

INSPECTION REPORT

ELLENBROOK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Worsley, Manchester

LEA area: Salford

Unique reference number: 130396

Headteacher: Mr J McNulty

Lead inspector: Mr D Speakman

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th March 2004

Inspection number: 256048

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	242
School address:	Longwall Avenue Ellenbrook Worsley Manchester
Postcode:	M28 7PS
Telephone number:	0161 799 6347
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Strang
Date of previous inspection:	5 th – 7 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average sized community primary school, located to the west of Salford, serves its immediate local area. The area served by the school is socially advantaged. The school population is stable and a below average number of pupils joins or leaves during the school year. The school is popular and oversubscribed. Most of the pupils are White British, with only eight pupils coming from other ethnic backgrounds. None speaks English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Special needs include specific learning difficulties and speech and communication disabilities. The proportion of pupils claiming a free school meal is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry to reception is average. The school belongs to Creative Partnerships of Manchester and Salford. The partnership's mission is to develop children's creativity and imagination through partnerships between schools and cultural organisations and individuals. The school is also a member of Healthy Schools, Eco Schools, and a winner of a lottery grant.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20086	Mr D Speakman	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, English as an additional language.
11077	Mrs J Harrison	Lay inspector	
18842	Mrs G Peet	Team inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education (PE), Foundation Stage.
28320	Mr R Willey	Team inspector	English, geography, history, religious education (RE), special educational needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **highly effective** school that provides a very good quality of education and enables pupils to achieve high standards. Because of its low unit costs and its effectiveness, it gives very good value for money. As a result of consistently good teaching, high levels of inclusion and an excellent ethos of care, pupils are interested in school, achieve well and starting from an average base, attain well above average standards overall. Leadership is excellent – problems such as a drop in standards caused by staff turnover in 2002 are quickly recognised and their impact minimised.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the head teacher is excellent and is fundamental to the school's drive for continual improvement. He is very well supported by the deputy head teacher and other staff with leadership responsibility. The management of the school is excellent. Governors' contribution to the leadership and management of the school is excellent.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with many very strong features at all stages. As a result, pupils achieve well above average standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and above average standards in all other subjects.
- Assessment procedures are very good, and assessment information is used very well to ensure that pupils at all levels of attainment are provided with challenging work to do. This enables all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those at different levels of attainment, including gifted and talented pupils, to achieve well.
- The curriculum is of a very good quality and benefits from excellent levels of enrichment, but planning for links between subjects lacks structure and opportunities for writing in different forms in subjects other than English are not sufficiently developed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Their behaviour and attitudes are consistently very good.
- The school shows excellent levels of care for its pupils and this reflects its excellent ethos.
- Links with parents are excellent. They have a very high regard for the school. The school has very productive contact with other schools.

The level of improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The school was inspected in 1998 and since then standards have risen and the quality of teaching has improved, with a greater proportion of very good and excellent teaching seen during this inspection. These improvements have been achieved in spite of the problems related to teacher turnover in 2002. Assessment procedures and their use are now very good. The curriculum is much improved. The excellent quality of leadership and management has been maintained. The school has responded very well to issues raised in the previous inspection and a wide range of other initiatives has led to further improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Prior attainment
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	B	C	E
Mathematics	A	B	A	A
Science	C	C	B	D

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

Achievement is good at all stages of the school. Pupils start in the Foundation Stage with average attainment and by Years 2 and 6, standards are well above average. By the end of reception standards exceed the goals children are expected to reach in all areas of learning. Although the test results last year were lower than usual in English, attainment in Years 2 and 6 is currently well above average. The school has accurately identified past weaknesses in English and addressed them very well, leading to a recovery in standards this year. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are on course to be well

above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This dramatic rise in standards, noted during the inspection and based on work seen, is not yet reflected in test results. Standards in information and communication technology are well above average. Attainment in all other subjects is above that expected nationally. Core skills in literacy and numeracy, as well as computer skills, are used well in other subjects.

Pupils' personal development is very good. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.** Pupils' attitudes towards school and learning and their behaviour are all very good. Attendance is excellent and punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are consistently good with many very good features. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use it very well to plan challenging and interesting activities based on very reliable assessment data. As a result teaching meets all pupils' needs well and encourages high levels of interest and enthusiasm for work. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and the resulting very good quality of behaviour supports the very good quality of learning. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good; teaching assistants provide valuable support and are effective. Teachers and support staff are fully aware of different pupils' needs and a feature in lessons is their skill in providing highly inclusive education. Procedures for assessment of pupils' achievement and standards of attainment are very good. The information is used very effectively to plan the next stages in learning.

The curriculum is very good. The school provides a very broad, well balanced and extremely rich curriculum. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. The school is very well staffed. Resources are very good. The school shows excellent levels of care for pupils and there is an excellent and supportive relationship between the school and parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are excellent. The leadership of the head teacher is excellent. His extremely clear, realistic vision of the needs of the school is based on high quality and rigorous school self-evaluation. Plans for school improvement are expertly thought out and highly appropriate to the school's needs. He is very effectively supported in this work by the deputy head teacher and other staff with leadership responsibility. The governors provide excellent levels of challenge and support and contribute highly to the work of the school. Statutory requirements are met fully. Together, the head teacher, staff and governors have developed excellent management systems that are highly effective in identifying the school's needs and moving it forward quickly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are extremely happy with the school and give unusually high levels of support. They feel their children are making good progress and that the quality of teaching and learning is good. Parents are confident that their children like school, are extremely well cared for and are expected to work hard and do their best. Parents feel they can make their views clear and that they are listened to. They feel well informed. At the pre-inspection meeting parents expressed a "pride in their association with the school." Pupils have positive views about the school. They enjoy school and feel they will be well supported if they have problems.

WHAT THE SCHOOL COULD IMPROVE

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

- Improve opportunities for writing in subjects other than English.
- Create a more structured plan for cross-curricular links between subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are well above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is good for all groups of pupils and at all stages of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception.
- All groups of pupils, regardless of gender, race or ability, achieve equally well.
- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are well above average. Standards in all other subjects inspected fully are above average.
- English results in the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003 were lower than usual.

Commentary

1. In the last three years results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests have improved in reading and writing at a pace better than the national trend of improvement. Although improvement in mathematics has kept pace with the national trend of improvement, results fell this last year. The school has identified a weakness in skills of using and applying mathematics for this group and is using a computer-based programme to address this weakness with Years 2, 3 and 6. The school is confident that this will improve results in the future and already there are signs of higher attainment. There has also been slippage over the past three years in standards in English. The school recognised this and careful analysis identified writing as an area for improvement. The effective action taken has necessarily taken time to show in the results, but it is now paying dividends and pupils in Year 6 are now reaching levels that are well above the national average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.0 (17.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	18.3 (16.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.6 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (28.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.4 (28.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.6 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. All pupils achieve well. Children start school with average attainment in the Foundation Stage and because of good teaching, all children achieve well and many exceed the goals children are expected to reach by then. There are notable strengths in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. This prepares pupils very well for their work in Year 1 and subsequent years in the school. Attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is well above average. Although the majority of pupils with special educational needs attain below average standards they achieve well against their targets and prior levels of attainment. This reflects the very good support that they receive from class teachers and classroom assistants.

