

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRIST CHURCH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chadderton, Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105707

Headteacher: Mr S Rigby

Lead inspector: Mr C Henderson

Dates of inspection: June 14th – 17th 2004

Inspection number: 255806

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	255
School address:	Crawley Way Off Denton Lane Chadderton Oldham Lancashire
Postcode:	OL9 9ED
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr E Butterworth
Date of previous inspection:	September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Christ Church Church of England School is an average-sized primary school. There are 144 boys and 111 girls currently on the school roll, with many more boys than girls in some years, particularly Year 2 and Year 5. The school serves mainly its local community, although a significant proportion of pupils come from outside the immediate area. Pupils come from a mixture of private and rented housing and a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. Most pupils are of white, United Kingdom ethnic background. Twelve per cent of pupils are from other ethnic minority groups. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as many parents have part-time employment locally, although over 20 per cent of pupils are entitled to a clothing allowance. Fifteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. These include a broad range of moderate learning, communication, visual and behaviour difficulties. When children start school, their attainment is below that expected for their age. They start the Foundation Stage in two classes, mixed with Year 1 pupils. The school is organised so that some pupils are taught together in single age classes in Years 2, 3, 4 and 6 and others are taught in mixed age classes in Years 1 and 2, 4 and 5 and 5 and 6. The school participates in a good range of educational projects, including Comenius and the Global Project that enhance the range of learning activities.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23742	Mr Colin Henderson	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Geography
			History
			English as an additional language
8943	Mrs Margaret Manning	Lay inspector	
22452	Mrs Mary Farman	Team inspector	Science
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Foundation Stage
11510	Mr Keith Oglesby	Team inspector	English
			Information and communication technology
			Music
			Physical education
			Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of Christ Church C of E Primary School is good. The school is a friendly, harmonious and caring community in which relationships are very good. Pupils have very good attitudes and behave very well. The strong staff team work successfully together to provide good teaching. Pupils achieve well, although standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national average. The school provides a good curriculum, enriched by good extra-curricular and out-of-school activities. Good leadership and management supported by an effective governing body, focus effectively on school improvement, particularly in the key, priority subjects. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well overall, although they have too few opportunities to extend their writing skills.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning.
- The good leadership of the headteacher, supported well by an influential deputy, gives a strong direction to the work of the school.
- The very good care and good support the school provides for pupils.
- Teaching is good, although more able pupils should be doing better in the mixed age classes in Years 1 and 2 and 4 and 5.
- Subject leadership and management in music, history and geography are not developed enough.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. It has made rapid progress recently in improving teaching and developing assessment procedures. Standards are lower, although changes in the local area have resulted in children starting school with lower levels of attainment than at the last inspection. The Foundation Stage curriculum has improved and the school now plans effectively to improve its work. The quality of pupils' writing has not improved enough. ICT resources have improved and these are contributing well to pupils' learning. The procedures that the school uses to check on how well pupils are doing have improved, but the information gathered is not used consistently to inform teaching and set improvement targets.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievements overall are good. Children in the mixed reception and Year 1 classes make good progress in their learning, promoted by good teaching. Most start school with lower than expected levels of attainment and achieve the levels expected nationally by the end of the reception year, except in developing their reading and writing skills. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall and it is good overall in Years 3 to 6. It is not consistently good in each class as teachers' expectations are not always high enough, especially in some mixed-age classes. Ethnic minority pupils achieve well. Boys generally achieve as well as girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their learning targets. Test results show that Year 6 pupils attain better in mathematics than English and science, although standards have dropped in recent years due mainly to some earlier staffing difficulties and weaknesses in pupils' writing. The work

seen during the inspection shows that standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. They are higher than those in the 2003 national tests. Both year groups have a higher proportion of pupils with special education needs than in other years and their prior learning has been affected by staff changes. Many pupils attain average standards in reading, although writing standards remain too low. Standards in mathematics and science are below average, although they are improving, promoted by good teaching, especially pupils' skills in mental mathematics and scientific enquiry. Most Year 4 pupils attain nationally expected standards, with a good proportion attaining above those levels. Standards in ICT and in other subjects meet nationally expected levels.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Behaviour and their attitudes to school are very good. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are consistently good in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good overall in Years 3 to 6, although teachers' expectations of pupils are not always high enough, especially in some mixed-age classes. Whilst most teachers plan work carefully for pupils based clearly on what pupils need to learn next, it is sometimes not as effective, particularly in mixed age classes in Years 1 and 2 and 4 and 5. The school provides very good care for pupils and supports them well. The good curriculum is enriched well by a good range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities. Links with parents are good. The links with the local community and schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership, supported well by an influential deputy. He has established a strong staff team and a positive, caring ethos that successfully includes all pupils. Subject leadership and management are good in English, mathematics, science and ICT. They are not developed enough in music, history and geography and this does not ensure that standards are high enough in these subjects. Governance is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school and support it well, but do not fulfil all their statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views about the school. Their children like school, behave well and are making good progress. Parents value the good quality of teaching and the good leadership of the headteacher. They feel comfortable about approaching the school if they have a concern. Most pupils like being at school; they have to work hard and there is an adult to go to when they are worried. Some were concerned about the behaviour of other children. Inspectors found pupils' behaviour to be very good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Extend pupils' writing skills and apply them consistently in a broader range of subjects.
- Improve the achievement of more able pupils, especially in the mixed-age classes in Years 1 and 2 and Years 4 and 5.
- Develop the roles and contributions of subject co-ordinators, particularly in history, geography and music.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents includes all required information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 attain below average standards. Standards in Year 4 are above average. They are average in other years. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage. It is good overall in Years 3 to 6, although it is not consistent in each class. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good achievement of children in the Foundation Stage.
- The quality of pupils' writing is not consistently high enough.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 4 and 6, promoted by consistently good teaching.
- The achievement of more able pupils in mixed age classes in Years 1 and 2 and Year 4 and 5 is not consistently high enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their learning targets.

Commentary

1 From a below average attainment on entry, children make good progress in their reception year in all areas of learning as a result of consistently good teaching and good support from caring adults. Most attain their nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year, except in communication, language and literacy where many children have weaknesses in their early reading and writing skills. Children enjoy an interesting range of learning activities. Teachers use what they know about the children to provide tasks that meet the children's needs effectively.

2 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily overall. Their achievement is often good in lessons, although teachers do not always expect enough of more able Year 2 pupils, especially in mixed age classes. Year 2 pupils attain below average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. These are lower than the standards at the last inspection. The trend in results of the tests for Year 2 pupils over the last three years is below the national trend. Pupils do not do as well in tests as those in similar schools, mainly as result of staffing changes and a low proportion of pupils attaining above average standards. Although most Year 2 pupils attain average levels, too few are challenged consistently to attain higher standards. The current Year 2 has a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs and an analysis of their work shows that staff changes earlier in the year limited pupils' achievement. Teachers do not maintain a consistent focus on improving the quality of pupils' writing, especially more able pupils. This limits their achievement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (15.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.1 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.7 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

3 Year 6 pupils attain below average standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards are lower than those in the last inspection. The results of national tests for eleven-year-olds over the last three years show that standards fluctuate from year to year, reflecting the variation in different year groups. The school had some staffing difficulties which are now resolved. They resulted in some marked differences in the achievement of year groups. The table of results below shows that last year's Year 6 did not do well based on their prior attainment. They did better than similar schools in mathematics but not as well in English and science. Weaknesses in the quality of

pupils' writing restricted pupils' attainment. Since the beginning of the year, Year 6 pupils are doing better. There have been some changes in staffing and it is evident from work in pupils' books and talking to pupils that standards are improving, promoted by consistently better teaching. Continuing weaknesses in the quality and range of their writing and the higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs limit standards. The school is likely to achieve their below average targets of 53 per cent in English and 63 per cent in mathematics for the proportion of Year 6 pupils to attain the nationally expected Level 4. The proportion of pupils likely to attain above expected levels is well below average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.1 (26.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (26.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (27.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well overall, especially in Years 3, 4 and Year 6 where good teaching and an interesting range of activities promotes good achievement. Overall, boys achieve as well as girls. The achievement of pupils from ethnic minorities is good overall and reflects the pattern of pupils' achievement throughout the school. A good proportion of Year 4 pupils attain above expected levels, resulting from the teacher improving pupils' writing and mathematical skills. Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough, particularly in some mixed-age classes, and this restricts pupils' achievement. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with expected levels throughout the school. They are supported by improved resources and increased teacher confidence and subject expertise, which promote skills and knowledge effectively. Pupils attain expected standards in other subjects. Good teaching and an effective use of visits, specialist staff from the nearby high school and other resources contribute well to pupils' achievement.

