

INSPECTION REPORT

CALE GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106091

Headteacher: Mr D Marshall

Lead inspector: Mrs M Fitzpatrick

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th November 2003

Inspection number: 255695

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	175
School address:	Shaw Road South Shaw Heath Stockport
Postcode:	SK3 8JG
Telephone number:	01614802715
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robert Hardman
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Cale Green is smaller than most primary schools, with 175 pupils between the ages of three and 11. It is located in an area of high economic deprivation in Stockport. Children join the school in the nursery with attainments that are well below the expected level. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is almost 20 per cent, which is high compared to other schools. Of this group, 14 pupils (almost 10 per cent) are at an early stage of language acquisition. Of these, three are refugees who have recently joined the school. Forty three pupils are identified as having Special Educational Needs, which is above the national average. There are two pupils with Statements of special educational need. Following the previous inspection the school went into a steep decline. The school's performance in national tests fell to the lowest five per cent nationally and the school had great difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers. These difficulties caused some parents to remove their children from the school and the number on roll began to fall. The situation has been reversed, under the leadership of the new headteacher. The school now has stable staffing and numbers in the Nursery and Reception classes reflect the confidence that the community now has in the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24326	Mrs M Fitzpatrick	Lead inspector	English
			History
			English as an additional language
9511	Mrs A Longfield	Lay inspector	
22452	Mrs M Farman	Team inspector	Foundation stage
			Science
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Physical education
			Religious education
21585	Mr A Kingston	Team inspector	Special educational needs
			Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Geography
			Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Cale Green is a **very effective school**, with many outstanding features. The excellent leadership of the headteacher has established an outstanding ethos for learning. Teaching is very good and pupils achieve very well. Taking into account the standards the school achieves and the very high quality provision it makes for pupils, it gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent leadership and management of the headteacher.
- Standards in core subjects are above average by Year 6, reflecting the very good progress that pupils make.
- The deputy headteacher provides excellent leadership for the English curriculum and teaching.
- The quality of teaching is very good, so is the quality of support from classroom support assistants.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good; their relationships and personal development are excellent.
- Children make a very good start to their education in the Nursery. Provision for the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The school's inclusion practices are excellent; provision for pupils whose mother tongue is not English and for special educational needs is very good.
- The use of assessment for planning in mathematics for higher attaining pupils in Year 1 in the previous school year

The school has made outstanding progress since the headteacher took up post three years ago. At that time standards in the school had declined. The school has an excellent range of procedures for evaluating the impact of its work. These are very well embedded in the school's routines and are a powerful tool in bringing about improvement. Most significantly the parents have regained their confidence in the school and numbers are beginning to rise in the Nursery and Reception classes. The very high quality of leadership together with the high commitment of staff place the school in a very strong position to continue to improve.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	B	D	B
mathematics	C	B	E	C
science	A	C	E	D

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' achievement is very good. The school's performance in National Curriculum tests has improved dramatically since 2000, from the lowest five per cent of similar schools to well above similar schools in 2002. There has been a dip in performance in the national tests in 2003 reflecting the very high proportion of pupils who had special educational needs (30 per cent) or whose mother tongue was not English (25 per cent) in this particular group. However, their performance in the tests represents very good achievement for the pupils who sat the tests and shows a good value added measure from when they were tested at seven. The school's performance in national tests has been above the national trend over the last three years. The steep rise in performance is due to the very high expectations of the new headteacher and the support for teaching and learning given by the highly skilled deputy headteacher. Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve above the expected standard in English, mathematics, science and history. In all other subjects they reach the expected

standards for their age. Pupils in Year 2 achieve very well and reach standards above the average in science; in English, mathematics and all other subjects they reach the expected level for their age. This too represents very good achievement because of the high number of pupils who have special educational needs in this class (40 per cent). In the Nursery and the Reception class children's achievement is very good. Children learn quickly because of the very good teaching they receive. The vast majority are on course to reach the expected learning goals by the end of Reception.

The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning are very good and **their personal development is excellent because of the very high quality of provision that the school makes for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good.

Teaching is very good throughout the school, with excellent teaching seen in Year 6. Teachers use very good assessment procedures so they can plan activities sharply based on what pupils need to learn next. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together; this ensures that pupils who have special educational needs or English as an additional language make the same progress as others in lessons. In the Foundation Stage classes, teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of the needs of young children and they plan very well for these. The result is that young children settle very quickly and are able to learn at a very good rate from the exciting activities provided. In the last school year, the learning of higher attaining pupils in mathematics in the Year 1 class was not assessed sharply enough, consequently these pupils did not make as much progress as they were capable of during the year. This has been noted by the teacher in the Year 2 class; these pupils are now set work which gives them good levels of challenge and allows them to achieve as well as other pupils. There is now a new teacher in the Year 1 class.

The curriculum is good overall. In the Foundation Stage it is very good because teachers plan a very rich curriculum from which children learn. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is very good in English, mathematics and science. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good; so is the provision for visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning. The school provides very good care and guidance for its pupils, because the headteacher and all staff have a very detailed knowledge of the children. Pupils have very good opportunities to comment on their school through the school council and in circle time, when they are able to make suggestions for improvements. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show high levels of maturity because of their involvement in helping to run the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management in the school is very good overall.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership for the development of the school. The deputy headteacher provides outstanding support for the development of teaching. Leadership and management of the provision for special educational needs is very good. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is excellent. The governing body discharge their duties well and have good involvement in the development of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school in very high esteem. They are pleased with the school's partnership with them and delighted at the quality of education that their children now receive. Pupils are very secure and happy in school. They get great pleasure from learning and pupils say that lessons are interesting and fun.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Closely monitor the mathematics work of higher attaining pupils in Year 2 to ensure that they are well challenged and make the best progress of which they are capable.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are above the national average in English, mathematics and science in the current Year 6. In the current Year 2 they are average in English, and mathematics and above average in science. Pupils' achievement is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage make particularly good progress in the development of their communication and literacy skills and in personal and social development.
- By Year 6 pupils exceed the expected standard in history and music.
- Pupils with special educational needs and pupils whose mother tongue is not English achieve very well.

Commentary

1 Children in the Foundation Stage join the school with attainment that is well below what is expected for their age. They make rapid progress in all areas of learning because of the very good introduction they have to school through the highly skilled support of adults who work with them. They achieve very well in all areas of learning, especially in the development of their personal and social skills because of the well structured support which enables them to quickly develop confidence and independence. They also make rapid progress in their communication skills because the teacher and adults plan very well for this and ensure that children have many opportunities to engage in talk. By the end of Reception all pupils have achieved very well and the vast majority are on course to reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.3 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.7 (14.5)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	14.5 (15.4)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 Results in the national tests in 2003 for pupils in Year 2, show a dip against the previous year's results but nevertheless represent a good value added measure for this group of pupils. This is due mainly to the good quality teaching, which has led to very good progress for all pupils. The exception to this is in mathematics, where the assessment information in Year 1 last year was not used to set high enough challenges for the higher attaining pupils or to move them on fast enough. In the teacher assessed science tests in 2003, results were below the national average and no pupil reached the higher level 3.

