

INSPECTION REPORT

CHEETWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cheetham, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105461

Headteacher: Mr E Thomas

Lead inspector: Mr A Margerison

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th April 2004

Inspection number: 255767

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:	256
School address:	Waterloo Road Cheetham Manchester
Postcode:	M8 8EJ
Telephone number:	0161 834 2104
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Sherratt
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is distinctive in its situation and the backgrounds of its pupils. It is situated very near the centre of Manchester in an area of mixed housing and light industrial and commercial businesses. The area has suffered significant deprivation in recent years. Significant employers have closed and large areas of housing have been demolished. However, new housing is being built and the area is viewed as gradually improving. Most of the pupils live near the school, but it is a very popular school and a significant proportion of parents choose to bring their children some distance to attend. Although, pupils' backgrounds vary, overall their socio-economic circumstances are well below average. There are 256 pupils on roll aged between three and 11 years, including 32 children who attend the nursery full-time. When children start school, their attainment varies from year to year, but overall it is well below compared with what is typical for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties, is also well above average. There are an average proportion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Pupils come from a very broad range of ethnic backgrounds and the proportion whose first language is not English is very high. Approximately a fifth of pupils are White-British and nearly a quarter come from Asian families whose first languages are Urdu and Punjabi. In addition, 16 per cent of pupils are asylum seekers or refugees from troubled areas around the world. In total, pupils represent seventeen different ethnic groups speaking languages from approximately 30 countries around the world. The number of pupils who join and leave the school during the school year is very high. The school has received a number of awards in recent years, recognising both its academic and pastoral successes: Artsmark in 2002 has been followed by the Basic skills Quality Mark, the School Achievement Award, Healthy Schools Award and Smoking Prevention Award and the Local Education Authority's Most improved Attendance Award, all in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21666	Mr A Margerison	Lead inspector	English
			Geography
			History
			Special educational needs
			English as an additional language
12511	Mrs L Buller	Lay inspector	
32138	Mr T Plant	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Music
			Physical education
			Religious education
30827	Mrs S Withnall	Team inspector	Science
			Art and design
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			Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Cheetwood Primary School is a highly distinctive, good school that provides good value for money. Due to good teaching pupils achieve well. It is very well led by the headteacher who is very well supported in his vision for the school by the deputy headteacher.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is highly inclusive and has a very positive ethos, based on pupils' very high respect for each other's feelings, values and very diverse cultural traditions.
- There is a very strong sense of teamwork between governors and staff. They all share the headteacher's very high aspirations and vision for the school.
- Standards and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) are unsatisfactory.
- The school has established very effective links with parents.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of activities outside of lessons.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects.
- The use of performance data to monitor the relative achievement of pupils of different ethnic and ability groups to set individual pupil targets for improvement is not rigorous enough.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved well. The school has established an effective senior management structure with the result being that most of the issues from the last inspection have been addressed effectively. The quality of teaching and the provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved significantly. However, although staff have had training and resources have improved, standards in ICT remain below those expected by Year 6.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E*	C	E*	E
Mathematics	E	A	E*	E
Science	E*	C	E*	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

All pupils achieve well. In nursery and reception, children achieve very well to exceed the goals they are expected to reach in their personal and social development. In communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world standards are below those expected, but from a very low starting point they achieve well. Children achieve satisfactorily to attain the expected standards in their creative and physical development. The school's results in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were very low. Inspection evidence shows that, although standards in these subjects are below average, due to the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, pupils are achieving well. In the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, standards were significantly lower than the previous year and placed the school in the bottom 5 per cent of schools nationally in English, mathematics and science. However, they reflect the very high numbers of pupils who join and leave the school in the course of the year and the well above average proportions of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Evidence shows that pupils who were at the school throughout Years 3 to 6 achieved very well. Currently, pupils in

Years 3 to 6 are achieving well, although standards in English, mathematics and science are below average in Year 6. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well and those with special educational needs, very well. In ICT, standards and achievement are below those expected. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education to attain standards that are in line with those expected. Insufficient evidence was available to enable overall judgements on standards and achievement to be made in any other subjects.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Attendance is below average, mainly due to a few parents who do not ensure their children attend school regularly enough, but pupils are punctual to school. Central to their personal development is their acceptance and appreciation of each other's cultural backgrounds, values and beliefs.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and encourage them very effectively to take part in lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well. In particular they have a very good understanding of how to use their support staff, who, in turn, make a very important contribution to the progress children make working closely with teachers. This reflects the very high priority placed by the school on striving to ensure that pupils are provided with the opportunities they need in order to succeed. However, there are not enough planned activities in other lessons for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Assessment procedures are very good and the information is used well to track the progress pupils make.

The school places a very high priority on providing equal access for all pupils reflected in the good provision for pupils with English as an additional language and the very good provision for those with special educational needs. Provision for pupils' personal, health and social education is very good. The range of activities for pupils to be involved in out of lessons is very good. Procedures for pupils' support and guidance are very good and the school has established very effective links with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher leads the school very well. His very clear vision for the school is based on very effective evaluation of its own performance. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and together with the leadership team they have created a climate of innovation based on very strong teamwork and a very positive school ethos. The governors, along with all staff associated with the school share the headteacher's vision for the school and are very supportive. They fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily. However, their role in direct evaluation of the school's performance is less well developed. Management is good. However, although procedures to monitor performance data to plan whole school initiatives are good, links between teachers' targets for their own professional development and the analysis of performance data for individual pupils and different ability and ethnic groups are less well developed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a very high opinion of the school and its work. They hold the headteacher in very high regard, consider the teaching to be good and really value the support it provides for pupils. Pupils feel very positively about their school and enjoy taking part in lessons and activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and achievement in ICT.
- Ensure that pupils are consistently provided with activities to use and practise their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in lessons and look for more ways of using new technology as a tool for teaching across the curriculum in all subjects.

- Build on the existing good monitoring and performance management procedures so that performance data is analysed with regard for different ability and ethnic groups, and the information is used to set targets for individual pupils with class teachers.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

From a well below expected starting point when they begin in nursery, pupils achieve well as they move through the school. However, due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, standards in core subjects are below average in Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well in their personal and social development and achieve well in their language and mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Standards and achievement in ICT are below those expected in Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Pupils with English as an additional language and talented pupils achieve well.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.2 (14.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.4 (13.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	12.4 (13.8)	16.3 (16.5)

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.0 (27.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.2 (28.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	23.5 (29.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1 The school's results have generally been well below the national average in Years 2 and 6. The exception to this was in 2002 when results for pupils in Year 6 were average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. However, this reflected an exceptional and unusual group of pupils. In the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 2, results in reading, writing and mathematics placed the school in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. Although these results were also below average when compared to similar schools, the trend in the school's results are above the national pattern. The trend over time for pupils in Year 6 is also above the national pattern, mainly as a result of the very good results in 2002. In the 2003 tests for pupils in Year 6, the results in English, mathematics and science placed the school in the bottom five per cent nationally when compared to all schools and were very low when compared to similar schools. However, these results have to be placed in the context of the school which has to contend with several very significant factors that affect the pace of pupils' learning and the standards they attain.

2 Firstly, children start in school with skills and knowledge that are well below those expected for their age in the key areas of communication, language, literacy and mathematics and very few children have any experience of any form of education prior to coming to school, so their knowledge of the world is very limited. An additional factor is the very high number of pupils who leave and join the school in the course of a school year. For example, in the 2003 group, less than a third had started at the school in nursery and less than half were at the school in Year 2. Of these pupils nearly a third had English as an additional language. A similar pattern applies in the current Year 6. Half of the class have joined the school in Years 3 to 6, thirty nine per cent have additional support due to having English as an additional language and forty per cent have special educational needs. The impact of the refugee pupils also has an adverse effect on the school's results. When these pupils are removed from the data, pupils in Year 6 in 2003 attained average standards in English and mathematics, although results in science remained low. Inspection evidence and national data shows that those pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, who are at the school for an extended period, such as from Years 3 to 6, achieve very well relative to their starting point. This was recognised in 2003 when the school was awarded the School Achievement Award and it met its targets.