3. Standards in English in Years 2 and 6 are well above average. Bearing in mind the above average starting point when pupils enter Year 1 their achievement is good. By Year 6, pupils write to a very good standard across a wide range of styles and purposes. Handwriting and presentation are of a high standard because teachers insist that work is presented well. Attainment in reading is well above average in Years 2 and 6, with almost all attaining the standards expected for their age and a significant number attaining at higher levels. Older pupils develop higher order reading skills such as working out the meaning of a word from its context. By Year 6 pupils read with expression, using punctuation as a guide. Speaking and listening skills are very good. Pupils are confident and speak with a high degree of fluency. They have good command of the spoken language and a wide vocabulary, which they use effectively to express themselves clearly.
4. Standards in mathematics are well above average by both Years 2 and 6 and achievement is good. Pupils have very good knowledge and understanding of number and of mathematics generally. The school makes a deliberate effort to provide good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills, thereby securing high standards in their knowledge and understanding and use of mathematical skills.
5. In Year 6 pupils have a very good understanding of the nature of science and have developed very good skills in experimental and investigative science. They have a higher than expected level of skill in planning and carrying out investigations. Pupils conduct a wide range of experiments effectively and extend their knowledge and understanding across the full science curriculum. They record predictions clearly, enter results and evaluate outcomes. Pupils have a very good understanding of fair testing and their results are valid, meaningful and interpreted well to extend their knowledge. They write up experiments clearly with the correct use of scientific language.
6. From a very early age, pupils use computers frequently and develop good basic computer skills. This secure start enables pupils to achieve well and maintain well above average standards in information and communication technology across the school. Standards in history, music and physical education are above average. In design and technology, pupils have good skills in the full designing and making process, with good skills in evaluating and improving their products. They develop good historical enquiry skills and appreciate how life has changed over time in relation to major events. In music pupils compose and sing well. Pupils have a good knowledge of a wide range of faiths and understand well how religion is a guiding force in the lives of many people. They have good physical skills and they apply these well in physical education, achieving a high level of success in competitive games.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very positive attitudes and behave very well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Attendance is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding and underpin the work and successes of the school.
- Attendance is excellent because parents are supportive and pupils like their school.
- Pupils are genuinely keen to learn. There is a calm atmosphere in the classrooms with high standards of behaviour; this enables effective learning to take place.

Commentary

7. Pupils have very positive views about the school and this is reflected in their excellent attendance levels. Parents send their children to school punctually and invariably let the school know quickly the cause if their child is away.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2002/3

Authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

School data:	3.4
National data:	5.4

School data:	0.0
National data:	0.4

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

8. Pupils are very keen to learn, well mannered and show respect for their teachers. Most pupils say that their school is friendly and fun. The school makes a considerable effort to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to succeed, whether through academic achievement, sport or creative arts, and this helps to raise their self-esteem and confidence. This is also reflected in Reception, where children exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of this stage in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils' successes and participation in activities are suitably recognised and celebrated. Pupils behave very well both in and out of the classroom. This is evidenced by the fact that the school has not had any occasion to exclude any pupils for poor behaviour since it opened. The imaginative and colourful playground layout and play schemes such as "Fitbods" help to ensure that breaks and lunch times are fun. There is no evidence of any racial tensions at the school. Incidences of bullying are very rare and quickly and firmly sorted. Parents are rightly pleased with the standards of behaviour at the school.
9. There is a striking level of care and attention to detail in the school, for example in the displays of pupils' work and achievements, which fosters and encourages high standards. Thoughtful displays of artwork and literature contribute strongly to cultural appreciation. The sensory garden for the younger children encourages them to appreciate beauty. Pupils are enthusiastic in collecting for charities. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and help to formulate their own school rules. They are keenly involved in helping in their school, looking after younger pupils and suggesting ways to further improve their school; this contributes to their strong sense of ownership.
10. The school's participation in the "Creative Partnership" scheme has provided a myriad of spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities for pupils. For example, a recent project with Year 5 started with a visit to an art gallery and workshops based on African art "Kumasi Junction". As part of the Lowry Gallery's multi-cultural arts celebration the children and staff worked with an American dance company and a jazz poet. These experiences were used to develop work with a visiting artist and the resulting ideas used to produce a decorated "kiosk" construction in the playground. Examples of the children's artwork were then exhibited in the Lowry Gallery. Recently children and the staff have enjoyed workshops on dance with visiting professional ballet, modern and street dance companies. They have also watched live performances at the theatre and interpreted their dance experiences in large-scale artwork figures to enrich the outside play environment.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is very good. Teaching is consistently good with many very good features. The assessment of pupils' achievement is very good and assessment information is used very effectively to ensure good achievement and high standards. The curriculum is very good and benefits from excellent opportunities for enrichment. The school provides very good levels of care, guidance and support for its pupils. The school has excellent links with parents and the community, and very good links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is consistently good with many very strong features in all year groups and in all subjects where judgements could be made. All groups of pupils learn equally effectively. Assessment and its use in planning lessons are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge.
- Planning is good, based on very good quality and reliable assessment data. Planned activities effectively meet all pupils' needs and enable good learning for all.
- Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils, set challenging tasks and invariably expect high standards of behaviour in lessons.
- Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and, combined with very good use of resources, this sustains pupils' interest and motivation well.

- All pupils are fully included in all learning opportunities, regardless of ability, gender or background. Teachers and assistants are fully aware of inclusion issues.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support and are effective in what they do.

Commentary

11. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good with many very good features throughout the school and is effective in enabling all pupils to achieve well overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics and science and in all other subjects where a judgement can be made. Almost half of the teaching seen during the inspection was very good and excellent teaching was observed in Years 1 and 6. This good quality of teaching has improved since the time of the previous inspection, because of the higher proportion of excellent and very good teaching. There has been a significant turnover in teachers in Years 3 to 6. Although this did have some negative impact on pupils' achievement, this has been extremely well managed by the head teacher and the governing body. Due to careful monitoring and high expectations of teaching by the head teacher, subject leaders and governors, and honest feedback that is developmental in its nature, the quality of teaching and learning is now well back on course.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	19 (43%)	19 (43%)	4 (9%)	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.

