

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Urmston, Manchester

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106329

Headteacher: Mr C Parfitt

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Baxter

Dates of inspection: 14-17 June 2004

Inspection number: 256426

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3-11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 288 |
| School address: | Bridgenorth Avenue Bradford Road Urmston Manchester Lancashire |
| Postcode: | M41 9PA |
| Telephone number: | 0161 7486096 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs J Thorley |
| Date of previous inspection: | June, 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Highfield Primary School has 276 full time pupils, 144 boys and 132 girls, aged between 3 and 11 years. In addition, 24 children attend at an earlier age, on a part time basis initially, in the purpose built nursery. The school is located in Urmston, Manchester. It is above average in size and serves a broadly average socio-economic community that has not changed significantly since the last inspection in 1998. Thirteen per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is average. About seventeen per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds; although several pupils speak English as a language different to their mother tongue none receive specialist language support. Approximately 15 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, a slightly below average proportion, and these include pupils with specific, moderate and severe learning needs as well as social, behavioural and speech and communication needs. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, and this is an average number in a school of this size. Overall, the attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly average. The school has achieved several awards in recent years including: 'Basic Skills Quality Mark', 'Healthy Schools', 'ECO' (environmental) award and the 'Arts Mark 2004' award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 25217 | Paul Baxter | Lead inspector | Foundation Stage Science Physical education |
| 9981 | Saleem Hussain | Lay inspector | English as an additional language |
| 32401 | Nigel Minns | Team inspector | English Information and communication technology Geography History Music |
| 30695 | Geraldine Dinan | Team inspector | Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Religious education |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Highfield is a good, improving school with significant strengths. The relatively new headteacher, strongly supported by the chair of governors and deputy headteacher, provides very good leadership. All members of the school community share a very effective commitment and capacity to improve. Most teaching is good and frequently it is very good. Consequently, standards are above average at the end of Year 6 with pupils achieving well in relation to their capability. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children in the Nursery and in Year R achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development. This very good ethos of support continues through the school, promoting the pupils' very good attitudes and relationships.
- Very good governance and leadership from the headteacher sustain equally effective partnerships with parents and the community that enhance pupils' learning.
- Good and improving teaching and learning through the school enable the pupils to achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- The pupils' moral and social development, their involvement in the life of the school and opportunities for enriched learning across the curriculum are very good.
- Whilst average standards in mathematics reflect improvement, they could be higher.
- The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but such information is not always used to best effect to raise standards in subjects other than English and science.
- At times the challenge presented to the pupils does not match their ability closely enough.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Almost all provision has been improved well and the very good partnerships with parents and the community have been sustained effectively. The school has carefully addressed the issues raised by the previous inspection, notably in teaching and learning and the work of subject co-ordinators. Pupils' achievement has been raised from satisfactory to good and improvement continues productively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is good overall. Most children enter school with broadly average levels of attainment. They achieve well in the Nursery and in their Reception Year (Year R) in response

