

INSPECTION REPORT

**FREEHOLD COMMUNITY JUNIOR, INFANT AND
NURSERY SCHOOL**

Chadderton, Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105630

Headteacher: Mrs J Willetts

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Baxter

Dates of inspection: 12-14 January 2004

Inspection number: 3532008

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	234
School address:	Sidmouth Street Chadderton Oldham Lancashire
Postcode:	OL9 7RG
Telephone number:	0161-2872575
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Steven Critchlow
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This community junior, infant and nursery school has 234 pupils aged between three and 11 years. It is average in size and serves a socially and economically disadvantaged community in Oldham, Lancashire. The school includes a purpose-built nursery unit that can provide up to 60 part-time places. This year there are eight children attending part-time and 25 attending full-time. A distinctive feature of the school is that the vast majority of the pupils, about 98 per cent, come from minority ethnic backgrounds and have English as a language different from their mother tongue and this is very high in relation to the national picture. Most of the pupils receive specialist support for English as an additional Language (EAL) for a substantial period during their time at the school. Approximately 30 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is above average. Thirty-nine pupils have special educational needs, a broadly average proportion, and these include moderate and profound learning and various social, emotional and physical needs. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and this is below average. Although the children possess valued skills and knowledge in their own cultures and languages, their overall attainment on entry to the nursery, is low, especially in communication, language and literacy in English, and in personal, social and emotional skills. Generally, most children start statutory schooling at five years old with well below average attainment, especially in English. Across the school about 13 per cent of the pupils either enter or leave other than at the normal time of entry. The school holds 'Basic Skills', 'Healthy Schools' and 'Investors in People' awards.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25217	Paul Baxter	Lead inspector	Mathematics, geography, history
19446	Susan Wood	Lay inspector	
8316	Jozefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, religious education, special educational needs
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20230	Jennifer Clayphan	Team inspector	English as an additional language (EAL), information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	15
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	19
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	22
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with distinctive features and significant strengths. Leadership and management are good overall, and are underpinned by the headteacher's excellent commitment to equal opportunity and full inclusion for all pupils. This is shared fully by all the school community and leads to good provision over all with many very good features across the school. The great majority of teaching is good, therefore, most pupils achieve well and an increasing number achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. Value for money is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children in the nursery and reception achieve very well in response to very good provision.
- Good teaching throughout the school enables the pupils to achieve well in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), physical education and religious education.
- Attainment in English is below average by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher gives very good leadership and involves staff very effectively in the development and day-to-day functioning of the school.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is very good.
- Very good provision for the pupils' moral and social development and for their health and welfare, is strengthened by the excellent personal care offered to the pupils by all the staff who work in the school.
- Despite the best and effective efforts of the school, too many parents take their children on extended visits abroad restricting their learning.
- The arts are not always used to best effect in widening the pupils' cultural awareness.

The school has improved well since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning and pupils' achievement have been lifted from satisfactory to good. Effective teamwork in leadership and management has also strengthened the drive for continuous improvement, for example, consistent care from adults has lifted pupils' behaviour to good. Improved provision is raising standards, particularly in writing, mathematics, science and ICT.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E very low*

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals. These are used instead of prior attainment figures because of significant changes year groups from Year 2 to Year 6.

Given the individual character of this school, comparisons with national standards and those found in similar schools nationally are less reliable. In addition the prior attainment and the number of pupils in each year group can vary from year to year considerably through the school. Such was especially the case in 2002 and 2003. In other years the table above indicates that standards have risen.

Evaluation of all inspection evidence shows that most pupils achieve well, including pupils with English as an additional language and a small number of pupils who have English as a first language, and pupils with special educational needs. The few higher attainers also achieve well. A significant number of pupils achieve very well, but overall, achievement is constrained to good as

some pupils have long periods of absence from school on family visits abroad, which hinder their learning. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is average in science, physical education and religious education. The overall standard is below average in reading, writing and speaking and listening, and in mathematics, as few pupils reach the higher level. Nevertheless, in relation to the pupils' starting points, these standards represent good achievement. Pupils in Year 6 attain average standards in mathematics, science, ICT, physical education and religious education. Pupils attain close to the average standards in English. These standards represent good achievement by the majority of pupils and very good achievement for several pupils in relation to the very limited skill in English when they first started school. Whilst children in the nursery and reception possess valued skills in other cultures and languages, standards are well below expected goals especially in English, but this represents good achievement since they started school.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Relationships are very good and are enriched significantly by the warm support of staff. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall.** Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. It is good for pupils' spiritual and cultural development and is enriched by the value placed on the pupils' own cultural and religious backgrounds. Attendance is satisfactory; despite the school's strong action, too many pupils have extended holidays abroad that result in big gaps in their learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is good in all parts of the school. In most lessons strong features included; very good use of teaching assistants and learning mentors, the very good example of staff, consistent planning and well-targeted questioning. These features in turn had a direct and positive impact on the pupils' learning. All teachers are diligent in valuing the pupils, their cultural heritage and their responses. They are also effective in promoting the pupils' independence in learning and the improving use of ICT, especially in mathematics, is helping pupils to learn. These have a beneficial impact on the pupils' academic and social skills. Very occasionally, learning is slowed by less effective management of pupils with behaviour needs. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. The curriculum is good and is planned carefully to meet pupils' wide-ranging needs and to include them equally and effectively. Excellent personal support from staff underpins the very good quality of the care and welfare given to the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads very well setting an inspiring example in terms of including all pupils and meeting their diverse needs. The deputy headteacher and other key staff give good support. Governors fulfil their statutory roles effectively. Governance is satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents: parents are very appreciative of the help given to children throughout the school. They feel that the teaching is good and that pupils are encouraged to work hard across a wide range of interesting activities. The vast majority of parents consider leadership and management to be good. Inspectors agree with these views.

Pupils: all pupils know an adult to go to if they are worried. They feel that teachers are fair and show them how to improve their work. Pupils are very proud of their school. Inspection supports their positive views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- *Extend the strategies used to develop pupils' skills in English, for example, by making more effective use of ICT in English lessons.
- *Increase the focus on promoting the arts to widen the pupils' cultural awareness.
- *Reduce the number of extended visits abroad undertaken by pupils during term time.

**The school has already identified these as areas for development.*

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' attainment is on course to reach an **average standard** by the end of Year 6, and standards are below **average** in Year 2. The vast majority of pupils have English as an additional language, and given the low level of skill, especially in English, demonstrated by most children on entry to school, these standards represent **good achievement** by the pupils currently in these year groups. Children achieve very well in their time in the nursery and in their reception year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in the nursery and reception as a result of very effective teaching and support.
- Good teaching enables most pupils to reach average standards in mathematics, science, ICT, physical education and religious education by the end of Year 6. Even though standards in English are below average overall, they are close to average by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement in this school.
- Pupils with special educational needs, and the very small number of pupils with English as a first language, and a few higher attaining pupils, also achieve well in relation to their capabilities, reflecting the school's inclusive provision.
- Literacy is promoted well in other subjects and pupils' reading skills are reinforced effectively.
- ICT is used effectively in mathematics and research using the Internet is a developing feature in the foundation subjects, but opportunities to enrich learning in English by using ICT are not always fully developed.
- Despite the best efforts of the school, several pupils have their learning disrupted by extended holidays abroad.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (14.3)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.4 (14.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 25 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	25.8 (23.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (23.9)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.6 (25.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. National Curriculum test results of pupils in Year 6 show that standards in recent years have continued to rise at a rate matching that found nationally, in the main reflecting good achievement in relation to pupils' capability. This has been accomplished by:

- An excellent commitment to full inclusion by the headteacher setting a clear example to all staff and pupils, that pupils and their cultures and skills should be valued and ensuring that pupils develop their skills in English sufficiently to access learning and achieve well.
 - The development of consistent and effective teaching and learning throughout the school.
 - Careful planning of the curriculum that places a strong emphasis on speaking and listening, and the use of subject specific language to aid pupils' understanding.
 - Valuing pupils and their responses so that the pupils feel confident to express their ideas and learn by sharing them with others.
2. As a consequence, inspection shows that standards are average at the end of Year 6 in writing, mathematics, science, ICT, physical education and religious education. These represent good improvement since the last inspection. The pupils' attainment is below average in speaking and listening, and in reading.
 3. Consideration of the pupils' performance in national tests and teachers' assessments should be treated with caution as the vast majority of pupils at this school have English as a second language, many of whom started school with little or no skill in English. In addition, comparisons with similar schools based on free school meals are even less reliable in the context of this school. In recent years the attainments of the pupils in such tests at the end of Year 6 have been mostly below the national average and matched those found in similar schools. Taken together, these results represent good achievement by the pupils of this school. The results of national tests at the end of Year 6 showed some improvement this year, especially in writing, where the standard was average. Standards in reading, mathematics and science were mostly below or well below average. Comparisons with similar schools at Year 2 were generally good, especially in reading and writing. Standards vary quite considerably from year to year, however, reflecting pupils leaving or arriving at the school, differing levels of prior attainment and the negative impact of unauthorised extended visits abroad. As a result, comparisons between the pupils' performance in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 are skewed to a well below average judgement of added value, which bears little resemblance to the good achievement identified by the breadth of evidence collected during this inspection.
 4. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 in all aspects of English, but are closer to average in writing than in the other strands. Standards are also below average in mathematics and they are average in science, physical education and religious education. Taken together, standards have improved well since the last inspection. These standards generally reflect good achievement by most pupils in relation to their previously well below and often lower levels of skill seen in reception. Compared to the pupils' performance in national tests at Year 2 in recent years, these standards show improvement, especially in reading, mathematics and science in response to more effective teaching.
 5. Although the children possess valued skills and knowledge in their own cultures and languages, standards of attainment on entry to the nursery in the required areas of learning are low, especially in communication, language and literacy in English and in the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. These reflect the significant gaps in the children's use of English. Provision in the nursery and reception is very good and children settle quickly and achieve well. They do best in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical development where they reach average independent and social skills by Year 1. The children achieve well in all other areas of learning, but because they started with underdeveloped skills, many do not reach the expected goals set for young children and most leave reception with a well below average level of skill.
 6. Achievement is good for most pupils in Years 1 and 2, but it is clear that several pupils in Year 1 still need a lot of support in sustaining concentration, especially in mathematics. Learning slows on occasion as the teacher and teaching assistants seek to develop the pupils' social skills. As the pupils mature they take a great responsibility for their learning and, consequently, they achieve well in speaking and listening, and in reading, writing, science, physical education and religious education, as a result of good teaching. Achievement is satisfactory in mathematics.

Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6 especially in mathematics, where the consistently good use of ICT enables pupils to work independently. Consistently good teaching and good support from teaching assistants and learning mentors keeps pupils on task well. As a result, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, the few who speak English as a first language and a few higher attainers, achieve well in English, mathematics, science, ICT, physical education and religious education. Inspection found no significant differences in the achievement of boys compared to girls. There was insufficient opportunity to judge standards in other subjects.

7. Pupils who speak English as an additional language attain at similar levels to the very few pupils who speak English as a first language. Children arrive in the nursery with little or no knowledge of English and there is good achievement throughout the school so that by the time they leave Year 6, the language skills of most pupils are a little below the national average.
8. Pupils who receive support for their special educational needs have a wide range of needs and benefit from the specific help they receive, particularly in English. Throughout the school these pupils achieve well, because the school is committed to inclusion and has organised a very strong programme of support. Since the last inspection, the school continues to make good provision for these pupils.
9. The school places a strong and effective focus on speaking and listening and in bridging the pupils' gaps in English. Teachers take every opportunity to extend the pupils' English vocabulary in other subjects, for example, in mathematics where technical language such as 'measurement', 'pattern' and 'sequence' is promoted to extend the pupils' understanding. The pupils' numeracy skills are developed well in science and geography through measurement. ICT is used and developed well in mathematics and to research topics in subjects such as geography and history, but opportunities to use ICT to enrich pupils' skills in English are not always taken and this limits attainment on occasion.
10. Since the last inspection the school has strengthened its ability to include all pupils equally and to meet the pupils' individual needs and this is helping an increasing number to attain higher than average standards and to raise their achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes to their learning and behave well. Relationships are **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and has been improved since the last inspection. Spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development are **very good** overall, due to the very successful emphasis placed upon personal, social and citizenship education throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about their learning and time in school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Very good relationships throughout the school impact very positively on the social and moral development of pupils.
- Very good procedures to monitor attendance rates have a positive effect and attendance is satisfactory.
- Pupils' moral, social and personal development are very good.
- Spiritual development is good. Cultural development is generally good with some strong features, especially the value placed on the pupils' own cultures and languages. However, there is scope to develop further pupils' knowledge of local British culture and of art, both European and from around the world.

Commentary

11. The pupils have good attitudes to learning and concentrate on the work they are given and this is having a positive affect on their overall achievement. Their behaviour in and around the school is good, which is the result of very good relationships, where pupils and adults respect each other. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection. There are very good induction arrangements for young children in the nursery and reception, which provide for a smooth transition between home and school. They result in children becoming increasingly confident, and through the wide and stimulating activities on offer to them, the children learn to become independent learners. The very effective balance between activities directed by adults and those chosen by the children provides an additional factor in encouraging independence. Evidence from this inspection indicates that the children are caring and respectful of others. There is often a spiritual dimension to their learning, as observed when they listened with rapt attention to the sound of raindrops on their umbrellas, and this aids their appreciation of others and the world around them.
12. Pupils enjoy their work and say they like school because their teachers make lessons interesting and this enables them to discover new information. They feel confident to ask for help when experiencing difficulty and take pride in the work they produce. Pupils listen carefully and are keen to share their own ideas. They work collaboratively as well as individually enabling them to complete given tasks during the lessons.
13. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are eager and enthusiastic. They usually listen attentively and try hard to join in and do their best. Whatever level of English they have acquired, they behave well and quickly form trusting relationships with adults and their classmates.
14. The children in the nursery and reception who have special educational needs are identified early and are provided with a very good programme of support by the lead teacher and her assistants. These children benefit from the strong ethos that exists in the school and the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils with special educational needs develop a positive self-image as the teachers and support assistants strive to help them to achieve success in their work. The pupils with most severe difficulties maintain their interest and concentration because of the cheerful encouragement of their teachers and support staff. The very good relationships that exist throughout the school result in close bonds of trust and friendship with adults. The pupils develop a positive attitude to their work and behave well.
15. The behaviour throughout the school is good and pupils know what is expected of them. There are notably few recollections of inappropriate behaviour, bullying or racial harassment in the school, although when they have occurred they are quickly and appropriately dealt with. Relationships throughout the school are very good with all staff acting as good role models. Pupils respond well and show respect for each other, the resources and buildings. Pupils are very polite to visitors and are delighted and enthusiastic to show their work and share their experiences at the school with them. These very good relationships are having a beneficial impact on the pupils' learning.
16. Attendance is satisfactory. The school has worked very hard on improving the overall attendance of its pupils, which has risen from 86.2 per cent to 93.3 per cent over the last three years. The considerable improvement has been accomplished by clear monitoring procedures and regular contact with parents immediately a child is absent without reason. The number of pupils taking extended holidays to visit homelands is impacting negatively on the annual figures of the school and the school is currently addressing this issue through its revised policy. The punctuality of the majority of the pupils has also improved considerably over time and the school continues to monitor this, with the educational welfare service. The arrival of a minority of pupils after the start of the school day occasionally delays an otherwise prompt start to

lessons. Overall, the school does well to restrict the impact of these issues on the pupils' learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
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
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Black or Black British – any other Black background