5 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans because of the good teaching and effective support. They gain in confidence and self-esteem. The school makes good use of assessment information to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage in their learning. Although class learning tasks are not always matched well to pupils' abilities, good use is made of skilled learning support assistants to help pupils with special educational needs to be included fully and to achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their relationships with adults and with each other are also very good. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are eager to learn and are able to share their views and opinions about their own, and each other's work, in a mature way.
- Behaviour is nearly always very good and pupils show respect for each other and adults.
- Pupils have good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills, and to accept responsibility.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced by the positive ethos evident everywhere in the school.

Commentary

6 Pupils behave very well around the school and in lessons. Playtimes and lunchtimes are usually relaxed and pleasant events. Pupils play safely and happily. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils from ethnic minorities are integrated well and many commented that they enjoy school and the friendliness of the pupils. Any form of racism or bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively. There are clear behaviour management procedures, including exclusions that are understood well by staff and pupils. They are used effectively to reinforce the school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour. This reflects the views of the large majority of parents that children's behaviour is good and that they mature and take responsibility well. Pupils are interested in their lessons and want to improve. They are particularly impressive when the work is challenging and they have to work responsibly to show what they can do. They know when to co-operate and when to work alone. Pupils enjoy being trusted to take responsibility and try hard to think about the advice given. They know that teachers have high expectations of their effort and behaviour and discuss the impact of their actions during circle time activities. These sessions also enable teachers to underline positive messages about behaviour and school routines. Pupils think that the system of rewards and sanctions is fair and works well.

7 Pupils who have special educational needs are encouraged and supported well in lessons by the other pupils. For example, classes are quick to show their appreciation of any success and make sure all are included in their groups. Adults manage the few pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties very well. There are clear limits, which help them settle in lessons. Pupils with all types of special educational needs do well with their personal development and maturity. They gain a lot from the positive ethos and very good relationships that are evident everywhere in the school.

8 The school provides a very good range of responsibilities for pupils. As well as classroom monitor roles, older pupils are playground buddies helping younger children and they use the CD player and overhead projector in assemblies. Two pupils in Year 6 run a successful computer club for the pupils in Years 3 and 4. There is an influential school council. Pupils take this very seriously. Candidates have to prepare a manifesto and share their ideas with the voters. Pupils in all classes contribute ideas and feel they are making a difference to their school as a result. Pupils' social development is further developed when they deal with visits and visitors, or participate in residential trips.

9 The school has increased opportunities for cultural development since the last inspection; this is now good. Pupils learn about a good range of different world faiths and discuss cultural issues or news items. Teachers provide good opportunities to celebrate the traditions of ethnic minority pupils, for example, by a parent visiting to illustrate and explain the special clothes worn for festivals. They learn about ways of life in other lands or other times in geography and history lessons. The school has introduced French lessons, which are popular. There has been a check on the range of fiction books and new books have been chosen because they give insights into other cultures. The older pupils keep in touch with several schools in other countries through the Internet and the Comenius project, and take part in the Unity in the Community project, which promotes racial harmony through sport.

Attendance

10 Attendance levels have improved since the last inspection and are now above the national average. There are good systems in place to monitor and promote attendance. Registrations are quickly and efficiently completed. Some teachers make good use of the time to promote pupils' learning, for example, by requiring them to use their French language skills to reply to their names. Most pupils arrive promptly for the start of school. There are good procedures to check on those who are late to school and to encourage their punctuality.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.8 %)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	4.0
National data	5.4

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.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	224	2	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	19	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good. The school provides a good curriculum, enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school provides very good levels of care. Links with parents are good. They are very good with the local community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage. It is very good in Years 4 and 6. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. They are good in English and mathematics. Teachers in the mixed age classes in Years 1 and 2 and Years 4 and 5 do not use assessment information to match work consistently to the needs of more able pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in the mixed reception and Year 1 classes helps children to settle happily and achieve well.
- Teachers manage their classes well and encourage pupils to want to succeed and achieve well.
- Most lessons in Years 3 to 6 are well-paced, taught well and help pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- The use of assessment information and target setting is not consistent.
- Teachers work well with learning support assistants to provide good support and promote learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	5 (14%)	18 (50%)	12 (33%)	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.

11 Teaching has been maintained at the good level reported in the last inspection. It has improved for children in the Foundation Stage. New staff have contributed well to maintaining the good quality. There were examples of good teaching in each year group. Parents in almost all the questionnaires valued the good teaching.

12 The quality of teaching is consistently good across the Foundation Stage. Its strongest features are encouragement, behaviour management, teamwork, expectations and relationships. These ensure that the children achieve well in learning and using new skills. They respond well to the interesting, varied and stimulating activities. All adults keep notes of individual achievement and use these to plan the next steps of learning successfully. They make sure children know what is expected of them in their learning. This gives good quality support according to each child's assessed needs. The good arrangements for children entering the reception class and the smooth transfer to Year 1 enable them to settle quickly into school routines.

13 All teachers maintain good control of their classes and have very good relationships with their pupils. Teachers expect high standards in pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work and encourage them to try hard. As a result, pupils sustain their interest and are keen to succeed. Teachers' expectations of how pupils extend their writing skills are not consistently high enough. This limits standards in some subjects, for example, writing up science investigations and descriptive writing in history. Most teachers in Years 3 to 6 maintain a brisk pace to lessons. They explain to pupils what they are going to learn and how long they have got to achieve it. Many give regular reminders during the lesson about how long pupils have left. This results in pupils' sustaining their concentration and achieving well. Most teachers use resources well to grasp pupils' attention, for example, when using an electronic screen to show different cloud levels in geography. They ask questions effectively to include all pupils in class discussions. Some teachers use 'talking partners' well to promote pupils' speaking skills, although this strategy is not used consistently in all classes to improve pupils' confidence and extend their speaking and listening skills.