3 Pupils who are now in Year 2 are reaching the expected standard in English and mathematics; in science they reach standards that are above the average. This is because of the high quality teaching in these subjects and the very good support given to pupils by the learning support assistant, and the deputy headteacher who supports learning in English and mathematics. Reaching these standards is a very good achievement for this group of pupils, which contains a high level of pupils whose mother tongue is not English and another significant group who have special educational needs. The quality of teaching and of adult support ensures that pupils are very well supported and that their different needs are met. Higher attaining pupils in this class are now well challenged in mathematics, because the teacher's use of assessment is much more effective. Pupils have good reading skills and write clearly and with correct punctuation. Their knowledge of

number is secure and they have a sound knowledge of shape. In science their understanding is good because they have plenty of opportunity to learn through observation and investigation.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (28.4)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	25.4 (27.9)	26.7 (26.6)
science	26.2 (28.6)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4 Pupils who are now in Year 6 achieve above the expected standard in English, mathematics and science. This is the result of consistently high quality teaching last year and this. In the current year they benefit from excellent teaching in mathematics and English and the teacher’s enthusiasm is infectious, spurring pupils on to work and achieve very well. They read with good understanding and write well for different purposes. In mathematics they have very good strategies for solving problems and have a good knowledge of all areas of the subject. In science they have good knowledge and good retention of earlier learning because it has been made memorable through practical investigations and the testing of predictions.

5 Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the expectation for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, physical education, information and communication technology and religious education. Their achievement is very good overall in these subjects because of the high expectations that teachers have and the enthusiasm for learning that they inspire in their pupils. By Year 2, pupils also reach the expected standard in history and music. By Year 6, pupils reach above the expected standard in history because of the very thorough coverage of topics in Year 5 and 6 and because the teacher makes good links with other subjects to support learning in history. In music Year 6 pupils achieve well above the average because of their teacher’s very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm, which added to their own enthusiasm and hard work leads to consistently very good achievement for all pupils.

6 Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans because of the very effective teaching and consistently high quality of support from the classroom support assistants and additional part-time teachers. Over time they make the same progress as other pupils in the development of basic skills. Results in national tests show that pupils with special educational needs often achieve higher than expected standards and this is because of the very good teaching and support they receive in class and through booster lessons after school.

7 Pupils whose mother tongue is not English make good progress in their learning because they are well supported by teachers’ planning, and the in - class support of learning assistants, and also by being paired with pupils of similar ability to work collaboratively during lessons. This year’s results in the National Curriculum tests show that all of the eight pupils whose first language was not English made good progress from their tests in Year 2 and that they also performed better than those test results predicted.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good. Provision for pupils’ spiritual development is excellent; provision for their moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils’ personal development is very well promoted through very good opportunities to develop independence and involvement in suggesting improvements to their school.
- Inclusion practices are excellent, ensuring that all pupils have their needs met.

- Relationships in the school are excellent.
- Very good behaviour structures, support courteous and caring behaviour in pupils.
- Pupils have a love of learning and high levels of self-esteem.
- Assemblies and lessons have a very high spiritual content.
- The school teaches tolerance and acceptance of difference very well. Pupils learn to celebrate their own and other's cultural traditions.

Commentary

8 All pupils display very positive attitudes to school, because they are very well taught and take delight in their learning and achievements. The very positive attitudes of the school towards pupils with special educational needs ensure they work hard and enjoy their learning. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and the school celebrates their achievements. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English are very well integrated into the school community and take part in all activities alongside classmates. They have the same very positive attitudes to learning and to school clubs as other pupils and are keen to take part in all the school has to offer.

9 From the earliest age, pupils learn to listen closely and join in discussions about their learning. The excellent relationships they have with their teachers makes them feel very secure and sure that they are cared for and respected. This develops high levels of confidence and self-esteem in pupils who are ready to take risks in their learning and volunteer for all kinds of tasks as a result. By the time they are in Years 5 and 6, pupils are mature and caring; they take the initiative eagerly and are frequently seen at lunchtime offering help to teachers or looking after younger pupils in the playground. Pupils behave very well in class and in the playground. They are aware of the impact of their actions on others because teachers place great emphasis on this during *circle time* when pupils talk about how to make their school better. Pupils understand too that good behaviour is fundamental to good learning and that everyone should be allowed to learn. They demonstrate how much they value this by following closely in lessons and working in silence when asked to do so.

10 The school's excellent promotion of inclusion ensures that all pupils know they are equally valued. They fully understand that the same opportunities are open to all and because of this develop very good sharing skills. They give good support to one another in lessons and are quick to include pupils whom they perceive as lonely in the playground. An excellent assembly, led by the headteacher, made the point about the strength of the school's friendship web. This prompted a Year 5 pupil to volunteer that breaking the threads of friendship affected everyone in the school. The links between the school's excellent promotion of spiritual development and its robust policies to promote tolerance and inclusion are seen again and again in examples such as this.

11 The school has developed an excellent climate where pupils can grow, flourish, give and receive respect and feel a sense of their own worth. The values of caring and compassion, striving hard and celebrating each other's achievements are very well embedded in the day-to-day life of the school. The headteacher and all staff in the school provide very good role models for pupils in the way that they uphold these values and their impact is seen on all pupils in the school who work hard to reach the high expectations the school has of them.

12 The school provides a very strong moral framework for pupils. Rules and routines are regularly discussed with pupils so that they are able to fully understand the need for them and how they improve the climate inside the school. By taking time to explain the impact of pupils' actions on others, teachers demonstrate to pupils how highly the school values relationships and how classroom and school rules relate to these. Pupils are well able to distinguish right from wrong and know that the rules help them choose right courses of action. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work together in lessons and to undertake fund-raising for those less fortunate than themselves. These activities develop the social awareness and social skills of pupils, who rise to challenges, eager to show their support for the school. The school council provides a very good forum for pupils from all classes to discuss the suggestions made by other pupils for ways of improving the school. Play facilities for playtime and lunchtime have been acquired in response to pupils' suggestions and currently they are exploring ideas to improve the toilet facilities.

13 Pupils in all classes are taught about their own and other cultures through religious education topics about world faiths, in geography by learning about the way of life in other lands and through the many multi-cultural stories they read in class. The school's high quality displays of a very wide range of cultural traditions and beliefs, as well as the multi-lingual signs and captions provide constant reminders to pupils of the multi-ethnic society in which they live.