No of pupils on roll
5
1
205
22
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

17. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development are very good overall and have been improved well since the last inspection. The school ensures that pupils develop a strong self-awareness by encouraging them to think deeply about issues that affect them and their reactions to those issues. Pupils also show good levels of respect for others' points of view. Teachers provide opportunities when pupils experience wonder and amazement at aspects of the natural world. Assemblies meet statutory requirements in the school's particular context. To ensure that everyone is able to participate without reservations, there is mention of 'God', but not of 'Lord Jesus' or 'Mohammed'. The silence and stillness while children in reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 thought about and silently thanked God for 'something special' during a 'Good Work Assembly' was deeply moving and had a beneficial impact on pupils' understanding.
18. Pupils have a very highly developed sense of right and wrong. Adults throughout the school provide very good role models of how to behave and treat others, and pupils are quick to follow their example. Pupils are active in discussing and deciding codes of behaviour. There are very good relationships between pupils and with adults, and this leads to pupils working very successfully as members of small teams.
19. Pupils have a good awareness of Pakistani culture. The school's very successful initiative to twin with a school with a largely white ethnic population has resulted in pupils having a high level of awareness of racial issues and the experience of how to overcome many of them. Pupils in Year 6 report that they believe in equality between races and are convinced of the importance of knowing about differences as a means to improving understanding between peoples. However, there is scope to extend their knowledge further of what interests and motivates the local white population. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' knowledge of European and world art, music and drama to raise their appreciation of their locality.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for all its pupils. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good and is enriched by caring links with the pupils' own cultures and religious beliefs. Provision for the pupils' care, health and welfare is very good and has a beneficial impact on the pupils' achievement.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning across the school is **good**. Teaching in the nursery and reception is good and the children achieve well. Teaching and learning is good in Years 1 to 6, and pupils achieve well in lessons. Assessment in the core subjects is good, but it is less effective in some foundation subjects. Pupils are encouraged individually to assess how well they are learning in the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very effective teamwork between class teachers and teaching assistants that helps to meet the pupils' needs.
- The very positive management of pupils' behaviour.
- Effective demonstration of literacy skills by all adults in the school.
- All class teachers have secure subject knowledge in delivering all areas of the curriculum, which includes well-planned lessons, effective questioning and guidance to help pupils achieve well in lessons.
- Assessment procedures for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are used effectively to assess and track pupils' progress, but assessment in some foundation subjects has not been developed to the same standard.
- Inconsistent use of computers in some English lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (11%)	32 (71%)	8 (18%)	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.

20. Teaching and learning have received a strong focus in recent years and the overall quality of this provision has been improved well since the last inspection. An important feature is the increased proportion of good and better teaching and its more consistent application in all classes, and this is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievement.
21. There is very effective teamwork between teachers and all support assistants to ensure that the support for pupils' learning is targeted effectively. The teachers give teaching assistants a clear understanding of the learning objectives from weekly planning and, through effective questioning, all adults help to focus pupils' thinking on them. They know pupils' individual learning targets and complete assessment records as they observe pupils in whole-class discussion or group work. This was demonstrated in a Year 2 English lesson when the two teaching assistants worked in close co-operation with the class teacher so that pupils achieved well when writing about different characters.
22. This very effective teamwork is also very successful in managing pupils' behaviour through the use of consistent strategies and approaches. The encouraging classroom atmosphere promotes very good relationships. Praise for good attention and quick response reinforces

expected behaviour. Teachers establish clear routines so that pupils know what to expect and how to respond. In doing so they provide good role models of how to speak and listen when addressing pupils, which provides a positive use of literacy in the school. This was demonstrated in a Year 4 dance lesson in which the clear instructions given by the teacher helped all pupils achieve well. When pupils' behaviour is challenging, the teachers' calm approach helps diffuse potential difficulties.

23. All class teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding to deliver all areas of the curriculum. They also ensure that planning of lessons achieves a good balance between activities to capture and hold pupils' interest, and the smooth transition between parts of the lesson helps to maintain the pace of learning. Overall, teaching in English and literature and in mathematics and numeracy is good. Questioning and guidance are used well and are often supported by visual aids, models or demonstration that enables the pupils to grasp the concepts. This was seen in a Year 6 English lesson when the teacher used an overhead screen to highlight persuasive script in a text being used in the lesson. Planning of group or individual tasks takes very good account of pupils' capabilities and identifies where support is to be targeted. This was effectively demonstrated in a Year 5 ICT and mathematics lesson, when the task was well matched to the learning needs of all pupils. This ensured that all pupils participated fully in the lesson and contributed to good achievement by pupils with special educational needs and those who were potentially higher attainers.
24. The quality of teaching provided for children and pupils who speak English as an additional language by specialists and all adults in the nursery and reception is very good. Other class teachers and teaching assistants throughout the school provide good quality input. Consistent emphasis is given to explaining specialist vocabulary, using a rich range of words and phrases, and modeling correct speech patterns, intonation and grammatical forms. Adults constantly ask questions that demand thoughtful and full replies from pupils, thus giving them numerous opportunities to practise spoken English. This results in good learning right through the school despite the fact that significant numbers of pupils have limited opportunities to use English away from the school environment.
25. The teaching of children and pupils who have special educational needs is good and, at times, very good. All class teachers are involved in drawing up the pupils' individual education plans, in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator. The staff know the needs of these pupils well and support them effectively. This enables the pupils to feel included in class activities. The staff provide many opportunities for these pupils to succeed in front of their peers. Each teacher carefully maintains an assessment file for special educational needs. Information from assessments is then used to set specific targets for improvement and to plan the next step of pupils' learning. The close teamwork that exists throughout the school helps the pupils to learn and achieve well.
26. There are effective systems and procedures in place for assessing and tracking pupils' achievements in the core subjects. However, the procedures for assessing pupils' achievements in a few foundation subjects are less effective. Pupils are encouraged to take part in assessing their own level of understanding and through the use of 'progress files' are now beginning to identify how they might improve. This is an effective strategy in helping them to take responsibility for their own learning. Although the ICT suite is used well to develop pupils' learning in using computers, there are, however, some lost opportunities in using classroom-based computers in English lessons and subjects such as mathematics.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** throughout the school.

The school develops the curriculum very well and adapts it to meet pupils' needs successfully. It is enriched well by extra-curricular activities. Accommodation is satisfactory. Resources for learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Specialist support for pupils who have English as an additional language is very good.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) is good and imaginatively planned to promote good achievement.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The pupils are very effectively supported by well-trained learning assistants and they make good progress towards their targets.
- There are interesting enrichment activities through visits and visitors to the school and by references to the pupils' cultures and religious beliefs, but there are too few activities for participation in the arts and sports.
- The school provides good support for learning outside the school day.
- There is a good match of teachers to the curriculum and very good match of support staff, who all work as a very effective team.
- Accommodation is satisfactory and the quality of resources is good and well used by staff and pupils.