14 In an excellent Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher used a very good range of questions to challenge pupils of different abilities to apply their mental skills and knowledge. This resulted in a very enthusiastic learning atmosphere and higher than expected standards. Although teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to contribute their answers, they do not consistently use a range of challenging questions to ensure that pupils, particularly the more able, are required to use their knowledge and give a higher quality of answers. Teachers use good assessment procedures to track how well pupils are doing, especially in English and mathematics. They use the information to check on the progress of different groups of pupils, for example, pupils from ethnic minorities, and to organise pupils into ability groups for their lessons. This helps them match activities to pupils' different learning needs. They do not use the information consistently to plan work that matches pupils' needs in other subjects and to identify targets for pupils to strive for to improve their work and speed their learning. This is particularly so in the mixed-age classes in Years 4 and 5 and Years 1 and 2. There are some examples of very good practice, for example, in a Year 4 class, in the use of individual pupil targets and class improvement targets. Pupils know what they have to improve and are very keen to achieve their targets. This is supported very well by the constructive marking of pupils' work to indicate progress being made towards their targets. However, these strategies are not used consistently and teachers, particularly in some mixed age classes, plan work that does not help pupils to make enough progress in their learning. More able pupils in some mixed-age classes are not extended enough. Teachers do not always mark pupils' work to indicate what they have done well and what needs improvement. This does not help pupils to raise the standard of their work.

15 The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs matches the quality offered to the other pupils. In the many good lessons they are involved fully and make good progress. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not ensure that learning activities match the needs of these pupils so they make less progress than other pupils. Teachers work very well with a capable team of learning support assistants to help pupils with special educational needs to achieve well. They try hard to ensure that pupils who have barriers to learning are given the means to overcome these. They deal with emotional and behavioural problems very well. Teaching and support staff are calm

and patient but set limits and do not allow other learners to be disturbed. Individual programmes of learning are carefully written for all these pupils. Pupils' difficulties are diagnosed early, and those who need help with reading, writing and number are given good support in small groups or individually.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum for all pupils. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. Resources and accommodation are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's involvement in a broad range of curriculum projects successfully extends pupils' learning.
- Popular and well attended school clubs and out-of-school activities enrich pupils' learning.
- Detailed planning develops effective links between subjects.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Lack of space in some classrooms restricts practical activities.

Commentary

16 The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum and personal, social and health education and citizenship. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and has been improved since the last inspection. There is a significant improvement to the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. All work is firmly based on the six areas of learning and is planned in detail to effectively meet children's emerging needs. The provision for children to move to work within the National Curriculum when they are ready is good. The governing body monitors the curriculum successfully through visits and regular 'one hour meetings' to focus on specific subjects. The headteacher has extended the range of learning activities successfully by involving the school in a good range of curriculum projects. These include gaining funds from the Pathfinder Project to enable teachers from nearby Radcliffe High School to teach French to all junior pupils. The school is involved in the Comenius Project that extends staff and pupils' knowledge of the lives of pupils and teachers in other European schools, through exchange visits by staff and e-mails between pupils. The school is currently seeking to gain the Healthy Schools accreditation and the Eco-School Green Flag Award. Its involvement in this process is helping to improve the school's curriculum, particularly in personal, social and health educational and citizenship. The school uses its very good links with the community to help pupils value the cultures and backgrounds of pupils, for example, when looking at the different religious festivals. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures additional links through the Unity in the Community programme and subject liaison with Radcliffe High School have also improved the provision in food technology, ICT, physical education and science.

17 This good programme is enriched further by a good range of extra-curricular activities, for example, in sport, chess, computers and aspects of music including choir and instrumental tuition. These activities are popular and are valued greatly by pupils and their parents. This is reflected clearly in 90 per cent of the parents' questionnaires and by parents' willingness to help with activities, for example, by organising an inter-schools' football tournament. Visits to local places of interest like Oldham Museum and the Mersey River Basin Trust and visitors from the local community, for example, to help with pupils' work in history, contribute to the richness of what pupils learn. The focus week on 'Inclusion' was particularly successful in valuing the contributions to the community of a very broad range of different individuals and groups of people. The annual visit for Year 5 and 6 pupils to either the Isle of Wight or Edinburgh extends pupils' learning well, especially in history and geography.

18 Teachers use computer software effectively to plan the curriculum in detail. They make good use of links between subjects to reinforce and extend pupils' learning in different subjects. For example, they integrate subjects successfully to promote pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT through history and geography topics. Many teachers also extend pupils' creative skills and

knowledge effectively, for example, by planning a design and technology project linked to the topic. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good because it meets their needs well and pupils are included fully in the life of the school. Additional support programmes are carried out successfully and teachers work in a good partnership with learning support assistants to ensure that pupils have experience of all curriculum subjects. Where the school has identified gifted and talented pupils, it provides well for their needs, for example, two able mathematicians attend Saturday extension activities at a local secondary school.

19 The accommodation is satisfactory overall and maintained well. The school has made considerable improvements to many classrooms, although some remain very cramped, making it difficult to teach some aspects of practical subjects such as investigative science. The outdoor environment is good with many features, for example, the outdoor classroom that enhances pupils' work in physical education, science and geography. Outdoor facilities for the Foundation Stage have improved, although the lack of a covered area restricts its use in bad weather. Resources are good overall. They have been improved since the last inspection, for example in ICT and physical education, and this enhances the range of learning activities.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for pupils' care and welfare. Pupils are given good support and guidance, especially in their personal development. The involvement of pupils in the work of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good pastoral and medical care. Pupils feel they are cared for very well and given good support in their learning.
- Pupils' views are listened to and acted upon. They help to shape aspects of school improvement.
- The tracking of pupils' academic development is not consistently and rigorously evaluated throughout the year.

Commentary

20 The school is very effective in providing a very good level of care and personal support for its pupils. This reflects parents' positive views. All teachers know their pupils well and have a strong commitment to meeting the needs of individuals. The school's programme of personal, social, citizenship and health education builds well on its Christian values. It is successful in helping pupils to become mature, caring and thoughtful individuals by the time they leave school. The recent tracking systems are used effectively to monitor and guide pupils' academic achievements and identify areas for improvement. These good procedures track how well different groups of pupils are doing, for example, those from different ethnic minorities, and to provide support where any concerns have been noted. Class teachers have their own systems for monitoring pupils' achievements and targeting areas for improvement. Some use individual pupil targets and class targets successfully to guide pupils in their work and raise attainment. They display targets clearly in the classroom to remind pupils and review their progress. This helps pupils remain focused on what they need to improve and helps teachers to identify where support is needed. However, this is not done consistently in each class. This results in some pupils not benefiting from clear specific guidance on what they actually need to work on to raise the standard of their work. Teachers pass assessment information on to the next class teacher to help them support pupils. Procedures to monitor pupils' progress consistently throughout the year are not developed fully. As a result, teachers do not always note any variations in pupils' progress and target improvement.

21 Staff know who to go to if they have any concerns over child protection issues. Pupils know and value that they can turn to any adult in the school if they have a concern. This gives them confidence in the knowledge that their worries are taken seriously. First aid and health and safety procedures are very good and have improved considerably since the last inspection. Staff work very

well with outside agencies, such as the educational psychologist and the school nurse, to support and fully include pupils with special educational needs in the life of the school. Staff provide good information and guidance to parents of new pupils to keep them informed fully before their children start school. The close consultation and pre-school visits help children settle very quickly into school routines. Parents willingly help when they can and use the teachers' information to give children support at home.

22 Pupils contribute to the school's life and development through their work on the democratically elected school council. Their ideas are presented to teachers and governors. They are taken seriously, discussed in detail and acted upon when agreement is reached. This, and their work as buddies, litter pickers and the healthy action team, increases their sense of social responsibility, community and citizenship.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school and appreciate its openness.
- Pupils gain a lot from the wide range of links with other schools and the local and wider community.
- Parents receive good information from the school, although there are some omissions in the governors' annual report.