Attendance

There has been a steady improvement in attendance since the headteacher joined the school. Figures for last year showed a dip in the improving picture to well below the national average. This fall in attendance was due mainly to a small group of parents taking their children on extended holidays to visit their families overseas. The school has makes very good use of the learning mentor and the educational welfare officer to monitor and promote good attendance and the impact of their work is seen in the improving figures.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002 – 2003 (91.8%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.8	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	112	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	20	0	0
Black or Black British – African	5	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides very good quality education for its pupils.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. Assessment is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of basic skills is very good.
- Foundation Stage teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn.
- Teachers make very good use of assessment overall to plan the next stages of learning for pupils.
- Teachers make very good use of a range of teaching methods to actively involve pupils in their learning.
- Learning is very good because teachers have high expectations and excellent relationships with pupils.

- Teaching assistants are skilled and make a very good contribution to learning.
- Teachers make very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils who have English as an additional language.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge, which supports the high quality planning that they do.
- The assessment of higher attaining pupils' work in mathematics last year was not used to set challenging enough work.

Commentary

14 The very high quality of teaching seen in all classes is a strength of the school. Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection when there was a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and very little good or better teaching. The transformation in the quality of teaching is the result of the very effective recruitment of new staff who are committed to the school's aims, and the excellent development of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The impact of this very high quality teaching is seen in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive, their confidence and self-esteem are high and they very quickly develop independence in their learning. There has been a dramatic improvement in the standards achieved by pupils in all subjects and their overall achievement is now very good.

15 In the Foundation Stage children settle quickly to the demands of learning because of the very good induction they receive and the excellent relationships that are formed between them and all adults who work with them. Their needs are very well catered for by the thorough assessment that is made of their learning in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers use these assessments to plan accurately for the next stage of learning for all pupils so that they are supported to make very good progress in all areas of their learning. Teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They plan activities that allow them to learn through play and investigation and seize opportunities to develop children's vocabulary and their communicating skills. Teachers and teaching assistants are very good at modelling speech for young children so that they quickly overcome the barriers that their low literacy skills present when they first join the school. Provision for children who have English as an additional language is very good. The bi-lingual teaching assistant provides high quality support for their learning and helps children who have a low level of understanding of English to join in the activities with other children.

16 The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is very good because teachers have very good subject knowledge and make very good use of the guidelines in the national strategies. The quality of teaching in all English and mathematics lessons ranges from good to excellent and is very good overall. Reading skills are very well taught, so that pupils gain a good knowledge of letter sounds and quickly develop confidence in tackling new words. In mathematics they learn to count accurately at an early age and are taught to recognise numbers patterns so that they are able to apply their number skills effectively in other subjects. As they mature pupils' learning continues to be very good in these subjects because teachers plan their learning of new skills carefully and provide good opportunities for pupils to apply them in real situations. In a Year 6 lesson where teaching was excellent, pupils were taught the rules for script writing and then had the opportunity to put these into action when writing their own scripts. The progress they made with these tasks was excellent because they were clear about what to do and very eager to see their ideas in action.

17 In most lessons pupils learn at a very good rate because teachers have very high expectations of them. Teachers knowledge of pupils' learning through their very good assessment procedures, allows them to know precisely what pupils are ready to learn next. This means that they are able to plan challenges that are appropriate to all groups in their classes. Pupils relish these challenges and because they have such excellent relationships with each other and their teachers they are confident when tackling them either independently or in a group. In a science lesson in Year 2, pupils worked together quickly to enter and collate their information about their favourite foods as part of their healthy eating study because the next part of the lesson required them to interpret what they had found. The brisk pace was well managed by the teacher and teaching assistant giving good support to pupils with special educational needs to help them keep up. In all lessons the pupils' enjoyment of learning and desire to please their teachers is seen when they move to work independently on the tasks set. Pupils quickly organise their materials, check what they have to do, and settle with very good concentration to get the work done. In the last school year, higher attaining pupils in the Year 1 class were not sufficiently challenged because the teacher did not use assessment of their work well enough when planning new learning. This has been picked up by the teacher in Year 2 and these pupils are now receiving the correct level of challenge and their progress has speeded up.

18 Teachers' very good subject knowledge is seen to inspire pupils in lessons such as dance and singing. Pupils in Year 3 showed excellent concentration and high levels of co-operation when they worked in groups to refine a complicated dance they had been devising. Because of the high quality teaching they had received, they were able to evaluate their own and other's work effectively using the correct terminology. Their very good understanding of what the terms meant was clear from the explanations they gave to each other when suggesting how part of a dance might be improved. All pupils took this work very seriously and were clearly delighted with their efforts. In a singing lesson for the whole school, the teacher's excellent coaching of a wide age and ability range meant that all pupils quickly learnt the parts of a complex song and were able to manage two-part singing successfully in a short space of time. Again pupils' were delighted with their achievement, knowing how well they had learned and performed the song.

19 The deputy headteacher has begun developing teaching and learning styles in two classes as part of a programme to give pupils an awareness of how they learn best. In the current Year 2 class, which has 14 boys and two girls, this is having a very good impact on pupils' speaking and listening skills as much of the work they do involves these skills as a way of recording their learning. There is also a sharp focus in the programme on learning through activity and this approach matches the needs of this class very well. In a lively history lesson about Guy Fawkes, the pupils were fully engrossed in learning about the events surrounding the attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament as they improvised plays to show how events took place. Not a moment was lost in the lesson and by the end pupils of all abilities had a good grasp of the events, why they happened and they were able to link these to the bonfire celebrations they were looking forward to. During lessons pupils are regularly alerted to how they are learning and asked to reflect on how well they are progressing so they are well able to judge which styles of learning help them most.

20 Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning in all classes. They are very well briefed by teachers about what they will do with pupils in every lesson, so they are able to work independently of the teacher and concentrate on pupils' learning during lesson time. They are expert in teaching basic skills and questioning pupils, so that they give very good support to pupils who have individual education plans and to pupils who have English as an additional language. They manage the behaviour and concentration of pupils very well when the teacher is teaching the whole class by prompting them to volunteer answers or discussing their ideas with them. They are meticulous in their record keeping and provide excellent information for teachers about the progress of pupils they work with. With the increase in the number of pupils with English as an additional language, particularly of older pupils with very low levels of English, there is a growing need for more training for both teachers and teaching assistants in how to provide for these pupils within the classroom.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7%)	24 (59%)	14 (34%)	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

The curriculum

The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils through a broad, balanced and well planned curriculum. The curriculum is very good in the Nursery and Reception. The provision for the enrichment of the curriculum is good. The school's accommodation and resources for learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis in the curriculum on promoting pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent.

- The curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school, giving children a very good start to their education.
- The equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is excellent.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities in which many pupils take part.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very strong.

Commentary

21 The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. There are stimulating activities set out in the classrooms for each of the areas of learning to ensure that children are provided with continuous opportunities to learn through play, supported by experienced and very well informed adults. The planning takes full account of the early learning goals in each area and is based on a very thorough assessment of what children need to learn next. The curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.