3 Although standards in English, mathematics and science are below average in Year 6 due to the lower than average proportion of pupils who are attaining the expected levels, inspection evidence shows that pupils attain appropriate standards for their ability and achieve well as they move through the school. Standards of listening in Year 6 are good. Pupils who benefit from additional support for English as an additional language achieve well. They are disadvantaged initially until they reach a satisfactory level of competence in English, but once competent make good gains over their time in school in developing their spoken and written language. The overall standard of achievement of most pupils with English as an additional language is good and pupils attain similar standards to their indigenous peers by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs also benefit from very good support and as a result achieve very well, particularly in reading and mathematics, as they move through the school.

4 In nursery and reception, children achieve well due to skilled teaching that focuses on developing their basic skills. This is particularly the case for their personal skills, in which they achieve very well. Due to skilled teaching by the staff in both classes who provide a very broad range of activities that encourage independence, imaginative language development and social skills, they make rapid progress. As a result, by the end of the reception year, children exceed the levels expected in their personal and social development. Good teaching of early reading develops children's basic literacy skills well. A similar emphasis is placed on developing children's basic number skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world so that, although standards by the end of the reception year are below the expected levels for their age, children achieve well. In their creative and physical development, children achieve satisfactorily to attain the expected levels for their age.

5 In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well to consolidate and reinforce their basic skills. Due to the lower than average proportion of pupils who attain the expected levels for their age, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average by the end of Year 2. The school places a high priority on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and this results in pupils achieving very well in these areas of learning so standards, particularly in their listening skills are broadly in line with those expected. They listen attentively to their teachers and each other. In response to teacher's questions, higher attaining pupils extend their answers and contribute their own ideas to discussions.

6 In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well. Due to the very good support they get from class teachers and support staff, most pupils' confidence in spoken English improves rapidly as they move through the school. By Year 6, the majority are confident when speaking to the rest of the class, especially when describing what they have been doing, and their listening skills are good. In their writing, the majority of pupils have a secure understanding of the basic skills of punctuation and grammar and express their ideas and describe what they have been doing clearly with a good structure. However, pupils' use of expressive language, to describe how characters might be feeling, for example, is less well developed.

7 In science, pupils develop a secure grasp of the areas of knowledge and understanding of the subject and a secure understanding of how to set up and conduct investigations, but the proportion of pupils who attain the higher than expected levels is below average, due to the inconsistent use of more challenging tasks in lessons for these pupils. In mathematics, pupils achieve well. Number skills are good, but pupils' ability to use and apply these skills is less well developed. Standards in ICT are below those expected for a similar reason. The school has not had the present range of resources for very long and, although pupils are developing secure skills and understanding, their ability to apply and use these skills in different practical situations is weaker. However, evidence from younger pupils indicates that standards are beginning to improve. Pupils achieve satisfactorily to attain standards in religious education that are in line with those expected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities are very good. Pupils' attendance is below average, but their punctuality is satisfactory. They have positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and as a result, pupils' behave very well.
- Relationships between pupils are very good and they have a very high respect for each other's feelings, values and very diverse cultural traditions.
- The school stimulates in pupils a strong desire to learn and develops their self-knowledge and belief effectively.
- Children in nursery and reception classes achieve very well in their personal and social development.
- Despite the very good procedures to promote pupils' attendance it is below average, mainly due to a few parents who do not ensure their children attend regularly.

Commentary

8 The vast majority of pupils are keen to attend school and most are punctual. The school has established very good procedures to promote and encourage pupils to attend school. For example, there are clear reward systems, certificates for good attendance and a Breakfast Club has been established as a further initiative to encourage pupils to attend. The learning mentors have worked very hard in recent years with individual pupils and families to improve pupils' attendance and this has a positive effect on the attendance of a good number of pupils. This was recognised in 2003 with the Local Education Authority's 'Most improved attendance' award. However, despite their work and that of the Local Education Authority officers they have had little impact on a few parents who do not ensure their children attend school regularly enough, so, as a result, overall attendance remains below the national average.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93.4%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

9 The school places a very high priority on developing pupils' personal skills, in particular their appreciation of each other's cultural traditions and beliefs. This is at the heart of the very positive

ethos apparent throughout the school. Much of this work is informal and is threaded throughout lessons and assemblies, but is very effective so that relationships between pupils are very good and there is an almost total absence of any bullying, harassment or racial tension. This is a significant achievement for a school with over 30 nationalities represented among pupils. The school does not tolerate any form of anti-social behaviour and parents agree that any incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. As a result, pupils develop a very high respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs and their responsibilities to each other within the community. Assemblies play an important part in teaching pupils to value each other's achievements and attributes. Rewards and certificates are given and pupils make extended and central contributions to assemblies. For example, during the inspection, pupils from Year 4 and Year 6 played several pieces of music on the Steel Drum, which they had been taught by a visiting music teacher. They showed good levels of skills, and their performance drew very enthusiastic applause from the audience. Nursery children are included in whole school assemblies so they learn to appreciate the ethos and culture of the school from a very early stage.

10 The vast majority of pupils are interested in school and willingly take part in all activities provided for them. As they move through the school they develop in confidence and most are keen to learn and to take any responsibility that is offered to them. For example, all classes in Years 4 to 6 provide 'Lunchtime Buddies' to assist the lunchtime supervisors (an initiative developed by the pupils' school council) and pupils in Year 6 escort younger pupils back to class after assemblies. However, the very good behaviour of pupils is a notable feature of the school and has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. There have been no exclusions in recent years. This reflects the very high priority the school places on developing pupils' understanding of their responsibilities to each other as part of the school community and what is acceptable behaviour. To a large extent the very high standard of behaviour is directly due to the clarity with which all teaching staff consistently make their expectations very clear and their skilled pupil management rather than the pupils being intrinsically well behaved. This was apparent in a few of the groups during the afternoon sessions observed as part of the 'Plan, Prepare and Assess' (PPA) pilot scheme. If staff were not so vigilant or clear on how they expected pupils to respond, a few pupils took advantage of this to become less engaged than is usual in the vast majority of lessons. The work begins in the nursery class where children very quickly learn what is expected of them. This continues in reception so, as a result, they make very good progress in developing their personal skills. Consequently, by the end of reception, their personal qualities exceed those expected for their age.

11 The very high standard of pupils' behaviour is made more notable when the very high proportion of pupils who join the school during the year is taken into account. For example, in 2003, less than a third of pupils in Year 6 had started at the school in the nursery. However, the school's very positive ethos and the highly consistent expectations of adults ensure that pupils very quickly learn how the school expects them to behave and respond to each other. Learning mentors also make a very important contribution to how quickly pupils settle into school. In addition, they work closely with a few pupils who have difficulties with behaving appropriately, so, for the most part, the impact of these pupils in lessons is minimal.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

12 The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good. Pupils are very well supported. The school has established very good links with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment procedures are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour so pupils behave very well in lessons.
- Teachers place a very high priority on encouraging and involving all pupils in lessons.

- Support staff make a very important contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well, so generally activities in lessons closely match the learning needs of pupils of different abilities.
- There are not enough planned activities in lessons for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and for higher attaining pupils to apply their skills independently in science.
- Assessment procedures in all subjects are very thorough.
- Assessment information is used well to track the progress of pupils and to respond to their needs.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8 (23%)	14 (40%)	13 (37%)	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.