Commentary

23 Most parents are very satisfied with what the school provides, as reflected in the very positive responses to parents' questionnaires. Newsletters and notices keep parents informed about what is going on. This is being improved through use of the school's own website. There are very good opportunities for parents to meet teachers, both informally and at regular meetings. The school actively seeks parents' views, for example, through questionnaires. Parents find that the school responds quickly to their concerns, day-to-day problems are sorted out quickly. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are kept well informed of their progress. Pupils' reports are informative, with notes on current targets and explanations of the grades awarded. The governors' annual report provides parents with further information about the school, although it lacks some of the required information on security issues and pupils' attainment.

24 Links with the local community are very good. There are regular visitors who contribute to pupils' learning and enjoyment, for example, pupils in Year 4 gained a lot from a guest with memories of World War Two. There are strong links with the church, with regular contributions to assemblies. Members of the community support school events, such as an ecology project, and use school premises for meetings. The school uses day and residential visits to extend links with the local and wider communities, for example, to Oldham Museum and, most recently, to the Isle of Wight. Pupils look forward to these and learn a lot. They look even further afield through the British Council Comenius project. Pupils in the older classes communicate with several schools in Europe via the Internet and letters. Staff from a German school have visited to talk about the project and life in their country.

25 The school has very good links with other schools, including several local secondary schools and some universities through teacher training. Staff from secondary schools visit to teach design and technology, physical education and French, whilst a few gifted pupils attend extra mathematics lessons at a local secondary school. Transfer arrangements at age eleven are effective; pupils say they have few worries about moving on. The school works very closely with the before and after school clubs which are on site for the benefit of pupils and their parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The leadership and management of key subject co-ordinators are good. They are not established fully for some other subjects. The school is well governed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher works in an effective partnership with his new deputy to provide a clear and strong direction to the work of the school.
- Good subject leadership and management is raising standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT, but the roles and contributions of other subject leaders are not developed enough.
- Governors know the school well and work effectively with the headteacher and his staff to check on how well the school is doing to guide improvements.
- A strong team approach has established a caring and supportive ethos in which every pupil is valued and included fully in the school's programme.
- The school has good procedures to monitor pupils' performance and evaluate its own strengths and weaknesses, although follow-up actions are not always rigorous enough.

Commentary

26 The headteacher continues to provide good leadership to the school. This is valued highly by parents, as reflected in 91 per cent of the questionnaires and many verbal and written comments. The headteacher has a very good knowledge of the school and the community it serves. He provides a clear vision, focused strongly on developing a caring and supportive school community and improving standards of attainment. He has used opportunities well to appoint new staff to establish an effective staff team. They work well together to create a harmonious and well-ordered community that offers all of its pupils a good range of learning activities and encourages them to participate fully. The partnership between the headteacher and his new deputy is particularly influential and is beginning to provide a consistently stronger focus on improving standards in the key subjects of English and mathematics. They work very well with other members of the senior management team to maintain good communication with all staff and monitor teaching effectively. The headteacher and deputy have established detailed assessment procedures to track how well pupils are doing from one year to the next, particularly in English, mathematics and science, although pupils' progress is not consistently evaluated throughout the year. Staff use the information well to identify pupils who would benefit from additional support and to inform their teaching to target weaknesses in pupils' learning.

27 The headteacher has established good procedures for managing the performance of staff. They know their roles and responsibilities and carry them out conscientiously, especially in the key subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Subject leaders review the provision in their subjects annually and produce a 'position statement' and an action plan to show how improvements will be made. These are included in a detailed school development plan that provides a good strategic plan for improving the school. Subject leaders meet termly with the headteacher and his deputy to review progress on their action plans. These good procedures are beginning to target improvement more consistently, especially in English and mathematics, and these are beginning to raise standards. Recent changes in staff responsibilities and limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning do not support some subject co-ordinators to improve their knowledge and understanding of standards throughout the school, for example, in music, history and geography.

28 The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs remains good, as reported at the last inspection. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on this responsibility and has built effectively on the clear procedures and detailed up-to-date records. The co-ordinator manages a very good team of learning support assistants well. They make a good contribution to helping pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The school uses funding carefully to ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet these pupils' needs.

29 Governors continue to be supportive of the school. They fulfil their duties well and generally ensure that the school meets its statutory responsibilities, although there are some gaps in the required information in their annual report to parents. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's strengths, weaknesses and current priorities, and support the school effectively. For example, the chair of governors maintains an awareness of pupils' views by attending the meetings of the school council and the healthy action team. Governors use their time and personal expertise to support and challenge the headteacher, staff and pupils and to guide the school's work. They take an active role in the school's development, both formally through governors' committees, and informally through regular contact with parents, staff and pupils. They make good use of 'one hour' meetings to focus on particular aspects of school improvement, for example, ICT, and this helps governors evaluate the school's provision and standards attained. Some governors visit the school to observe lessons and monitor teaching. Governors in the curriculum group are kept well informed about standards by the headteacher and presentations by subject co-ordinators.

30 Governors have established good financial procedures and manage the school's funds efficiently. They receive good support from the school's secretary and satisfactory support and information from the finance officer from the Local Education Authority. This enables them to receive up-to-date financial information and monitor their spending levels closely. The headteacher has encouraged the school's involvement in different educational projects to enhance the range of funding sources. The good detailed financial information helps governors to use the principles of best value consistently to evaluate the school's effectiveness. Most of the current budget surplus is targeted at a major improvement in infant toilet facilities and maintaining staffing levels.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	598,489
Total expenditure	612,380
Expenditure per pupil	2,007

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27,000
Balance carried forward to the next	13,110

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

31 Children achieve well in their reception year because all work is firmly based on their previous learning and the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Most children enter the mixed reception and Year 1 classes with levels of attainment below those seen nationally. By the end of their reception year, most children meet their early learning goals, except for their reading and writing skills. This is good achievement. The good quality provision and support for children with special educational needs enables them to learn and work alongside their classmates. All children quickly learn to become confident and secure with each other and adults because of the very calm relationships. The significantly improved outdoor learning area successfully increases children's interest in the world around them. Its use is restricted occasionally because there is no covered area for all weather work, although teachers make good use of indoor facilities. All members of staff take every opportunity to encourage parents and carers to take a full part in their children's education. They work closely with pre-school groups and with the receiving Year 1 teacher. This increases the sense of partnership. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator has created a strong and effective team that work closely together. Good quality review and planning work that meets the children's emerging needs extend children's learning well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because the consistently good teaching increases their independence and attitudes to learning.
- Children gain in self-confidence as they take part enthusiastically in a good range of activities.

Commentary

32 All children have a strong and secure foundation for their future development in personal and social skills. This is because all adults work hard to increase children's self-awareness and independence. This has improved since the last inspection. Patient teaching ensures children take turns to answer questions and listen to each other as well as adults. Children gain confidence and self-esteem as they increase their ability to work well with each other and adults. Clear explanations ensure that children tackle their work with much enthusiasm and are keen to learn. They change independently for physical education sessions and fold their clothes neatly. This increases their understanding of the need to care for themselves and property. These very positive attitudes develop and increase throughout the reception year. Careful organisation of group work ensures that children learn to work and co-operate with each other and a range of adults. They leave their parents or carers happily, work well alongside the Year 1 pupils and become mature and sensible. The calm and consistent teaching ensures children become confident and secure and develop trust in adults. Most children meet the standards expected nationally by the end of the reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good quality teaching ensures most children meet their early learning goals in their speaking and listening skills.

- Not enough children meet expectations in their reading and writing skills.
- High expectations of achievement ensure children concentrate and learn well.