Commentary

27. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are good and enable all groups of pupils to achieve well. Curriculum provision has been improved well since the previous inspection. It is well planned and assisted by the positive atmosphere for learning. The school evaluates the provision regularly, assessing the effect on teaching and learning. The curriculum is carefully reviewed and adjustments made as necessary, most recently in respect of racial equality. This was developed further and linked to geography, using guidance from courses provided by the local education authority. The school is totally and very effectively committed to inclusion, as evidenced in the very good equal opportunities open to all pupils. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects, including religious education and personal, social and health education. 'Booster sessions' provide extra support for pupils to achieve the next level. Consequently, barriers to learning such as the limited opportunities to develop English skills at home are addressed, and the pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
28. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is stimulating and planned carefully to provide for their varying needs. It provides the children with many good opportunities to explore and investigate inside and outside the classroom. The staff support the children well as they embark on the Early Learning Goals. The staff have developed very effective teamwork and, together with the very good co-ordination by the lead teacher, they have created a very strong first stage of learning.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Careful thought has gone into organising the curriculum and grouping to ensure that their diverse needs are fully met in all classes. These pupils have full access to all subjects taught and to the life of the school. The pupils are very effectively supported in class by the staff, who are well briefed and prepared by the teachers. In this way, the school ensures that the pupils are fully included in learning. Consequently, the pupils achieve well and make good progress towards the set targets.
30. The curriculum provided for children and pupils who speak English as an additional language is very good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 where there is specialist teaching and support for individual pupils. It is good through the rest of the school. The school celebrates pupils' home languages and, when appropriate, uses both them and English to ensure that pupils are fully involved in all learning activities.
31. There are strong links between subjects that help pupils gain further understanding from their learning. Each subject co-ordinator ensures that key skills, for example, specific language, are included effectively in the planning and that they are built into the overall curriculum provision. The very strong focus on speaking, listening, language and communication, and opportunities

for writing in other subjects of the curriculum, for example, results in improving standards. In addition, the school has made effective links with two other schools through which the staff develop the curriculum. Freehold School, for instance, shares information about Islam, and the link school about Christianity. Both benefit well through these links. Further developments are made through 'improving your own learning', whereby pupils are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning, from the nursery to Year 6. This ensures that all staff maintain their professional development for the benefit of the pupils.

32. The opportunities for enrichment outside the school are good. There are carefully planned visits and visitors, such as to Castleshaw Outdoor Centre, and older people visit to talk about their World War Two experiences. Present budgetary constraints prevent the school from participating in a residential visit. The school makes visits to the Royal Exchange for drama, and to the Art Gallery in Oldham, where the pupils participate in the art workshops. These visits provide good opportunities for developing their aesthetic skills, but there are insufficient opportunities for the full development of arts in the school. There are sporting coaching sessions for basketball, football and rugby, but these opportunities are not on offer on a regular basis. There are no clubs on offer for pupils in Years 1 and 2 at present.
33. There is a good match of teachers and very good match of support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The sense of joint purpose that binds all staff is a strong feature and a key factor in the school improvement. There is a good range of resources for all subjects, but accommodation is satisfactory. Sometimes the cramped classroom areas restrict practical activities, but forward planning ensures that adjoining areas are well used, for example, for science investigations and small group support.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for ensuring pupils' care, health and welfare and provides a caring environment in which pupils feel safe and enjoy their learning. The school seeks pupils' views and acts on them very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel safe and valued by all the adults in the school.
- The school sensitively welcomes pupils, and their individual needs are met.
- The school seeks the views of its pupils and these are incorporated into the plans for school development.

Commentary

34. Pupils and parents feel that the care and guidance given to the pupils is a strength of the school, and the inspection team agrees. This area of provision has been improved well since the last inspection. Pupils feel confident that they can approach any adults with concerns and worries. The clear procedures that are in place for health, safety and child protection ensure that the school provides a caring environment in which pupils can learn and develop into mature adults. The school seeks the views of the pupils and, where appropriate, acts upon them. Children are well supported as they enter the school and their individual needs are sensitively provided for. The support given to pupils, particularly by the teaching assistant, is exceptional and has a profoundly enriching impact on the pupils' learning. The young children are carefully introduced to school life and they settle quickly into the daily routines of the school. The school is very sensitive to the individual needs of all its pupils and work hard to ensure that they are fully met. Children and pupils who speak English as an additional language are very well cared for and supported. They are fully included in all activities and quickly become confident. The school cares for its pupils with special educational needs well and this caring attitude is reflected in the ethos of the school. These pupils know that they are very well cared for and valued. This has a positive impact on their learning.

35. The organisation of the teaching assistants and their roles in the life of the school is excellent and provides sensitive and unobtrusive support to all pupils regardless of their individual needs. The headteacher has thoughtfully developed their role to provide informed support for all the children in the school. Having included the lunchtime role into the teaching assistance job description, alongside involvement of the pupils in roles of buddies and lunchtime monitors, very good relationships and responsibilities have clearly been developed. The impact is a calm and purposeful environment when pupils can develop into mature and confident adults whilst feeling safe and very well cared for.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and the community and with other schools. The parents are supportive of the school and the work it does. The school consistently provides a wide range of well presented documents to inform parents about their children's learning and the daily routines of the school, although many parents find it difficult to become involved in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good quality of information to parents ensures that they are very well informed about the work of the school and how their children will learn.
- Many opportunities are given to parents to become involved in their children's learning and the life of the school, although too few parents take advantage of these opportunities.
- The strong links with a nearby school, have a positive impact on the understanding of the richness of the pupils' local community.

Commentary

36. A range of very well presented information is provided for parents on the everyday routines of the school, the curriculum being taught in the classes and the progress their children make during their time at the school. They have many opportunities to share in their children's learning and achievements including through homework, productions and assemblies. Few parents are seen supporting in classrooms despite the efforts of the school to involve them. The school is keen to develop a working relationship with its parents. There are currently a good number of links with the community to help enrich pupils' learning, including links with the mosque and local church, the police and a range of local charities.
37. The school strives to keep parents of children with special educational needs informed of the progress they make. Very few attend the review meetings, but parents are always made welcome to discuss pupils' progress towards meeting the targets set for them. The school makes great efforts to welcome the parents of children and pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school has made good improvements to its links with parents, the community and other schools since the last inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall and perform a pivotal role in developing and sustaining effective provision, and promoting pupils' achievement. The experienced headteacher provides very good leadership overall, and her specific lead in developing an ethos where everyone is included regardless of the individual differences or backgrounds is excellent. Leadership in the school as a whole is good. Senior managers work well with staff who have areas of responsibility to ensure that management strategies are effective. The governors support the headteacher well in sustaining equal opportunity for all pupils, and governance is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very talented and committed headteacher sets an excellent example in meeting the particular needs of pupils through an ethos of full inclusion.
- The headteacher involves all staff fully in promoting the effectiveness of the school.
- All staff and governors fully support the school's commitment to providing a curriculum that meets the pupils' needs and provides equal opportunity.
- Well-devised and implemented management strategies ensure that provision enables most pupils to achieve well despite the potential hindrances due to language barriers.
- Governance and the consideration of best value are satisfactory, but financial information is not always easy to read.

Commentary

38. The headteacher has set a clear vision of a strong commitment to inclusive learning that is shared fully by all members of the school community. The deputy headteacher contributes well to the strategic development of the school. With encouragement and wise support from an experienced Chair of Governors and from an energetic deputy headteacher, the headteacher shares responsibility effectively with colleagues. Teamwork is a valued feature of the school that is increasingly successful in raising the overall effectiveness of the school. For example, teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors co-operate closely to promote pupils' learning. The quality of leadership and management has been improved well since the last inspection.
39. The school has addressed effectively all the key issues for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. The ongoing challenge of promoting the pupils' skills in English remains. Senior managers through a detailed school development plan are fully involved as a team in identifying and agreeing future priorities. By placing a whole-school focus on inclusion, teaching and learning and on speaking and listening, actions have been successful. As a result, pupils' achievement has risen from satisfactory to good since the last inspection.
40. The quality of teaching and learning has been steadily improved in recent years by careful appointments and by systematic and effective management, monitoring and support. The development of very good procedures for performance management of all the staff, including the large number of teaching assistants and learning mentors, has been a key element of this improvement. Staff are encouraged to exercise responsibility and do so effectively overall. The co-ordinator of children in the Foundation Stage and the specialist teacher for pupils with English as an additional language provide very good direction. The leadership of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator, together with the headteacher, has succeeded in establishing an ethos of teamwork. This has led to a commitment to standards of provision and care for these pupils. There is a designated governor for this area who maintains an appropriate overview of special educational needs. All matters concerning children and pupils who speak English as an additional language are very competently dealt with by the headteacher who makes every effort to ensure that the limited specialist support for these pupils is given where it will benefit them most. The roles of subject co-ordinators have been improved significantly since the last inspection and this, in turn, has brought good improvements to the planned and taught curriculum.
41. Specific grants, for example, for supporting pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) and for helping pupils with special educational needs are used well. Occasionally, the success of this support works against the school, for as standards in English rise, so the grant for supporting EAL pupils is reduced. The school provides support from its own budget to address this issue, but it remains an aspect that is not helpful in raising standards even higher.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	556,775	Balance from previous year	60,000