to close adult support. Achievement over time has been satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 reflecting fluctuations in the quality of provision. Most pupils, from a range of backgrounds and prior attainments, achieve well in Years 3 to 6, especially in Years 5 and 6, showing their maturing response to good teaching. Standards of pupils in Year 2 are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and above average in art and design, music and religious education. Pupils in Year 6 attain above average standards in English as a whole and in the other subjects, except in mathematics, where standards are average. In general, standards are rising throughout the school, reflecting improving provision. Standards for children currently in Year R match the expected early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development and exceed expectations in their personal, social and emotional development.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good overall. The pupils' attitudes and relationships are very good; behaviour is good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Years 5 and 6, showing that established strengths continue. It is mostly good in Years 1 to 4, reflecting ongoing improvement, especially in teachers' lesson planning. Teaching and learning are very good in music and good in English, mathematics, science, art and design, and religious education, showing continuing improvement and the school's effective commitment to a broad well-balanced curriculum. The pupils' learning is enriched further through a very good range of clubs, visits and contributions from visitors. Marking is good and pupils' work is assessed satisfactorily overall, but information is not always used effectively to ensure a correct degree of challenge. Very good partnerships with parents and the local community, good links with other schools and good procedures for ensuring the pupils' health and welfare enhance further the pupils' interest and commitment and also aid learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a very good leader. He receives very good support from the deputy headteacher, chair of governors and bursar. They promote a clear vision for the future development of the school that is shared strongly by staff and governors. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their responsibilities well and management is good. The governors are particularly effective in their support of the school and governance is very good. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are good. They support the school well. Some parents expressed concerns about bullying. The inspection team did not witness any bullying and found very effective strategies in place to address bullying should it occur. Pupils think very highly of their school and are encouraged to express their views. A few have concerns about the behaviour of other pupils. Inspectors judge behaviour to be good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue the focus on raising standards in mathematics.
- Develop further the use of assessments of the pupils' work to inform teaching and learning.
- Strengthen the matching of pupils' work to their prior attainment so that they are fully challenged.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children achieve well in the Nursery and in Year R. Standards in Year 2 are average, representing satisfactory achievement. By the time they leave the school, pupils with special educational needs, pupils who have English as an additional language and higher attainers generally achieve as well as their peers. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, science, art and design, music and religious education and they are average in mathematics, representing good achievement overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the Nursery and Year R and reach expected goals in most areas of learning; they achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development.
- In mathematics, although there is scope for even higher standards, improved teaching and learning across the school is having an increasingly positive effect on pupils' achievement.
- Occasionally an imprecise match of challenge to pupils' prior attainment constrains pupils' learning to a satisfactory quality.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Nursery with broadly average skills; they generally achieve well, with progress in personal, social and emotional development being particularly successful. This good achievement and the positive introduction to school routines that aid learning continue in Year R. By the time the pupils enter Year 1 they have reached the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development and most exceed expectations in personal, social and emotional development. Several pupils also show above average numeracy skills.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 15.6 (15.7) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 14.4 (14.3) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 17.1 (15.2) | 16.3 (16.5) |

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

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 27.7 (28.0) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| mathematics | 26.1 (27.0) | 26.8 (26.7) |

| | | |
|---------|-------------|-------------|
| science | 29.4 (27.9) | 28.6 (28.3) |
|---------|-------------|-------------|

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2003, standards were above average in mathematics and average in reading, writing and science. However, fluctuations in standards over the last five years show a trend that is less positive than that found nationally. A similar broadly average picture is found in comparison with the performance of pupils in similar schools over this period.
3. Current standards are average overall by the end of Year 2, reflecting satisfactory achievement for most pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve more in relation to their capabilities than their peers as a result of the good quality of additional support that they receive. Above average standards and good achievement in art and design, music and religious education reflect established 'whole school' strengths in these subjects. Average standards and satisfactory achievement in English, mathematics and science reflect previous inconsistencies in the quality of provision. Although there was an occasional less effective challenge in a few lessons, observations of lessons showed that pupils are now learning well and are likely to achieve more in the future due to improved teaching.
4. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were above average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Comparisons with the performance of pupils in schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals were average overall. Comparisons with the pupils' performance when in Year 2 show that, except in mathematics, pupils have achieved well. As in Year 2, standards have fluctuated over the last five years, but in general standards at the end of Year 6 have risen slightly, matching the trend found nationally over this period.
5. Standards are now above average overall at the end of Year 6 and stem from an increasingly successful 'whole school' focus on improving teaching and learning and an effective plan to raise standards in mathematics. As a consequence, standards are average in mathematics and are above average in all other subjects inspected fully. These findings show that good practice is now firmly embedded in these subjects and that, after a couple of years where standards slipped, good teaching has lifted standards and improved pupils' achievement. Overall, achievement has been improved well since the last inspection. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils who have English as an additional language and higher attainers, generally achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers and achieve well in relation to their prior learning. Most learning in lessons was good or better but on a few occasions, particularly in mixed aged classes, the match of challenge to pupils' needs limited the learning of a small number of pupils. Inspection also shows that in Years 5 and 6, in response to good teaching, pupils are showing a more mature involvement in their learning and this is also promoting an accelerated rate of improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good and behaviour is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons help them to achieve well.
- They form very good relationships with their peers and this supports learning very well.
- Pupils are very confident because they are given many opportunities to take responsibility and raise their self-esteem.
- Pupils' moral and social development are very good.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness are good.