Commentary

33 Both teachers work hard to give children opportunities to listen carefully and speak clearly. Most children achieve well and talk confidently with each other and adults. Adults insist on children speaking audibly, in sentences and to an audience. This increases their self-confidence, for example, one class acted out the story of Jesus and the lepers in a whole school assembly. Good quality teaching ensures children listen carefully to adults and each other and follow instructions accurately. Children enjoy listening to stories and share books happily. Many already recognise individual words and read simple sentences. This is good progress from the below average standards on entry, although too few children meet nationally expected levels. Adults do not always extend more able readers enough. All adults use opportunities soundly to increase children's early writing skills. They help children to know that writing conveys meaning. The more able children are beginning to write simple sentences, although most are not encouraged enough to extend their writing and meet expectations. The good level of support throughout the Foundation Stage helps children who have special educational needs to join in with their classmates. Members of staff work closely with parents or carers to increase their understanding of their children's needs. Good quality planning and assessment ensures that reception children move on smoothly to work within the National Curriculum when they are ready.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching ensures children achieve well in their mathematical learning.
- Stimulating practical work makes children want to learn and explore number and shape.

Commentary

34 Staff provide a stimulating range of mathematical opportunities for children in their reception year. There are significant improvements for children to investigate shape through practical experiences since the last inspection. This ensures children become interested and motivates them to recognise and use the mathematical names of three-dimensional shapes. By the time they leave their reception year, most children meet their mathematical early learning goals. Adults ensure that children become independent in choosing and using resources. This increases their confidence and self-esteem and enables them to achieve well. Children work well together, enjoy counting sessions and quickly understand the concepts of more and less. They use the outdoor learning area well and increase their knowledge of capacity and use of language such as 'full' and 'half full'. All children support their mathematical learning effectively by using computers. Adults keep detailed notes of children's achievement and use this information to give them work that meets their needs. This ensures that all children consolidate their understanding and knowledge before moving on to new learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good quality teaching gives children confidence to investigate and ask questions.
- The stimulating outdoor learning area develops children's enquiry skills well.

Commentary

35 Throughout the reception year, the good quality teaching increases children's confidence in investigating natural and manufactured objects. This increases children's knowledge of plants and living creatures and of the need to care for them. All adults encourage children to look closely and to ask questions about their surroundings to increase their awareness of the wider world. Children have immediate access to a well-designed and stimulating outdoor learning area. Staff take every opportunity to take the children outside to observe change and carry out independent investigations. Some activities are restricted because there is no all weather shelter from the sun or inclement weather, although adults make full use of indoor facilities to continue to stimulate children's learning. Staff ensure children develop a keen interest in computers. They have secure skills in using the mouse and keyboard satisfactorily to control movement on the screen. For instance, by the time they leave the reception year, all children use the computer well to create pictures. The school ensures that the religious education element of knowledge and understanding is taught effectively. Most children meet their early learning goals. Improvement in this area of learning since the last inspection is good.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures children achieve well in their use of space and control of their bodies.
- Children do not control their pencils well enough to improve their writing.

Commentary

36 All adults work very hard to increase children's skills in using and controlling their bodies. This results in skilful sequences of movement and a well-developed awareness of space. They use the outdoor learning area effectively to manoeuvre wheeled vehicles safely. This, and the regular access to the outdoor area, has improved since the last inspection. Throughout their reception year, children improve their physical skills in using tools, such as brushes, pencils and scissors. In spite of the good and patient teaching, many children have difficulty in using pencils to write neatly and form letters accurately. Overall, most children are likely to meet the expectations for their age by the end of their reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults give children interesting opportunities to develop their imagination in and out of the classrooms.
- Children achieve well in developing a sense of rhythm and in using a range of media to create pictures and pattern.

Commentary

37 Consistently good quality teaching ensures that children begin to develop their imagination effectively in the reception year. The good provision of imaginative areas that interest and involve boys and girls improves thinking, speaking and co-operative skills. For example, children enjoy using the seaside area and carefully sort shells and pebbles. They enjoy using the outside area and skilful adult intervention supports their learning well. Children increase their sense of rhythm as they follow instructions to compose sequences of seaside music. Skilful teaching ensures they hold and play instruments correctly and stop and start on time. Work displayed in the classroom shows good use

of paint and colour mixing but collage skills are less well developed. All adults promote children's creative skills well and most are likely to meet their early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some good teaching, but this is not consistent in each class.
- Writing lags behind reading, but the school has introduced some very good strategies to put this right.
- The leadership of the new subject co-ordinator is good and is beginning to raise standards.
- The school has recently introduced a very good system to track pupils' progress. However it has not been used rigorously to identify the reasons where progress is not good enough.

Commentary

38 There has been a sharp decline in the results of the national tests for Year 6 pupils over the last three years and standards were well below other schools in 2003. The school had some recent staffing difficulties. These are now resolved, although they have resulted in some marked differences in the achievement of year groups. These results also reflect the considerable variation in the range of ability in each different year group. Last year, for example, about one third of the pupils did not reach the expected level for Year 6. Many of this group had special educational needs. At the same time, a very small number managed to reach the higher level. In the present Year 6, there is a similar proportion of pupils with special educational needs, but good teaching is helping more pupils to work at the higher level. Standards are below average overall, and below those at the last inspection, due to this wide range of ability and some more able writers not achieving as well as they could. However, pupils are achieving satisfactorily overall. Their achievement in Years 4 and 6 is good because the teaching in those years is often very good and the pupils are working hard to improve. Standards in reading and speaking are broadly in line with those expected at this stage. Writing is below average as a result of pupils not extending their range of writing skills enough.

39 National test results in recent years show that standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly average, but they dipped below the average of other schools in reading, and well below average in writing in 2003. The work seen during the inspection was below average overall, mainly as a result of a higher proportion of Year 2 pupils with special educational needs than in other years and the effect of staff changes during the year. Pupils are making better progress in reading than writing due to more consistent teaching of reading skills. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall throughout the school. The achievement of ethnic minority pupils reflects that of other pupils. They make good, and often very good progress, for example in Years 4 and 6, where teaching is of a consistently higher quality. Their achievement is not consistent where teachers do not expect pupils to extend their skills enough, especially in writing, in some mixed age classes. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and also make satisfactory and often good progress.

40 Pupils achieve well in reading. It is better than their achievement in writing. Pupils' reading skills are developed well, as a result of the good support from home, pupils' enthusiasm to get better, an up-to-date stock of quality books and consistent and effective encouragement from teachers and support staff. The new subject co-ordinator has given a high priority to reading, and has introduced new approaches, for example, new ways of teaching letter sounds in Years 1 and 2 and more consistent reading in small groups to the teacher in Year 6. These help pupils to tackle unfamiliar words with increasing confidence. By Year 6, pupils are enthusiastic readers and talk confidently about authors, character and plot. Teaching is satisfactory overall although with significant variations, especially in mixed age classes. The teaching of reading is good and satisfactory in writing. Pupils do not achieve as well in writing as teachers do not focus consistently on extending pupils' skills in a broad range of different writing styles and in a good range of subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

41 Boys do not attain as well as girls in some years, especially those where there is a much larger number of boys. The development of writing has been identified by the co-ordinator as an area of concern. She provides good subject leadership and is leading a determined drive to raise standards, which is beginning to succeed. Working closely with the headteacher, she has introduced some good ideas and provided very good support for teachers. In particular, the plans to improve writing are very well thought out and are already proving effective in some classes, for example, Year 3 and Year 4. However, teachers do not use them consistently in each class. In some lessons in mixed age classes, the teachers were so keen to guide and support pupils that they took away most of the challenge. Pupils were not inspired to show what they could do because teachers had over-rehearsed the writing task. This restricted their achievement. This results in pupils' enthusiasm for writing being much less than that for reading, as illustrated by the many Year 6 pupils who are still reluctant to write at length. They find it hard to sustain ideas and organise their work. Sentences are basic and the vocabulary chosen does not excite or entertain the reader. Spelling and punctuation have been priority areas and have improved. They often feature in the useful personal target system that is used successfully in most classes. Pupils like the new marking policy, because it shows them what has been done well and what they can do to improve. However, teachers do not use it consistently enough in every class to contribute well to raising standards.

