

INSPECTION REPORT

CLARKSFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lancashire

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 133711

Headteacher: Mrs Barbara Entwistle

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Canham

Dates of inspection: 21st – 23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 255829

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary and Nursery |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 to 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 406 |
| School address: | Grasmere Road Oldham Lancashire |
| Postcode: | OL4 1NG |
| Telephone number: | 0161 665 1376 |
| Fax number: | 1061 624 7350 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Eleanor Ritchie |
| Date of previous inspection: | No previous inspection of this recently amalgamated school. |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- Clarksfield Primary was formed in September 2002 as a result of the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, which were situated in the same building. It is larger than average for this type of school.
- The school serves a community which has a high level of deprivation.
- It caters for a small number of asylum seekers and refugees.
- The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is high, and just over half are at the early stages of learning English. About 85 per cent of children in the Nursery do not have English as a first language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is double the national average.
- In recognition of the challenging circumstances it faces, the school benefits from its inclusion in an Education Action Zone and it is involved in the Excellence in Cities initiative. It also receives additional funding to help support the work of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The school gained the Achievement Award during in 2003, its first year following the amalgamation.
- Attainment on entry to the Nursery is very low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 1353 | Paul Canham | <i>Lead inspector</i> | Science; Physical Education. |
| 9625 | Colin Herbert | <i>Lay inspector</i> | |
| 23390 | Melvyn Blackband | <i>Team inspector</i> | English; Music; Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education; Special Educational Needs. |
| 27869 | Micah Cummings | <i>Team inspector</i> | Art and Design; Design and Technology; Mathematics. |
| 31319 | Dot Hunter | <i>Team inspector</i> | Geography; History; Information and Communication Technology; Religious Education. |
| 7418 | Kath Rollisson | <i>Team inspector</i> | English as an Additional Language; The Foundation Stage. |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Clarksfield gives its pupils a **satisfactory** level of education and it provides **sound** value for money. Having overcome the initial challenges brought about by the recent amalgamation, the school continues to face challenging circumstances, which include significant barriers to achievement. The school draws its pupils from a community which has a high level of deprivation, and attendance is poor, largely as a result of the number of extended holidays taken by families. The school's commitment to inclusion underpins much of its work. It caters well for the small number of asylum seekers and refugees and places a high value on pupils' cultures. Children enter the school with very low standards, and they benefit from a very good start in the Foundation Stage. They make rapid gains in all the areas of learning because they receive very effective support and guidance. Pupils continue to achieve well throughout the school, including those with English as an additional language (EAL). Evidence from pupils' work shows that they are likely to reach standards that are at nationally expected levels at the end of Year 2 and of Year 6. The headteacher, with the close support of staff and governors, is committed to promoting equality and high levels of achievement. Parents endorse the work of the new school, although they continue to take their children away for extended holidays.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' good achievement, and the standards, which, on the evidence of work seen during the inspection, match those expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Good teaching.
- The very good start children get in the Foundation Stage.
- Poor attendance.
- The underdeveloped monitoring and strategic roles of the governing body.
- The limited development of roles and responsibilities of the senior management team.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The lack of a systematic approach to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in all subjects.

The school was formed in September 2002 as the result of the amalgamation of two schools. The school has not undergone a previous inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | *similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|------------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | N/A | N/A | D | C |
| Mathematics | N/A | N/A | C | B |
| Science | N/A | N/A | C | B |

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

**As the school has recently amalgamated, the benchmark is that of schools with similar Free School Meals and not schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The data shows that standards and levels of achievement of pupils are good overall when compared to those of similar schools*. In all three subjects, boys gained higher standards than girls. Attainment on entry is very low. Children get a very good start to the development of their personal and social skills because they benefit from good teaching and well-focused support in English, mathematics, and science, pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach standards that are similar to the nationally expected levels by the end of the school year. In religious education, pupils' work is likely to reach the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in ICT are on course to reach expected levels, although the new facilities and equipment have yet to have a full impact on learning. Owing to the focus of the inspection, not enough evidence was gathered to judge standards in the other subjects, though good work was seen in music and design and technology. Pupils with EAL, and those with special educational needs (SEN), make good progress.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **good**. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and to their learning. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils enjoy good relationships with one another.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **sound** quality of education. The quality of teaching is good. Examples of very good teaching were seen in almost all years. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The quality of provision extends to the good range of extra-curricular activities, which encourage the development of pupils' personal skills and independence. Assessment is satisfactory overall, although it is particularly good in English. The provision for pupils with EAL is good, and it is satisfactory for pupils with SEN. Pupils benefit from good levels of support.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. Governance is **unsatisfactory**. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties but has yet to play a full and active part in monitoring the work of the school and in holding it to account. The headteacher, with the support of staff, has worked to develop a school in which pupils achieve well and where everyone is valued. The school is a calm and orderly environment in which pupils feel secure and behaviour is good. As a result, the school is in a strong position to raise standards further by developing the roles of the senior management team and introducing a more systematic approach to monitoring by key staff.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are supportive of the school, which strives hard to involve the community in its work. However, parents continue to take their children away on extended holidays, and many children do not achieve as well as they should. The school recognises the need to improve communication through regular newsletters and notices. Discussions with pupils confirmed their views that they were happy at school. They feel safe and well cared for and they like their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve attendance.

- Strengthen the role of the governing body.
- Develop the roles of the senior management team and improve monitoring procedures.
- Develop a systematic approach to the use of ICT in other subjects.
- Improve communication to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good. The standards of work seen in almost all subjects, including the core subjects, were at nationally expected levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very good achievement in the Foundation Stage and good achievement throughout the rest of the school.
- Standards that are similar to nationally expected levels.
- The good levels of achievement by pupils with EAL and by those with SEN when working in small groups.
- Good personal and social development.