Commentary

6. Pupils show very good attitudes to learning in lessons and other school activities. They show very high levels of interest in their work, listen very attentively and take pride in their achievements. Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved well since the last inspection.
7. The school has maintained good standards of behaviour since the last inspection. Pupils behave sensibly in the classroom, in assembly and around the school grounds. Behaviour in the dining hall is excellent. All pupils are aware of the school rules and the school has very high expectations regarding conduct at all times. Some parents say that there is a little bullying. The inspection team investigated this very carefully and no incidents were seen during the inspection. Discussions with pupils reveal that when, on rare occasions that bullying occurs, it is dealt with quickly and effectively and this is confirmed in school records. There were no exclusions during the previous school year.
8. Relationships are very good. Pupils play and work together very well. For example, in a Year 6 personal, social and health education lesson pupils worked very effectively in small groups as they learnt more about personal values. They decided who would act as 'judges' so that others in the groups could make arguments about the value of items and objects. The race equality policy is developing well and is successful in promoting good race relations.
9. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are developing very good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is very good. They take turns and share learning resources with each other very well. Children are encouraged to be independent. For instance, they are given much freedom in choosing the order of learning activities to take part in. These factors make a strong contribution to children's very good achievement in their personal, social and emotional development in the Nursery and Year R classes.
10. Pupils are given many very good responsibilities at this school. For example, they are often asked to undertake monitor duties and can put themselves forward to represent their class on the school council or 'ECO council' (a group where pupils consider the environment). These opportunities contribute very well to their personal development. This in turn has a very supportive impact on their academic learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.8 |
| National data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National data | 0.4 |

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

11. Attendance and punctuality are good and reflect the pupils' enjoyment of school. They also contribute positively to the pupils' achievement.
12. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. All pupils are involved in the 'Eights' scheme, where older pupils are placed in responsible charge of younger ones to develop friendship and pastoral support. Pupils consider the effects of their actions on others and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils develop very good social skills through participating in a wide range of interesting visits to galleries, theatres and sports venues. Pupils enjoy collaborating in arts events in school, such as the popular and highly acclaimed school musical and drama performances. Pupils in Year 6 develop leadership and team building skills in pursuits such as rock climbing during Outdoor Education visits. Pupils develop good spiritual and cultural awareness through selected themes during assemblies and collective worship. They consider important life issues arising in the wider community, such as the rights and plight of refugees. They particularly empathise with immigrant children of their own age. They reflect with reverence when reciting the school prayer together and derive much pleasure when listening to or singing in the school choir. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils experienced a sense of delight and satisfaction when completing work on electrical circuits for alarm systems. Pupils appreciate and celebrate the work of a variety of artists from their own and other cultures and in religious education they compare similarities between aspects of Christian culture and those of other major world faiths. These personal qualities, which have been improved well since the last inspection, underpin the pupils' energetic commitment to school that supports their learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning, the planned curriculum and provision for the pupils' health and welfare are all good. Partnerships with parents and the community are very good and they are good with local schools. These aspects have a substantial impact on pupils' achievement.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, throughout the school. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between teachers, assistants and pupils are very good throughout the school.
- Teachers plan well organised and stimulating lessons, which engage pupils' interest.
- There are particular strengths in music and in the teaching of personal, social and emotional development In the Foundation Stage.
- The best teaching develops links in learning across a range of subjects and reviews prior learning well at the start of lessons, using good focused questioning techniques.
- In some lessons, work is not difficult enough for higher attaining pupils.
- Assessment is less well developed in foundation subjects, especially in mixed age classes.
- Teachers and pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 lack support from teaching assistants.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 (2%) | 14 (29%) | 25 (52%) | 8 (17%) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with a good proportion of very good lessons observed. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially as the proportion of very good lessons seen has been doubled and unsatisfactory teaching eliminated. The best teaching was characterised by thoughtful and thorough planning of stimulating learning activities. Very good co-operation between teachers and teaching assistants improved learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2. There was less teaching assistant support available for teachers and pupils in Years 3 to 6. On occasion this limited the amount of individual attention given to the pupils and restricted learning as well as adding to the work load of the teachers. Relationships in and outside of lessons are very good. Teachers encourage pupils well and pupils respond with good behaviour and interest. As a result, in most lessons the pace of learning is very good. Teachers employ a good variety of approaches, so that pupils of all levels of capability know what is expected of them. This promotes confidence as well as capability.
14. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and often it is very good and impacts very strongly on children's learning, especially in personal, social and emotional development. Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Year R classes are typified by warm relationships, very good planning and use of resources, very effective planning and very supportive contributions from teaching assistants. Assessment is used very effectively in these classes to build upon children's prior experiences.
15. In the lessons observed, teaching was consistently very good in music where the specialist teacher utilised her skills very effectively across the school. Teaching was good overall in English, mathematics, science, art and design and in religious education and several other good lessons were seen in other subjects. Inspection shows that senior managers, including subjects co-ordinators, are supporting colleagues well through professional development and advice and this is improving the quality of teaching across the whole school.
16. There is little waste of time across the school because lessons are well paced, very well prepared and well resourced with stimulating learning materials, often made or collected by teachers out of lesson time. This augments the school resources and makes learning tasks more stimulating for pupils. Teachers share clear learning objectives with pupils at the start of lessons and return to them in the final stages, to reaffirm learning and to assess what pupils have achieved. Generally, teachers are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils. They set behavioural and academic expectations appropriate to individual needs, and this is very effective in ensuring educational inclusion. The only exceptions to this occur occasionally when higher attaining pupils and those in mixed age classes are not always given work that is sufficiently challenging. Homework is generally well used to reinforce and extend work in lessons.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. It helps to raise pupils' self-esteem as well as capabilities. The arrangements to ensure that the work is of the correct degree of interest and challenge for pupils with special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator works closely with class teachers and other agencies to identify specific, individual needs and to provide specialist support for pupils as well as guidance to parents. Parents are consulted and kept informed at each successive stage and play a positive role when new targets are agreed. Teachers brief support staff well. They participate in all aspects of lessons and provide effective support for learning, whatever the pupils' personal or academic needs. Pupils are grouped in some classes according to capabilities, especially in English or mathematics. A small number of pupils have 'one to one' support from a teaching assistant. These assistants