13 Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when 20 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. It is now good with nearly a quarter being very good. The consistently best teaching is generally in reception, Year 2 and Year 5, which makes an important contribution to pupils' good achievement and learning. However, there are several consistent strengths seen in all classes throughout the school. First and foremost is the insistence of all staff on high standards of behaviour. Teachers are very consistent in the expectations of behaviour, giving very clear and explicit instructions so pupils thoroughly understand how they should behave and respond to adults and each other. As a result, pupils' behaviour is very good and lessons are very calm, organised and productive learning experiences for pupils. There are a few pupils throughout the school who find behaving well difficult, but teachers have very good management skills and manage those pupils very effectively. They use a very good range of management techniques such as ignoring the pupil on occasions, quiet admonishment or subtle reprimands. Consequently, the degree of disruption these few pupils have on their learning or that of their peers is minimal. The second consistent strength in the teaching is the very high priority teachers place on encouraging pupils to take part in lessons, rewarding them for their efforts and ensuring that all pupils are fully involved. In particular, they use questions well to involve pupils in discussions. In the best lessons, particularly in Year 5, teachers target questions to pupils of different abilities and use supplementary questions very effectively to encourage pupils to expand upon their answers and express their views and opinions. This approach not only extends pupils' understanding, but also makes a good contribution to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, this is not consistent in all classes and where teaching is satisfactory, although teachers ask good questions, they tend to focus their attention mainly on those pupils who put up their hands to answer rather than inviting others to express their ideas or views.

14 Teachers have a very clear understanding of the role of support staff and how they should be used within the classroom to support individuals or small groups. As a result, the support staff are well briefed, their tasks are well planned and they make an important contribution to the progress pupils of all abilities make. Their impact is particularly significant for pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs. Support staff for pupils with special educational needs know the targets their pupils are working towards and help pupils work towards them using questions and additional checks on pupils' written work. In small group activities, the pace is brisk and activities well matched to what the pupils need to learn next. Strategies for assessing and supporting pupils through targeted work with specialist teachers for pupils with English as an additional language are effective. New arrivals are assessed when they arrive in school and those with no English are targeted for extra support, their specific needs are tackled well by both the teachers and the Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher. This is achieved

through a combination of small group work and support in lessons. Partnership teaching is a feature in some classes and is effective.

15 Teaching in the nursery and the reception class is consistently good. A very broad range of activities is provided for children that effectively develops their personal, language and basic number skills. Role-play activities develop children's imagination and encourage them to work and play with each other. On-going assessments of how children have got on in lessons on a daily basis provide teachers and support staff with a clear picture of each child and how they are progressing. This enables teachers to plan activities that build progressively on children's skills. The pace of lessons is generally good so children learn to concentrate well and there are few occasions when children are 'off-task'. Teachers and support staff also have very high expectations of children's behaviour and give very clear and explicit instructions at the start of sessions. As a result, the youngest children very quickly learn the routines of the school when they first arrive.

16 Generally teachers plan a good range of activities in lessons to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities so they achieve well. Lessons are carefully managed and organised by the teachers, which, although resulting in the very good behaviour seen in lessons, does restrict the opportunities for the older and more able pupils to explore and extend their own ideas. This particularly affects pupils' progress in the investigative aspect of science. Pupils learn how to conduct experiments and develop a secure understanding of the processes involved but they are not given enough opportunities to use these skills to plan investigations of their own. In addition, there are not enough activities in all subjects for pupils to use and apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

17 Since the last inspection, the school has introduced very thorough procedures to assess and track the progress pupils are making. These procedures are in place for all subjects. In English, mathematics and science they are supported by regular testing and assessment tasks in lessons. Subject leaders use this information well to evaluate standards in their subjects and the overall progress different pupils and year groups are making and to identify areas for improvement. Pupils are involved in the process and are set targets to work towards in English, mathematics and science, which effectively helps them measure their own progress.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. The opportunities for enrichment are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school places a very high priority on giving them the opportunities they need in order to succeed.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The range of sporting and other activities for pupils to participate in outside of lessons is very good. The number of pupils who take part is high.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- The match of support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good.
- There are missed opportunities to promote pupils' creative and performance arts skills.

Commentary

18 The school has a clear focus on giving all pupils equal access and opportunity and does this very well. Learning objectives, teaching methods and provision such as additional literacy programmes are adjusted to meet pupils' needs. Staff expertise is very good and the deputy headteacher works with the Local Education Authority on issues relating to the equality of access and advises other schools. Teaching assistants have clearly defined roles and have all been trained. They support individuals and groups of pupils very well, particularly those with special educational needs, who consequently make very good progress. The school's procedures and provision for special educational needs is very good. The school has a high percentage of pupils who have

special educational needs but only five pupils currently have statements of special educational need. Pupils' progress is very carefully monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator within the school's framework which ensures those pupils' individual plans are detailed and well matched to each pupil's needs. As a result, they achieve very well. This reflects very good improvement since the last inspection when provision was judged to be unsatisfactory. The curriculum meets statutory requirements in all respects. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been adopted and adapted by the school to meet the needs of pupils more closely. A small number of pupils are withdrawn from religious education and collective worship. However, the school makes good arrangements for these pupils to ensure they have time of thought and reflection that is acceptable to their parents and these sessions make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development. There are regular visitors to assembly by representatives from religious groups within the community and these enrich pupils' experiences well.

19 Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good. It is based on a whole scheme of work so there is a structured approach which helps maximise its impact. Sex, drugs and relationship issues are taught well. For example, an annual visit by the Life Caravan, which is subsidised by the Rotary Club, gives pupils a good opportunity to explore matters related to drug and alcohol misuse; this is also open to parents but few choose to attend. The high quality of provision was recognised in 2003 with the Healthy Schools Award and the Smoking Prevention Award. Whole school challenges are used to focus attention on a specific aspect of the curriculum, for example, art and design or science. These 'challenges' include the nursery. Classes are expected to work together to produce, for example, a sculpture or piece of three-dimensional artwork. All pupils in the class must contribute to the final piece. These have been very successful in generating interest and have resulted in very good work being produced, much of which is displayed around the school.

20 The school is part of an innovative Local Education Authority pilot scheme to implement a national agreement and give all teachers time out of the classroom to plan, prepare and assess (PPA) pupils' work. The current programme, which is linked to the workforce reform initiative, enables teaching assistants and others to develop pupils' personal and social skills through curriculum activities such as art and design, music, drama and physical education. The scheme is at an early stage of development and has enormous potential. However, inspection evidence shows that although in some classes the activities provide good opportunities for this to be effective and provide a stimulating and balanced mix of experiences, in a few classes there is a lack of coherence in the programme and there are missed opportunities to fully extend and develop pupils' creative and performance arts skills.

21 There is a comprehensive range of things for pupils to do after school and at lunchtimes. School staff and other providers organise lots of sports and games. There are excellent outdoor facilities including spaces with all weather, safe surfaces and the new sports and arts hall has improved indoor accommodation significantly. The school has been very successful in judo competitions and is rightly proud of its achievements. Judo and boxing are used well by the school to channel the natural aggression of some pupils and develop their self-discipline. The school is currently applying for 'Activemark' award as recognition of its commitment to sport. The school welcomes a wide range of guests who are poets, musicians, actors and dancers and many of these are professional performers. For example, pupils in Year 5 are working with actors from the Royal Exchange Theatre in preparation for taking part in a production of 'Great Expectations' later in the year. Pupils' ballet dancing is assessed through the Royal Academy of Dance. Pupils have also visited local museums and galleries to extend their knowledge and understanding.

22 There are sufficient teachers to ensure that the national curriculum can be taught satisfactorily. Recently, the school governors made a strategic decision to give each class its own teaching assistant, which has resulted in a good number of these staff working in school. The impact on the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, in particular, is significant. However, many of these staff also act as lunchtime supervisors which, due to the consistency of approach, also has a positive effect on standards of pupils' behaviour during lunchtime and this has also enabled the school to take part in the pilot scheme linked to the workforce reform initiative. Provision is enhanced further by the learning

mentor team which works effectively to engage pupils who might otherwise lose interest in school and not learn well enough.