22 The school curriculum fully meets all statutory requirements, including those for teaching religious education and providing a daily act of collective worship. The school has rightly had a keen focus on improving standards in English, mathematics and science after standards had fallen very steeply in these subjects following the last inspection. The school has implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very successfully and the good standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 6 shows the success of the school's curriculum in these subjects. The use of both literacy and numeracy in other subjects is both imaginative and productive, as is the frequent and regular use of ICT. Pupils have many stimulating opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences and to develop their numeracy skills through the use of graphs and charts as well as the opportunities to measure in science and design and technology. Displays around the school show how widely pupils use ICT skills in recording information, data analysis, desktop publishing and art and design. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and the extra activities the school provides. Lesson planning takes full account of the pupils' needs and their individual targets.

23 The relevance of many topics that pupils are learning is brought to life by visits and visitors. For example, the local fire brigade visited the school as a part of the younger children's work on people who help in the community, while older pupils, as an extension to their geography work, investigated the dangers experienced by road users and pedestrians as viewed by local residents of Shaw Heath. The school has plans to develop the use of visits and visitors in the coming year as part of the development of its foundation subject curriculum.

24 Pupils with special educational needs receive extra help from talented, committed support staff, and are always fully included in the class activities. Teachers take every opportunity to promote pupils' personal and social skills through the curriculum. They are very skilled at developing pupils' personal qualities through their teaching and in other school activities, not only generally but also through personal, health and citizenship lessons. In these sessions, pupils have the chance to discuss feelings and beliefs and to tackle issues such as caring for the environment or how to eat healthily. The school council provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop citizenship skills and an awareness of democracy.

25 The school's very strong commitment to equal opportunities ensures that the curriculum is fully inclusive and that pupils, whatever their ability or background, benefit to their capability. Extra booster groups are provided for pupils who are assessed as needing them and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very strong. Furthermore, the school has developed and recently implemented a very good and effective policy for the identification and support of gifted and talented pupils across a range of activities and personal attributes, including art and leadership.

26 The school enriches and extends the curriculum through clubs, musical activities, sports teams and regular visits to a nearby swimming pool. They are given opportunities to work alongside professional artists such as fabric and materials specialist, Gaye Chorlton. These activities not only help to enrich the experiences of pupils but promote the development of an atmosphere where

learning is seen by all to be exciting and enjoyable. They are well supported by pupils of all ages who are very keen to join in.

27 While the school has no playing fields it does make very good use of its hard play area for games and in the summer makes use of a local cricket club's grounds. Resources in the school are good. They have been well chosen for quality and to reflect the needs and cultural background of pupils. The school makes good use of its accommodation and learning resources. Computers are available in all classrooms. All pupils are encouraged to make full use of the very well equipped ICT suite. To date the ICT curriculum has correctly placed emphasis on teaching the basic skills of computer use and this has enabled pupils to make good gains in their knowledge, understanding and competency in using computers. The school is now developing the use of ICT to monitor change, such as in temperature, or as a control device.

Care, guidance and support

The school's care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good. There is very good provision for support, advice and guidance based on thorough monitoring. The school ensures very good involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child Protection procedures are in place and are very effective.
- All pupils are very well known to the headteacher, class teachers and classroom support assistants.
- Induction arrangements for the nursery and for pupils joining the school at different times in the year are very good.

Commentary

28 The school provides a very safe environment and pupils are very well supervised throughout the school day. Pupils are taught about their own health and safety through the science and personal and social education curriculum and safety matters are very well monitored in the school. Child protection is very well monitored with well-trained staff and procedures in place. There are few accidents in the school, and any that do occur are recorded promptly and parents are informed.

29 In the classroom, teachers and support staff know their children well and they are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by children and to take prompt and effective action. The headteacher has a very good knowledge of pupils through his tracking of their progress each term and his discussions with teachers. All pupils feel secure and confident as a result of how well known they are to the adults in the school.

30 For pupils who have special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English, there is a high degree of support. Teachers make good links with external agencies and take advice on how to plan for the learning of pupils who have different barriers to their learning. The school is very effective in enabling pupils with special educational needs to become independent in their personal and social skills. The school celebrates the different cultures of pupils whose mother tongue is not English and this ensures that they feel valued as an integral part of the school community. The academic performance and personal development of all pupils is very well monitored by teachers who are thorough in their identification of individual problems and respond quickly with appropriate support in the form of individual plans or from classroom support assistants.

31 The school has very good induction procedures for children when they start school in the Nursery. By the time they join, the teacher and classroom support assistant have a good knowledge of them and are able to plan for their different needs. Because of the high quality provision and the well-planned introduction to the routines, children feel very secure and quickly develop independence. Similarly when pupils join the school at other points they are very well cared for. Established pupils are appointed to care for them by introducing them to friends and the school's

routines. They are soon assigned responsibilities so that they feel a part of the school. The school is quick to respond to any special educational needs of pupils who join the school and have recently enlisted a member of the local community to support three refugee children who only speak Portuguese, because the local education authority does not have a Portuguese speaker on its team.

32 The school council, circle time and lessons in personal and social education all give pupils very good opportunities to express ideas and make suggestions about how the school should improve. Pupils value these opportunities highly and feel they make a significant contribution to developing the school, as indeed they do.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established a very good partnership with parents. Links with the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school actively encourages parents to become learners themselves.
- The local community makes good use of the school's facilities for social and educational purposes.
- There are good links for pupils who are gifted or talented with the local football club and other schools.

Commentary

33 The school works very closely with parents to help them support their children's learning. It provides family literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology courses for all parents, and Positive Parenting courses for the parents of Nursery and Reception children. Parents are kept well informed of all school affairs through the monthly newsletter, regular correspondence and via the school's website. The pupils' annual progress reports provide them with very good information regarding what their children know, understand and can do, and include a grade for effort and achievement in each subject. Teachers record targets that are set for pupils on their reports so that parents can be involved in supporting these. There are three consultation evenings per year, with bi-lingual support for parents of children whose first language is not English.

34 Parents support their children's learning by listening to them read and by helping with projects. Examples of these are on display in the school entrance celebrating the work parents and children have done together on models of the 'Iron Man' and a 'Viking Ship'. Parents support the school through their involvement in the recently formed PTA, which raises good sums for the school fund and organises social events such as school discos and concerts. Parents volunteer to help with the Breakfast Club, making the toast for pupils at playtime and by joining educational visits. The school has very good links with parents, other schools and agencies. Parents of children with special educational needs are well supported and meet each term with the special educational needs co-ordinator to discuss their children's progress and how they can help their children to meet the targets set for them.

35 The school works closely with the local community, making good use of what it has to offer to extend pupils' learning. Teachers' planning includes visits to places of historic and religious interest and the Foundation Stage teachers have very good links with local services, such as the fire brigade and police, to teach children about people who help us. The Parent and Toddler group and *Mini-Movers*, an activity group for pre-nursery children, meet on the school premises so that very young children become familiar with the school before they join the Nursery. The school has good links with the local Asian community, whose women's group meets regularly in the school and contribute to lessons and displays about their cultural traditions. The school has developed strong links with the local education authority and is at the centre of the Stockport School Travel Plan. This initiative involves the local community in planning and making safer routes to school. The pupils are proud of their work in the last school year in re-designing the local park.