work effectively and sensitively with the pupils concerned, without drawing undue attention to them. The school takes good account of inclusion issues in its teaching.

18. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Teachers generally mark the pupils' work well but the methods of recording results is inconsistent. Assessment is good in English and science but is less effective in several other subjects. At its best, teachers write helpful suggestions about how pupils could improve their work. Where pupils are set individual and well-matched targets, they are effective in helping them know how to improve. Some teachers display targets well in classrooms, in pupils' own handwriting, but occasionally they are too vague to be of real use.
19. The way that pupils learn is good. They sustain concentration and take pride in their work. Pupils enjoy working in small groups and in pairs. They like the social opportunities that shared learning can bring. Pupils listen to each other's ideas respectfully and support one another's efforts in lessons. Older pupils, encouraged by teachers, show good levels of independence in their learning. Pupils respect and relate very well to teachers and all other adults in school, in lessons, breaks and lunchtimes. Teaching ensures that pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning, through clear sharing of objectives at the start of lessons and checking if they have been met in the closing sessions.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum meets pupils' needs well. It is broad and balanced and is very well supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources support the curriculum well. The planned curriculum, accommodation and resources are very good for children in the Nursery and Year R.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curricular provision for children in the Nursery and the Year R classes is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
- Enrichment through the use of visits and visitors is very good.
- The range of extra-curricular activities provided for children is very good.
- Accommodation and resources are good and are used well to support learning.
- Planning for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.

Commentary

20. The curriculum has been improved well since the last inspection and, for example, improvements to the planning of ICT and design and technology now ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met in full. Personal, social and health education is taught both through other subjects and as a separate subject, as in the very good lesson seen in Year 6, in which the teacher gave a very good explanation of how different people value everyday things differently. Teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to share their views and experiences as a class and provide good role models for pupils. Pupils' personal and social education is also developed through the very good use of assemblies. For example, an assembly for pupils in Years 1 and 2 was a very good social occasion. The school promotes good health and participates in the Healthy Schools scheme. Sex and drugs education are offered in Year 6 and these sessions are well supported by the school nurse. Early identification of individual and specific learning needs, often in Foundation Stage (and before) is very effective. The school works well with other agencies to provide and target specialist support. This ensures that pupils are well integrated into mainstream education.