23 Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. The main building is clean and well maintained, though it was never originally intended to be in use as long as it has. The school makes best use of available space but as pupil numbers have risen the amount of room for the library and ICT suite has been reduced. As a result, the library area is now situated in a corridor and does not provide adequate space for classes to have dedicated research time or for a very comprehensive range of books to be kept permanently available for occasional use. Outdoor play areas have been improved with the addition of an adventure play area, games markings on the yard and seating. Subject leaders review resources annually and purchases are linked to the school's development priorities. The recently built sports centre and all-weather pitches have improved the facilities available for physical education and community use significantly.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Support and guidance for pupils is very good. The school has sound procedures to involve pupils in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. As a result, pupils feel comfortable in asking for help when they need it.
- Pupils are provided with very good support, advice and guidance by all staff.
- The learning mentors and support staff make a very important contribution to the very positive and supportive ethos of the school.
- Effective day-to-day routines ensure pupils work in a safe environment.

Commentary

24 Among parents, the high standard of care and concern for pupils' welfare is seen as a significant strength of the school. Most parents feel that the school develops the 'whole person' well, based on good relationships between staff and pupils, that staff know pupils well and, in nursery and reception, staff quickly get to know children. Inspection evidence supports their view. The school has established comprehensive procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, including risk assessment. All staff know and understand the procedures for child protection. However, the key factor that contributes to this aspect of the school's work is very good relationships that exist between pupils and adults. As a result, pupils have great confidence in the staff and know that if they have a problem they will be listened to and their concern taken seriously.

25 All staff contribute to the very good support and guidance provided for pupils and this reflects the very positive ethos of the school as a caring community. The learning mentors and support staff play a particularly important role and their work complements the school's very good procedures to track pupils' academic progress very well. Support staff have responsibility for a small number of pupils. In the case of pupils with special educational needs they are very clear on the targets in the pupils' individual education plans and their role within them. They give feedback to teachers on the progress the pupils are making, although this tends to be verbal and there are no systematic arrangements for them to formally contribute to the review process. However, the learning mentors provide a more structured and systematic level of support. Individual pupils are identified and in some cases individual action plans are drawn up involving parents and the pupil. The lead learning mentor works very closely with the headteacher, which ensures he is fully informed on the action being taken and the progress being made.

26 The school has established sound procedures to involve pupils in the work of the school. The school council has only been in operation for a short while, and involves staff, governors, parents and pupils mainly drawn from Years 3 to 6. Its structure reflects the school's commitment to promoting the community 'feel' for the school. A member of the governors chairs the meetings and

a Year 5 pupil is the deputy chair and they meet together before meetings to set the agenda. The deputy headteacher is the secretary. It is beginning to have a positive impact on the school. For example, it has been instrumental in developing the lunchtime 'buddy' system and in the establishment of the school's anti-bullying charter. Recently systems have been put in place to canvas the views of pupils in year groups who are not represented on the council.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to deal with any concerns or complaints from parents are very good.
- The procedures to involve parents in the work and development of the school are very good.
- The school is well regarded in the local community and it makes good use of the local area and community facilities in lessons.
- Links with one of the local secondary schools are good.

Commentary

27 The school has made considerable efforts to develop the role of parents in school. Although only a few help in school on a regular basis, they are very supportive and the vast majority have very high regard for the school and feel that it provides their children with a high standard of education. An important factor at the root of the trust that exists between the parents and the school is their confidence in the staff, and in particular the headteacher. They are confident that if they have any concerns or complaints they will be dealt with quickly and very effectively. Parents receive three written reports each year. These meet requirements but, unusually for the school, are not fully pupil-specific. This is mainly due to the fact that they are computer generated and the school has recognised they are in need of improvement and have recently bought a different and much more flexible program to improve the quality of the reports. There are three parents meetings each year, as well as the daily opportunities to talk to teaching and support staff at the beginning and end of the day. This ensures that parents know how well their children are doing. The arrangements to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs are effective so they are fully informed on what the school is trying to achieve for their children. The learning mentors also play an important role in developing links with parents, particularly of pupils who are experiencing some problems in school, with attendance or who have just arrived at the school.

28 The school has established good links with the community and other schools. Parents feel that the school has a good reputation in the local area, and benefits the local community by the many after school activities available to their children. In addition, the school organises some events for parents during the day such as a 'Parenting workshop' and a spoken English class. The school takes part in many local events - especially sports, works with other schools to support local charities and uses the community as an important resource in its teaching. The school has established particularly strong links with one of the local secondary schools at several levels. There is good communication at a management level. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the learning mentors meet with secondary school staff so they are fully aware of any problems pupils may have before they transfer. Pupils visit the school and take part in lessons and other activities prior to transfer. Teachers from the secondary school have also been into school to teach some lessons. Together, these links ensure that pupils are well prepared for transferring to secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. Governance of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership of the school is very good. He is well supported by senior managers. The school deals

very well with the potential barriers to learning caused by high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the high numbers of pupils who join the school during the school year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has very high aspirations for the school and a very clear vision for its future based on very effective self-evaluation procedures.
- The headteacher and key staff, particularly the deputy headteacher, have successfully created a very positive school ethos based on very strong teamwork.
- Governors are supportive of the school and the senior managers.
- Through their teaching and curriculum leadership, the headteacher and key staff are very good role models for other staff.
- Financial management is good and close attention is given to ensuring the school gets good value from its spending.
- All subject leaders have a good understanding of the standards and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects due to effective monitoring procedures.
- Procedures to monitor performance data to identify, plan and evaluate whole school initiatives are good. However, the use of the data to monitor the relative achievement of pupils of different ethnic and ability groups to set individual pupil targets for improvement with class teachers is not rigorous enough.

Commentary

29 The headteacher is the driving force behind the school and the architect of its success as a very inclusive school that values the contribution of all pupils and staff. He has a very clear vision and extremely high aspirations for the school as an institution that reflects the diversity of its pupils' experiences, skills and attributes through all aspects of its work. Together with the deputy headteacher he has created a school with a very positive ethos and distinctive approach to meeting the needs of its pupils. Parents also hold the headteacher in very high regard and the vast majority believe the school is well run.

30 A key feature of the headteacher's leadership is his willingness to take carefully calculated strategic decisions that involve curriculum innovation and an element of risk in a drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. For example, the school is taking part in a pilot scheme with a few other schools in the area as part of the government's workforce reform initiative. This has involved teachers delegating responsibility for the direct teaching and delivery of their planning for their classes to the support staff whilst they undertake staff development, assessment and planning activities. This has only been in place for a few weeks and its impact on pupils' learning has not yet been evaluated. The inspection identified some weaknesses within the provision, mainly linked to a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching and planning across year groups. However, the school has effectively established a pattern of provision that has the potential to further develop the inclusivity of the school by providing activities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and to meet the needs of pupils who have particular talents in the creative and performance arts, building on the diversity of their backgrounds.

31 Since the last inspection, the school has responded well to the key issues identified. The leadership team has been expanded to include the co-ordinators for the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. They have a clear understanding of the wider role in school and form a strong team and support the headteacher well in the development of the school. They are also very good role models for the rest of the school through their own teaching and their management of their own areas. Together the headteacher, the deputy head and the senior managers have motivated and inspired all staff to share in their vision for the school and created a very cohesive staff team based on sharing good practice and very good teamwork. This includes all adults who work within the school and extends to pastoral, administrative and catering staff in addition to the academic teaching and support staff. The very significant contribution of the learning mentors, in particular the lead learning mentor, through the management and implementation of the very effective network of

support for pupils that underpins much of the pastoral work of the school to the overall school ethos cannot be under-estimated.