36 There are good links with the local schools. There are a number of secondary schools for parents to choose from when their child reaches the end of Year 6 and the school has regular links with them all. The school has established a partnership with a Beacon Primary School with which it shares good practice. The school is part of the Stockport Excellence Cluster and is closely involved in providing challenges for gifted and talented pupils as well as in developing teaching and curriculum strategies. The older pupils benefit from the summer schools for gifted and talented pupils and the booster classes in the Easter term. They also benefit from close links with a local secondary school to learn lacrosse, which they play in a local mini-league.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management in the school overall are very good.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership for the development of the school. Overall leadership of the other key staff in the school is very good. Management is excellent. It is very well focused on efficient and effective systems for bringing about improvement. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher.
- The excellent leadership of the English curriculum and the development of teaching by the deputy headteacher.
- The leadership and teamwork in the Foundation Stage are excellent.
- Very good management of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and for pupils whose mother tongue is not English.
- The creation of excellent teamwork and shared vision for high achievement in the school.
- Ambitious planning for improvement reflecting the school's aims to achieve the best for every pupil.
- The governors' knowledge of the school and the support and challenge they offer to improve it.

Commentary

37 Since taking up post three years ago the headteacher has taken the school through a process of rapid change leading to outstanding improvement. He has done this through his sharp and accurate analysis of the school's priorities for improvement and by providing excellent guidance to develop systems and procedures which set the school on course for improvement. By establishing clearly his very high expectations of staff and pupils, the headteacher was able to work quickly to transform attitudes in order to gain support for his vision for the school. His excellent interpersonal skills and professional expertise have allowed him to gain the trust and respect of all staff, pupils and parents, who now wholeheartedly support his vision and give very good support to the further development of the school. When the headteacher took up post, the school had been in a period of steep decline since the previous inspection. Standards in teaching and learning, pupils' behaviour and attitudes and their performance in national tests had fallen to such an extent that there was a loss of confidence in the school and parents were beginning to remove their children. Staff absence was high and because of this, curriculum planning and development were in disarray. This picture has been transformed because of the headteacher's leadership; standards are above the average in core subjects in the current Year 6 and pupils achieve very well; parents have regained their confidence in the school and numbers on roll are rising against a local trend of falling rolls. In all of this work, the headteacher has been most ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who has provided inspiration and guidance for teachers and teaching assistants and has worked with great determination to support the rise in standards seen in the school.

38 Together, the headteacher and deputy headteacher provide excellent management for the development of the school. They have devised and implemented thorough and comprehensive systems for monitoring the work of the school, their impact on standards and their cost

effectiveness. Because of the very successful use of these systems, the school has been able to move forward at a much faster rate than is usually seen. The leadership team's relentless commitment to involving teachers in the school's self-evaluation has provided very good opportunities for their professional development as well as winning their support for the high standards the school seeks. All subject leaders are clear about the headteacher's high expectations of their work, and despite some being relatively inexperienced, because they have such outstanding role models in the headteacher and deputy, they are able to rise very successfully to the challenges of their management roles. The result is that leadership and management of subjects overall is very good. The deputy headteacher has provided outstanding leadership in developing the English curriculum to ensure standards in the subject have improved dramatically since she joined the school. She also provides an excellent role model for all teaching and support staff in the quality of her work in the classroom. Her current initiative to introduce *mind friendly learning styles* into teaching methods, is proving highly effective in the current Year 2 class which has complex learning needs because of the composition of the class. The school's openness to new ideas and its willingness to join in local initiatives are hallmarks of the headteacher's approach to finding solutions to the problems that the school has faced.

39 The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that individual education plans are very well written, well matched to pupils needs and supported by teachers' planning. The organisation of support is efficient and very effective and there are very good links with parents and external agencies to support pupils' learning. The school uses the specific funding allocation for special educational needs very well.

40 The governors have a good knowledge of the school through their visits to the school, the reports they receive and their involvement in committees where they monitor developments and question standards. Governors are well aware of how rapidly the school has improved and recognise that it is once again highly respected by the community. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that the school's policy for race equality is very well implemented. Governors have been closely involved in bringing the school's finances under control in recent years. They have taken decisions to reduce a deficit budget while taking care to protect good staffing levels. The budget is very ably managed by the school secretary, who is a member of the finance committee. Members of the committee, together with the headteacher, make very good use of best value principles in the school purchases and use of resources. Given the high standards of teaching and learning, the excellent personal development of pupils and the standards they achieve, the school gives very good value for money.

41 The school has successfully overcome a number of barriers to raising pupils' achievement in the last three years. When the headteacher took up post, the school was staffed largely by supply teachers, none of whom remained in the school for long. There were no appropriate schemes of work in place for most subjects, including English and mathematics and planning for teaching and learning was haphazard. Following the appointment of a new deputy headteacher, and by working closely with the local education authority the headteacher was able to begin to improve provision for the curriculum. He and the deputy headteacher were quick to seize the opportunities offered through the Excellence in Cities Project and have worked very closely with local schools, including a Beacon School, to share good practice. The highly effective teaching force now in the school is a result of the headteacher's determined efforts to appoint only high quality staff, who demonstrate a strong commitment to the school's aims in providing permanent contracts. The very significant improvements visible in many aspects of the school's work are testimony to how well the headteacher; deputy headteacher and staff now in the school have successfully overcome these former barriers to pupils' achievement.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	409,316.00
Total expenditure	450157.00
Expenditure per pupil	2262.00

Balance from previous year	0.0
Balance carried forward to the next	6570.00

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

It was not possible to inspect children's physical development during the inspection.

42 Children achieve very well. Most children enter the Nursery with well below average levels of attainment. This is particularly noticeable in their social skills and in their ability to communicate with each other and adults. They make very rapid progress because of the consistently very high quality teaching and are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. All members of staff give children rich and varied activities that provide very well for their developing needs. This ensures that children build very successfully on their previous learning. The systems for checking children's progress are very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of the consistently very high quality support.
- All adults place a very strong emphasis on this area of learning.
- Children have very positive attitudes to learning and relate very well to each other and adults.
- Parents are closely involved in their children's education.

Commentary

43 Children quickly become secure and settled in their classrooms. This is because they receive very high quality support and care from their teachers, nursery nurses and support assistants. The very careful checking of children's progress ensures that they work well together and with adults. All members of staff encourage children to work together in pairs and small groups and also to develop skills of working independently. Most children are likely to meet the requirements of the early learning goals by the time they leave the Reception class. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults have very high levels of skill in ensuring children listen to each other and adults.
- There are very good strategies for encouraging children to speak clearly.
- Very skilful teaching ensures children become interested in and enjoy books.
- Many children have very limited communication skills when they enter the Nursery.