21. A wide range of visits and visitors are used to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils' work in history has been supported by a range of visits, including a Year 1 and 2 visit to Chester to support work on the Romans, while visits such as a Year 5 and 6 trip to the Manchester Ship Canal supported pupils' work on water and rivers in geography. A range of visits and contributions from outside visitors enrich pupils' learning, including members of the local community, such as the local vicar, as well as specialists such as the curator of Manchester Museum in history, and visits from the 'Travelling Tubas' for music and to the Whitworth Gallery in art.
22. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly for older pupils. The school band and choir are well supported and have numerous opportunities to perform both in and outside school. There is a separate group of pupils who are preparing a performance at the Trafford Centre. The school also has a recorder group and pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the keyboard. There are several sports clubs, including football, netball, rugby and rounders and outside coaches have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school also competes in local leagues and friendly tournaments.
23. Accommodation and resources are good overall and are very good in some areas. The limitations in the school's libraries identified during the last inspection have been addressed and the school has a very good computerised library system. Resources for physical education are very good and have been supplemented by outside sources. A good example is the portable cricket strip which was donated by Lancashire Cricket Board. Co-ordinators have been proactive in developing resources for their subjects through careful management and activities such as book fairs, while parents' contributions have helped to buy additional resources, including equipment for the library and computer equipment. Playgrounds and playfield areas are spacious but noise from the adjacent M60 motorway at times restricts their effectiveness as learning environments. The level of support staff is satisfactory overall, but classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 lack the additional and beneficial support of teaching assistants enjoyed by other classes.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with good support and guidance and involves them very well in aspects of the school's development. Provision in these areas is very good for children in the Nursery and Year R classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are introduced to school life very well.
- Pupils feel cared for because of the good arrangements to ensure health and safety.
- Pupils are given good advice, support and guidance about their personal development. This is monitored well and has a very beneficial impact on their academic learning.
- Pupils form very good, trusting relationships with adults because of the school's very strong family ethos.

Commentary

24. The school has maintained the quality of its work in care, guidance and support well since the last inspection. Children new to the school are gradually and sensitively inducted. They are given very good chances to experience the learning routines at pre-school integration

sessions. Several staff and support agencies attend the new parents' induction event and this is very helpful.

25. Arrangements for child protection are good. The designated officer is well trained. The local authority's procedures are followed fully and the school has good links with other agencies. General health and safety risk assessments are undertaken as required and school governors are very well involved. The school works very closely with other agencies to promote health and safety. For instance, the community police officer makes an excellent contribution to raising awareness by giving talks on 'stranger danger' and personal safety. Older pupils can take part in safe cycling training and also the 'crucial crew' initiative, where they receive basic training about dealing with emergencies.
26. There are good procedures to assess pupils' personal development. Pupils' records are very detailed and staff use information well to provide good advice, support and guidance. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The school has implemented an innovative peer mentoring system - 'the eights' - whereby pupils are arranged in groups of eight across the different ages. This enables all pupils to seek support from the oldest pupils. The sensitive and professional writing of IEPs (individual educational plans) for pupils with special educational needs is keenly focused to specific need. Targets are regularly reviewed between teachers, pupils and parents. Teaching assistants are well briefed and provide effective learning support. The school works well with other agencies to provide and target specialist support. This ensures that pupils are well integrated into mainstream education.
27. Discussions with pupils indicate that the school has a very strong family ethos, underpinned by very good, trusting relationships between pupils and staff. This gives pupils confidence in raising any concerns or worries they may have. In turn these attributes also enrich the pupils' learning across the range of curriculum subjects.
28. There are many very good opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff and become involved in the school. A broad-ranging questionnaire was issued recently to pupils and the school intends to repeat this at regular intervals. The school council (an elected representative group of pupils) is currently being consulted about how 'travel plan' funding for the school can be used and the 'ECO council' (a group of pupils and staff charged with considering environmental issues) is also very actively involved in whole school issues.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good partnerships with parents and the community. These represent good improvements since the last inspection. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very good opportunities to express their views and make suggestions to the school.
- Parents' involvement in their children's learning at school and at home is very good.
- Very good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum and support learning very well.
- Parents are well informed about the school.
- References to pupils' progress should be more specific in some of their annual reports.