12. Based on their good subject knowledge, teachers give clear explanations and support this very well through the effective use of the very good resources, such as interactive whiteboards, to give easily understood demonstrations of learning points. Consequently, pupils feel confident to move forward and work independently at a good pace. All teachers are fully aware of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and have completed training in the teaching of information and communication technology, so they show competence in teaching these subjects. Consequently, teachers are able to guide their pupils effectively and ensure that all achieve well and develop good core skills, which also support the good learning in other subjects.
13. Pupils are taught well to use their knowledge and understanding, such as in mathematics and information and communication technology, so there is clear purpose to their learning. Teachers ask appropriate questions focused on pupils of different ability, and these are effective in furthering all pupils' progress and ensuring all pupils are fully included in activities. The best questioning was vigorous and made pupils think carefully about answers to their questions. This was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, when the teacher moved from group to group and, whilst they were investigating angles, asked searching questions that made pupils think and find out answers for themselves.
14. Planning is good. Activities are planned carefully for pupils at all levels of attainment. Teachers use assessment data very well so work is carefully matched to individuals' needs. As a result tasks are challenging for pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers. Teachers' expectations of pupils are therefore high, but well focused on their ability. Expectations are well rooted in the use of assessments carried out at the end of lessons, when a plenary session might be used to check up on what pupils have learned, or to extend learning in preparation for the next lesson. At the end of a Year 3 mathematics lesson for example, the teacher used pupils arranged in a circle to help them thoroughly understand how pie charts represent data.
15. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons; this is good because pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Their management of pupils is good and teachers consistently apply the school's agreed approach to behaviour management, so pupils are well aware of how to behave in school and that there is no compromise of standards. All teachers recognise and comment on those pupils who are co-operating and others soon follow the example and quickly settle at each change of activity. Because these approaches are applied consistently, pupils soon learn the classroom routines and comply. Because teachers have a positive approach to pupils'

behaviour, pupils feel valued and this forms the basis of good relationships between pupils and teachers.

16. Teachers use a good range of teaching and learning methods, which suit these pupils and enable them to progress well. In mathematics and science there is a strong emphasis on developing and using mental and investigative skills to support effective learning and in enabling pupils to use and apply their knowledge and understanding in challenging activities. Year 6 pupils, for example, learned facts about the sum of angles at points and in shapes. They were given an interesting and challenging task to complete, in which they used and consolidated this knowledge well. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and the progress that they make. In information and communication technology lessons, teachers ensure that the pupils have plenty of time to practise and consolidate the skills they have learned. Very good use of computers in other subjects further enables pupils to use the skills they have learned, giving a purpose and meaning to learning.
17. Regular assessments are made and detailed records are kept to check that all pupils are achieving as well as they can. The information is used effectively to provide challenging activities for all pupils and to identify those who need extra support. Teachers usually mark pupils' work to a very high standard and address learning issues sensitively, acknowledging pupils' effort.
18. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the additional support given to them, and learn successfully as a result. Their learning is enhanced by the good support provided by teaching assistants who support them well in class. As a result, these pupils make good progress towards the targets on their individual educational plans.

The curriculum

The curriculum provides a very good range of experiences for all pupils and opportunities for enrichment are excellent. Accommodation and resources are very effective in meeting the needs of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision of enrichment activities both within and outside the school day is excellent.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs or identified as being gifted and talented, are fully included in school life and have equal access to the curriculum.
- Curriculum innovation makes excellent use of national and local initiatives that extend provision well beyond that offered in most schools.
- The school has addressed a major criticism from the last inspection and produced schemes of work for all subjects.
- The school has a very well structured programme for personal, social and health education that makes very good use of the expertise of outside agencies.
- The school is aware of the need to develop links between subjects in a planned and coherent way in order to maximise curriculum time and raise standards further.

Commentary

19. The curriculum is broad, balanced and differentiated to match pupils' age, ability and aptitude, and meets all statutory guidelines including provision for religious education and collective worship. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are implemented effectively. The school now has subject policies and schemes of work in place for each subject, which guide teachers' planning very effectively. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good and is securely based in all areas of learning for children in this stage of schooling, with particularly interesting and enriching activities that prepare children well for their work in Year 1 and beyond.
20. Every opportunity is used to make learning more meaningful and interesting for pupils. The provision of a wide range of experiences outside the basic curriculum, which are open to all, is a strong feature of the curriculum and generates real enthusiasm for learning. The development of the learning environment is a very special feature of the school and PTA money, as well as a Lottery Grant, continues to sustain this. There is an abundance of clubs for pupils of all ages, which include puppets and gardening for younger pupils and mathematics, first aid and cooking for those in Years 5 and 6. There are also very good opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments and play competitive sport. Visits to The Lowry Centre and Manchester's art gallery and museums are planned to link directly with topics being covered in the classroom, enriching the curriculum very much further. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy a residential visit to Wales which fosters their independence and social development. Visitors include authors, artists and musicians as well as those sponsored through Creative Partnerships shared by selected schools throughout the local authority.
21. The curriculum has been planned to avoid repetition and very effectively supports the development of skills, knowledge and understanding for pupils at all levels of attainment. It is adapted well to be fully accessible for pupils with special educational needs. The targets set for them are clear. Careful assessment of their progress and effective use of well-informed and dedicated support staff are key factors underpinning the school's approach and are major reasons why these pupils progress well. The significant number of gifted and talented pupils is provided with additional opportunities to develop their own specific skills, especially in English, mathematics and science. The school is piloting the Gifted OWLS Reading Project for the local education authority under the guidance of a very able advanced skills teacher in the school.
22. There is a well-devised programme for personal, social and health education, which makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development. This is linked to aspects of the science curriculum and uses 'circle time' for discussing aspects of drugs awareness in addition to using the highly valued local education authority's 'Life Education Caravan'. The school is piloting a 'Healthy Schools' scheme in conjunction with the local education authority.
23. The school is very aware that good time management is essential if it is to expand the present curriculum to include the many initiatives in which it is currently involved. It recognises that curriculum time could be created if topics were to be designed to include aspects of more than one subject. As yet, however, it has not begun to do this systematically as staffing suffered from some disruption in 2002, when three teachers

left the school and another three had maternity leave. The staffing situation has now stabilised. The head teacher and governing body have again gathered a settled team and the school is set to expand its curriculum provision further and implement change.

24. The resources are very good in the Foundation Stage and overall. Information and communication technology resources are very good and are used very effectively to enrich other subjects in all classes. Accommodation is very good. Imaginative use has been made of the site and accommodation to meet the needs of pupils from the Foundation Stage to Year 6 and to create a rich and stimulating learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very high quality care for its pupils. Pupils receive very good support and guidance. There are very good procedures to take pupils' views into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is friendly and orderly and this enables pupils to learn with confidence.
- Child protection and health and safety procedures are excellent, so that children feel safe.
- Pupils are given very good guidance through the monitoring of their work.
- Pupils know their views matter and this makes them feel valued.