32 The role and effectiveness of subject leaders and co-ordinators, including the co-ordinator for pupils with English as an additional language has also developed well since the last inspection. Although, a significant proportion have been in post for only a short time they give good leadership to their areas. They all have clear action plans in place to develop their subjects. This is the result of the good opportunities all subject leaders have had to monitor the provision and the quality of teaching and standards in their subjects by observing lessons, looking at pupils' work, assessment data and evaluating colleagues planning. However, as yet their impact on provision in most foundation subjects has been limited to improving the resources available for teachers. The feedback given to colleagues has been effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning in a few subjects, for example, in science. Leadership is very effective in English and mathematics. Teaching is now good in both subjects and the subject leaders have very clear plans to improve it further in the drive to raising standards. The special educational needs co-ordinator has had an excellent impact on developing the provision in response to the last inspection. At that time, provision was judged to be inadequate in a number of ways and pupils failed to make the expected progress. The provision is now very good and inspection evidence shows that pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

33 Governors are very supportive of the school and they share the headteacher's vision for its future. They ensure that the school meets its statutory responsibilities, including the effective promotion of the school's racial equality policy. The success of this is apparent through the pupils' attitudes towards each other and the very good relationships seen throughout the school. They are regularly in school, visit classes on an informal basis and contribute to the range of activities provided after school and as part of the PPA pilot project. Several, including the chair of governors have been involved with the school for a long time and believe passionately in its role, not just as an academic institution, but as an important part of the local community. In this way they make a significant contribution to the cohesiveness and community ethos of the school. However, although they are aware of the significant impact the school has on pupils' personal development, they are less clear on the strengths and areas of development in academic standards and teaching and learning. Much of what they know is due to the detailed reports they receive from the headteacher and other staff rather than as a direct result of their own systematic monitoring of performance data and lessons. As a result, although they challenge the headteacher to explain the rationale behind decisions and school priorities, they are less aware of the impact of initiatives on pupils' achievement.

34 The basis of the school's good improvement since the last inspection is the very good self-evaluation procedures. As a result, the headteacher and senior managers have a very good understanding of how effective the school is in the different aspects of its work and what it needs to develop further. They monitor and analyse pupils' academic performance in national and school tests well and use the information effectively to identify whole school priorities for development. For example, in English, pupils' handwriting was identified as an area for improvement and a whole school scheme of work has recently been introduced. Performance management procedures for teachers are intrinsically linked to improving standards. However, the school does not use the assessment information sufficiently to evaluate the relative achievements of the different ethnic or ability groups as part of this process. As a result, teaching staff are not sufficiently involved in translating the assessment information into setting expectations or targets for individual pupils.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	729395	Balance from previous year	32033
Total expenditure	729448	Balance carried forward to the next	38798

Expenditure per pupil	3014
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35 Financial management is good. At the last inspection, the school had a significant deficit. Due to careful budgeting and the importance governors and the headteacher make on ensuring that they get best value from the school income this has been completely eliminated and the school now has a surplus budget within national guidelines. For example, three different companies had been employed to maintain the ICT equipment until the existing contractor was awarded the contract.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36 The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is **good** overall with **very good** provision for children's personal, social and emotional development.

37 Assessments carried out in the children's first few weeks in nursery indicate that the majority of children enter the Foundation Stage with attainment which is well below that which is expected nationally. All children achieve well as a result of good and sometimes very good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. Nevertheless by the end of the Foundation Stage a significant minority of children do not reach the Early Learning Goals in Communication, Language and Literacy, Mathematical Development and Knowledge and Understanding of the World. However, the majority exceed the goals in personal, social and emotional development. Staff work well as a team to ensure that children settle well to their learning and that all have equal access to the broad range of experiences on offer. Provision for children who have special educational needs or who do not speak English at home is very good.

38 Teachers plan in detail to specific learning objectives relating to the early learning goals. Day to day assessments are made and are used to inform the next stage of planning for each child's work. The teachers have very high expectations for each child's progress. Each day is well structured, lessons proceed at a good pace and usually changes in activities take account of young children's concentration span. Activities are well considered for the age group and are carefully prepared and organised. Teaching and support staff work well together, which enables support staff to make a positive impact on children's achievement and on the quality of education provided. All staff know individual children very well and are knowledgeable about the needs of children in the Foundation Stage. There is usually a good balance between direct teaching and independent activities.

39 The teaching areas are made bright with displays of children's work and both are well furnished. The nursery classroom is quite small and this has impacted on the way the teacher has organised her children into two teaching groups which alternate in their use of designated areas, coming together for brief periods each session. However good use is made of the school hall, enabling all of the children to enjoy dance and physical education lessons together. Resources are carefully selected and well organised to support the children in particular lines of enquiry. The quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory overall and the outdoor area offers good opportunities for learning. The coordinator maintains a good overview of the curriculum and prioritises appropriate developments and staff training issues.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good.
- Children learn at an accelerated rate because teaching in this area is very good.
- Very clear routines are understood by the children, enabling them to grow in confidence and become independent.

Commentary

40 All staff have high expectations of the children, all of the time. They remind, encourage, model, motivate and reinforce how children should treat each other and behave. From the start they encourage children to be independent in their day-to-day tasks. Self-help skills are very good, children take off shoes and socks for physical activities such as dance without fuss and need little assistance. Children try very hard to succeed, knowing that help is available if they need it. Children

know how to line up sensibly, walk to the school hall in an orderly fashion and sit quietly, waiting for their lesson to begin. They are successful because their teachers break down information and instructions into small steps, which children can understand and follow. Behaviour is very good in a range of situations, for example, in assemblies, whole class, small groups, or on their own. Very good relationships are established too, enabling children to work and play happily together, sharing toys and equipment. Staff use praise to good effect, raising children's confidence and self esteem. At the end of a session the teacher produced a jar of marbles inviting each child to take a marble, also reminding them that she wanted to hear them using words like *brilliant* or *excellent* about their own achievement, as they transferred the marble to another jar. Clearly the children were used to this positive activity and offered descriptions of themselves as *star girl* or *superboy*. In this way children learn to feel valued and to value themselves. They learn about respect for others when they are reminded to listen to what other children have to say. Most children are very keen to share their ideas and make themselves understood, despite the difficulties they encounter at this stage of very early acquisition of English. The ethos in nursery and the reception class supports and promotes the progress of all children very well. As a result, children achieve very well to attain good standards in Personal, Social and Emotional development by the end of reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Teachers plan a good range of activities focused on developing children's basic language skills in English.
- Teachers carefully track children's progress.

Commentary

41 The majority of children in the Foundation Stage do not speak English at home. Due to good teaching, all children including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well. Skills in language and literacy are developed systematically through carefully planned activities. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of speaking and listening skills. In nursery these skills are fostered successfully through purposeful and imaginative play, singing songs and rhymes and through opportunities for children to talk in front of the group. Whilst a small number of children speak confidently, using good vocabulary, for the majority of children this is very difficult. Despite this, they are willing and encouraged to *have a go*. Teachers make this easier by choosing big books which feature repeating lines and choruses, encouraging children's interaction and group responses. Teachers are skilled in presenting these activities in a very dramatic and multi-sensory way, making good use of facial expressions, of their voices and using their hands to give visual clues. The children's enjoyment is obvious as they enter into the telling and dramatisation of "*We're Going on a Bear Hunt*." During these activities children also learn that print is different to pictures and that it carries meaning. They learn to recognise letter names and sounds and how to form the letters. The reception class teacher uses games such as hiding a letter behind a cardboard wall, revealing the letter a little at a time to see how quickly the children can identify it. As well as strengthening children's understanding of letter shapes, this game introduces an element of challenge to see who can identify the letter first, all of the children are keen to rise to the challenge. The acquisition of children's literacy skills is well supported by an interactive programme to teach children letter names and sounds which they enjoy and which enables them to begin to spell three letter words. The learning areas are all set up to promote literacy skills. Labels, captions, books and displays surround children with words, and the development of literacy skills pervades all of their learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Activities are well matched to children's needs.
- Support staff are well deployed and work effectively with children in group activities.