Commentary

44 Children achieve very well in this area of learning. Many have limited communication skills and do not know how to listen when they enter the nursery. The very good quality teaching ensures that children learn to listen carefully. This is evident when the children respond to puppets in the Reception class. All adults use questions very skilfully to encourage children to speak clearly in sentences. This increases their ability to communicate with each other and adults. Careful teaching in both classes ensures that children learn to hold and use pencils correctly. This enables children to write recognisable letters. Their achievement is very good and most children are likely to reach the required early learning goals by the end of Reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very positive attitudes and are enthusiastic about their work.
- All adults take every opportunity to develop children's number skills.
- There is very good use of the outdoor learning area to develop children's awareness of shape.
- Many children have limited skills in number when they enter the nursery.

Commentary

45 Most children achieve very well in their mathematical development because adults give them many varied experiences in counting, comparing and measuring. Many have limited counting experiences when they start school. The skilful and sensitive teaching ensures they develop awareness of number and enjoy solving problems. For example, the nursery teacher uses registration time for children to work out the number of absent children. She increases their awareness of shape in the outdoor learning area. This continues through into the Reception class where children have practical experiences of adding on one more. Children quickly develop very positive attitudes to learning and become enthusiastic about their work. They concentrate hard and, by the time they are in the Reception class, know the names of different shapes. The children use computers confidently to solve number problems and are on target to meet the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality outdoor learning opportunities.
- Adults ensure children have very good opportunities to ask questions and investigate.
- All adults encourage children to think about what they are doing.

Commentary

46 All children in the Foundation Stage have plenty of chances to widen their understanding of everyday life. For example, during a visit from a group of fire fighters, children explored a fire engine and operated the hose. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes use the outdoor learning area to act out their experiences. This increases their ability to work and talk together. All children increase their computer skills effectively. For example, children in the Reception class work confidently to create patterns on the screen. This increases their mouse and keyboard control. Regular observations of the weather increase children's awareness of change. Most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of their time in the Reception class.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to explore materials and work independently.
- All adults ensure children use their skills in other areas.
- Some children have immature drawing skills.

Commentary

47 The very skilled teaching ensures that children achieve very well in this area of learning. They quickly learn to hold and use paintbrushes correctly and use paint confidently. For instance, children in the Nursery used a spinning machine to create very effective firework pictures. All adults take every opportunity to increase children's sense of rhythm and ability to sing. This is evident when the Reception children sing number rhymes from memory and maintain accurate rhythm. Most children are on target to reach the required targets by Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very high.
- Pupils achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Reading is very well taught.
- Pupils speaking and listening skills are above average.
- There is excellent leadership and management for the development of the subject from the subject leader.

Commentary

48 The school has made outstanding improvement to the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6. These have risen from the lowest five per cent nationally to above average in the current Year 6 and reflect the very good progress pupils now make from when they join the school. Standards for pupils currently in Year 2 are average overall and this reflects the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and a similar high proportion who have English as an additional language. Progress for these pupils has been very good since they joined the school. All pupils achieve very well in the subject because of the high quality provision.

49 Standards in speaking and listening are in line with the expectation for pupils in Year 2. They listen well, following closely what is said by the teachers and the support assistant, and enjoy listening to each other presenting poems they have rehearsed. They speak clearly and confidently because adults provide good models of how to speak and sensitively correct pupils when they make an error in speech. Because of this, their pronunciation of unfamiliar words is good and gives support to their developing reading skills. Pupils' reading skills are about average. They have been very well taught the strategies for sounding out new words and make good use of picture and story clues to guess at the meaning of unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils are able to work out the meaning of new words such as *staggering* when they read a poem together. Most pupils write legibly and letter formation is clear. They are beginning to punctuate their work with capital letters and full stops and the majority can demarcate sentences correctly. Pupils who have English as an additional language make slower progress than others in their writing, but learn at a similar rate in speaking and listening and also reading, because of the good quality additional support they receive from the visiting specialist. They also receive very effective support from the teaching assistant and the supporting deputy headteacher. Pupils who have special educational needs have detailed targets that are set for their learning, and the teachers' planning and support from classroom assistants help them reach their targets.

50 By Year 6 pupils reach above average standards in their speaking and listening. They listen intently to the teacher and to others in the class and are able to answer questions directed at them by the teacher without any hesitation because they have followed so closely. They are eager and able to add to the ideas of others or to ask for more information. During a lesson where teaching and learning were excellent, pupils developed ideas for scripts through discussion about what characters might say or do next and how at a rapid rate. Standards in writing are also above

average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to write for different purposes and different audiences. They are able to write playscripts with convincing dialogue and very clear, specific stage directions. Their attention to detail in their writing is the result of the excellent teaching they receive, which places very good emphasis on structure and word choices. Standards in reading are above average, pupils read well, and show good understanding of what they have read. They are interested in different authors and are able to explain their preferences in reading.

51 The quality of teaching is very good in all classes, with excellent teaching in Year 6. Teachers all make very good use of day-to-day assessment to adjust their planning so that activities match very well with what pupils need to learn next. The quality of teachers' planning is high because they have very good subject knowledge and have had excellent support from the deputy headteacher in sharing and developing their expertise. All teachers have very high expectations of pupils of all abilities. They share a strong determination to help pupils overcome barriers to learning and are innovative in the methods they use to hold pupils' interest. Without exception, they form very good relationships with pupils and these relationships underpin the pupils' desire to please their teachers by working hard. The result is that pupils learn at a very good rate in all lessons and are highly motivated when it comes to independent work. Teachers make very good use of ICT in the subject and give pupils frequent opportunities to consolidate their learning through a variety of interesting programmes, as well as encouraging them to use computers to present their written work in different ways. Pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported by the teachers' thorough planning for their needs and the high quality in-class support they receive. Pupils who have English as an additional language are also well-supported in class, but the school recognises that as the numbers of these pupils rise their resources are being stretched so that they have less impact than they could. Teachers would benefit from further training and advice on how to meet the needs, particularly, of older pupils with English as an additional language who have recently joined the school.

52 There is excellent leadership and management of the subject by the deputy headteacher. She has high ambition for all pupils and considerable subject expertise to translate this into very effective systems for improvement to all aspects of the subject. Under her leadership, standards in the subject have soared, as have the quality of teaching, assessment and resources for learning. She has given an outstanding lead to teaching and as an outstanding practitioner herself is highly respected by colleagues who seek her advice and unfailingly act upon it.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53 Teachers make good use of the basic skills of speaking and writing in other subjects. They are particularly effective in developing pupils' speaking and their learning is memorable as a result of the many opportunities they have to discuss and present their learning. Teachers ensure that pupils make good use of their reading skills for research and set tasks regularly to extend the range of their reading in other subjects such as science, history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in the current Year 6.
- There has been a good trend of improvement in national tests for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. The pupils' achievement is good overall.
- Teaching is predominantly very good with several excellent characteristics.
- Pupils are very keen and enthusiastic and enjoy the subject.
- Teachers of infant pupils do not make sufficient use of day-to-day assessment to plan future work.