Commentary

25. Parents say that their children are very happy, standards of care are high and that all children are treated fairly and equally. In the questionnaire completed by the pupils before the inspection, every pupil said that there was an adult they would go to in the school if they needed help. This reassurance has a positive impact on their learning. There are very good induction procedures and parents are given lots of information about school procedures and feel welcome in the school to discuss any concerns. There are good levels of support in the classroom, good levels of supervision and the school behaviour policy is very effective so that pupils get along together at work or at play harmoniously.
26. The school is maintained to high standards. There have been external audits of health and safety and child protection procedures, which confirm the systematic and effective attention that the school takes to care for and protect the children.
27. Pupils receive very good guidance from their teachers and are set relevant targets to improve their work. However they are not yet fully aware of how to relate their standards of work to the National Curriculum levels. Pupils discuss topical and moral issues in personal and social education sessions and the school promotes healthy eating and care for the environment very effectively.
28. Pupils are pleased that the school listens to their views and proud of the changes that they have helped to bring about, for example their involvement in the redesign of the playground. Each class has council meetings, feeding into the main school council, which is very effective. The pupils chair and minute their meetings themselves. The class and school councils make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has an excellent relationship with parents and the community and very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents support the school very effectively because they have high expectations and are very pleased with what the school is doing for their children.
- The home-school partnership is first rate. The school is welcoming and any concerns that parents raise are professionally dealt with.
- Pupils benefit from the excellent links with the community and the very good links with other schools.

Commentary

29. Parents are highly satisfied with the school. They say that their children are happy, that the school is well managed and that they have no overriding concerns. The strong parental support for the school was illustrated by an unusually high turnout of about half of all parents at the meeting with the inspectors. Nearly all parents attend the thrice-yearly consultation meetings with teachers to discuss their child's progress. The "Parents and Teachers Association" gives strong support to the school and since its commencement in 1997 has raised an impressive £45,000 for school funds. This welcome support has been used to great advantage for the pupils, not only in large-scale projects such as computers and the playground re-development but also in sponsoring visits and clubs for the children to enjoy.
30. Communications are frequent and very good. Each class sends home regular letters, which encourage close educational links and describe ways parents can work with their children at home. Copies of all newsletters and school documents are also readily available for parents in the reception area. Parents are very pleased with the information they receive about their children's progress. The inspectors agree, but consider that the written reports could be further improved with more specific subject improvement targets set for pupils to work on. The school is professional and welcoming. Parents' views have been sought in a recent questionnaire. The school has acted upon several of their suggestions and responded with a comprehensive written analysis. This fosters and encourages the high quality home/school partnership.
31. Outstanding community links enrich pupils' learning and personal development. There are frequent educational visits to local areas of interest. There are excellent community links through the "Creative Partnership". Pupils speak animatedly about their arts, drama, media and dance visits, projects and workshops and of the visiting experts who have taught and enthused them. The school plays a central role in the local community; nearly 2,000 local people attended the school's Community Summer Fair and the school premises are used for a wide range of local clubs and classes.
32. The school collaborates very well with local schools to mutual benefit, for example in mathematics for the gifted and talented children and in the "Creative Partnership". Year 6 pupils enjoy French lessons taught by staff from the local high school, which they feel will get them off to a good start in secondary education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are excellent. The leadership of the head teacher is excellent. The leadership of senior managers and key staff is very good, and management is excellent. The governance of the school is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher shows excellent leadership qualities and he provides an extremely clear and effective vision for the continuing development and improvement of the school.
- The deputy head teacher makes a significant contribution to the school ethos and leadership vision.
- Other staff with leadership responsibility are enthusiastic, committed and well focused on school improvement.
- Governance of the school is excellent. Governors have a deep understanding of the school and its needs. They are highly challenging, supportive and pro-active.
- There is excellent quality monitoring of teaching, the curriculum and performance data. The data is used highly effectively to identify weaknesses and address them effectively.
- Commitment to inclusion, equal opportunity and meeting the needs of individuals is very good.
- The excellent quality of professional development ensures that all staff are knowledgeable and competent in their work.
- Financial control is excellent.

Commentary

33. The excellent clarity of vision for the school, by the head teacher, and his very high aspirations and challenging aims for all pupils are key factors in the success of school improvement in recent years. He is highly respected by all. This was seen in the highly effective way he led the school through a difficult staffing period two years ago, when there was a high level of staff change in a short period of time. Although this affected achievement, through his support and guidance, the school is now well back on course, and teaching and learning are now once again strong. The governing body supports the head

teacher in bringing about development and improvement by making a major contribution to the life and work of the school. Governors are confident and have an extremely clear idea of where the strengths and weaknesses lie in the school. The head teacher and the deputy head teacher work in a high level of collaboration with each other. Their work is central in establishing an inspirational leadership style, resulting in an excellent ethos and leadership vision. The work of other staff with leadership responsibility is very effective and offers very good support to the school through clearly defined management roles. Together they have created a very effective learning environment that offers a very broad and rich curriculum, whilst maintaining high academic standards, despite the extra-curricular demands. The commitment to the inclusion of all pupils and to meeting their needs is very good. The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and as a result, these pupils achieve well.

34. Management is excellent. The school's evaluation of its own performance is highly effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses when compared to both national and school information. All staff and governors have an extremely clear picture of what they do well and what needs to be improved. This means that all issues, whether at a school level or concerning individual pupils, are quickly resolved. Early identification of issues needing to be addressed is rapidly followed up by effective action and results are quick. For example, writing at Year 6 and mathematics at Year 2 were very well identified as issues arising from analysis of results of National Curriculum tests in 2003. Action plans were agreed and implemented and standards have already recovered. Performance management is used highly effectively, not only to focus on the needs of the school, but also to develop teachers' individual expertise in teaching. This is a significant achievement because it has enabled teaching to improve to an extent that there is now a much higher proportion of very good and excellent teaching than at the time of the previous inspection.
35. Strategic planning is excellent. It is very thorough, arising from a combination of contributions from the head teacher, deputy head teacher, all staff, governing body, parents and pupils. Governance of the school is excellent. Governors provide very high levels of challenge and support for the head teacher and staff. Financial management is excellent and exceptionally closely linked to school improvement planning. The systems are very secure, and governors ensure that best value principles are applied rigorously to ensure value for money. Allocations are appropriately directed and used to raise standards. As a result the school learning resources are of a very good quality.
36. The special educational needs co-ordinator, the special educational needs team and all staff are very knowledgeable and concerned for the well-being and achievement of all pupils with special educational needs. There is much very good practice in monitoring, assessing and assisting these pupils through activities that enable them to reach their full potential. The progress of very able pupils and those who are gifted and talented is very effectively monitored and managed.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	479570
Total expenditure	482370
Expenditure per pupil	1993

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	21082
Balance carried forward to the next	18282

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The school has improved on the good provision reported at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are good in both nursery and reception. Some very good teaching was seen during the inspection. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to children's learning and personal welfare. The children start in the nursery in the year in which they are four with attainment that is similar to that seen in other schools. There are very good induction procedures so that children make a secure start and achieve well, exceeding the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Children achieve well because of consistently good and sometimes very good teaching, and because the leadership of the Foundation stage is so effective. Staff plan their work together taking into account the informative notes they make on children's achievements. Assessment is very good. Leadership is very good and the provision is very well managed. Classrooms are very well organised, resources are good and, together with the exceptionally good outdoor play area, learning in all aspects of development is well supported. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and their needs are very well met.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and curriculum planning provide opportunities for children to develop independence and good social skills, and raise their self-esteem.
- Very good relationships enable the children to achieve very well.