Commentary

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 25.7 (N/A) | 26.8 (N/A) |
| mathematics | 26.6 (N/A) | 26.8 (N/A) |
| science | 28.7 (N/A) | 28.6 (N/A) |

There were 44 pupils in the year group.

1. Children entering the Nursery have very poor standards in speech, vocabulary and comprehension, and poorly developed personal, social and physical skills. Many are in the early stages of learning English and they have little understanding of the world outside their immediate locality. About 85 per cent come from homes where their first language is not English. Children take time to settle into school and they are often shy and withdrawn. As soon as they enter the Nursery, children begin to benefit from the good provision, which includes thorough and sensitive induction procedures, and from effective teaching. As a result, children make rapid gains in their learning and achieve very well by the time they are ready to join Year 1. However, it is unlikely that most of them will reach the Early Learning Goals. Evidence of work seen in the inspection indicates that by the end of the school year pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach standards in the core subjects that are in line with those found nationally. These improvements, which are sustained throughout the school, represent good progress and achievement. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved in the core subjects between those pupils with EAL and the few pupils who speak English as their first language.

2. Information from national assessment data shows that, when compared to those in similar schools, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards in 2003 that were high in reading (and in the top five per cent nationally), and well above average in writing and mathematics. The most striking feature is the difference between standards in reading and mathematics and standards in writing. In both reading and mathematics, significant proportions of pupils performed at a level (Level 3) above that expected nationally. The relative weakness has been recognised by the school. The girls outperformed boys in all three subjects, although the pattern reflects that found nationally. In science, the school is

placing a greater focus on investigations to help pupils develop their understanding through practical work.

3. The most recent national test data shows that, when compared with those of similar schools, standards achieved by Year 6 pupils in 2003 were similar to the national average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. In all three subjects, the boys gained higher standards than girls. This represents an overall picture that does not reflect that found nationally.

4. The most recent unpublished results (2004) show a decline in standards, though the school's own assessment information had predicted such a change owing to the make-up of the cohort. Consequently, the targets were lowered to take account of expected performance. However, when account is taken of the fact that pupils enter the school with very poor standards, pupils continue to achieve well.

5. Standards of work seen in Years 2 and 6 during the inspection suggest that the majority of pupils are on course to reach, by the end of the year, standards in English, mathematics and science that are at the expected levels. These standards are affected by the pupils' poor levels of English on entry to school. Pupils' work in religious education is likely to match the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In ICT, standards are on course to reach expected levels, though the new facilities and equipment have yet to have a full impact on learning. Owing to the focus of the inspection, it was not possible to gather enough evidence to judge standards in the other subjects, though examples of good work were seen in music and in design and technology. No apparent differences in achievement were seen between boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Pupils' personal development is good because the school provides for good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is poor. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weakness:

- Poor attendance.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and interest shown in their work.
- The good behaviour of pupils.
- The good relationships between pupils and staff, and between the pupils themselves.
- The value the school places on pupils' cultures and home languages.

Commentary

6. Pupils enjoy coming to school, though a significant proportion do not attend regularly. Many families take extended holidays in term time. However, the school is working hard with parents to ensure that their children attend on a more regular basis, and attendance has improved during the current year. The majority of pupils are punctual to school.

7. Pupils are generally well behaved and their attitudes are good, and often very good, both in the classroom and when moving around school and in the playground. Pupils come from one of the most socially disadvantaged areas in the country, and they respond well to the supportive and welcoming environment provided by the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), and those with SEN, are keen to learn and respond well to lessons, particularly when they receive additional help and when activities are accurately matched to their needs. For example, in science, pupils in Year 5 were given good opportunities to work collaboratively during a practical lesson, which focused on the phases of the moon. Strong features of the lesson were the high level of interest shown by pupils, their sense of enjoyment, and the innovative approach to teaching. The good relationships promoted pupils' confidence and self esteem. In a good personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, pupils in Year 2 seemed comfortable when talking about their feelings, and valued one another's contributions by listening carefully. This was because the teacher had set clear ground rules for the discussion.

8. Since the amalgamation, the school has placed a strong focus on behaviour management. Concerns about behaviour were raised by parents and pupils in their responses to the questionnaires. The school has developed and put into practice a clear behaviour policy, which includes a coherent set of procedures and expectations. These are reflected in the small number of exclusions during the reporting year. Pupils with behavioural problems react well to the support that the school provides. Behaviour was good in all but a few lessons seen during the inspection. Most pupils are thoughtful, and are respectful to their peers and to adults.

9. Children enter the Nursery with very poor standards, and they make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. This pattern continues, and the school successfully develops pupils' personal qualities and social skills. The good relationships between staff and pupils promote strong moral values in all year groups. Pupils are strongly influenced by the adults who work with them. They are polite and well mannered towards visitors and are keen to engage in conversation with them. The effect of these relationships is that pupils feel confident and are happy to exchange ideas. For example, during an English lesson in Year 6, which focused on 'Olivia's Journey', pupils with SEN responded well to the sensitive support by confidently joining in the class discussion.