Commentary

54 The unfailing challenge offered to junior pupils ensures that they achieve very well reaching above average standards in the current Year 6. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average. Throughout the school planning is systematic. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work from last year showed that Year 1 higher attaining pupils did not receive sufficient challenge and, unlike the juniors, tend not to achieve the higher standards they were capable of. This is because daily planning was not supported sufficiently well by a thorough assessment of pupils' responses in each of the lessons. The Year 2 teacher has remedied this by providing the correct level of challenge for all pupils in her class, ensuring that higher attaining pupils make up any lost ground. There is a new teacher in Year 1. Teachers' constructive marking of written work provides encouragement and, especially for junior pupils, leads to very good rates of learning.

55 Teaching is consistently very good and sometimes excellent. Teachers have a very good grasp of the subject and most often have high expectations of the pupils. An excellent lesson delivered by the class teacher was based around solving of real life problems. The initial mental starter was challenging, brisk and bright and pupils responded enthusiastically to the opportunities offered to exchange ideas with peer partners. Groups of children were targeted for individual support. The classroom support assistant was used effectively to support the learning of a small group of pupils employing the same techniques and strategies as all other pupils but with work set at an appropriate yet challenging level. The enthusiasm and energy of the teacher linked to her excellent subject knowledge and clear communication captivated all the pupils and immersed them in their own learning and resulted in the majority attaining above expectations for their age. Relationships between pupils and teachers are at least very good. Consequently, pupils take pride in doing their best. This is borne out by the overall high standard of presentation, which clearly helps pupils to make good progress when they refer to data for their calculations.

56 Cross-curricular links are very evident throughout the curriculum. Computers are used to reinforce learning and help pupils to check their work and self assess. Key mathematical words are taught consistently throughout the school and, as they progress, pupils demonstrate an effective and working mathematical vocabulary.

57 The subject is well led. There has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection. A detailed and rigorous analysis of national test results has begun and areas of weakness are being addressed. This is well supported by the monitoring of teaching which now also focuses on an analysis of pupils' work in books.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58 Mathematics is used purposefully and effectively across the curriculum so that pupils apply their skills in a wide and variety of contexts. Work in science often involves pupils' skills in measurement and data handling while charts and graphs are used to record information in subjects such as geography and personal, social and health education.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in all elements of science are above average for all pupils.
- The quality of teaching and learning are consistently very good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work.
- The curriculum is rich and very stimulating.
- There is a suitably wide range and number of good quality learning resources.
- The subject leader is enthusiastic and is determined to raise standards further.

Commentary

59 There has been a very significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection. Pupils' standards are above average throughout the school; teaching, achievement and pupils' attitudes are consistently very good and there has been a considerable improvement to the resources for learning. Visits to the neighbouring secondary school, participation in science fairs and the use of Mind Friendly Learning techniques enrich the very stimulating curriculum.

60 Teachers now all place much emphasis on the investigation element of science. This makes a significant contribution to the standards pupils achieve and these have improved significantly in the current year. Throughout the school, teachers ensure that pupils produce carefully labelled drawings and accurate diagrams when recording their investigations. Their written summaries of their findings are concise and clear. These strategies ensure that pupils' understanding is above the expected level across the school. The tasks for pupils with special educational needs are planned to support their individual targets. This and the sensitive support from adults, ensure they make very good progress in science. There is effective support for pupils who have English as an additional language. This enables them to work alongside their classmates and achieve similar standards.

61 There is very thorough coverage of the science of living things and teachers make very effective use of computers to support pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 use computers confidently and accurately to collate and record their findings about food as block graphs. The school has a very well structured programme of health education that forms part of their work on living things. This ensures that pupils have a very clear moral understanding of issues such as healthy eating and drug misuse.

62 By Year 6 pupils have above average knowledge in all areas of science and are eager to share their previous learning about earth and space. They investigate materials enthusiastically and record their findings accurately. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils worked very well together to filter mixtures. Very skilful questioning led to pupils increasing their understanding of the use of filtration in everyday life.

63 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers make the work interesting and exciting for all pupils. This ensures that girls are as enthusiastic as boys and achieve equally well. The co-ordinator is very clear about what needs to be done to raise standards further. She has put a range of effective strategies in place already. These include an investigation area in each classroom, and appropriate and easily accessed resources, which are all making a positive contribution to pupils' achievement. Leadership and management in the subject are very good in providing direction for the development of the subject and guidance for colleagues.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**

- Teaching and learning are good.
- ICT skills are developed through most subjects.
- Teachers use ICT as part of their every day teaching.
- There is good coverage of word processing and communication but a lack of emphasis on the use of ICT to monitor and control events.

Commentary

64 The recently appointed part-time subject specialist has provided the school with very strong leadership in this area of the curriculum. Consequently, the school has made great strides in its provision for ICT within a very short period of time. Pupils throughout the school achieve consistently well, reaching above average standards in word processing, communication, and storing, retrieving and interpreting data. However, due to a previous lack of structure and design in the curriculum and

a shortage of appropriate resources pupils' understanding of ICT to monitor and control events is insufficiently developed.

65 Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and they are well supported by a range of very good resources that include an ICT suite, large screen monitors which are used effectively as teaching tools and a good range of audio equipment which is used appropriately to develop listening skills. Pupils' skills are being developed by accurate assessment, good teaching, clear auditing arrangements and planned funding.

66 Pupils in Year 1 independently access software on computers to write their names and draw pictures of themselves. As they progress through the school pupils' skills in investigation and evaluation through the use of data analysis and spreadsheets are developed. Some of the best skills are demonstrated when they create multi-media presentations. Here pupils bring together many skills that they have acquired and use them creatively to combine text, graphics and sound. Pupils are encouraged to use the worldwide web at home and at school to research topics.

67 Teachers regularly use extended questions to challenge pupils' thinking, reinforce learning and raise self-esteem. Clear and concise instructions are given. Teachers provide informed answers to questions asked by pupils and show effective levels of competence when called upon to sort out problems caused by programs behaving in an unexpected manner. These features are significant contributory factors in the school's improvement in ICT provision since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68 ICT is used regularly and frequently throughout the school to promote learning in other subjects. Children and pupils in the infant classes have many opportunities to use the computer for, for example, maths games and by investigating a range of graphic techniques they learn how to create pointillism pictures in the style of Georges Seurat. Pupils in the junior classes continue to use ICT as part of their work in most subjects. For example, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils use the computer to draft and edit their work in English. Year 5 pupils use spreadsheets effectively to interrogate their own research data into biscuits and, as part of their geography investigation, they use the digital camera to record evidence in support of their conclusions. Year 6 pupils use the real player video features to very good effect in their work on dialogue. This imaginative use of the computer greatly enhances the quality and the standard of pupils' work.