Commentary

38. Very good teaching in this area of learning allows the children to learn and achieve very well and as a result most will attain a level well above the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Teachers and support staff have established clear routines so that the children feel confident. Relationships between the children and between the children and adults are very good. Children rode together on the road in their outdoor play area, paying attention not to bump into one another. They sat patiently in a traffic jam as the child pretending to be the crossing attendant saw children safely across the crossing. Most children share resources, such as the bikes, unselfishly.
39. Children are given many very good opportunities to develop their social skills. In both the nursery and the reception class they learn to raise their hands when they want to speak and to wait their turn. They sit calmly on the carpet listening well to the teacher, showing good manners in their contact with other children and with adults. There is a high expectation of good behaviour and the attitudes to requests from adults are good. Children are encouraged to be independent. Before a dance lesson most nursery children removed their shoes and socks unaided and fold their clothes tidily. In the reception class children prepared their own snacks, carefully spreading cheese or jam on cracker biscuits. Examples were seen during the inspection where children worked unsupervised for extended periods of time, behaved sensibly and shared resources to good effect. They take responsibility for tasks, such as returning the attendance register to the office and helping in the classroom. Children learn to try hard and behave well when they are rewarded with stars. In both the nursery and the reception classrooms activities are well planned, well organised and clearly explained to children so that children can move around independently and confidently perform the prepared activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and learning ensures that children achieve very well. Teachers use questioning very effectively to draw all pupils into language and literacy learning activities.
- Speaking and listening are given priority across the curriculum.

Commentary

40. Very carefully structured teaching enables the children to achieve very well in their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Children achieve very well and are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Teachers keep detailed records of the development of language for all children and this enables them to plan appropriate activities that challenge children.
41. Speaking and listening are developed very well through role-play activities, through co-operative group-work with other children and because of the good adult to child ratio. In the nursery class good opportunities to share ideas and news with an adult are provided when children bring in their special news books, prepared at home with their parents. Children take messages and write notes when answering the telephone in the 'Medical Centre'. In the reception class the 'Garden Centre' provides opportunities for children to talk about what they are selling. As a result of this very good provision children are able to express their thoughts clearly and generally speak in full sentences to communicate effectively with each other.
42. Many very good opportunities for children to develop their writing skills are provided in both classes. Most children in the nursery are able to write their name and in the reception class, most children are able to write simple sentences. More able pupils in the reception class use full stops and capital letters appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to "have a go" at writing sentences independently, such as when they create a poster telling others how good the reception class is.
43. All children share books with the teacher and most reception children are able to read simple stories from them. Children borrow books from the school library which they read at home with parents. Reception children read confidently and most have a large bank of words they know by sight.
44. All staff make learning a pleasant experience. Good relationships help to motivate children and keep their interest, for example, when the children in the reception class choose how they will be addressed when the register is taken. In the reception class the teacher uses a puppet in an animated and amusing way to add to the children's enjoyment of learning and gain their attention straight away. In both classes, tasks are clearly explained so that all children are confident to take part. Teachers use questioning skilfully. In the nursery, 'carpet time' is used well to encourage children to speak and careful use of questions targets pupils so that all are encouraged to develop their skills and all are fully included. In the reception class questioning is used well to help children understand the story when they are reading, or to move children on to developing a wider range of reading skills such as predicting or to ensure that all children are fully included. Learning is such fun that one child in the reception class told the inspector "It's so exciting here!"

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and lessons are well planned and structured, with clear learning intentions identified.
- The curriculum is very good and children have the opportunity to achieve well across a wide range of mathematical topics.

Commentary

45. As a result of good provision and good teaching and learning, the children develop their mathematical awareness well and are on course to exceed the national expectations by the time they enter Year 1. Their achievement is good. Lessons are well planned and well structured to challenge and meet the needs of all children. In the nursery they enjoy making patterns and playing in the sand. They recognise and name colours and can sort objects by their colour as well as other criteria. They use the computer well to create a number train and thus develop their ideas of simple number sequences. .
46. In the reception class children confidently count to twenty and add up the number of dolls they see or the numbers on dice. They do this by counting on and more able children recognise and mentally recall the sum involved. More able pupils can name common shapes and describe some of their properties to do with the length and number of sides. They learn to tell the time on the hour and half past, an activity expected of older pupils. Pupils build secure skills in measurement through activities such as comparing objects of different sizes with their feet.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

47. No direct teaching could be seen during the inspection in this area, but it is clear from planning that the curriculum is very good and that children experience a wide range of stimulating activities. Information and communication technology is used very effectively in both the nursery and the reception class. In the nursery they use the computer to create a garden for Mary. In the reception class they visit the computer suite and become familiar with the different parts of the computer and the interactive whiteboard, preparing them well for work in Year 1 and beyond.
48. Children build early ideas in science. In the nursery they learn that magnets attract some materials and not others and that stronger magnets attract more and more strongly. In both classes they learn about the different parts of their bodies, establishing a secure basic understanding of life and living processes. They learn about toys that move and use construction kits to make their own moving models. In the reception class they learn that toys are made from different materials and the different ways in which toys can move. Cultural awareness is provided for well. In both classes they learn to understand that other people have different customs and beliefs when they celebrate the Chinese New Year by making a dragon's head and sampling Chinese food.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with some very good features and promotes good achievement.
- The resources, accommodation and grounds are very good and very well used.

Commentary

49. Good teaching enables children to achieve well and the majority are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. In dance, nursery class children display very good awareness of space as they move around the hall without touching each other. They move with confidence and most can skip, walk and run and stand up and sit down when asked. Good links with literacy were made when they revised the sound 'M' and then moved around the room like a monster. Children are encouraged to do things for themselves whenever possible, for example, getting changed or preparing their own snacks. Children displayed good control of a 'safe' knife when buttering their own crackers.
50. Very good use is made of the well-equipped and attractive outdoor learning area. When playing there children move confidently using the large wheeled apparatus. They move safely and with due regard to others. In these activities, children work well with others and show great interest and enthusiasm for what they are doing. Children use small equipment with increasing control as they make minibeast models in the nursery or pictures using spaghetti in the reception class. In the reception class children learn to hold pencils correctly. This skill supports their development in writing well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

51. It was not possible to see any direct teaching in this area, but teachers' planning and the displays in the classrooms suggest that provision is good. Children are given many opportunities to use their imaginations, for example in role-play. Both classrooms have well designed role-play areas where children play imaginatively. The outdoor resource area has a roadway on which children ride the wheeled toys. During the inspection links were made to their work on hospitals and doctors when the children played at being the emergency services attending a road accident. Children have opportunities to create puppets or snowmen from socks, developing their creative imaginations well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and effective tracking and target setting procedures are supporting high standards.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set them work that is challenging for their ability.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons.
- Thorough analysis of assessment data gained through tests and lesson observations allows the subject leader to address effectively weaker areas of the subject.
- Opportunities created for a range of writing in subjects other than English are underdeveloped.