Total expenditure	539,239
Expenditure per pupil	1,899

Balance carried forward to the next	77,536
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42. The headteacher plans and monitors the budget available carefully and, with effective support from an administrative assistant and the local education authority, ensures that long-term factors, such as the fluctuating numbers of pupils seeking entry to the school are fully considered and planned for. This accounts, for example, for the 14 per cent of the budget that was carried forward from last year's budget to address health and safety and building improvements, and to maintain staffing levels during a time of reductions in support grants. This year's surplus will be constrained to 3.8 per cent after such expenditure. Good financial management is accompanied by equally effective financial control – an aspect identified by the last external audit report. Governors are not always presented with budgetary information and in an accessible format, however. The currently used computer-generated printouts are not helpful in enabling governors to contribute to best effect in promoting best value. The governing body is well served, however, by experienced and capable people in key positions, for example, the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the curriculum sub-committee. Several governors are new to their responsibilities, though, and rely too much on the headteacher. At this time governance and the consideration of best value are satisfactory. In all other respects, governors meet their other statutory obligations well.
43. Racial harmony and equal opportunity are sustained very effectively. Leadership and management have been developed well since the last inspection. This is a good school that is focused diligently on providing pupils with sufficient skill to reach their potential. Even though it receives above average funding, in the context of this school, good achievement by the pupils represents good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. Provision was strong at the time of the last inspection and it has continued to be developed well. Children enter the nursery class with attainment in all areas of learning that is very low, particularly in personal and social development, in communications, language and literacy, and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Through the consistently good teaching and strong support they receive, the children enter Year 1 with levels that are in line with those expected in personal, social and emotional development, in creative and in physical development. In mathematics, there are a good proportion who achieve standards that are in line for the expected ages, but in English language and in knowledge and understanding of the world, standards are well below expectations. Nevertheless, the children achieve well and often very well in all areas of their development.

Assessment procedures are very good. All staff are regularly involved in gathering information about each child across all areas of children's development, which is then very well used to plan the next step of their learning. The curriculum provided for children is good, with stimulating and imaginatively planned activities, through which the children enjoy learning.

The lead teacher has overall responsibility for teaching and learning across both classes. Through her very good leadership and management, the staff are inspired to make children's learning relevant and fun. For instance, in the 'launderette corner' set out for different areas of the curriculum, the children show intense concentration when undertaking role play. All staff are careful to value the pupils' previous experiences and make beneficial links with their home cultural backgrounds. As a result, the children love coming to school, and work well throughout the busy day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress and achieve very well.
- The lead teacher and staff ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued; there is mutual respect and teaching is very good.
- The provision for children who learn through English as an additional language is very good.

Commentary

44. The children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The teaching is very good because the staff establish very warm relationships, through which the children learn to form positive self-image and friendship. The children in the nursery settle quickly to the expected routines, which staff have clearly explained to them. After a term in the nursery, the children are confident and eager to try out new experiences. In the morning, they are seen independently choosing activities from the invitingly arranged areas set out for the purpose.
45. The lead teacher and staff ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. They have established very good relationships and a very calm atmosphere, conducive to children's learning. The children in reception get on well with the staff and the nursery children, who join them for assemblies, for example. They sit quietly and listen attentively to what is taking place, even if they do not always understand. They know that they must use their 'inside' voices and reserve the 'outdoor' ones for playing outdoors. The lead teacher reinforces school rules by imaginatively using a toy named Dinah and explaining to it how they should behave. The teacher reinforces the children's positive image by praising them, and inviting them to repeat

what Dinah says, about their very good listening. They learn difference between right and wrong and that there are consequences to inappropriate behaviour, by putting the toy on the 'time out' chair, for example. From a fairly low starting point, most of the children achieve the Early Learning Goals (final stepping stones) in confidence, behaviour and self-control. The skill of conversation in relationships is the weaker area, because of the poor skills in communications, particularly in English.

46. Those children who learn through English as an additional language make very good progress through the specific help they receive in both classes. There is a translator on hand who interprets instructions and effectively assists the children to learn. This support is reduced as the children become more competent. All adults speak clearly and work hard to teach new vocabulary, such as 'tumble-dryers' or 'purse'. New words are carefully revisited through stories and talk so that children learn to become familiar with meaning, such as telling the children to find another scarf, after introducing the word. This is just one example of the way the staff ensure that all children are fully included in all activities and that there are no barriers to their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The lead teacher and staff are particularly skilled in developing children's language skills.
- Teaching is very good and the children achieve well in this area of their development, but their progress is hampered by prolonged holidays.
- There is a very strong focus on language skills in all activities.

Commentary

47. Children make very good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills through the very skilful teaching that they receive in the nursery and reception. Children achieve well, rather than very well, because a significant proportion are taken on prolonged holidays to their homeland, where they are provided with few opportunities to speak English. All staff are particularly skilled in developing children's language in both classes.
48. The planning and teaching in language are very good. In reception, the teacher carefully assesses and evaluates what the children have learned previously, and through imaginatively planned activities, she ensures that children's language skills are consolidated through judicious repetition. Her animated approach enthuses the children to enjoy stories. The teacher's expressive reading is seen in the enjoyment and sheer joy of hearing the story of 'Billy Duck' retold leaving gaps for them to insert words and phrases. Labels and sentences are carefully displayed around the classrooms, so that children become accustomed to seeing writing. The use of computers and headphones provide further opportunities for speaking and listening. In each year group, there are well-arranged areas for children to experiment with writing. They see the teacher and the nursery nurses writing captions and sentences under children's illustrations. The more able children try to form letters or to write their names. Rightly, the staff concentrate on developing children's speaking skills before moving them on to reading and writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematical language and skills is good; children learn very well through practical and play activities and the close individual support of teaching assistants.
- They achieve very well in mathematical development.

Commentary

49. The lead teacher and staff carefully plan activities, which are entirely based on the children's first-hand experience and play. The children successfully acquire new mathematical language through both adult initiated activities and play. The intervention of adults is judiciously undertaken to ensure that very good progress is made in this area. The teacher plans and resources practical activities that give the children the hands-on experience to understand shape, size, weight and capacity. The children in the nursery, for example, were observed in exploring the scales and trying to balance the number of plastic teddy bears by placing an even number in each container. They count the number of children in the class when the register is taken.
50. In reception, the children enthusiastically played in the 'laundrette', carefully counting out 5p for using the washing machine, 3p for detergent and 1p for using the iron. The 'attendant' checked, with unobtrusive help from the nursery nurse, whether he received the correct amount of money. They sorted out their clothes into the basket, with one or two needing assistance when counting ten items of clothes. The more able children explained how they grouped the clothes. They achieve very well and are in line with the expectations for their age of development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children achieve well in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The staff create a lively learning environment to stimulate children's curiosity.

Commentary

51. The good teaching provided in the nursery and reception is seen in the wide experiences on offer to the children. All visits are carefully planned to ensure that children's horizons are effectively broadened. The children achieve well rather than very well, because of limitations placed on this development outside the school's control. When not in school, many of the children's visits are generally limited to their own families, sometimes outside Oldham. The lead teacher and staff provide numerous opportunities to stimulate curiosity and to capture the children's interest. In the nursery, the children examine a bowl of fruit and use their senses to compare fruits. The children learn about the weather and the appropriate clothing they may need when playing outside. The visit to Blackpool Zoo is used very well to link geographical and scientific knowledge. In both classes, the children learn to use the computer, and to use headphones to listen to stories and music. The teacher introduces videos for extending their knowledge and understanding of the wider world. The children visit the local supermarket and observe the hairdresser at work, when learning about water, for example. They celebrate the festival of Eid, and are very familiar with the customs and practices of Islam. The local priest shows the children how a baby is baptised and the children also learn about customs from other faiths, such as celebrating Divali, by making diva pots. While the children achieve well in knowledge and understanding of the world, nevertheless, this area of their development is well below average, despite the school's best efforts.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and are in line with standards expected for their age.
- The imaginatively planned activities successfully develop children's physical skills.
- Teaching is good and is supported by high quality personal care.