HUMANITIES

69 In humanities work was sampled in geography and only two lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

70 Only two lessons were seen in geography. It is not therefore possible to form an overall judgement about the level of provision in this subject. In addition to observing lessons inspectors spoke to pupils about what they had learned and looked at pupils' work from last year. The evidence indicates that standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6. This is a significant improvement since the time of the last inspection.

71 It is evident from teachers' planning and the range and quality of the work seen that the geography curriculum is well planned. The opportunities that pupils have to study a wide range of topics are good and these are enriched by the use of visits and visitors.

72 In Years 1 and 2, pupils begin to develop geographical knowledge, skills and understanding by using the school and its immediate locality. They develop skills of observation and recording by, for example, drawing and labelling simple maps of the school. As they progress through the junior classes pupils build upon these experiences well. For example, they learn about how people affect the environment and show a very good understanding and sharp awareness of global environmental issues such as conservation, the importance of recycling and the effects of climatic change.

73 ICT is used effectively to research and record topics. For example, Year 5 pupils formulate and carry out their own public opinion survey on the dangers experienced by local residents on the streets and roads of Shaw Heath. The evidence gained by pupils is used to petition the local council and is supported by photographs taken by pupils on the school's digital camera.

74 The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and is able to give good support to colleagues.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- The curriculum is well supported by visits to places of historic interest.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject.
- Standards have risen significantly since the previous inspection.

Commentary

75 Standards are in line with the expectation for pupils who are in Year 2. Pupils in Year 6 reach standards that are above the expectation.

76 Year 2 pupils learn about famous people and how events are celebrated over time. Their learning is good because it is based on practical activity and role-play. They learn quickly why Guy Fawkes wanted to attack the Houses of Parliament and developed a good understanding of how other people living at the time reacted to this. They make very good use of speaking and listening skills in their learning, and acting out scenes from history makes their learning memorable. By Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of different eras in history because they have had good teaching, which has planned a thorough coverage of the topics they study. Their knowledge of Britain during World War Two is good and so is their understanding of the technology which protected citizens through their linked work with design and technology.

77 Teaching is very good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about the subject. Where teachers make links with other subjects, as in Years 3 to 6, pupils' learning is extended and they see the interrelatedness of such things as transport and technology in shaping change. Visits to local historic sites make learning memorable for pupils and extend their understanding. For example, after a visit to the Roman site at Chester, Year 4 pupils wrote vivid descriptions of *their experiences* as Roman soldiers landing in Britain for the first invasion. Teachers make good use of a range of learning styles which help pupils develop confidence and independence. In Year 3, pupils researched different aspects of life in Tudor times and thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of presenting their findings to the rest of the class.

78 The subject is well led, with good organisation of resources and advice for colleagues. The co-ordinator has a clear picture of what needs to improve in the subject as well as a good grasp of standards across the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good.
- The curriculum is rich and stimulating.
- There is a suitably wide range and number of good quality resources.

Commentary

79 Improvements since the previous inspection are in the quality of teaching, the interesting and stimulating curriculum and the range and number of resources. The use of visitors and the local community helps pupils understand the similarities and difference between different cultures.

80 There is no judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 because it was not possible to see any lessons here. The basis for other judgements is the analysis of work in pupils' books, discussions with pupils and teachers' planning. These show that the school meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils' standards meet those expected for their age.

81 The analysis of work in pupils' books shows that they continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6. This ensures that by Year 6 most pupils reach the standards expected. Teachers ensure that the lessons are interesting and the work meets pupils' needs. This was particularly noticeable in a lesson in Year 4, when pupils discussed the meaning of pilgrimage. Pupils asked questions confidently and deepened their awareness of how different religions have similar beliefs. The teachers built on and extend pupils' experiences through visits to places of worship and the use of the Internet to find out about places such as Bethlehem. This increases pupils' ability to use computers for research purposes; it also gives them more understanding of a range of cultures, beliefs and practices.

82 The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was good. The consistently interesting and enthusiastic teaching gives pupils a strong sense of motivation and interest in religious education. Pupils use their literacy skills well in their written work. They take care over handwriting and spelling and clearly take pride in their achievements. All teachers make their expectations of high standards of behaviour clear and promote an air of calm, purposeful work. This gives pupils the chance to reflect quietly as they work. The links with other subjects deepen pupils' awareness of how work in lessons such as geography supports religious education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83 Work was sampled and discussions with pupils were held in **art and design, design and technology and physical education**. This evidence shows that standards in all three subjects are average. The school gives its pupils rich and varied experiences and uses expertise from outside the school. For example, pupils have qualified coaching in lacrosse in physical education, and in art and design work with artists from Manchester Metropolitan University. These steps ensure that the school maintains its high quality of teaching.

Music

Provision for music is **good**

- By Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of rhythm patterns and keep a beat well because of well-planned activities.
- Pupils have good opportunities for ensemble work and composing.
- Teaching is good and the staff's enthusiasm is reflected in pupils' enjoyment of music lessons

Commentary

84 Throughout the school pupils enjoy singing in assemblies and during lessons. The standard and quality of singing, often in two-part harmony, is high. Even the youngest pupils quickly learn the words of hymns, sing well and follow complex rhythms. Year 2 pupils play a range of untuned percussion instruments with good levels of control and maintaining an accurate beat. By Year 6 pupils produce their own complex rhythmic compositions using a wide range of percussion instruments to accompany a selection of recorded music. They record their compositions and during the evaluative process listen to constructive criticism before setting to the task of further reworking and improving their musical performances.

85 The quality of teaching is good and sometimes excellent. For example, in a singing lesson involving the whole school the lead teacher was extremely confident, enthusiastic, energetic and knowledgeable and expected only the highest of standards. She threw herself into the lesson and

was whole-heartedly supported by her colleagues. All pupils put their hearts into the lesson and as a consequence produced a performance of a very high quality.

86 Pupils of all levels of ability perform well because of the intensity and pace of the lessons and pupils with special educational needs are enabled to play full part in the lesson, often shining in their own particular way. Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond extremely well.

87 The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge of the subject and provides very good leadership for its development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88 The school places high value on developing pupils' knowledge of themselves and their responsibilities for the world in which they live. Discussions with pupils confirmed how much emphasis the school places on this aspect of pupils' learning and showed that they covered a wide range of topics in some depth, especially as pupils got older. In *circle time* as well as in PSHCE lessons, pupils have many opportunities to discuss issues that concern them and to plan ways of improving the school. Through work linked to geography, older pupils have been involved in exploring ways of finding safer routes to school and in raising public awareness to the importance of clear signs on the roads to reduce hazards for pedestrians and motorists. In these and many other ways the school promotes excellent personal development of pupils and ensures that they are always willing to consider issues and accept responsibility for themselves and their community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	1
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	4
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).