Commentary

52. Standards are now higher than at the time of the previous inspection. The 2003 national test results in Year 2 were well above the average attained nationally. The scores achieved by pupils in Year 2 in the writing test put them in the top five per cent of schools in the country and they attained well above average results in the reading test also. Attainment at the higher levels by pupils in Year 6 was also above average but the school recognised that the overall results at Year 6 had been slipping over the previous three years and that improvement was necessary. Careful analysis of subject weaknesses identified how writing could be improved and action was taken. This has resulted in significant improvement in pupils' writing in English. Standards have been raised for pupils in Year 6, who are now reaching levels well above the national average. This improvement is consolidated through specific targets for pupils to achieve, based in the very good assessment of pupils' work and supported by very thorough, diagnostic marking that details how work can be improved. In addition 'booster classes' are very effectively used for targeted groups of pupils in Year 6.

53. Pupils make good progress because of the good quality teaching throughout the school. Teachers focus well on vocabulary, use targeted questioning to ensure the inclusion of all pupils and they conduct lessons at a good pace, which maintains pupils' interest. Teachers plan their lessons well to take account of the different abilities of their pupils and offer appropriate challenge to all. As a result, all pupils in Year 2 have experienced a good range of writing styles and average and higher attaining pupils are writing well, using good sentence structure and punctuation. Lower attaining pupils still spend time on basic skills such as phonic blends and the 'magic e' at the end of words. By Year 6 pupils are given numerous opportunities for extended writing and they plan and draft their stories to a generally good standard. Handwriting and presentation are of a high standard because teachers insist that work is presented well.
54. Pupils make good progress in their reading as they move through the school and almost all attain the standards expected for their age, with a significant number attaining at higher levels. Teachers set very good examples for reading, as was shown in a Year 2 religious education lesson when the teacher read the story of Jairus' daughter. This encouraged pupils to emulate them when they read aloud. Pupils enjoy reading and younger pupils in particular take books home daily to read to parents, other adults or siblings. Enthusiastic older pupils have joined the public library as well as reading the books from the school's well-stocked shelves. Pupils are encouraged to recommend their favourite books to others, developing their skills at analysing text and defining why they like books. Older pupils are confident in their ability to locate books in the library and to use the contents and index pages and glossary efficiently.
55. There are good, planned opportunities for pupils to further their speaking and listening skills. In a very good Year 5 literacy lesson about persuasive language in advertising, pupils worked in groups to produce an advert that they acted out to the rest of the class. These performances were thoughtful, articulate and humorous and pupils watching made constructive comments about how they could be improved. Opportunities are not confined to literacy lessons but planned across the curriculum. In a very good Year 2 history lesson, pupils were asked to sequence pictures illustrating the Fire of London and to explain the reasons for their choice which they did clearly and confidently. As a result, standards in speaking and listening are well above average.
56. The impact of teaching assistants goes beyond pupils who have special educational needs as they work with groups of lower attaining pupils. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson when a teaching assistant worked with two groups of lower attaining pupils. She had been briefed well and was able to keep these pupils on task through much focused questioning which helped them to develop the stories they were writing.
57. Very good leadership of the subject has helped produce well above average standards. This is because the subject leader carefully analyses strengths and weaknesses shown in tests, in pupils' work and in the lessons she observes. As a result, the action plan she has produced for the subject is well thought through and thorough. She encourages parents to buy books for their children by organising book weeks to coincide with parents' evenings and shows pupils that reading is enjoyable by organising a story-telling festival. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The development of literacy skills in other subjects is good in speaking and listening and reading but there are fewer and less well-structured opportunities for writing. Teachers encourage pupils to give oral feedback on work they have been doing. Pupils do this cogently, giving well-reasoned explanations which help to improve their speaking skills. Pupils are also given opportunities to speak before the whole school in assembly and to take part in performances. They learn to listen to others before expressing their own opinions during discussions in 'circle time'.

MATHEMATICS

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well and attainment is well above average by the end of both Years 2 and 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school.
- There is a very good assessment programme and data is used very well in ensuring that work for pupils at all levels of attainment is appropriate yet challenging.
- The subject is well led and there are clear plans for further improvement.

Commentary

59. As a result of a good start in the Foundation Stage, most pupils enter Year 1 having achieved the standards set by the Early Learning Goals and many are working within the Year 1 National Curriculum for mathematics. This good level of achievement is maintained throughout the school and well above average standards are reached by the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is consistent with the results of the National Curriculum attainment tests, which have been consistently well above average at Year 6. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be average by the end of Year 6. Results in Year 2 are generally above average but there was a dip in 2003 when results were below average. The school is able to explain this and is focusing on this group to improve standards. Inspection evidence from lesson observations shows that attainment of these pupils has recovered and is currently above that expected for pupils of this age.
60. Good teaching and learning throughout the school make effective use of a very good assessment programme so that learning is able to build on a clear understanding of what pupils have achieved and what they should learn next. Teachers use this information very well in their planning. Different levels within the activities are planned for pupils at different levels of attainment so that all can move forwards confidently. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and all activities are challenging and ensure that all pupils make good progress and achieve well. This is a feature of all lessons so that different groups of pupils achieve well within their capability year on year.
61. Teachers make activities interesting and in the best lessons planning is of high quality and ensures that a wide range of mathematical skills is covered. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils investigated angles in rather complicated diagrams. They used their knowledge and understanding of angles at a point, on a straight line and in a triangle or quadrilateral to work out the size of unknown angles. This activity was also very effective in developing pupils' logical problem solving skills. This work was typical of that completed by older pupils and prepared them very well for studying mathematics in the secondary school. Excellent teaching methods were used and the teacher was very aware to fully include all pupils of all abilities in question and answer sessions, and to challenge pupils at all levels of attainment. The end of the lesson was used very effectively to extend pupils' learning even further and to set the basis for the next lesson. This means that by the end of their time in the school, all pupils in Year 6 generally work at least at nationally expected levels for their age and a good proportion at levels better than expected for their age. This means that attainment is well above average by the end of Y6.
62. An important feature of the good quality of teaching is the very good management of pupils. This means that pupils are invariably very well behaved and they have very positive attitudes towards their learning. This enables the creation of a very effective learning environment, in which pupils sensibly get on with their work and enable teachers and teaching assistants to support focus groups effectively and without being distracted. Information and communication technology is used effectively in teaching and learning and teachers make full use of the interactive whiteboards to make demonstration of a high quality.
63. Two recently appointed subject leaders have made a good start to leading the subject and have already developed strategies to ensure high standards are maintained and any identified weaknesses are addressed effectively. They have identified the need to focus on pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematics, one of the reasons for the lower Year 2 test results last year. Good leadership at this early stage is still developing further and they are constantly seeking to promote new areas for development. Their good subject knowledge, with good ideas about how to lead and develop mathematics in the school, supports improved provision and high standards well. Very good monitoring and analysis of assessment data have led to clear identification of appropriate targets for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Mathematics skills are used well across the curriculum. The success of the initiatives to extend pupils' ability to apply the skills learned in mathematics is particularly evident in their work in science and in their handling of data and graphs when using databases.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good.
- The pupils in Years 5 and 6 receive specialist teaching and have many opportunities to investigate for themselves. This contributes to the high standards. However, these opportunities are not consistent in all classes.
- The subject is well led by an able subject leader.