10. Pupils are attentive and respectful in assemblies, which celebrate achievement and deal with wide range of moral issues. During the inspection, in an assembly celebrating the school's successful involvement in a recycling initiative, pupils were absorbed by the topic and spent time to reflect on the importance of taking care of the environment. The school also provides opportunities in circle time for pupils to reflect quietly upon their feelings and on the fact that every child is different. Pupils have a clear idea of right and wrong, and they are encouraged to become mature and responsible members of the school and local community. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of the 'Golden Rules' and know how to abide by them. Pupils in all year groups accept a variety of everyday duties in their classrooms, and many volunteer for election to the school council. They have good opportunities for social development through such activities as the *Buddy System*, acting as monitors, taking part in class assemblies, and becoming involved in the class or school council. Pupils have some understanding of ecological issues, and of hardships suffered by rural peoples in developing countries. They have a good understanding of western culture and they are encouraged to celebrate their own faith and to understand those of others. The school successfully draws upon the pupils' own cultures and experiences to add richness to the curriculum. Pupils benefit significantly from a wide range and number of percussion instruments, which are chosen both for their multicultural connections and for enriching the pupils' musical experience. A good range of recorded music supports the playing of these instruments. The school arranges for numerous opportunities for visits into the community to enhance pupils' learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 90.9 | School data | 2.2 |
| National data | 94.2 | National data | 0.4 |

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

Ethnic background of pupils***Exclusions in the last school year***

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White - British | 67 | 4 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British-Indian | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 308 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British - Caribbean | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 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**Teaching and learning**

The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching is good and the curriculum is satisfactory. The quality of care is sound, with strong features. The school has satisfactory links with parents but good links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The effective support for pupils with EAL.
- Effective management of behaviour.
- The encouragement and engagement of pupils.
- Lack of a systematic approach to setting homework.

Commentary***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons***

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 8 (22 %) | 21 (56 %) | 8 (22 %) | 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.

11. Teaching is good, though there are inconsistencies within the same year group or the same subject. Examples of very good teaching were seen in almost all years. The most effective teaching was seen in the Foundation Stage, where teachers and other adults have high expectations and much attention is given to the development of children's independence. Effective support from bilingual assistants helps to give children confidence and to play a full and active role in the planned activities. As a result, children achieve very well and develop positive attitudes to learning in response to the good teaching and sensitive support.

12. Throughout the school, there is a marked contrast between the enthusiastic learning styles seen in some classes and the sedentary learning seen in others. The school recognises the need to

share the most effective practice that already exists. For example, in one science lesson, innovative and challenging teaching captured the pupils' interest, and they achieved well because

they were fully involved in practical work which built upon knowledge and understanding that related to their everyday lives. Similarly, in music, mathematics and English, pupils were challenged by effective planning, a brisk pace, and well judged questioning, and they responded well.

13. Pupils with EAL make good progress and benefit when the targeted support given by the specialist teacher or bilingual assistant focuses on the development of speaking and listening skills. A combination of in-class and withdrawal support is effective in meeting individual needs. The induction arrangements for bilingual pupils who join the school late often helps them to make early progress. The best teaching values the pupils' home language, and the bilingual assistant improves their learning by speaking to them in dual languages and interpreting the instructions and information of other members of staff. The good range of opportunities for speaking and listening help pupils with EAL to achieve well, and teaching recognises that advanced learners need continuing support. Assessments are thorough and record pupils' progress systematically to inform planning for the next stage of learning. The progress and targets of pupils with EAL are carefully tracked from the Foundation Stage, and this contributes to the pupils' considerable achievement.

14. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, commitment and work. They value the contributions of pupils, and use lots of questions to probe pupils' understanding. In the good lessons, teachers question pupils skillfully, taking careful account of how different individuals learn. For example, in a music lesson, pupils made good gains in their learning because the teaching built on and improved their performance through perceptive and relevant questioning. In these good lessons, well-tailored support improved the learning of pupils with EAL, pupils with SEN, and the small numbers of higher attaining pupils. However, not all pupils with SEN benefit from a systematic planning of adapted activities which focus directly on their needs. In some cases, teachers give the same tasks to pupils with SEN as those given to the rest of the class, but with lower expectations. In most cases, pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning, though such tasks do not necessarily meet the needs of individuals, and prevent some pupils from making good gains in their learning.

15. A small number of parents raised concerns about the setting of homework, and there was very little evidence of homework being set or discussed during the inspection.

16. Assessment procedures are being strengthened in all subjects. Detailed assessment information is largely confined to English, where it is particularly good, and to mathematics and science. The school is developing procedures for other subjects with the help of national guidance.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory** and a good range of out-of-school activities enriches it. Staffing, accommodation, and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- A good range of out-of-school activities.
- The lack of a stimulating outdoor play area in the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

17. The school has developed a curriculum which embraces all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It places a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and science, though it successfully promotes pupils' creative and physical development through music, art and design, and swimming. The school engages subject specialists to raise the

level of expertise in some foundation subjects. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects, and acts of collective worship take place daily. Provision for pupils' PSHE is satisfactory overall and is good for children in the Foundation Stage, where they benefit from well-focused support. The school ensures that children are very well prepared for their next stages of learning, in Year 1. Statutory policies, including drugs education, are in place. Circle Time has been introduced to give pupils opportunities to discuss issues, such as bullying, in a supportive way. The school is aspiring to the 'Healthy Schools Achievement Award', and pupils have gained from an emphasis on healthy meals and an extension of the range of playground equipment.

18. One of the school's strengths is its good range of extra-curricular activities, which makes a strong contribution to pupils' good attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour. The popular breakfast club helps pupils start the day alert and attentive, and a wide variety of activities, such as fitness, badminton, soccer, and choir, extends learning at the end of the school day. Pupils also have opportunities during school time to visit a variety of places within and outside the community.

19. Literacy is promoted well across the curriculum, but numeracy is not used systematically to support learning in all subjects. Basic English language and literacy skills are soundly promoted in classes. Bilingual support assistants are used well to translate, and this enables pupils with EAL to have full access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory. Reviews are completed termly, and parents are kept informed. The procedure for identifying and assessing pupils with SEN is satisfactory, and all pupils have individual education plans (IEPs). The pupils' progress towards their targets is evaluated and new targets are set. The IEPs have a very clear format and they are well maintained and up to date. However, targets for improvement are sometimes too demanding or not demanding enough and this weakness causes some difficulty when judging the rate of progress.

20. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum, although the number of teachers engaged in the Nursery is below the national average and ICT lacks sufficient technical support. Accommodation is satisfactory and contains spacious teaching areas which include two halls, a separate gymnasium, and an indoor swimming pool. However, some of the hard court areas contained litter that had built up over time, and the 'redgras' pitch had broken glass on its surface. The outdoor play area for children in the Foundation Stage is poorly equipped and inhibits their physical and social development. The teaching areas are enhanced with attractive and informative displays, which are also to be found in some classrooms and corridors. However, there are internal areas of the school that require some structural repairs and redecorating. The teaching of ICT is well supported by the two suites, although the school has yet to make the most effective use of these teaching areas. Resources are satisfactory overall, but good in English and very good in music.

Care, guidance and support

Sound procedures ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils. The school provides a satisfactory level of support, advice and guidance to its pupils, and it makes good provision to involve them in school life by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very good trust between pupils and adults.
- The good opportunities for pupils to contribute their views.

- Good induction procedures in the Foundation Stage.
- The lack of a systematic approach to all health and safety procedures.

Commentary

21. Pupils receive good individual care and support from teachers and other adults. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils, and they are fully aware of child protection procedures. These enable staff to monitor pupils' personal development, though little information is recorded. Outstanding achievement, effort, and good behaviour are acknowledged at weekly celebration assemblies. Pupils interviewed were positive about the support they receive from their teachers and the classroom assistants. The school makes effective use of outside agencies, which provide the school with additional expertise and support for pupils.

22. Pupils are relaxed and happy in the school community. They know that the school will always listen carefully to their concerns. Discussion with the pupils, and their responses to the questionnaire, indicated that they felt able to express ideas and raise concerns in different ways. Circle Time, class councils and the school council are all occasions when pupils have the freedom to express their views, and their contributions are valued. These initiatives are also a good example of the inclusive way in which the school operates.

23. A good induction system quickly settles children into the Foundation Stage. Children's needs are identified early, and bilingual support is used to good effect to give children security and confidence at an early stage. The effective teaching and sensitive support encourages children to join in activities and enjoy learning. Pupils joining other year groups, including refugees and asylum seekers, soon make friends in the welcoming school community. The school operates a *Buddy System* for vulnerable pupils and promotes 'Golden Time', when pupils look forward to being rewarded for their hard work and efforts through the week. Good procedures in Year 6 prepare pupils for transfer to secondary education.

24. The school has put in place good procedures for recording incidents. Parents consider that their children are well cared for and treated fairly in school. In terms of the accommodation, however, there are certain areas inside and outside school which require attention, and the build up of litter in the playground and the broken glass on the 'redgras' are a particular cause for concern.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community.

The partnership between the school and its parents is satisfactory. Good links have been established with the community and with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Limited information for parents.
- Good links with the community.
- Good links with outside agencies.

25. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and the meeting with parents, were positive overall and reflect parents' satisfaction with many aspects of the school. However, only a small proportion of parents responded to the questionnaire, and a few parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection. Some parents do not feel well informed about the progress their children are making or that the school seeks their views, though the school has appropriate arrangements in place. Regular parent/teacher consultations take place, and teachers are very willing to meet parents at other times. Parents enjoy attending class assemblies and taking part in workshops which focus on aspects of the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy. Annual reports provide detailed information for parents; they show

children's progress, and share some targets with parents so that they can help their children to improve. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents conform with statutory requirements. The school recognises the need to send out regular newsletters and to improve the level of communication. Parents would welcome more information from the school, particularly if translated into home languages.

26. There is no formal fund raising group within school but parents are generous in their support of charities, such as the Manchester Drop-In Centre.

27. The school has developed good links with other schools through the Education Action Zone (EAZ) and Excellence in Cities initiatives. It has also developed good relationships with outside agencies to ensure that full and appropriate help is given to pupils with EAL and those with statements of SEN. Additional funding has helped the school to engage learning mentors, and to establish the breakfast club, and pupils have benefited from involvement in the Behaviour Improvement Project. Pupils value the additional support and enjoy the opportunity to visit local churches, mosques, art galleries, and museums.

28. Parents of pupils with SEN are informed on a regular basis about their children's progress towards their individual targets. Parents are always invited to annual reviews, and their views are carefully noted. The school recognises the need to involve parents more fully in the regular review of their child's IEPs and progress towards his or her learning targets.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties but has yet to play a full and active part in the strategic development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The successful amalgamation of two schools into one community.
- The lack of independent governors to ensure the clear strategic development of the school.
- Insufficient development of roles and responsibilities of members of the senior management team.

Commentary

29. Recently formed from the amalgamation of two schools, Clarksfield continues to face challenging circumstances. With the support of governors and staff, the experienced and well respected headteacher has worked hard to create a school in which pupils achieve well and where everyone is valued. She has worked closely with the local educational authority (LEA), and the school is included within an EAZ and is involved in the Excellence in Cities initiative. The school won an Achievement Award in 2003 and is committed to raising standards further.

30. Information from the parents' questionnaires indicates a clear endorsement for the new school and the quality of leadership and management. The headteacher has shown a clear vision and has identified the immediate needs of the school. Behaviour management was a major priority, and evidence from the inspection shows that staff have worked hard to put into practice a whole school strategy which ensures a calm, secure and orderly environment. This they have successfully achieved, and the result is an ethos where everyone is valued and included.

31. The headteacher has managed change well and has shown a determination to develop the leadership capability of staff. The appointment of two committed deputies has given a good platform from which to create a strong leadership team. However, their roles have yet to be developed sufficiently to help move the school forward. Strategies put in place at the time of amalgamation, which were designed to foster more cohesiveness and teamwork amongst staff, have been successful. For instance, the shared leadership of subjects has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Several subjects are well led and managed, and these include English, mathematics, geography and history. Music is co-ordinated by a subject specialist, who gives advice to teachers and monitors their planning. Action plans for subjects show that co-ordinators know the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects, and how they can bring about improvement. However, the school acknowledges the need to strengthen the role of subject leaders and to develop a more systematic approach to monitoring. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is unable to systematically monitor teaching and learning to iron out inconsistencies in practice, which is satisfactory overall. Similarly, there is no systematic monitoring of the teaching of second language learners.