Commentary

42 Whilst a significant minority of children will not reach the early learning goals in this area of learning, the achievement of most children is good. This is due to the strong emphasis which teachers place on number skills and the opportunities they seize in all areas of learning to promote and develop mathematical links. In nursery, an interesting range of activities is used well to introduce mathematical concepts and to help children to gain confidence with numbers. Most of the activities are oral and practical, which make mathematics fun for young children. Children learn a lot from singing songs and from number rhymes, where they learn to count up to and back from, a given number. By playing in sand or water, children develop simple ideas of weight and capacity and they begin to use mathematical terms such as *big, small, long, longest, empty* and *full*. By the end of nursery most children can recognise, order and write numerals up to five, ten or beyond according to their ability. In reception, mathematics activities continue to be taught well and presented in a lively way, holding children's interest and ensuring that they make good progress. Children can name a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. They use correct vocabulary to describe their attributes, for example, *face, base, surface* and *corner*. They know that a cube will not roll and that it has eight corners. The teacher plans independent activities which are well matched to the children's needs.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress.
- Limited knowledge of topic related words prevents children from engaging in good quality, imaginative play, recreating the roles of people who help us.

Commentary

43 Children achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the world due to good teaching that promotes children's learning well through a variety of practical experiences. All children use the computer regularly and most are able to use the mouse to click and drag, or to draw simple shapes. Children practise these skills to reinforce what they have learned about two-dimensional shapes in their mathematics lesson. Similarly, good links are made with their literacy activities when children singing, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, wriggle their fingers in the materials encountered on the hunt, for example, in grass, water, or artificial snow. They learn more about their environment when they plant seeds, or watch tadpoles develop. Whilst children clearly enjoyed sitting in the fire engine they had made the day before, most were unable to do more than that because they did not have the vocabulary or topic knowledge to extend their play. However two of the higher attaining children played together, one at the top of the castle waving her arms and shouting *Help*, the other racing around to find a *big ladder up to the clouds to wash the fire off*. Children come from a wide range of different backgrounds and cultures, this helps them to develop a very good awareness of their own culture and the cultures of others, when they celebrate festivals or enjoy food from other countries.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress.
- The outdoor area offers good opportunities for children to practise and refine their physical skills.

Commentary

44 Children achieve well in this area of learning which is not so reliant on language skills, therefore the majority of children are in line to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children manipulate small tools such as pencils, brushes, scissors and glue spreaders very well and they squeeze, squash, roll and manipulate malleable materials such as play dough. They gain increasing dexterity as they complete jigsaws and use a range of construction materials. In dance or physical education, children practise and improve co-ordination when developing sequences of stretching, jumping, reaching high and swooping low. The imaginative development of the outdoor play area is a major factor in helping the children to make good progress in their physical skills. Here they can enjoy the opportunities to pedal, push, run, climb or balance and show awareness of the needs of others in the space around them. They also learn the concepts of *under*, *over* and *through* as they manipulate their bodies whilst playing in the castle or on the climbing frame. Teaching in this area is good overall. Teachers provide a good range of activities to promote physical development and children's control over body movement.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress.
- Children enjoy a wide range of creative activities which enable them to reach the early learning goals.

Commentary

45 Children achieve well in this area due to good teaching that provides children with a wide range of creative experiences and activities including art and design, dance, music and imaginative play. The majority are in line to reach the early learning goals for this area of learning. Children draw, print, paint, model and use collage to create colourful pieces of work. They develop art and design techniques and skills, applying them well to create bright displays which enhance their learning environment. They use them also to support their work in other areas of learning, for example, children used paper plates, cardboard boxes, natural and man-made material to create a table top environment, after reading, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, and to prepare them to take part in their own bear hunt in school. Children are given a good introduction to music, enjoying frequent opportunities to listen to the music of well known composers and artists at snack time in their classroom, or in assembly where members of the school's own steel band often play. Good opportunities are provided for children to experiment with sound and rhythms when percussion instruments are provided in well-structured lessons. Sharing, carefully chosen, big books and inviting dramatic responses from the children makes a good contribution to children's cultural development. At the same time this also promotes their speaking and listening and performance skills, and extends their knowledge and understanding of the world. Good teaching in this area is seen in the variety of interesting ways children are enabled to learn more about colour, texture, techniques, drama and music. Effective adult support encourages children to make creative responses to what they see, hear, touch and smell.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in Years 2 and 6. However, pupils achieve well due to good teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Teaching has a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic literacy skills.
- Effective analysis of performance data ensures that the subject action plan is clearly focussed on areas for improvement.
- Teachers do not use other subjects enough for pupils to use and practise their literacy skills.
- Teachers do not consistently use questions well enough to fully extend pupils' speaking skills.
- Assessment procedures are very good and the information is used effectively to track the progress pupils are making.
- The subject is very well led by the subject leaders.

Commentary

46 From a well below starting point, pupils achieve well as they move through the school. However, by the end of Years 2 and 6, due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the proportion of pupils who attain the expected level in reading and writing is below average. However, the school's results are also adversely affected by the high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school during the year, a significant number of whom are refugees or asylum seekers. Those pupils who attend the school during Years 3 to 6 achieve very well. Many of those pupils who join the school during these years achieve well, but do not attain as well in the national tests in Year 6 because the school does not have enough time to fully offset what those pupils have already missed. Many of these pupils also have English as an additional language which creates additional challenges for teachers and support staff. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good in Year 2. They make good progress in Years 3 to 6 so by Year 6, listening skills are good and pupils are very attentive when teachers or other pupils are speaking. Due to the very good support pupils get from class teachers and specialist support staff, most pupils' confidence in spoken English improves rapidly as they move through the school so that by Year 6 the majority are confident when speaking to the rest of the class, especially when describing what they have been doing. Standards in reading and writing are currently below average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils steadily develop their skills as they move through the school so, by Year 6, pupils are competent readers, but, except for a small proportion of higher attaining pupils, they do not consistently extract the relevant information from what they read, for example, to draw conclusions about characters' emotions. The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation is good. The majority of pupils have a secure understanding of the basic skills of punctuation and grammar and express their ideas and describe what they have been doing clearly with a good structure. Spelling is good. However, pupils' use of expressive language in their writing is less well developed and few use emotive language or describe the feelings of characters in books or stories. This partly reflects the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language. However, analysis of assessment data shows that pupils who benefit from additional support achieve well as they move through the school at a similar pace to their peers. Similar analysis shows that pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in developing their reading and writing skills.

47 Teaching and learning throughout the school is good with consistent strengths in many lessons in most classes. Teachers' very high expectations of behaviour ensure that pupils listen well, try hard to do their best and behave very well. Learning intentions are shared with pupils at the start of the lessons so pupils are clear about what they will be learning. Opening parts of lessons in all classes are good and most teachers try to involve all pupils in the discussion by using good open-ended questions to encourage them to express their ideas and opinions. However, not all teachers

target questions sufficiently to specific pupils to encourage them to expand upon their answers or to draw a few less confident pupils into the discussion. The pace of these parts of lessons is brisk and books and other written texts are used well to illustrate to pupils the point the teacher is aiming to teach. As a result, pupils' listening skills develop well. They make good progress in understanding the basic skills of punctuation, grammar and spelling. The strong emphasis the school places on developing pupils' basic skills was recognised in 2003 with the Basic Skills Award. The links between the opening discussion and the main activities are generally good and well matched to needs of the range of attainment in the classes.

48 Teachers have a very clear understanding of how to use support staff to work with individuals or groups in lessons. The support staff themselves are skilled at their role and make a very significant contribution to the progress of pupils with specific needs such as English as an additional language or special educational needs. They achieve a good balance between prompting pupils and helping them do the task they are set and are also very effective when they are working in class or on specific programmes designed to develop reading skills.

49 The subject leaders are giving very good leadership to the subject. Due to very good monitoring procedures, which include observation of lessons, looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work they have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the subject and the areas for improvement and have used this information very well as the basis for the subject action plan. Various initiatives involving external advice and training have contributed well to the provision, particularly the consistency of teaching and, as a result, standards are beginning to improve. Both teachers are very good role models for their colleagues through their own teaching.