Commentary

52. In the nursery, the imaginative use of the outdoor play area helps the children to achieve very well in the development of their physical skills. They soon learn to manipulate the wheeled toys without bumping into one another, despite space limitations. They use scissors, pencils and crayons, for example, when decorating their models. In reception, the children were observed thoroughly enjoying the very well planned activities for improving co-ordination. They walked, made large strides and tiptoed, and used the hall space well. The children learn that their heart beats faster after exercise.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well through the very good teaching and support provided for them.
- The staff provide the children with numerous activities to develop their creativity.

Commentary

53. The children's creative development is low on entry into the nursery class. They are provided with a very good range of stimulating activities, which enable them to develop their imaginative response. In the 'home corner', the children happily engage in role play and use the dressing-up box to dress each other as clowns, much to their own and others' delight. The children use musical instruments to explore the sounds that these make and readily join in with action songs. In reception, the children gain good knowledge of textures and colours, for example, when making their 'marvellous mixtures'. They undertake different roles in the 'launderette' and are observed to be completely engrossed in their play. The children delve deeply into their own imaginations. Their attainment is in line, but for a significant proportion of children, it is below what is expected for their age.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong and effective leadership, which ensures English has a clear ethos and focal point throughout the school.
- There are effective procedures and systems to track and monitor pupils' achievement, which are helping raise standards, particularly in their writing.
- Good quality teaching, which takes account of the different needs of pupils, through planning, support, questioning and guidance.

- The inclusive atmosphere created in lessons through the effective partnership of teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors.
- Classroom-based computers are not always used to best effect in support of pupils' learning in lessons.

Commentary

54. Standards at Years 2 and 6 are below the national average. However, inspection evidence reveals that pupils are reaching close to average standards in their writing at Years 2 and 6. This is due to the strong and effective leadership of the headteacher, who is the subject co-ordinator. She has a clear overview of how English is at the focal point of all learning activities in the school, and a vision of how the subject is to be developed further. As a consequence, there has been good improvement since the last inspection.
55. There are thorough assessment procedures and systems in place to track and monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school, along with an analysis of statutory test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of the subject. This is helping raise standards of all pupils and those capable of attaining the higher levels at the end of Years 2 and 6. This approach by the school is also helping overcome the low level of literacy in English that children have at the time they enter school and the limited English speaking backgrounds of pupils outside the school day. This results in pupils of all abilities achieving well as they move through the school.
56. Within the supportive atmosphere found in classrooms, teachers encourage pupils to share their ideas or thoughts on the work they have been doing. When addressing pupils in lessons, all adults provide good role models of how to speak clearly and make sure that they are understood. For instance, in a Year 4 English lesson, when the class teacher discussed where ducks live and gave precise descriptions of their waterside habitat. However, despite marked improvement from their low oral skills on entry, speaking and listening skills are below the average at Years 2 and 6. Although pupils have gained confidence to discuss their work in group activities or working in pairs, they often lack confidence or are more hesitant when discussing in more formal situations in lessons. Pupils' range of vocabulary is often limited and they have difficulty in expressing what they fully mean when answering a question.
57. Although standards in reading are below the national average at Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve well in developing their reading skills from a low starting point. All teachers give a considerable amount of time and attention to developing pupils' reading skills during the school day. A taxonomy is used in guided reading to develop pupils' comprehensive skills, and they are given appropriate targets to complete. Pupils' progress in reading is regularly recorded, and this information is used well to plan future reading tasks for them. The school encourages pupils to read at home. High attaining pupils enjoy their reading and are willing to share their thoughts on a particular book they are reading and the author they enjoy most. For example, a Year 2 pupil said he enjoyed reading Jill Murphy, whilst a Year 6 pupil said she enjoyed reading Enid Blyton and Jacqueline Wilson. However, the cultural backgrounds of the pupils often prevent them visiting local libraries and building on what has been developed in school.
58. Standards of writing across the school are close to the national average at Years 2 and 6. The school has a clear focus on ensuring that writing is developed and used systematically in all areas of the curriculum. Year 2 high attaining pupils can write legibly in sentences using capital letters and full stops in their written work. Lower attaining pupils need some adult guidance to remind them to use capital letters when composing their sentences. Year 2 pupils have written for a variety of purposes such as writing an account of the 'Great Fire of London' in 1666. This is built on as pupils move into Years 3 and 6. By Year 6 pupils can write for different purposes across the curriculum. For example, raising questions about how to improve the local environment around the school. High attaining pupils can use paragraphs and correct punctuation in their written work, but make spelling mistakes by adding 's' or 'd' to the end of

words. Lower attaining pupils need some help to order their thoughts into a written piece of work.

59. The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons is good. All teachers plan effectively for lessons to ensure that pupils are included with activities and work well matched to their needs. This was demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson, when the class teacher, teaching assistant and student teacher worked with groups containing pupils of different levels of prior attainment, when identifying persuasive words that would convince people when arguing a point of view. The specific needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met and, as a result, they achieve well in lessons and make good progress over time. The organisation and working partnership of all teachers and other teaching support in school ensures that there is an inclusive atmosphere in classrooms, which helps pupils overcome any problem they may encounter. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson, when lower attaining pupils, with teaching assistant help, could write descriptive words of a character about whom they were writing. Although the computer suite is used to support pupils' learning, there are missed opportunities for pupils to consolidate skills learnt on computers in the classrooms.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. The use and development of literacy skills across the school are **good**. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum in subjects such as music and physical education. Also, classrooms have informative displays that contain specialised vocabulary within a particular subject such as mathematics, history and science. Writing skills are used effectively across the curriculum by all teachers to help pupils write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are average.
- Most teaching and pupils' learning are good, but there is a small element that is satisfactory.
- Well-trained teaching assistants support pupils effectively.
- Teachers use ICT well to enrich the pupils' learning.
- An effective emphasis on the language of mathematics extends pupils' understanding.
- Occasionally, mental oral sessions at the start of lessons lack pace and this slows the pupils' development of knowledge and facility in number.
- Very occasionally, when teaching is less effective in sustaining the pupils' interest, the pace of new learning slips.

Commentary

61. Standards in Year 2 are below average and in Year 6 they are average. However, because most pupils enter school with well below average skills, both these standards of attainment represent good achievement by the pupils. They also continue the trend of steadily increasing standards shown over the last few years in the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to reach the average standard by the time they leave the school and this shows a good improvement over the below average standards identified at the time of the last inspection. In response to good teaching and learning and an improved level of consistently effective provision across the school, with an increasing number of pupils set to reach the higher than expected Level 5 standard. Overall, as a result of very good inclusive support from teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors, all groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils who have English as an additional language, pupils with

special educational needs and the very small number of pupils who come from white British backgrounds, all achieve well. Inspection found no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