32. The senior management team work well together and have drawn up some long-term strategies to build upon the school's strengths. For example, members of the senior management team analyse the information from the national tests and assessments to guide teachers' planning and focus additional support. The development plan includes the school's priorities and identifies areas for staff training.

33. The co-ordinator for EAL and the headteacher manage the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. Pupils benefit significantly from the allocation of an additional grant because they are taught in small groups and receive well-focused support. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has introduced several beneficial strategies, including the LEA's Ethnic Minority Achievement Survey. This provides the staff with the means to assess EAL pupils accurately across all English skills, based on National Curriculum assessments. The school has produced a brief but useful action plan for pupils with EAL, and this is incorporated within the school development plan. A more detailed action plan, based on the findings of the audit, is in the process of being completed and will improve further the school's provision.

34. Day-to-day management of the school is efficient. The teaching and non-teaching staff work very closely to ensure that a calm and orderly climate is maintained at all times and this contributes well to the learning environment of pupils. The two secretaries are very effective and contribute well to the smooth running of the school's administration, but opportunities for joint working could be extended if they were in closer proximity.

35. Governance is unsatisfactory. The chair of governors has worked closely with the headteacher to ensure that the governing body appoints members from the wider community. This has proved to be difficult. Currently, the large majority of members have very close relationships with the school, because they are either members of staff or spend much time supporting teachers in the classrooms. The governing body is supportive of the school and ensures that statutory requirements are met, but few governors can provide an independent view. Governors have yet to develop a formal approach to monitoring and evaluating the school's work, and holding it to account. The school makes use of information from tests and assessments to help with planning over time and in deploying staff. The funding for pupils with EAL is well spent, and funds for SEN are used well for additional support to develop basic skills. The finance committee oversees the management of the budget satisfactorily but principles of best value are not consistently applied. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Total income | 924,993.00 |
| Total expenditure | 920,997.00 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,542.00 |

| Balances (£) | |
|--|------------|
| Balance from previous year | 114,881.00 |
| Balance carried forward to the next year | 3,996.00 |

PART C: THE QUALITY PART OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for all the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

36. As soon as they enter the Nursery, children begin to benefit significantly from the good provision. As a result, children make rapid progress and achieve very well by the end of Reception Year. Activities are well planned to develop learning in all areas. Assessment procedures in the children's home languages are used well to plan lessons. Leadership and collaborative teamwork are strong. All staff understand children's individual needs and have high expectations of what they can achieve. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator was absent during the inspection, but it is evident that leadership and collaborative teamwork are strong.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Understanding of children's individual needs, with support well matched to them.
- Good relationships.

Commentary

37. Children achieve very well and develop positive attitudes to learning in response to good teaching and sensitive support. It is unlikely that most of the children will reach the expected goals in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1, but they make good progress towards them. In the Nursery, good relationships develop quickly between adults and children. Bilingual support is good because it provides children with security and helps them to acquire the confidence to join in activities and enjoy learning. Teaching in the Reception classes builds well on the good start children receive in the Nursery. Teachers have high expectations, and children begin to develop personal independence. For example, during the inspection, children put away their own materials and changed clothing when getting ready for physical education. Evidence from children's work and teachers' plans shows that children begin to understand the similarities and differences between cultures. They discuss photographs and classroom displays of families in various forms of dress, and enjoy celebrating festivals such as Eid and Christmas.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good opportunities for children to develop speaking and listening skills.

- Good progress in reading and writing by the end of the Reception classes.

Commentary

38. All staff have high expectations for this area of learning, and children achieve very well. Given the low start when they enter the Nursery, most children are unlikely to meet the expected levels at the end of Reception, but they will have made good progress towards them. Children's home languages are valued, and the bilingual teaching assistant improves their learning by speaking to them in dual languages and by translating the explanations and instructions of other members of staff. In the Nursery, staff plan activities which children want to talk about. Children were encouraged to listen carefully to the sounds of musical instruments in order to distinguish between the high notes of the violin and the low notes of a cello, played by visiting musicians. Some children delight in the wealth of picture and storybooks available in a quiet space, where staff share books with them. They enjoy retelling the stories they have heard. In the Reception classes, children make good progress because of the good teaching. Teachers provide many interesting opportunities for children to read and write. Some children recognise words and letter sounds, such as the 'ch' in 'Chip' and 'church'. They enjoy writing out luggage labels and passports in the class 'travel agents' shop' or recording the sounds they heard during a 'sound walk' around the playground, such as a 'motorbike' and a 'bird'. A few children are able to attempt writing words and simple sentences for themselves, such as 'pati' for 'party'. The good teaching of letter and number formation is evident in the many large, attractive writing books that children complete on a variety of topics.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The early progress in counting and number.
- The high expectations, and the wide range of mathematical opportunities.

Commentary

39. Provision for mathematical development is always carefully planned, and children achieve well. Good teaching and purposeful play activities, number rhymes, and songs contribute to children's growing knowledge and understanding of number, size, shape, and measures. Many children have a natural ability with mathematics, and staff capitalise on this. Once they settle in the Nursery, children make good progress, and those of average and higher ability can count reliably up to 10 everyday objects. Numerals are also displayed in Urdu. Children learn about shape and space and begin to talk about the different features of the construction blocks for building, including the cylinders that roll. They recognise the correct vocabulary for filling boxes with plastic objects, when 3 would 'not be enough' and 10 would 'be too many'. Many children, though not all, will meet the expected goals for this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. In the Reception classes, children continue to make good progress because of the consistently good teaching and high expectations. Children begin to operate numbers independently and roll dice to make up and record their own sums. They understand how to make a number 'one less' or 'one more'. No opportunities are missed to teach and reinforce basic number skills. Examples are counting out the fruit at 'snack time', ordering teddies by size, and making up car registration numbers following a traffic survey.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The good teaching, which develops children's curiosity and observation skills.
- Some unsupervised activities which do not extend learning sufficiently.