Commentary

29. The headteacher and staff are very approachable and they are always pleased to discuss parental concerns, for example, at the start and end of the school day or by appointment. A questionnaire is sent to parents regularly and this helps to identify issues and enables parents to influence school policies. Recent changes to practice include arrangements at the start of the day in the playground and school communications. Pupils with special educational needs feel well supported because of the inclusive attitudes of all teachers, which raise self-esteem and motivation.
30. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, newsletters and various other publications. Good information is provided about forthcoming work in the curriculum for each class and how parents can help to support their children's learning at home. Pupils' annual reports are generally satisfactory but there is a little inconsistency about how clearly pupils' progress is described in their annual reports between different classes. Future learning targets and personal development are reported well. Pupils of pupils who have special educational needs are kept fully informed and are enabled to contribute supportively to their children's needs.
31. The Parents' and Teachers' Association supports the school particularly well by organising many social and fundraising events. It played a key role in the school's 50th Anniversary celebrations recently and continues to thrive in all regards. Many parent helpers give their time generously to the school. For instance, they listen to readers, organise the library and lead gardening club activities. Parents give very good support to their children's learning by helping with homework tasks.
32. A member of the clergy from a local church frequently takes assembly and leads worship, making a significant contribution to personal development. Links with sports clubs provide pupils with very good opportunities for coaching in several sports including football, cricket and rugby. Educational trips to the county cricket club enable pupils to make use of a modern computer suite under the guidance of experienced tutors. Pupils also visit places of interest such as Bramhall Hall and a war museum. The school puts much back into the community. For instance, it is very successful in fund raising for charities and good causes. The school choir and band are very active in the community.

33. Good links with local secondary schools provide additional learning experiences. For instance, staff from one local school frequently lead lessons in ICT, design and technology and basketball skills. There are good mechanisms in place to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good overall. Leadership by the headteacher is very good and he receives strong support from the chair of governors and the deputy headteacher. The leadership of the key staff is good. Governance is very good and management is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and clarity of the vision of the headteacher are very good.
- Governors are fully informed and involved and governance is very effective.
- The school has a strong commitment and ability to improve.
- The school's ethos of supporting pupils in their personal development is very successful.
- Very good co-ordination of the Foundation Stage, music and special educational needs, and mostly good co-ordination in other subjects, is raising standards and achievement.

Commentary

34. The relatively new headteacher is already giving very good leadership to the school. With close support from the deputy headteacher and chair of governors and committed support from other key staff and governors, he has developed a clear vision for the future development of the school. School effectiveness is evaluated well and a good improvement plan that identifies appropriate priorities for development is helping to move the school forward. The targeting and subsequent improvement of all the key issues of the last inspection and the more recent focus on raising standards in mathematics are clear examples of the school's ability to self-evaluate and self-improve. With support from the local education authority the headteacher has also been successful in strengthening the effectiveness of subject co-ordination and this is helping to raise standards. Overall there has been good improvement in leadership and management and in the effectiveness of the school since the last inspection. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides very good leadership. Teaching assistants are well briefed and provide effective learning support. Pupils with special educational needs feel well supported because of the inclusive attitudes of all teachers, which raise self-esteem and motivation
35. The school's ethos of nurturing the personal development of all pupils and including them equally in a broadly-based and well-planned curriculum is another strength. The day-to-day functioning of the school is managed well. The professional development of staff, performance management procedures and whole school needs are considered and supported well. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and representatives of the local education authority, monitors teaching and learning well and improved subject co-ordination and improved teaching have subsequently followed and are having a beneficial impact on pupils' achievement. Strengthened teamwork has improved leadership and management well since the time of the last inspection.