50 Since the last inspection, the curriculum and assessment procedures have improved well, although ICT is not yet an integral part of many lessons except when tasks linked to English are used in the computer suite. Assessment procedures are very thorough in all years, and the information is used effectively to track the progress pupils and classes are making. However, it is not used rigorously enough to predict the rate of progress individual pupils should be expected to make and to involve class teachers in working towards these targets. Targets are set for pupils in all classes and these are recorded when they are achieved, but pupils are not consistently involved in setting and reviewing these targets and they are not linked to teachers' individual professional development targets. Resources generally are good, but the library area in one of the main corridors restricts the opportunities pupils have to develop their library skills and to conduct research on their own.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51 In Years 1 and 2, teachers provide pupils with plenty of tasks that require them to use their reading and writing in subjects such as science, history and geography. However, this is not as consistent in Years 3 to 6, although pupils are expected to write about what they have been doing in some subjects such as science. In other subjects such as history and geography, teachers do not plan enough activities that require pupils to write for themselves, to record their own ideas and express their opinions on the topic they are studying. However, throughout the school, teachers' very high expectations of pupils' presentation in all their work makes an important contribution to pupils' attitudes to their work and standards of handwriting.

MATHEMATICS.

Provision In mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well due to good teaching.
- Individual targets for improvement are being set.
- ICT is not being used well enough to support work in mathematics.
- There are insufficient opportunities to develop mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils are given lots of opportunities to talk about and explain their work.

- The subject is led and managed very well.

Commentary.

52 Last year results in national tests were very low in Years 2 and 6 when compared to national averages but were slightly better when compared to similar schools. However, closer analysis shows that in Year 6, the scores of higher attaining pupils are in line with national expectations and well above when compared to their own prior attainment. These results need to be viewed with some caution because results have fluctuated; there has been a lot of movement of pupils in and out of the school and a high percentage of pupils have special educational needs. Although standards are currently below average in Years 2 and 6, inspection evidence shows that pupils who stay at the school through Years 3 to 6 achieve very well and more significantly, that their attainment is in line with national standards. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve very well due to the very good support they receive in lessons.

53 The quality of teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. There is a clear focus on meeting the needs of individual pupils and, as a result, they achieve well. This is particularly the case in pupils' number and computation skills and their understanding of mathematical language. For example, in Year 1, pupils are already learning to know and use a good range of mathematical vocabulary related to addition and subtraction and Year 2 pupils recognise odd and even numbers up to thirty accurately. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate very good recall of table facts and their links to division, while a majority of pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge and understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and the relationships between them.

54 In most lessons, tasks are set at different levels of difficulty that enable all pupils to take a full part and learn new knowledge and skills. Teaching assistants have an important role and give very good support to individual pupils and groups and this helps everyone to do their best and make good progress. Pupils have positive attitudes and respond well with lots of hands up to answer oral questions and neatly present work in their books. This accurately reflects teachers' high expectations for work and behaviour. Pupils are given opportunities to work independently from an early age and while they can't do this very well in Year 1 they are able to do so in Year 2. However, there is little evidence that they are being given enough chances to apply and use their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum.

55 Pupils have lots of opportunities to talk about their work and explain what they have been doing. They are encouraged to use the correct mathematical terms from an early stage and their vocabulary is progressively built up. Teachers' queries and prompts are used well to clarify and assess pupils' learning. Some questions are directed to named individuals so that even the most reluctant participants are brought into the action. Closing sessions in lessons are used by all teachers, some more effectively than others, to assess and consolidate pupils' learning. When these are not used well enough there is no clear focus, only a chance for some pupils to show others their work. Written work is checked regularly and given lots of supportive comments, though advice on how to improve is more inconsistent. Testing is used well to identify what pupils can and cannot do so targets for improvement can be set. Pupils are fully involved in this process. For example, during the inspection, in Year 4, examples of pupils' work were put alongside their targets so that they could see exactly what was needed to achieve the next step. In Year 6, current projections show that the school will meet its agreed targets in this year's national tests.

56 The role of the subject leader has developed well since the last inspection and the subject is now led and managed very well by a highly skilled and experienced subject leader who understands the subject very well and knows what needs to be done. Through her own teaching she is a very good role model for other staff. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully monitored and this has had a positive impact on teaching and learning. Developing pupils' numeracy skills and their ability to solve problems has been a key focus, so much so that other aspects of mathematics, such as data handling are not being covered as consistently well. The potential for ICT to support work in mathematics in lessons is not being exploited sufficiently.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57 Mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils' learning is improved because teachers ensure that they understand its relevance throughout the rest of the curriculum and are beginning to use other subjects to support their learning in mathematics lessons. For example, pupils use their knowledge of shape and their measuring skills in design and technology and in science, pupils sometimes use graphs and tables to record results of investigations. However, overall teachers do not plan enough activities in other subjects for pupils to use their mathematical skills on their own.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use their ICT skills to record and present the results of investigations.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to investigate for themselves.

Commentary

58 Whilst pupils achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school, standards of attainment are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is due in part to the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and to the high percentage of pupils who arrive or leave during the school year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils know that pushes and pulls are forces and they can identify which force is needed when operating devices in daily use, such as a light switch or a computer keyboard. They are able to select the quantity and size of batteries required to make some devices work. Although pupils are attentive during the teachers' introductions to lessons, their interest and enthusiasm increases as soon as they begin the practical activities in their lessons. Pupils co-operate and behave well, applying themselves to their tasks and enjoying their success, sometimes achieved with the help of an adult. In Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things when they learn the purpose of skeletons, or how muscles help humans and animals to move. Pupils are introduced to the use of keys, based on observable, external features, to help them to identify and group living things systematically. They discover how materials can be changed by physical force or by heating or cooling. They begin to understand for which materials the change is reversible or irreversible. By Year 6, most pupils understand how to devise a fair test by changing only one factor at a time.

59 Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of the different strands of the subject and that they develop investigative skills. However on most occasions, pupil's work on the same activities and expectations are not matched sufficiently to different abilities. For example, lower attaining pupils may simply have less recording to do, whilst higher attaining pupils have too few opportunities to design and carry out their own investigations, or to present their findings themselves. Pupils are usually given a format common to all ability groups, and often copy some of the information from the board. In this way opportunities are missed to extend pupils' literacy skills and to use ICT as tool to record and present the findings from their investigations.

60 Leadership and management of the subject are good. Recent developments have included training activities to improve teachers' expertise in teaching science. Booster groups introduced for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 resulted in improvements in results in the statutory assessments in 2003, for most of the pupils involved. Teaching and learning are now monitored systematically. Effective assessment procedures are in place and a portfolio of pupils' assessed work now supports teachers in their judgements of standards of attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are not high enough.
- ICT is not being used well enough to support work in other subjects.
- Staff training has improved their expertise and confidence.

Commentary

61 Despite the school's efforts to improve resources and to provide staff with training which has raised their subject knowledge and confidence, in a rapidly changing subject, standards have not improved since the last inspection. The ICT suite is quite small and unable to accommodate whole classes but teachers make satisfactory arrangements to compensate for this. However, until very recently, the school has suffered significantly from poor external technical advice and support that has severely affected the resources available for pupils to use. As a result, the computer suite has been unreliable, the range of programs available for pupils has not been consistent on all machines and it has frequently been out of use which has affected teachers' confidence in the facility and restricted the access pupils have had to it. As a result, pupils' attainment in ICT is below national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 3 to 6 where demands are higher nationally. The school has introduced good procedures to track the progress pupils make. However, the most recent assessments show that no pupils were judged to be at the appropriate levels at the end of Years 2 or 6.

62 Limited evidence of older pupils' work was available to evaluate standards, as much of this was lost when a third party mistakenly deleted staff and pupils' work from the server. However, talking with groups of pupils showed that there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding, particularly that of older pupils in Year 6. For example, pupils in Year 2 know that they need to log on and log off but some still need help to do this. They have word processed some of their writing and printed it out but are unsure about changing fonts and sizes. Year 6 pupils have a good working knowledge of word processing but they have only used e-mail when visiting the City Learning Centre. Most pupils in this group have a computer and Internet access at home and this is a big advantage that became very obvious when pupils were given an opportunity to demonstrate their skills. Pupils referred to a limited number of programs they had used and knew little or nothing about musical composition or spreadsheets to give but two examples. They know about some devices in the home that rely on microchip technology, such as the washing machine, and they have all used a digital camera in school.