Commentary

40. Most children enter school with a very limited knowledge of the world around them. The varied range of activities and good teaching develop curiosity and observation skills. Children make good progress and achieve very well, but only a few will meet the expected goals by the end of Reception. Nursery children explore the textures of various natural and man-made materials, linked with a topic on the senses. They learn to select and use a range of tools and collage materials to produce a picture for someone special in the family. During the inspection, just a small number of children could operate the computer and use the mouse and keyboard confidently in a simple painting program. Occasionally, a small number of Nursery children did not make enough progress during unsupervised activities because the tasks were not challenging. In the Reception classes, children's books show a good range of experiences for this area of learning. Children draw pictures and write examples of good and bad behaviour, and make a patch work quilt for the seven dwarfs. They sequence the stages observed when they plant seeds, and record their findings about floating and sinking. In the lively, stimulating classrooms there is much evidence of links between areas of learning, all of which reflect planning and teaching of good quality.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- High expectations of children's independence.
- The lack of a stimulating outdoor play area.

Commentary

41. Children's achievement is good overall but only a few children are likely to meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching is good. During the inspection, outdoor play in the Nursery involved activities linked with a topic. Children enjoyed stacking blocks to build a house, wearing hard hats and using toy cranes and bulldozers. They painted the wall, using water. Large cardboard boxes served as 'dens', and children learned about fitting into small spaces. Although safe and secure, with a large patch of lawn and a hard surface, the outdoor play area has no fixed play equipment or attractive garden or interest areas to extend the quality of children's learning. In the Reception classes, children respond well to the teachers' high expectations. They prepare sensibly and safely for physical development lessons in the school hall. Most children showed good co-ordination and control as they moved rhythmically to the music of Mike Oldfield's 'Portsmouth'. Behaviour is good, and children listen and follow instructions carefully. Nursery and Reception children paint, draw, construct, and learn to handle and manipulate a wide range of tools and materials safely and with increasing independence.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Imaginative planning for the development of a wide range of creative skills.

Commentary

42. Teachers plan imaginatively and have a good knowledge and understanding of the wide range of skills children need in order to develop creatively in the early years. As a result, children achieve well and make good progress, though only a few are likely to meet the expected levels by the end of the Reception classes. Children learn to use colour, shape and form, and to experiment with different textures in two and three dimensions. Reception children decorate their classrooms with an array of attractive artwork of a good standard. Children sing favourite songs tunefully and tap out rhythms, using a good range of percussion instruments. In the Nursery, children have many opportunities to develop a love of sound and music. During a visit from members of the Halle orchestra, the children listened carefully to the music and words of a poem, written during an earlier visit by a local poet. Some children were able to distinguish between the features and sounds of string and wind instruments, such as the cello and the saxophone. Children were delighted on each being given the opportunity to 'play' a miniature violin.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good support given to pupils with EAL.
- Good teaching.
- Not enough opportunities for writing creatively.
- Effective leadership and management.
- Good promoting of language and literacy skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

43. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are likely to reach standards that are similar to national expectations by the end of the school year, but with particular strengths in speaking and listening. Achievement is good in relation to the very poor level of attainment in language and literacy skills when pupils enter school. Owing to strong teaching, effective use of assessment information, and well-focused support, pupils make good gains in their learning throughout the school. There is no evidence to indicate that pupils with EAL achieve differently from the small proportion of pupils who speak

English as their first language. Similarly, there is no evidence to indicate that boys achieve differently from girls.

44. Teachers have a good range of knowledge and understanding of the subject, and they place a strong emphasis on the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. This was evident in all lessons seen in English and other subjects. As a consequence, pupils make good gains in their speaking and listening as they progress through the school. Most pupils listen attentively to adults and each other. Pupils make rapid gains in their confidence in using spoken English during Years 1 and 2. In some instances, with effective support from the specialist teacher or bilingual assistant, pupils are encouraged continually to practise their oral language skills. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class were able to ask well-focused questions, and to discuss with the teacher and between themselves why a character in a story had no friends. In Year 6, pupils confidently discuss events and characters they encounter during their reading. Teachers use skilful questioning to stimulate pupils' learning and to check progress. For example, in a good lesson, pupils in Year 6 were absorbed by the topic 'immigrants to Britain' and responded well to incisive questioning, contributing fully to the discussion. Higher attaining pupils spoke English fluently, using a wide range of vocabulary, though other pupils experienced difficulties in using correct tenses or in employing an extended vocabulary.

45. Pupils benefit significantly from regular reading sessions and from the use of graded reading books which build upon their skills and confidence. Teachers make use of exemplary records to ensure that planning is well matched to pupils' learning. In Year 6, most pupils are able to discuss the content and style of their books and to speak confidently about their favourite authors. Pupils make good use of reference books and are confident in using the resources in the classroom and the school library. Pupils are accustomed to reading for enjoyment and have developed their own tastes; the majority enjoy taking their reading books home to practise.

46. Writing throughout the curriculum shows substantial progress over time. In Year 2, pupils write in short sentences, with increasing accuracy in spelling and punctuation. The most capable pupils demarcate sentences correctly with capital letters and full stops, and have mastered the use of speech marks. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school and, in most cases, by Year 6 they use punctuation and grammar correctly. The most capable pupils write with fluency and confidence. For example, it was evident from work on the story of 'Macbeth' in the form of newspaper reports that the pupils were able to write in a variety of styles, both factually and imaginatively. However, the over-emphasis on repetitive grammatical exercises inhibits pupils' writing, and pupils are not given enough opportunities to write poems or imaginatively.