Commentary

65. Results in the National Curriculum tests in 2003 were above average at the end of Year 6. Above average standards have been maintained in Year 2 this year. In Year 6 a greater number of pupils are expected to attain the higher Level 5 and this year standards are likely to be well above those attained nationally. Achievement is therefore good throughout the school. This is a good improvement on the standards reported at the last inspection. In Year 6 pupils have a very good understanding of the nature of science and know how to test their hypotheses and predictions. They have a higher than nationally expected level of skills in planning and carrying out investigations.
66. Teaching and learning are good. Some very good teaching was seen in Years 2 and 6. Teachers have a good understanding that pupils need to think about science and question ideas and not simply learn facts. This results in pupils having a thorough understanding of what they are learning. Lessons are planned to involve pupils practically as much as possible and pupils are encouraged to talk to each other about their ideas.
67. In the Year 5 and 6 classes, which are taken by the specialist teacher, there is a strong focus on experimentation and investigation. Pupils are encouraged to raise their own questions and to plan their own investigations. Questions are challenging and encourage pupils to reflect on their own ideas. Whilst there is a clear focus on practical work in other classes there are fewer opportunities for pupils to raise their own questions and plan and carry out their own investigations.
68. The subject is well led by the coordinator, who has a very good understanding of how pupils learn science. Her specialist teaching in the older classes is a significant factor in the high standards being attained at the end of Year 6. She supports all learners well and has planned separate activities for pupils needing to boost their attainment as well as interesting and challenging activities for pupils that are gifted and talented. She has introduced a new scheme of work that supports teaching and planning well. She has a clear view of what improvements she wants to see and this includes extending her approach to science to all classes in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils, regardless of their ability, achieve well and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. This is due to consistently good teaching.
- There is good use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
- The leadership of the subject is good.
- Assessment of pupils' progress and achievement is good.

- The resources for the subject are very good and are used very effectively by both teachers and support staff.

Commentary

69. The achievement all pupils throughout the school is good and standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above average. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The school has improved provision for all pupils and on the average standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.
70. As pupils progress through the school, teachers ensure that a secure skills base is established for all pupils. The curriculum is well designed so that knowledge and understanding are developed in a progressive way. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 already have good routine skills in manipulating computers. They use a mouse and the keyboard efficiently to locate the cursor, delete text and insert edited text when editing on screen. Pupils in Year 1 entered information on eye colours into a database and quickly understood that they could easily represent this information in the form of a bar chart. This work was at a level expected of older pupils and also supported pupils' knowledge and understanding of graphs in mathematics.
71. Year 6 pupils prepare multimedia presentations linked with their work in literacy. They write stories that were intended to be suitable for reception children. These multimedia presentations include graphics downloaded from the Internet or from the clip art library. They blend sound and pictures, effectively linked by graphics and text. Pupils make their own choices and prepare a good range of original stories with appropriate themes. Pupils are able to evaluate their own work to good effect and critically edit their presentations. They use information and communication technology to organise, improve and present information for specific purposes and audiences in various forms and styles. All pupils work confidently at levels beyond those that are reasonably expected for their age.
72. High standards result from consistently good teaching. Excellent and very good teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and give them the opportunity to make choices and develop their own style of presentation. Pupils respond to high expectations with high levels of confidence and seek improvement in their work. Tasks are challenging and interesting and promote positive attitudes and very good behaviour. Lessons are well planned to ensure that explanations are clear and brief and give pupils confidence, yet leave a good period of time in which pupils can practise and develop their skills.
73. The good leadership given by the curriculum leader has been particularly effective in raising the confidence of teachers and pupils alike. A well skilled and knowledgeable teacher, she has managed development well. She has ensured that all teachers have had training in using the high quality resources, including the computer suite and interactive whiteboards. She has made sure that equipment is up to date and maintained well. This enables pupils to continue work started in the suite, allowing them especially to practise and develop their research skills at other times of the week. She has worked hard to ensure that the scheme of work is matched to the resources available.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Information and communication technology is used as an effective tool to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils use their skills well to support learning in other subjects, such as mathematics, English, art and design and history. Pupils use word processing skills to consolidate editing skills and improve their knowledge and understanding of punctuation. Mathematics programs reinforce number skills well. Younger pupils developed their ideas about graphs effectively when handling data using the computers.

HUMANITIES

History was inspected fully and is reported in detail below. Geography was sampled, as was religious education, in which no teaching in Years 3 to 6 took place during the inspection.

75. As most **geography** is taught in the summer term in order to make use of the better weather for field trips, only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Pupils' learning was good as a result of the very good teaching they received. It was clear, however, that there were gaps in their knowledge which affected the

quality of their learning. Discussions with pupils and the work seen in books indicate that standards are average in Years 3 to 6 but that they are rising in Years 5 and 6 where the teaching is done by a geography specialist.

76. Two lessons in **religious education** were observed in Years 1 and 2. In both lessons teachers built successfully on the prior knowledge of their pupils and questioned them skilfully, ensuring that all were included in the discussion. As a result teaching and learning were good. In the Year 1 lesson, the teacher motivated and enthused her pupils by including role-play. As well as helping them to remember the events of Palm Sunday, the drama created good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills, as worksheets are often used for pupils to record their work.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers develop pupils' historical skills as well as their knowledge.
- Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum.
- The school provides the subject leader with good opportunities to gain an overview of history.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills through the subject.