42 The school has established a very good system to keep track of pupils' progress and to check whether they are learning fast enough. This identifies where pupils need extra help and carefully checks the progress of different groups of pupils, for example, ethnic minority pupils. The procedures are beginning to evaluate how effective teaching is, although this is not developed fully. The school now has a settled team who work well together. Because of this, and the positive attitudes of the pupils, it is well placed to raise standards in English.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

43 Speaking and listening skills are generally promoted well, teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils to be involved in discussions or to read their work to the class. In subjects such as mathematics and science, pupils learn to use the correct technical terms. Reading and writing skills are used in many subjects to support learning and this helps to raise standards. There are some good examples of writing in history and religious education. However the range of writing techniques, which pupils are learning in literacy lessons, is insufficiently used across the curriculum to raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good mental recall of key number facts.
- Pupils are not always confident in using their number skills accurately to solve written mathematical problems.
- Good subject leadership focuses strongly on raising standards.
- Good teaching extends pupils' skills and knowledge well, although teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough.

Commentary

44 Year 6 pupils attain below average standards. These are lower than the results of national tests in 2003 and standards at the last inspection. The current Year 6 has a higher than usual proportion of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. The school focused strongly, during the last school year, on improving standards in mathematics. This resulted in improved results in the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that, although standards are below average overall in Years 5 and 6, good teaching in most classes is

raising standards and helping pupils to achieve well. The standards being attained by many Year 4 pupils are above nationally expected levels. However, there are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of pupils in some mixed age classes, for example, Years 4 and 5. This does not ensure that pupils always achieve the quality, accuracy and amount of work of which they are capable.

45 Year 2 pupils attain standards that are below the national average. Almost all Year 2 pupils attain the nationally expected Level 2, although too few attain above this level. Most Year 1 pupils achieve well. An analysis of the work of Year 2 pupils, particularly in the autumn term, show that teachers' expectations are not always high enough. Staff absence and the limited range of mathematical activities, especially in classes of mixed-age and mixed-abilities, restrict pupils' progress. Teachers do not always match mathematical activities to pupils' learning needs, although this has improved for older Year 2 pupils since the return of the permanent class teacher.

46 Most pupils have good mental number recall skills. Teachers use a very good range of mental mathematical activities to consolidate then extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, Year 2 pupils accurately count up to and back from 100, in two's then fives. They maintain their concentration very well to pick up where the other half of the class had finished. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils apply their number skills successfully to rapidly work out a range of different addition and multiplication questions that give the same answer. More able pupils apply their understanding of division effectively to quickly check the accuracy of their multiplication questions. Most Year 6 pupils, in the higher ability group, respond enthusiastically when trying to achieve their individual multiplication targets within the time allowed. However, many Year 5 and 6 pupils have weaknesses in deciding which number skills to use to solve more difficult written mathematical questions, for example, more complex money calculations. Although they have satisfactory, and often good, basic number skills, they are often unsure how to use them, for example, to solve problems that require them to use two or more separate operations. This limits the number of older junior pupils who attain above average levels.

47 Teaching is good overall in lessons, with occasional examples of excellent practice, particularly in the Year 4 class. Teachers manage and control their classes very well, including those that contain pupils with specific behavioural and learning problems. They work in an effective partnership with learning support assistants to enable these pupils to be involved fully and contribute well in lessons. The use of ability groups in Years 5 and 6 is successful in supporting achievement because teachers match activities more consistently to pupils' different learning needs. Where teachers provide interesting and challenging mathematical activities, this results in high levels of enthusiasm, a desire to succeed and good achievement. For example, in high quality lessons in Year 6 and Year 4, pupils were challenged to 'crack a number code' to solve problems. They were required to apply their mental number skills quickly and accurately in a competitive activity. Pupils worked very hard to use their knowledge and achieve as much as they could in the lesson. Their strong motivation resulted in continuous buzz of activity and excitement and good achievement. In some lessons and in an analysis of pupils' work, teachers of mixed-age classes, for example, in Years 4 and 5 and 1 and 2, do not match activities closely enough to the range of learning needs. Too often, their expectations are not high enough and they use worksheets that do not require pupils to show how they work out their answers. As a result, pupils did not consistently present their work accurately and too little work was achieved in the lesson.

48 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator, working closely with other members of the senior management team, has focused strongly on improving standards. She analyses test results to identify strengths and weaknesses. The co-ordinator then provides staff training to illustrate effective teaching strategies. For example, a stronger focus on teaching multiplication resulted in a significant improvement in pupils' skills. The use of improved pupil tracking sheets helps the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate standards of attainment throughout the school. For example, she tracks pupils by ethnicity and gender to show that ethnic minority pupils achieve similar standards as other groups of pupils in their year groups and boys achieve as well as girls. These good tracking procedures have helped her to identify those pupils who would benefit from additional, booster sessions in mathematics. This has helped to improve standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

49 Pupils use their mathematical skills well in many different activities. These include Year 2 pupils applying their subtraction knowledge to work out how many pupils are present at class registration. Year 5 and 6 pupils apply their knowledge of percentages well when working out cloud cover as part of their 'Globe Project' in geography. They use their numeracy skills effectively to calculate the 'mean' after measuring the results of their 'bubbles' investigation in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recent focus on the use of scientific vocabulary and enquiry is beginning to improve achievement.
- Some inconsistencies in marking and lesson pace do not let all pupils do as well as they could.
- The stimulating curriculum interests and motivates pupils to learn.
- Pupils do not always use their skills in writing and ICT to good effect in science.
- Work outside the classroom promotes very positive attitudes amongst pupils.

Commentary

50 There have been several improvements in science since the previous inspection. These include pupils' progress by Year 2, the planning for work in mixed age classes and teachers' subject knowledge and understanding. Standards, however, are below average in Year 2 and Year 6 and not as high as at the previous inspection. Reasons include lower standards of attainment on entry, staff changes and higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups. Achievement is satisfactory by Year 2 and good by Year 6. This reflects the current focus on scientific investigation and the use of scientific language, for example, Year 2 pupils achieve standards in scientific enquiry that broadly meet those expected nationally for their age. Some pupils in Years 4 and 5 do not achieve as well as they could because they spend too much time listening rather than investigating. The good quality leadership ensures that guidance for teachers is clear. Pupils' work is interesting and is enriched well by visits and visitors. As a result, they want to learn. Not all pupils use their writing skills effectively to present detailed and neatly presented accounts of scientific experiments with an explanation of their findings. This limits their achievement. Assessment systems are currently developing and are planned to identify targets for improvement in the coming academic year. All members of staff make good use of the school's stimulating grounds and the local area to give pupils a varied curriculum. Standards are improving because of the improvements made in pupils' enquiry skills.

51 Teaching is good overall, especially in extending pupils' enquiry skills. There are some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations and lesson pace that do not always help pupils to achieve as well as they could. Teachers plan tasks for pupils with special educational needs carefully to support their individual needs. This, and the sensitive support from adults, ensures they achieve as well as other pupils. Support for higher attaining pupils is effective in most classes in developing their scientific knowledge and understanding.