63 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement for Years 3 to 6. Teachers and teaching assistants have received appropriate training to enable them to teach ICT and this is an ongoing process. Teachers' skills have been analysed again recently as part of a new support package which is already giving better advice and support than other failed ventures in the past. Pupils have positive attitudes towards ICT and are enthusiastic about their work but most of them are not achieving as well as they could. This is mainly because, although they learn the basic skills, they have not been given sufficient opportunities to then use and apply them and this has been made worse when computers have been out of action for varying periods. In addition, there are one or two computers in each classroom but not enough use is made of these machines in lessons.

64 The school has tried very hard to improve the provision for pupils. A newly qualified teacher has recently been appointed as the subject leader and just before the inspection new external consultants were brought into school to completely service the machines in the computer suite and to ensure that the range of programs available for pupils to use is consistent throughout the suite. In addition, an accredited commercial provider has been commissioned to complete a detailed profile of ICT provision. As a result of their report and the good opportunities the headteacher has provided

for the subject leader to monitor and evaluate teachers' planning and observe some lessons, the school now has an appropriate two year action plan to improve the provision for pupils. One specific aspect that has already been identified is a need for ICT links to be made more explicit in planning and for this to be done in sufficient detail so that ICT can make an effective contribution in other areas of the curriculum. Inspection evidence confirms this to be an accurate evaluation of the current position and one of the main contributors to the lower than expected standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65 The use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects is limited, particularly for higher attaining pupils who do not have sufficient activities for them to reinforce and develop their skills. Mainly pupils use ICT to present their written work and to carry out basic research using the Internet. The potential that the subject has for pupils to present their work in, for example, science using graphs and charts, is not effectively exploited.

HUMANITIES

66 There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on the provision for **history** or **geography**. However, samples of pupils' work, two lessons seen and discussion with the subject leaders, indicate that the curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, pupils' work indicates that there are few opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in lessons and there are not enough activities that expect pupils to use a broad range of writing or number skills. They have plenty of activities to describe and write factual matters. However, much of this is worksheet based and not enough tasks require them to express their views or opinions or to use their imagination to consider what life was like for different people in the past or present times. The subject leaders are keen and enthusiastic and have been given time to monitor the strengths in the provision of the quality of teaching and learning. The school has developed good procedures to assess the progress pupils are making. However, as yet, the subject leaders have not had time to use the information they have gathered to implement significant changes to the provision in their subjects.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use the multi-cultural dimension of the school well in lessons.
- Effective use is made of visits to local places of worship.
- Cross-curricular links, particularly with literacy, are not well established.

Commentary

67 Standards are in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achieve satisfactorily. Pupils move in and out of the school frequently and this has a negative impact on continuity and progression for these pupils. However, the school is mindful of the need to integrate new pupils carefully as they have a wide variety of religious beliefs and come with different expectations. The school places a very high priority on ensuring that religious education and collective worship cater for as many pupils as possible. As a result, only a very small number of pupils are withdrawn from these sessions by their parents and the subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

68 Overall, teaching is good and a very good lesson was seen in Year 5. Teachers demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the subject and staff support each other well using their shared expertise effectively. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn at the start of each lesson. For example, "Today we are going to find out how Saul was converted to Christianity." They use questions well to extend pupils' thinking and discussion to

broaden pupils' knowledge and assess what they have learnt. Teachers and teaching assistants support all pupils very well, particularly those who have special educational needs, and this ensures that everyone does their best. Teachers use informative visits to places of worship within the local community well to support what pupils learn about in school. For example the cathedral, mosque and gurdwara; and visitors enrich pupils' work in class and assemblies. In addition, effective links are being made to pupils' own experiences and teachers use the multi-cultural dimension of the school well in lessons and through the good displays of work in all classrooms in Years 3 to 6. The needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language and who may be recent residents of the United Kingdom are also recognised. For example, there is a corridor display, "Spring Festivals Around the World" which is specifically designed to involve pupils who are currently at an early stage in learning English. Teachers set high standards for work and behaviour. Pupils respond positively and take pride in their work and this is reflected in the very good handwriting and presentation seen in pupils' books. However, activities in lessons do not consistently give pupils sufficient opportunities to use and practise their literacy skills and written follow-up tasks are not always set at appropriate levels of difficulty to challenge all pupils. For example, older and more able pupils are sometimes asked to do sentence completion tasks when they are quite capable of writing at greater length independently. There are some examples of good practice, as in Year 5, when pupils were re-telling the story of Rama and Sita through a play script which was a good link to a previous literacy lesson.

69 There is good leadership and management of the subject by an enthusiastic subject leader who is well informed. This is based on analysing the information from the termly teacher assessments, monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning by checking teachers' planning, observing some lessons and analysing displays. In this way the subject leader has developed a clear understanding of work being done and what needs to be improved, and has informed governors about this. As a result, since the last inspection, teaching has improved, staff training needs have been specified and levels of resources and their organisation have been improved.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70 No lessons were seen in **design and technology** or **art and design** so no secure judgement can be made on teaching or standards. However, the school was awarded the 'Artsmark' in 2002 in recognition of its emphasis on developing pupils' skills. The regular whole school challenges set for each class within a specific theme results in a high standard of imaginative two and three dimensional artwork.

71 Physical education and music were sampled during this inspection. Insufficient teaching was observed to enable an overall judgement about provision in these subjects to be made. In **music**, planning is based on the Manchester music scheme and the school has made a real effort to improve standards. The Local Education Authority adviser has observed lessons in school and given demonstrations as part of an in-service training programme. There are opportunities for talented pupils to receive specialist music tuition. During the inspection, in assembly pupils in Year 4 and Year 6, who are members of the steel band, performed three pieces competently and enthusiastically. The band is taught and conducted by a peripatetic music teacher from the Local Education Authority's music service and pupils are making excellent progress. As part of the initiative to provide time for teachers to plan and prepare lessons, a group of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have been taught to sing a selection of songs by their classroom assistants.

72 The **physical education** programme is based on a sound scheme of work developed along Local Education Authority guidelines that ensures coverage of the National Curriculum and the gradual progression of pupils' skills. Assessment procedures are good, with each pupil assessed against National Curriculum criteria each term. Appropriate arrangements are made for pupils to learn to swim. There are excellent indoor and outdoor facilities and adequate resources. In addition to the activities in lessons, there is a wide range of activities after school that are all free and open to pupils of all ages. Sports and games are used as a vehicle for pupils of all academic abilities to achieve success and sporting achievements are recognised in assemblies. The school has enjoyed spectacular success in judo at the Greater Manchester Games and has strong links with the British

Judo Association through the headteacher and lead learning mentor. Effective links are also being developed with the local secondary school to benefit from coaching expertise. The school is in the process of applying for the Active Mark Award in recognition of its commitment to sports provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73 The school makes very good provision for pupils' in personal, social and health education. Throughout the school, staff place a very high priority on involving pupils in discussions, encouraging them to consider their work and to express their views and opinions. In reception, staff build on children's personal skills very effectively. They encourage them to work, play and communicate with each other so, from a very low starting point, by the end of reception their skills in this area of learning are better than those expected. The positive attitudes and very good behaviour of pupils show that the school makes very good provision for developing pupils' personal skills and qualities. Due to the very good relationships in school between adults and pupils, all staff, including the lunchtime supervisors and catering staff contribute well to this provision. There is a consistent system in school of rewards and certificates and pupils understand these systems. A notable feature of the school is the very high respect and regard pupils have for each other's cultural traditions and beliefs. This is partly due to the way that teachers very effectively draw upon pupils' own experiences in discussions in lessons and celebrate the contribution that each pupil makes to the school. The high quality of its provision was recognised in 2003 with the Healthy Schools Award and the Smoking Prevention Award.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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