Commentary

77. As a result of the good teaching they receive, pupils reach higher than average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 and achievement in the subject is good. This is similar to judgements made at the time of the previous inspection, so improvement since then has been satisfactory. Lessons are planned carefully, the pace at which they are delivered is brisk and teachers' expectations are high. Questions are clearly targeted, which ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are involved in lessons. Teachers develop pupils' vocabulary well and their speaking and listening skills through the use of group discussions. Pupils in Year 2 were seen linking cause and effect in their lesson about the Fire of London whilst those in Year 3 were beginning to grasp the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence. Older pupils present their work well. Marking is up to date throughout the school, but it is particularly thorough in Year 6 and comments both affirm what has been produced and suggest ways in which it could have been extended or otherwise improved. Pupils in Year 2 record much of their work on worksheets and this misses the opportunity to develop pupils' writing skills through the subject.
78. Visits and visitors play an important part in making history interesting. They encourage the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. A 'Living History' group comes to school to work with pupils in Year 3 when they are learning about the life of the Vikings and they visit Manchester Museum when learning about the Egyptians. Pupils in Year 4 visit Tatton Park to add realism to their learning about this period in history. The school also uses artefacts effectively to bring history to life. There is a good supply of videos available to help pupils visualise life in the past.
79. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader is given the opportunity to observe others teaching and give feedback on what she has observed. She sees teachers' planning for lessons and pupils' work, and has established end-of-unit assessments so pupils' attainment and progress can be monitored. The subject leader makes insufficient use of these opportunities to extend her vision for the ways in which the subject could or should be developed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music and physical education were inspected fully and are reported below in detail. Art and design and design and technology were sampled.

80. Only one **art and design** lesson was seen and in this lesson the teaching was satisfactory. The quality of work on display is indicative of above average standards. For example, pupils have painted 30 dancing figurines on the walls of the building to enhance the playground and to provide a good quality lasting record of the Commonwealth Games held in Manchester. Pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding is extended by decoration on the 'Kumasi Kiosk' in the playground, based on African sign painting. Development in three-dimensional skills is also evident in sculpture. Pupils in Year 6 made detailed sculptures, such as a living maypole, when visiting an outdoor centre in Snowdonia and working with artists in residence.
81. One **design and technology** lesson was seen in Year 5 and one lesson in Year 6. In both these lessons, as a result of good teaching, pupils planned and produced above average work. Some good links were made with literacy in Year 5 when pupils considered the order of what they had to do to cook biscuits for different tastes. Pupils in Year 6 were developing well their knowledge and understanding of mechanisms through designing a system which converted rotary motion to linear movement. Pupils at all levels of attainment learned how to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding quickly and developed a good awareness of the design process.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well as a result.
- Standards are above average in singing and composition. Pupils sing and perform well in a large group, such as in assemblies
- There is a very good opportunity for pupils to learn to play a range of instruments and this contributes to the above average standards.
- Leadership and management are effective at supporting teaching, learning and achievement.
- There is a good range of resources available for music, enabling pupils to have valuable music-making experiences.

Commentary

82. Standards are above average in singing and composition of pupils' own music. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. This represents satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, when similar judgements were made on standards. They enjoy singing together. In assemblies and singing practices they take care to sing in tune with the piano, listen carefully to the melody and demonstrate a good sense of rhythm and dynamics. They control the volume of their singing well, showing the care and attention given to providing a pleasing performance from well-organised practice sessions. Throughout their lessons they are challenged to try hard and improve their personal performing and composing skills.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Subject leadership and management is good and the subject leader has put together a wide range of good quality learning opportunities and this, combined with her good personal musical skills and those of the visiting music specialists, ensures that pupils work enthusiastically. There is a very clear structure to music lessons and pupils are provided with effective opportunities to develop a good range of musical skills. Teachers make very good use of all the time available in music lessons and pupils respond well to the high expectations. Pupils settle very well after a range of warm-up activities, making a prompt start and maintaining a brisk pace of learning throughout. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to learn to pitch accurately against piano or recorded accompaniment. Pupils develop positive attitudes to music through visiting musicians from a wide range of different cultural backgrounds.
84. Pupils have good opportunities to learn a range of musical instruments with specialist teachers, both beyond and during the school day. The school provides a good range of musical instruments to pupils to use to perform together and individually.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve well.
- Opportunities for extra-curricular activities, including the residential experience, provide excellent opportunities for pupils to participate in sports and make a significant contribution to extending and complementing school-based activities.
- Subject leadership is good.

Commentary

85. Standards in physical education are above those expected nationally and pupils achieve well. This maintains the standards since the previous inspection, which were judged to be above expectations by the end of Year 6.
86. Over time in school and supported by extra-curricular activities, teachers ensure that pupils develop confidence, self-discipline and other personal qualities such as trust and supporting their friends, all of which gives them good skills in working together in teams. They are aware of the need to warm up and cool down, to handle equipment with care as well as understanding the effect activity has on the body. In dance pupils acquire skills such as using space, balancing and responding to music, as was observed in a Year 1 dance lesson when they moved like Mr Strong or Mr Wobbly, or when Year 2 pupils developed good quality dance sequences and free movement in response to South American music. Pupils display enjoyment in all aspects of dance and perform well individually and in pairs.
87. Games skills are developed well. Year 6 pupils learned quickly how to use hockey equipment in both defence and attack in a game. They acquire a competitive edge in matches and tournaments but still retain respect for opposing teams as well as each other, and understand the principles of fair play. Teachers ensure that all pupils participate fully, dress appropriately and learn from each other. Pupils attend swimming classes and by the end of the course, almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected 25 metres unaided swim and many pupils achieve other awards in life-saving and distance swimming.
88. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers consider the individual needs of pupils very well. They provide opportunities for them to work in pairs to evaluate each other's performance; they develop strong partnerships that promote social interaction. Their skills in managing pupils' behaviour, their subject expertise and their use of time and resources contribute to the above average standards being achieved.
89. The curriculum for physical education is very good. The extensive opportunities provided within the extra-curricular programme enrich and enhance very well the acquisition of skills development. Individual pupils and teams benefit from competing in a variety of sports. The school has a wide range of resources and the accommodation in school is appropriate. The residential experience contributes strongly to pupils' physical education, extending and complementing school activities as well as promoting independence and interdependence. Pupils' progress is well supported by the effective co-ordination of the subject. Improvement is satisfactory overall.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education was sampled.

90. Pupils are encouraged to feel positive about themselves, to be actively involved in the life of the school and the wider community, and to make wise choices about developing a healthy and safe lifestyle. Pupils' personal development needs have been successfully identified and the school meets these well. Teachers have a pleasant, warm manner and relate well to the pupils. They show sensitivity when they carefully discuss different feelings and issues, such as the risks and dangers of getting lost or accepting lifts. Teachers ensure that pupils at all levels of attainment are fully involved and contribute to discussions. The school council makes a positive contribution to the life in school. Pupils discuss sensibly the views brought to them by others in their classes. In this way the whole pupil population has a voice in school development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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