62. Observations of pupils working in class and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that by the end of Year 2 most pupils work within the expected range for their age. They develop an appropriate knowledge and understanding of place value and number facts up to at least ten. Pupils recognise number patterns and use different strategies to solve number problems. Although increasing, the proportion of pupils on course to attain a higher than expected Level 3 standard by the end of the year is significantly below average, restricting the overall standard to below average at the end of Year 2. This reflects the pupils' low starting points rather than weaknesses in teaching. As pupils move up the school, the momentum of their development of skill, knowledge and understanding increases. This is partially due to consistent teaching, but it is also assisted by the pupils' own improved effort and application. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are expected to explain their strategies for solving addition and subtraction problems and most do so appropriately. In Year 5 pupils show average skills in addition and subtraction and use ICT to investigate patterns and sequences in number and to handle data effectively. By the end of Year 6 pupils have an appropriate knowledge of place value and understand numbers up to and beyond one thousand. They use this effectively to complete calculations using multiplication and division. Pupils' standards are similar across all strands except in problem solving where several pupils still have difficulty with the language of mathematics and this restricts the number of pupils set to reach a higher than average Level 5 standard. The teachers are focusing carefully in this area and more pupils are on course to reach a higher Level 5 this year.
63. Teaching and learning are good overall. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good in most classes. They were satisfactory in Year 1, where the teacher faced a greater challenge in terms of raising the pupils' interest and levels of concentration. Strengths include:
- Well thought-out lesson planning with clear learning objectives, which are shared effectively with the pupils to raise their interest and effort – a developing strength across the school.
 - Good emphasis on mathematical vocabulary – a consistent feature seen in all lessons.
 - Good links with previous work so that the pupils build upon previous skills and develop an awareness of their progress, which in turn raises their confidence and self-belief, as seen in Year 2.
 - Adults valuing pupils and their contributions and using questioning well to develop new learning from the pupils' responses, observed in most lessons.
 - Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed and make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning as seen, for example, in Year 6.
64. All adults working with the pupils promoted warm relationships and these encouraged pupils to offer ideas readily and to willingly share them with others. This spirit of co-operation had a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. These qualities were clearly apparent in a lesson in Year 2 where the teacher, through good questioning, developed the pupils' understanding of place value successfully. Effective lessons in Years 4 and 6 also provided good examples of how warm support and high expectations were combined to promote good learning. On occasion, less effective management of the pupils' behaviour and insufficient pace and rigour in the mental arithmetic session at the start of the lesson, limit the success of the teaching on pupils' learning.
65. The teachers and teaching assistants use assessment of the pupils' work and responses well to revisit previous work, where necessary, to reinforce understanding and to target new learning. The teachers ensure that all lessons include carefully planned work in groups where pupils receive effective support and work at a level that is matched closely to their individual needs. These strategies ensure that pupils progress well. The co-ordinator leads the subject effectively. The curriculum is planned well and this is helping to promote an improving consistency of practice through the school. As a consequence, pupils' achievement is improving.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. The use of mathematics across other subjects is good. Mathematics and the language of mathematics are promoted consistently and effectively within classrooms through mathematical displays. ICT is used well in all lessons to reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge, for example, of number, shape and measures. Links with other subjects are satisfactory, for example, by measuring temperatures in science and by creating and studying large and small-scale maps in geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching throughout the school ensures good achievement by all pupils.
- The average standard of the pupils' work in class is higher than the standards reached in national tests where they were restricted by the pupils' skills in English and by the absence of a few pupils on prolonged holidays abroad.
- There is a very strong and effective focus on scientific enquiry (in the subject).
- There are effective links made between science and other subjects.
- The scheme of work has been successfully adapted to the needs of the pupils, without losing the rigour of the subject.
- Additional subject teaching is provided for pupils in Year 6, which helps to raise standards.
- The pupils enjoy their scientific investigations; they take care with their presentations and behave well in lessons.

Commentary

67. Teachers' assessments for 2003 show that the pupils in Year 2 reached average standards. The 2003 national tests indicate that the standards for pupils in Year 6 were below the national average, but average in comparison with the pupils' performance in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was well below average. The evidence from the inspection, however, indicates that standards are average in lessons and are not reflected in the national tests. This is due to some limitations in English skills and, to an extent, to some pupils taking long holidays abroad, despite the school's best efforts to prevent absence. Also in lessons higher attaining pupils have good opportunities to learn well through investigation.
68. The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection. The judgements of the last inspection were that overall standards were below average. Improving enquiry skills and life processes and living things, both featured as key issues for action. These weaknesses have been addressed well. In addition, the schemes of work have been reviewed and updated, providing good quality guidance to teachers and support staff, who, consequently, ensure good progression in learning for the pupils.
69. The quality of the teaching and learning throughout the school is at the heart of the pupils' good achievement. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, engage in a range of rich experiences through experimentation and investigation. The pupils in Year 1, for example, become used to making observations, such as noticing similarities and differences between materials. Later in Year 2, the pupils move on to making their tests 'fair', by ensuring that each ice cube is the same size, when investigating melting. They know that changes take place, as people get older. The pupils know that plants need water and light to grow. Skills of recording gradually become more accurate, so that by Year 4, the pupils tabulate their results of dissolving, using both mathematics and literacy to write the final conclusion. Discussions with the pupils in Year 6

revealed that their most secure knowledge and understanding in science was associated with practical experience.

70. The teachers make interesting introductions to their lessons. In Year 6, the teacher led a very good brainstorming session about methods of planning and of approaching an investigation on reversible and irreversible changes. The pupils were immediately interested and considered the best way to obtain evidence. They chose suitable equipment to carry out their investigations. In this lesson, all pupils were learning well, because the teacher ensured that their tasks were adapted to meet pupils' differing abilities. The support teacher effectively helped the pupils to investigate information using the Internet. The quality of discussion between pupils and the teacher increased understanding of change. The focus on key words resulted in the pupils acquiring knowledge and understanding in their investigations. The use of prompts for investigations is well thought out, allowing the pupils to follow a logical sequence in their investigations, enabling them to make relevant conclusions, on the basis of their scientific method.
71. In all lessons observed in each year group, the pupils thoroughly enjoyed their science. They behave well because the teachers and support staff manage them effectively. The close teamwork that exists between all staff results in a very good learning environment, where each adult and pupil matters. The very strong focus on speaking and listening also helps the pupils to respond verbally and to participate as fully as possible in discussions. The pupils' understanding is deepened through clarifications and challenging questioning. The booster classes for Year 6 are well attended and assist in raising standards.
72. The enthusiastic subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well, so that pupils' scientific skills are developed systematically, without any gaps in different elements of science. She monitors planning and teaching in lessons, samples pupils' books, and ensures that a good level of resources aids pupils' learning. Findings from these are discussed at staff meetings and action is taken to rectify any identified weaknesses.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well because of the good quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils are regularly assessed against a detailed range of criteria and this information is used well to plan future learning.
- Classroom computers are not used fully to develop pupils' learning in a few subjects; for example, English.
- Programs involving sound are not used to best effect in promoting the pupils' learning.

Commentary

73. It was not possible to make a firm judgement about standards in Year 2 because no lesson was observed and there was limited evidence of pupils' work. Observation of a few lessons and a scrutiny of the pupils' work and teachers' planning indicate that standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. This represents good achievement from the time that pupils enter the nursery. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported by teaching assistants and achieve as well as their classmates.
74. The teaching of ICT in the lessons observed was good and pupils achieved well. Both lessons were clearly planned with well-structured activities, and learning objectives that were shared with the pupils at the start of each session. The teacher used well-phrased questions that encouraged pupils to think and to answer fully, thus practising new vocabulary and showing that they understood what they were doing. Pupils' knowledge of technical words and terms such

as 'cells' is good. The skilful blending of questions, information and activities involved all the pupils and ensured that their interest remained high and that they practised new skills thoroughly.

75. The computer suite is used well to develop pupils' technical skills and further their knowledge in subjects across the curriculum. computers to research topics in history and geography is an improving feature that is helping to promote the pupils' independence. Classroom computers were used effectively in mathematics during the inspection, but they are not always put to best use to develop the pupils' skills in English. Programs that improve pupils' mathematical and spelling skills are used effectively at lunchtimes, but they do not improve pupils' typing skills, which are slow.
76. The subject is well led and managed. The scheme of work is detailed and helpful, and ensures that pupils build technical knowledge and skills steadily. The one strand that is underdeveloped is the use of programs that involve sound and music making. The co-ordinator gives good quality demonstration lessons for colleagues and has an intimate knowledge of pupils, their needs and attainment. Assessment arrangements are good and are used effectively to develop strengths and correct weaknesses in the pupils' learning. Resources are good and are often used well. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected and is reported in full below. **Geography and history** were sampled.