47. Teaching and learning are good. The targets set for pupils with SEN are written in pupils' books. These carry constant reminders of their learning objectives, and teachers and support staff are able to give well focused support. All pupils have good attitudes and they respond well to the range of interesting tasks, the good relationships, and the sensitive approach used by teachers and other adults. Pupils benefit from regular marking and constructive comments.

48. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has produced a sound policy and an action plan for future development. Information from the monitoring of planning, analyses of performance data, and a scrutiny of pupils' work is used to guide effective tracking procedures. The teaching is enhanced by the good range of books and a well-stocked library.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

49. The development of language and literacy skills across the curriculum is a strength. Links with other subjects are maturing well, and pupils are given greater opportunities to write in other subjects, such as science and history. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their work,

and to discuss ideas and share their findings. Research skills are promoted well and enable pupils to search for information, for example in their work on World War Two.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching and learning.
- Effective leadership and management.

Commentary

50. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach expected standards by the end of the school year.

51. Pupils enter the school with low mathematical understanding but make good progress over time. All pupils, including those with EAL, achieve well and no differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. The success is largely due to the focus on developing pupils' own strategies for working out problems and presenting work in a clear and organised way. Pupils in Year 6 have a good grasp of number work, fractions, subtraction, shape and space, and problem solving.

52. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' enthusiasm motivates pupils to succeed, and as a result of this they have a positive attitude to learning. There is a good emphasis on the use of questioning to develop vocabulary and to encourage pupils to think and solve problems quickly. Pupils, including those for whom English is not their first language, contribute confidently in lessons. Lessons are well planned and support staff are deployed effectively; small group discussion nurtures early ideas and encourages pupils to explore possibilities. For example, whilst working in four groups, pupils in Year 6 made good gains in their interpretation of line graphs. This was because the well-planned tasks closely matched their stages of learning and the questions made pupils think hard about their work. A strength of teaching overall is the good relationship between teachers and pupils, and the high expectations of good behaviour. Evidence from previous work shows that marking of pupils' work is regular, but it is not as helpful as it could be. The best examples inform the pupils of what they need to do to improve.

53. The two co-ordinators lead and manage the subject well. Since the amalgamation, the co-ordinators have brought the curriculum planning together to ensure that pupils' skills are systematically developed throughout the school. The co-ordinators have carried out analysis of the national and Qualification and Assessment Authority (QCA) tests results and have used the information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Information from assessment procedures is used to track pupils' progress, and teachers are clear about what needs to be done to ensure that standards continue to improve.

MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

54. There are satisfactory links with other subject areas. For example, some aspects of data handling and line graphs feature in ICT. Measurement in science supports the learning of basic number skills. However, the school has yet to plan systematically for the development of numeracy across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Effective teaching.
- Good attention given to practical investigations and skills in scientific enquiry.

Commentary

55. Pupils enter the school with very low scientific understanding, and they bring little knowledge of how science influences their everyday lives. However, pupils' achievement is good because teaching is effective and the curriculum gives them some good learning opportunities in practical work and investigations. As a consequence, pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach expected standards by the end of the school year. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. Evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work shows poor levels of recording at the beginning of the school year, particularly for pupils Years 1 and 2. However, the quality of recorded work showed a marked improvement as pupils strengthened their writing skills and developed a sound understanding of science through practical investigations. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils used good detail in the written explanations, showing a good understanding of the work, though some key vocabulary was misspelled and not corrected. Strong features of all pupils' work were the wide coverage of the curriculum, the emphasis on practical investigations, and the focus on writing in which the pupils used their own words. These features led to pupils showing good gains in their learning and good achievement over time. The recorded work of lower attaining pupils pointed to good curriculum coverage, though their explanations were less convincing and some tasks were incomplete.

56. Pupils contribute confidently in lessons, and this includes those for whom English is not their first language. Relationships are good and teachers respect the pupils and value their contributions in lessons. As a result, classroom management is good and pupils generally show a willingness to learn. Teaching is good. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were benefiting significantly from teaching that was engaging and fully involved them in practical lessons which related science to their everyday lives. As a consequence, they found science interesting, achieved well, and made good gains in their understanding of fair testing and in the life cycles of some familiar animals and insects. Pupils in Year 5 were also fully engaged in a practical lesson which focused on the moon and its phases. The teaching, which was lively, innovative, and memorable, helped pupils to develop a sound understanding of the topic. Pupils responded with enthusiasm and enjoyment, though some had difficulty recalling the links between the sun, moon, and earth. The session encouraged pupils to think constructively about their work, stimulating their curiosity and giving them good opportunities for discussion. A strength in almost all the teaching was the use of questions that matched the learning stages of all pupils. The subject is soundly led and managed by two co-ordinators, who are aware of their need to strengthen their roles further and to improve assessment procedures.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Effective in-service training.
- The well-planned scheme of work.
- Insufficient technical support.
- The lack of a systematic approach to using ICT in other subjects.

Commentary

57. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are likely to reach nationally expected standards by the end of the school year. Additional funding from national initiatives has helped significantly with resources and in the professional development of staff. As a consequence, teachers and other adults approach the subject with confidence, making a good impact on the quality of learning throughout the school.

58. The subject leaders give effective and enthusiastic leadership and have worked hard to raise the profile of the subject in a very short time, though the school lacks sufficient technical support for the full development of the subject.

