the computers. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to others' views. The younger pupils, in particular, enjoy the wonder of the world of technology. Opportunities to use the Internet and e-mail facilities are exciting, particularly when sending and receiving messages from Sebastian Swan!

88. **Enthusiastic leadership gives clear direction to improving standards.** The subject is enthusiastically led and managed. The subject leader recently resumed responsibility and checks planning with colleagues. A portfolio of pupils' work provides guidance on the standards expected for different levels of ability. Plans for observing teaching are currently in hand.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

89. The standards in physical education by Year 2 are above average and show good progress since the previous inspection report. Achievement is good. The strengths of the subject are:

90. **There is good teaching and learning leading to higher standards.** Overall the quality of teaching is good and at times very good. It is based on good subject knowledge and lesson planning. Teachers share the teaching objectives with their pupils and set clear challenges. There is good pace in the lessons and all pupils are involved in the activities. They develop pupils' decision making and independence effectively, as well as promoting partnerships and group work. Pupils improve co-ordination and control of their bodies. They develop ball skills and learn to travel, send and receive.

91. **There are good lesson plans used to develop a range of basic skills effectively.** There is an effective policy and planning document in operation, which promote challenge and fulfilment and a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are encouraged to feel their heart beat after exercise and look for other signs of exertion, making a good link to learning in science. They learn the reasons for warming up and cooling down processes, and why there is a need to exercise control and develop an awareness of others. A published scheme provides the basis for the delivery of lessons and individual teachers use it to build on the medium term themes covering gymnastics, dance and outdoor games.

92. **Good behaviour and attitudes promote better learning.** Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons and the standard of behaviour is good. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. They are willing to demonstrate good practice, join in discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to the views of others. These assets help pupils learn from one another as well promote better learning of new skills.

93. **Extra curricular activities enhance and extend learning in classrooms effectively.** There is a wide range of games opportunities available to the pupils including tennis, athletics, football and tae-kwondo. An after school 'Sports-club' provides professional coaches to give instruction to pupils in a wide range of sports. Pupil participation is high and learning continues effectively after school has finished.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

94. Standards in religious education are above average and better than those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Strengths in the subject include:

95. **Good teaching and learning promote high standards and good achievement.** Lessons during the inspection focused on raising pupils' awareness of the Hindu festival of Diwali. This was very successful in all lessons. Pupils learn a good range of religious vocabulary such as the names of characters in the story of Rama and Sita, as well as some of the traditions associated with the festival, including hand painting, Diva lamps and the coloured Rangoli patterns made with rice flour. Teachers use artefacts very well to stimulate learning. They show large-scale pictures of characters in stories and pass round small Diva

lights so pupils get first hand experience of these features. Stencils of Rangoli patterns are provided so pupils can colour them, developing a good understanding of the spectacle of colour associated with the festival. Teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to learn well. Some of the group work is specifically designed so that different groups of pupils have different patterns to work with, thereby challenging the higher attainers as well as those with learning difficulties. When teachers ask questions of pupils, they are careful to ensure that the language is not too hard for those with less proficient levels of English. This results in better learning opportunities for all.

96. **Good progress is made over time.** All pupils make good progress in religious education, irrespective of race, creed or background. Pupils learn the names of different religious beliefs and, by Year 2, many pupils understand why people worship in different ways. They have learnt to respect these beliefs and traditions. This is apparent when unfamiliar names are used in lessons and there is no giggling or silliness. Pupils in Year 2 understand that Christianity is the main religion of this country. They have learnt to understand the nature and functions of religious buildings, including the local church, which they have visited. Pupils do not know all the technical terms as yet, but were able to paint a good picture of the pulpit by describing it as 'a sort of box or stage where a man speaks'. Learning is also enhanced by the regular use of a knowledgeable visitor who enthralled pupils with his stories and by showing them artefacts.

97. **Enthusiastic leadership in the subject ensures standards are raised.** The subject leader has good knowledge and understanding of the subject. This is used effectively to help her colleagues improve their teaching techniques. Planning from the guidance in the locally agreed syllabus has been thorough and detailed, and often goes beyond its requirements, so that pupils might benefit from a wider range of experiences. All individual teachers' planning is looked at with a view to improving the learning opportunities. Resources are used effectively and new and better ones sought. The subject leader ensures that staff develop an awareness in pupils of the multi-faith nature of British society by focusing on all the major religious festivals in the six major religions found in the country. As a result, not only is progress good and knowledge above expected levels for infant aged pupils, but a wider and broader understanding is developed which includes virtues such as tolerance, respect and kindness.