Geography and history

77. Two lessons were seen in geography and two in history. Samples of the pupils' work and teachers' plans were examined and planning was discussed with the subject co-ordinators. This evidence showed that both subjects are led well and good planning strengthens the teaching and seeks to include all pupils equally. The pupils' learning is enriched significantly by the good use of ICT. Frequent opportunities for pupils to use and extend their developing literacy skills, through discussion and extended writing, for example, by writing about the good and bad points of Henry VIII, also deepens their understanding effectively.
78. The quality of the teaching and learning seen in the two **geography** lessons was **good**. As a consequence, the pupils were enthusiastic and sustained concentration well. In a lesson in Year 5, conducted in the ICT suite, pupils showed good skills in accessing information about Pakistan on the Internet. They followed the teacher's guidance carefully and the teacher and teaching assistant promoted good learning through focused questioning, effective use of ICT and close links with the pupils' cultural heritage. Good questioning and well-planned use of ICT were also strong features of the lesson observed in Year 6. Here the teacher involved the pupils closely in their learning by setting high expectations and encouraging them to formulate and share their own ideas about how to improve their local environment. The pupils worked at an average standard and made good progress in both the lessons observed.
79. Two lessons were also observed in **history**. Here the quality of teaching and learning was **good** and, again, the pupils showed interest in the work and this aided their progress. For example, in a lesson in Year 3 undertaken in the ICT suite, the teacher shared the learning objectives carefully with the pupils, raising their interest so that when they began to use the computers to research about the Romans, they did so excitedly and productively. Teaching in a Year 2 lesson was successful because the teacher had planned and prepared well, and used a 'big book' about 'The Great Fire of London' to enthuse the pupils and to promote their ideas and responses. Pupils showed average skills and progressed well in both the lessons seen.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well over time in Years 1 to 6; they attain average standards in learning about other religions and learning from religions.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils enjoy the subject.
- The co-ordination and management of the subject are good and make a positive impact on standards.

Commentary

80. Evidence from observation of lessons and an examination of the pupils' work indicates that standards are average overall. Achievement is good and it is similar to that reported in the last inspection.
81. The overall quality of teaching is good. Additional evidence was also gathered from a scrutiny of work to indicate that pupils learn well from the provision made for them in the subject. The teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and place a consistent and effective focus on discussions, in class and in pairs, and these promote a better understanding and learning of religion. Pupils enjoy these lessons and participate fully, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
82. A careful consideration is given to learning about Islam teaching. This is entirely appropriate as it meets the specific circumstances of the community in which the school works. Nevertheless, the pupils learn about Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. In Year 1, for example, the pupils know about special festivals of Islamic faith and how Eid is celebrated. They understand which days are for work and which are for rest. In this lesson the teacher invited one pupil to describe how he spent Christmas Day and to tell others in the class the different types of food he enjoyed during the festivities. In this effective lesson, the pupils were enabled to understand similarities in celebrating special days and to learn about different practices in both faiths.
83. There is a very strong emphasis on respecting different faiths, as was observed in a Year 4 lesson. The class teacher reminded the pupils to respect different faiths. In discussion with them, it was clear that the pupils have respect for the different faiths. They talked about the key features of Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as Islam. In Year 5, the pupils showed clear understanding that religions guide people's lives. They could, for example, show that there are rules to keep them safe, but there are rules that guide their personal lives. The pupils understand the significance of the 'Five Pillars of Islam' and why Muslims have instructions to worship.
84. The co-ordination and management of the subject are both good and result in good achievement for the pupils. The schemes of work are updated, to ensure that they comply with the Oldham Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum governor is also aware of the developments in the subject and maintains an overview of all developments.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was reported in full. **Art and design, design and technology** and **music** were sampled.

Art and design

85. No lessons in **art and design** were seen. Samples of pupils' work were studied and documentation was discussed with the co-ordinator. The scheme of work is full and helpful, and ensures that all required areas are covered. Work from last term was well displayed. It

showed work at a standard expected of primary aged pupils, but that there is scope to develop pupils' observational skills further. Pupils work both in two and three dimensions and in a range of media. The school is aware that art and design has not had a sufficiently high focus recently and has started to organise visits to the local art gallery as a first step to widening pupils' cultural knowledge. Pupils in Year 3 have responded with enthusiasm and made some interesting 'reverse' prints of animals in the style of Picasso. The co-ordinator leads well, helping less confident teachers with their planning, and taking part in team teaching sessions.

Design and technology

86. One lesson was seen in Year 4, a discussion was held with the co-ordinator and documentation and samples of pupils' work were studied. The quality of teaching and learning in the lesson observed was good. The teacher and support staff worked effectively to prepare pupils for their main task. Good use of questions encouraged pupils to think and to answer fully, and technical words and terms were clearly displayed and explained. The scrutiny of work showed that pupils make clear plans and sketches of what they want to make and label salient parts. Most pupils evaluate their finished work and pupils in Year 5 have used ICT effectively for this purpose. This indicates a satisfactory degree of improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is well organised and provides effective leadership.

Music

87. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Teaching in this lesson in Year 1 was satisfactory, with the pupils' learning and achievement soundly developed. An examination of the teachers' planning, and a discussion with the co-ordinator, shows that there is appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum requirements in this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong and effective leadership of the co-ordinator is a key factor in raising standards at Year 6, and giving teachers the confidence to teach effectively.
- Physically challenging activities, along with effective questioning and guidance, take pupils' learning forward in lessons.
- Assessment procedures are inconsistent across the school.

Commentary

88. Pupils attain average standards at Years 2 and 6 and most pupils achieve well in lessons. All elements of the physical education curriculum are undertaken by the school and most pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. The leadership and management by the co-ordinator is strong and effective; she has a clear vision of how the subject is to be developed, and is aware that more consistent whole-school assessment procedures need to be put into place. She has also been instrumental in raising the standard of attainment in Year 6, and giving all teaching staff the confidence to deliver the subject. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
89. The overall quality of the teaching and learning is good. Teaching is characterised by teachers having secure subject knowledge, which includes the planning of physically challenging activities for all pupils to undertake in lessons. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils learnt how to develop their games skills of passing and dribbling with a hockey stick, and then used these skills in a small-sided game. Teachers use questioning and intervention well in lessons. This was demonstrated in a Year 4 dance lesson, when the teacher challenged the pupils to become 'angry gorgons', as part of their dance sequence linked to their work on the

Ancient Greeks. In all lessons seen, teachers made good use of the resources, including the effective deployment of teaching assistants in activities, for instance, as in a Year 2 games lesson. All teachers and teaching assistants dressed appropriately for lessons, and showed enthusiasm for the subject and this set a good example for the pupils and promoted their positive attitudes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

90. There was not enough evidence to provide a firm judgement in this area of the curriculum, however, work was sampled. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education permeates all aspects of school life and underpins all the aims of the school. Its contribution is vital to the atmosphere of calm, to the pupils' positive attitudes to work and to all that happens in school. Work in this area helps to ensure that all pupils are included fully and have their individual needs considered, valued and addressed equally. Two sessions of philosophical enquiry were seen. Teaching and learning were good in one lesson and in the other very good. Good planning in both sessions ensured that all pupils were involved in thinking deeply about serious issues and in asking and answering questions that led them to greatly increased understanding. Teachers used strategies that encouraged decision-making skills successfully and interaction between pupils, and through the taking of votes promoted the understanding of how one aspect of democracy works. Assemblies also contribute well to this area of the curriculum. The co-ordinator has compiled a detailed scheme of work that is proving very successful in promoting the school's aims.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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