59. The comprehensive scheme of work ensures that pupils benefit from balanced planning which includes tasks related to word-processing, graphics, data handling, control, monitoring, and modeling. In the lessons seen, all pupils responded well to the teachers' high expectations, and tasks which were suitably focused on their stages of learning. Pupils were confident working by themselves or in pairs, giving each other good support. Younger pupils are taught in small groups to enable them to make effective use of laptop computers in classrooms as well as making time-tabled visits to the ICT suite. However, during the inspection, pupils did not make the expected gains in their learning, because the laptop computers did not work properly and the school has not developed a flexible approach to using the two ICT suites, located on different floors. By Year 2, pupils use the internet to find out information and add this to knowledge gained from first-hand experience, so that they can produce work in a variety of ways. By Year 6, pupils are familiar with spreadsheets, using formulae to add and multiply cells so that they can produce data with confidence. Higher attaining pupils have worked with pupils from a local secondary school, using data-logging equipment to investigate 'why penguins huddle together'.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used to support learning in English, mathematics, and geography. However, its use in subjects is not systematic or routine. The school recognises the need to encourage teachers to identify opportunities for ICT in their planning.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

61. There was not enough evidence to make it possible to report separately on geography and history, but religious education has a full report. During the inspection, one geography lesson was seen. Teachers' planning was analysed and pupils discussed their work with inspectors. Pupils

have good opportunities to strengthen their literacy skills through report writing. Learning opportunities are enriched by visits to places of interest and by visitors to the school. From their work in **geography**, pupils in Year 6 showed a sound knowledge of the continents of the world and the location of the important mountain ranges, such as the Rockies, Andes, and Himalayas. In the lesson seen, pupils in Year 6 used their sound knowledge of regions and the location of cities to prepare a weather forecast of the British Isles. However, their understanding of temperatures was underdeveloped. In **history**, pupils in Year 6 showed good links with literacy and a sound knowledge of dates and significant events, when writing about Life in Britain in the 1930s and World War Two.

Religious Education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weakness:

- Teaching that is rooted in pupils' own experiences.
- Effective use of resources.

Commentary

62. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are likely to reach the objectives of the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of the school year. Pupils, and particularly those with EAL, have a good understanding of their own faiths. Pupils achieve well as a result of the good teaching, which places a strong emphasis on their experiences and knowledge of their own religions, practices, and beliefs. As pupils progress through the school, they develop an understanding that the different religious traditions deal with feelings similar to their own. Throughout the school, pupils celebrate the various festivals of Christmas, Diwali and Eid at appropriate times in the year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils painted their hands in Mendhi patterns to celebrate Eid, whilst in Year 6 pupils joined with other local schools to celebrate the festival in the local Pakistani community centre.

63. In the lessons seen, pupils were keen to talk about their religions and traditions, and time was used well to encourage them to think about moral issues. In Year 6, 'The Heart-Stone Odyssey', is used to raise awareness of stereotyping and race, and to give pupils insight into traditional dances and music which characterise different faiths. By Year 6, pupils know that similar stories can be found in different sacred texts, such as the tale of the Great Flood; pupils respond to the spiritual or religious aspects of stories in the light of their own experiences.

64. The good teaching is reflected in pupils' good attitudes to the subject. In two lessons of the lessons seen in which pupils showed very good attitudes, they were very keen to take part in discussion and share their knowledge. In assemblies, pupils were attentive and respectful during periods of reflection. The richness in the wide range of artefacts is used particularly well to add interest and enhance pupils' learning. Pupils also benefit from visits to the Methodist Chapel, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Mosque. The subject is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinators have a good understanding of the subject and ensure that the curriculum is well planned.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. There was insufficient evidence to make it possible to report separately, and in depth, on any subjects in this area of learning. Evidence from the two lessons seen in **design and technology** and from displays showed that pupils are given planned opportunities to work creatively, and to apply their skills to the design and the assembly of working models. The quality of the models and toys, made by pupils in Years 3 and 5, showed a sound

understanding of the designing and making process. Pupils showed much interest and enjoyment in their work. During lessons, they were given good opportunities to discuss their ideas with each other and to look critically at their own work. Evidence from displays in **art and design** around the school shows that pupils benefit from working with a range of materials and in the style of different artists. Sketches, collages, paintings, and drawings help provide some attractive displays around the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 have produced colourful paintings and drawings in the style of Monet and Piet Mondrian. In Year 5, pupils' observational drawings of fruit and vegetables show a good range of different skills and techniques. **In music**, pupils benefit significantly from the engagement of a subject specialist, who plans effectively and has high expectations of pupils' work. In the lessons seen, pupils in Years 2 and 3 worked enthusiastically, listened to one another, and took pride in the quality of their singing and in the playing of instruments. In recognition of its good standards, the school choir takes part in the Local Schools Festival. The school places a high priority on **physical education**, with the timetabling of swimming for pupils in all years, and the engagement of outside specialists. The school recognises that practical activities help to develop performing and creative skills, improve self-esteem, and strengthen the pupils' knowledge and understanding of team games and individual sports. In the lesson seen, boys and girls showed good attitudes and worked well together on developing their skills in athletics. The swimming pool was not in use during the inspection, and serious concerns were raised over the unsafe surface on which pupils were seen playing cricket.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school's strong supportive ethos.
- Teaching that effectively promotes pupils' independence and shared working.
- The lack of a systematic approach to planning.

Commentary

66. The school places a strong emphasis on how well pupils develop as responsible, caring young people. The impact on relationships, attitudes, and pupils' approach to work is a particular strength. Pupils feel valued by adults and are confident to approach their teachers. The strong relationships fostered by the school give pupils good opportunities to express their views. For example, during a very good PSHE lesson seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 5 confidently spoke about the desirable characteristics of a teacher. The teacher used the very good relationships with pupils to encourage them to play a full part in the discussion and to refine their views. Pupils responded in a mature way by listening to one another's views, and the teacher generated a feeling of trust within the group. The school recognises the need to devise a systematic approach to the development of the subject.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| Inspection judgement | Grade |
|--|----------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 4 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 8 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 4 |
| Overall standards achieved | 3 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 6 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| How well pupils learn | 3 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 4 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 4 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 4 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 4 |
| The governance of the school | 5 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 4 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| The effectiveness of management | 4 |

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