52 Teachers make work in science interesting and exciting for all pupils. This ensures that girls are as enthusiastic as boys and achieve equally well. Teachers emphasise the use of investigation and correct scientific language from Year 1 and this is contributing to raising pupils' achievement. There is some inconsistency in the effective use of assessment and marking to improve pupils' work. The subject co-ordinator is aware of this and has plans to address this issue. Teachers make satisfactory use of pupils' ICT skills to promote attainment in science. For example, some teachers require pupils to use their ICT skills to record and present the results of some investigations, although this is not used consistently throughout the school.

53 The good quality subject leadership is steadily improving standards. The subject co-ordinator is clear about what needs to be done to raise standards further. Strengthened management is ensuring that teachers are beginning to use assessment to identify and address areas for improvement. For example, all teachers have increased the emphasis on investigative science and the use of scientific language. This is enabling pupils to achieve well across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is good.
- Good use across the curriculum, with some valuable outside links.
- Capable pupils are challenged and encouraged to take responsibility.
- An assessment system is not fully in place.
- Teachers make good use of electronic boards, although they do not yet exploit all that these offer.

Commentary

54 Good subject leadership has encouraged staff to make the most of the schools' improving resources. Effective school-based training and technical support have increased confidence and expertise, so teachers are able to develop pupils' skills. Teaching is good throughout the school. The curriculum has been revised and covers all requirements. There are helpful resources for teachers and an adequate supply of computers and software. As a result, pupils reach the standard expected for their age by Year 2 and Year 6, with a small number of the oldest pupils going beyond this. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and all pupils achieve well.

55 Pupils are becoming mature and responsible users of technology. They have very positive attitudes and the older pupils regard computers as everyday tools, rather than machines that do clever tricks. One reason for this is that teachers expect them to use their skills seriously in worthwhile activities. For example, pupils in Year 6 use multi-media presentations to make a striking summary to show what they know about the Tudors. In Year 4 the pupils work hard on the presentation of their story because they have to e-mail it to someone else for comment. Pupils use Internet search engines confidently and know how to narrow their search and select. By Year 6, most pupils confidently use databases, spreadsheets, word processing and graphics programmes. They are less experienced in control technology but teachers are beginning to develop this area.

56 A strength in some classes is that teachers give many opportunities for pupils to use and improve their skills. Working in a flexible way, in small groups, means that teachers have to organise carefully to keep track of progress. Pupils feel that systems are fair and that everyone gets an equal turn. There are simple systems to record who has done what, for example when pupils in Year 2 work on a music programme. However these systems note what pupils have done, not how well they have done it. As a result, pupils do not always build successful on prior learning. A manageable assessment system is being tried to help teachers to set work at the right level for all abilities.

57 The school has invested wisely in electronic screens. These are now in most classrooms. Teachers are beginning to use these well to demonstrate computer skills. This is helping the pupils' knowledge and confidence. However, these are early days and most teachers have yet to exploit the full potential of this equipment, for example in presenting information in other subjects or involving whole classes with interactive controls.

58 The subject co-ordinator has achieved a lot in a very short time. There have been improvements in the curriculum, training, hardware and software. Some of this is too recent to show

improvements in provision in all parts of the school. Pupils' overall achievement is lifted by the good work done in Year 6, although the consistent development of pupils' ICT skills in all classes is not fully established. The school has always been keen to give pupils a wider view of the world and uses ICT well to do this. Pupils communicate with schools in several European countries through the Comenius project and are taking part in a worldwide weather survey.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59 Teachers use a good range of opportunities to enhance learning in other subjects and to use pupils' ICT skills. In history, for example, pupils in Year 4 do some purposeful research on World War Two before preparing interview questions for a visiting ex-soldier. The use of databases and spreadsheets extends mathematical skills, for example, pupils in Year 3 can enter and analyse data whilst by Year 6 they can use a spreadsheet formula to calculate. There is some use of technology in science to communicate findings. Pupils regularly use word processing programmes to improve and present their writing.

HUMANITIES

60 There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on provision in **geography**. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. This showed clearly how the school's involvement in the 'Globe Project' was promoting pupils' enthusiastic attitudes. Pupils made good use of ICT to collect, record and send weather information by satellite link. Pupils were excited about their participation in this project and showed a good understanding of how to collect the information and its use to monitor global weather patterns. An analysis of pupils' work and talking to pupils show that standards attained are broadly in line with those expected nationally. They have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' key geographical skills, for example, in mapping, and their knowledge of their own local area and other contrasting locations are developed satisfactorily. The lack of assessment procedures does not ensure that teachers always build well on prior learning. Year 5 and 6 pupils make good use of their geographical skills on school trips, for example, to the Isle of Wight. Pupils' understanding of how the geography of their own local area contrasts with other locations is promoted successfully by the school's involvement in the Comenius Project. An analysis of pupils' work show that more able pupils are not challenged enough to apply their knowledge and explain any similarities and differences. This limits the standards attained.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, detailed planning helps pupils to extend their historical skills and knowledge effectively in many subjects.
- Pupils often have good factual knowledge, although they do not always explain changes and differences.
- The role of subject co-ordinator is not developed enough to focus strongly on raising standards.

Commentary

61 Teachers make good use of improved planning to link pupils' work in history to many other subjects. For example, the lower juniors' topic on children in World War Two is supported very well through literacy, art and design and design and technology. This helps pupils to increase their historical knowledge and understanding. Teachers in Years 4 and 6 encourage pupils to use their writing skills well, for example, to write an evacuee's diary, although this was not consistently evident in other classes. Some of the interesting ways in which teachers promote historical topics stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and enables them to achieve satisfactorily overall. As a result of some good teaching and the use of interesting resources and visits, some pupils, for example, in Year 4,

achieve well, especially in their knowledge of historical events and famous people. However, an analysis of pupils' work shows that their understanding of the reasons for historical events and the consequences of them are not developed consistently enough. Pupils describe well aspects of people's lives in earlier times, but do not use their understanding to try to explain some of the reasons for these features.

62 Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features. As a result, standards are at expected levels throughout the school and have been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers make good use of visits, for example, to Oldham Museum and to the Isle of Wight, to enrich learning opportunities and extend pupils' learning. They use visitors successfully to capture pupils' interest and attention, for example, when Year 4 pupils hear detailed accounts of children's lives during World War Two. Teachers use 'how' and 'what' questions effectively, for example, to help Year 2 pupils identify, from drawings and photographs, some of the differences between their holidays and those in Victorian times. Teachers do not always challenge pupils enough, particularly the more able, to use their knowledge and understanding to explain some of the reasons for these differences. This does not help pupils to achieve as well as they could in some aspects of their work.

63 The subject is led and managed satisfactorily overall, although procedures to assess pupils' attainment and target areas of weakness are not established fully. The co-ordinator took on the responsibility for history and geography in January. She has discussed the range of historical and geographical topics with teachers to check on how pupils' skills and knowledge are built on effectively, especially in the mixed-age classes. These discussions have enabled the co-ordinator to improve resources. Her knowledge and understanding of pupils' attainment throughout the school and the quality of teaching and learning are not developed enough. As a result, teachers do not focus consistently on improving standards of attainment.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

64 No overall judgement could be made on teaching in **art and design** as no lessons were seen. Evidence was gained from discussions with staff and pupils, sampling of pupils' work and analysis of teachers' planning.

65 Work in pupils' sketchbooks and around the school indicates that, by Year 6, standards in two-dimensional work are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. It is evident from the high quality painting work on landscapes that the teaching of perspective and water colour techniques is good. The analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers build well on previously learned skills and techniques. For example, from year to year, pupils increase their abilities to look and draw carefully and, by Year 5, they produce effective Victorian style silhouettes. There is an improvement in the use of three-dimensional artwork. Pupils throughout the school have had the opportunity to work with a sculptor and produce well finished products. All pupils know the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of their work. This is particularly evident in Years 3 to 6. Work on Islamic pattern links effectively with religious education and African style sunsets deepen pupils' awareness of non-western art. Pupils are eager to talk about their work and are very enthusiastic. They particularly enjoy their individual research. For instance, one boy produced a beautifully crafted book about calligraphy whilst another was eager to demonstrate calligraphy pens.

66 Only one **design and technology** lesson was seen so no judgement could be made on the quality of teaching. Evidence was gained from the lesson seen, analysis of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and staff and a scrutiny of teaching plans and other documents. This evidence shows that all required aspects of the subject are taught.

67 Standards in the Year 6 lesson meet the expectations for most pupils of this age. The work provided a good link with the current focus on healthy eating. Pupils matched their fruit salad to their original plans and evaluated the finished product well for appearance and taste. The good quality teaching was enhanced by a support teacher from the neighbouring secondary school. Work on display around the school and in pupils' books indicates that standards in all elements of design and

technology meet expectations by Years 2 and 6. They have been maintained at the level at the last inspection. Pupils take great care over their finished products and increase their skills of evaluation. For example, Year 2 pupils use simple design frames to produce wells with winding mechanisms. By Year 6 pupils write clear instructions and well thought through evaluations with suggestions for improvement. There are not always enough opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills because some evaluation sheets require only single word answers. Teachers clearly build on pupils' previous learning as they move through the school. For instance, the acceptably accurate pop-up lever books in Year 1 develop into more complex pop-up books in Year 5. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work; "its one of the best subjects" and reminisce fondly about the work they did in Year 5.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of visiting musicians, particularly with the choir.
- There is no one on the staff with the expertise and confidence to inspire pupils.
- Leadership has not been effective because the subject has not been a school priority.

Commentary

68 Music has not had a high profile in the school in recent years. Teachers take their own classes for lessons but there are weaknesses in staff subject knowledge. There is no specialist on the team to give support. The school does what it can to compensate by using visiting teachers, for example from the Local Education Authority's instrumental service and a local secondary school. This is particularly successful for the choir, where very good teaching enabled pupils to reach a high standard in their singing. The teacher wasted no time on talk but led pupils at a cracking pace through a variety of songs, chants and rhythm games. After an hour of this, the choir sat back exhausted, thrilled with what they had achieved. All classes have a weekly lesson. Teaching was satisfactory overall in the small number of lessons observed, with some variations in teachers' confidence and musical knowledge. Teachers' records show that all strands of the music curriculum are taught. The school has resources to help non-specialists and there is a good curriculum to ensure that pupils have enough chances to learn. Pupils understand the school's problem and think they have reasonable chances to play, sing and listen. However, some say that they would like more. The school knows that progress would be faster with the quality and excitement that a good musician can achieve. It has made this a priority in its recruitment plans. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and standards of singing from the large choir are good. No lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6 so no judgement can be given on pupils' attainment overall.

69 Subject co-ordination is satisfactory overall, although with some weaknesses. Two co-ordinators share responsibility. Neither has good subject expertise and they organise the programme satisfactorily with the support and guidance of music instrumental teachers. They use national subject guidance satisfactorily to enable teachers to provide a programme that includes all the required curriculum aspects. The subject has not been an improvement priority. The co-ordinators have not established an action plan to show how provision will be improved and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, pupils' skills and musical knowledge are not evaluated and there is no consistent focus on raising standards.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader is enthusiastic and supports other staff well.

- Pupils are enthusiastic and make good use of the good range of equipment and the plenty of space outside.
- Teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to extend their skills.
- There are very good links with the local secondary school that help extend pupils' skills.

Commentary

70 Physical education is a popular subject. Pupils enjoy the lessons, listen and behave very well. They are keen to do well and work hard to improve their skills, making full use of the large playing field. Teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Pupils benefit from good facilities and equipment, especially for promoting games skills. Standards are in line with those expected nationally. There is a typical range of ability with a small number of pupils attain above expected standards. All pupils achieve satisfactorily. Those with special educational needs, including some visually impaired pupils, are supported well and also make steady progress. There are no differences in the enthusiasm or achievement between boys and girls or different groups of pupils, for example, ethnic minority pupils participate enthusiastically in the full range of sporting activities.

71 Lessons were seen in indoor games for infant pupils and orienteering with the oldest pupils. All lessons are well prepared and managed. Teachers are enthusiastic and kept everyone busy. A good feature in all the lessons was the emphasis given to teamwork and decision making. Infant pupils, for example, had to agree on their own rules for a partner game and then test them by playing. Teachers are effective because they make good suggestions without giving too much away. As a result, infant pupils are beginning to evaluate their own performance and learning a little about tactics. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given a lot of responsibility in their orienteering lessons. Nearly all respond well to this and manage to work as a team in setting out their own course. A very small number find this co-operation all too much at first, but teachers handle this very well, so these pupils make some progress in their social skills. Teachers do not always use the time in lessons well to maximise the practice of basic skills, for example, catching and throwing. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

72 Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator is energetic and enthusiastic and she is improving the standards of teaching and learning. The school is one of a group of schools which are funded to work with their secondary school to promote physical education. One benefit is that the co-ordinator has 12 days release time per year to work with other teachers. She uses this well to observe lessons and offer support and guidance to teachers. Another benefit is the chance for primary and secondary staff to work alongside each other to improve staff confidence and subject knowledge.

73 There are a small number of clubs and the school enters local events such as a six-a-side football tournament and a swimming gala. The school is part of the Unity in the Community scheme, which promotes racial harmony through sport. Pupils said that they had enjoyed these sessions. Girls feel that boys get a better deal with clubs at the moment, even though some girls play for the football team. However, they knew that the co-ordinator was planning to put this right soon.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74 Only one lesson was observed so no overall judgement was made on provision and the quality of teaching. However, discussions with teachers and pupils and an analysis of teaching plans show that the school has improved its programme since the last inspection. The strong, caring Christian ethos promotes personal development well and enhances pupils' understanding of good citizenship. The headteacher has a good knowledge of the subject and has established a broad programme that fully includes all aspects of pupils' personal development. He has been successful in promoting the school's involvement in a good range of projects, for example, the Eco-School Award, the Healthy Schools Award and the Comenius Project. These have contributed significantly to enhancing pupils' personal development and their responsibilities and the range of opportunities to contribute to their school and wider communities.

75 Pupils enjoy the opportunities to discuss personal issues within their classes, for example, on friendship and caring for others. They respect the views and ideas of others by listening carefully and contribute their own opinions clearly and sensibly. For example, in a very good discussion on their feelings about war, linked to their history topic, Year 4 pupils were very keen to contribute their

opinions. Skilful teaching encouraged pupils to understand how they can manage their feelings well, for example, anger and how they can help the school become a safer place. This sharing and understanding of people's different views contributes significantly to the school ethos and to promoting very good relationships. The school's use of a 'focus week' on inclusion was particularly effective in extending pupils' understanding of some of the difficulties faced by people with disabilities and how they could help them to be involved fully in the community.

76 The school council represents pupils' views well. The four Year 6 councillors are elected by a whole school vote and other nominees become playground buddies. The councillors meet weekly to discuss issues raised by pupils and then with teachers once a month to agree and implement any new ideas. Such initiatives as the new wildlife area, new equipment for lunchtimes and new toilet facilities have contributed successfully to school improvement and to extending pupils' personal development.

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