36. Governors are very supportive in all aspects of the school's work. They are fully involved in the decision-making processes. Through their well-established committee structures and their active involvement in their areas of responsibility, governors support the staff very effectively and knowledgeably. Aspects such as financial management, health and safety and special educational needs, for example, are enriched by the input from governors. The governing body fully meets its statutory obligations.
37. Financial management and control are very good. The headteacher receives very effective support from the chair of governors and from the school bursar. Together they give staff and governors very accurate up-to-date information on the budget and this is enabling the school to sustain good consistent provision despite the increasing financial pressure of a falling roll.
38. Given this accurate information and their detailed knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, governors consider and achieve 'best value' very well. As a consequence, pupils achieve well, provision is consistently good or better and the school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 650,275 |
| Total expenditure | 661,443 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,998 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 15,799 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 4,631 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is good for children in the Nursery and Year R classes and children achieve well. Standards have been sustained well since the last inspection, with provision benefiting from ongoing development. Children enter school with a range of attainments, but overall attainment is broadly average for all areas of learning. Most children benefit from at least one year in the Nursery before entering Year R. The school has very good induction procedures and these ensure that children settle quickly when they enter school or move into the next class. Mostly good and often very good teaching enables all children to achieve well. By the time they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, where achievement is very good and reach expected standards in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Assistants support teachers very effectively; together they monitor the children's progress very closely and use assessments of the children's work equally effectively to inform future teaching and learning. Leadership of the Nursery, of Year R and of the Foundation Stage overall are very good. Management is similarly strong and is enriched by the close teamwork of staff.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve very well in the Nursery and Year R because very good teaching and warm adult support encourage them to develop their independence and awareness of others.
- Children reach above average standards for their age by the end of Year R.
- The children's very positive attitudes and very good relationships have an equally successful impact on their academic achievement.

Commentary

39. The inclusive ethos that encourages all children to learn in the Nursery and Year R classes ensures that all children feel welcome and valued. This was very evident when teachers used taped music and encouraged the children to greet each other by singing 'Hello, Hello' at the beginning of lessons. Adults, including a good number of parent helpers, promote discussion, listen to the children's ideas and help them to develop self-confidence. Classroom routines are quickly and securely established. All children enter the room quietly and sit politely, listening carefully when the register is taken. Children are taught to co-operate well with each other in group activities and there is a strong and consistent emphasis on promoting independence and self-responsibility. This was seen when children in the Nursery used the computer and when children in Year R classes chose from a variety of tasks, for example, painting. Teachers sustain an effective balance of adult-led and child-initiated choices and these lead to a harmonious atmosphere of enjoyable and effective learning in all classrooms. These were illustrated to very good effect in the Nursery when children played with sand or on large-wheeled toys

and in Year R classes when children played in the role-play 'beach hut' areas or took part in whole class numeracy and literacy sessions.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and reach expected goals by the end of Year R.
- Teaching, support staff and adult helpers take every opportunity to develop children's language skills and teaching is good overall.
- There are regular opportunities for role-play and for social interaction and adults use these well to encourage the children's speech and language skills.

Commentary

40. Children in the Nursery and Year R are encouraged to communicate through speech, shared play and drawing and increasingly through early writing skills, from an early age, and in a consistent manner. Adults provide very good role models, showing children how to listen and how to speak in a clear way that can be easily understood. In small and large group situations, for example, children are expected to check and consider whether their peers have understood what they said. The teachers' very good management of the children's behaviour supports this consistent message of attentive, co-operative learning. This was seen to good effect in the Year R and 1 class when the teacher stimulated the pupils' enthusiasm by using a 'Daffy Duck' glove puppet.
41. Good links between the Nursery and Year R classes ensure that there is a successful continuity of approach to writing and learning, especially in letters and sounds. There is a plentiful supply of good quality books and other reading materials in all classes and this ongoing stimulus and support leads to a steady progression in the children's development of skills. Teaching is good and most children are on line to reach this early learning goal by the end of the year, with an increasing number of children exceeding these expectations in response to increasingly more effective teaching.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and promote good achievement for all children.
- The curriculum is planned very effectively to ensure that the children can develop their numeracy skills systematically over time.
- Learning is supported by the good use of a wide range of resources.

Commentary

42. Children have regular opportunities to count on an individual basis or as a member of a group with an adult and to learn about shapes and spaces, colours, measurements, and numbers. Teachers, assistants and adult helpers are skilled in developing the children's numeracy skills through day-to-day activity, for example, when taking the register or by counting how many shells there are in the trays of play materials that are provided in these classrooms. Particularly good examples were seen in the Nursery when children counted how many shells they had placed in their play dough models, and in Year R when the children counted how many creatures could be classified as both being 'land creatures' and 'sea creatures'. Adults take every opportunity to develop mathematical language, for

example, by counting or by singing rhymes, and in turn these have a beneficial impact on the children's learning, promoting their good achievement in this area of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT and CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of the provision or standards in these areas of learning.

43. However, observations of activities in the Nursery and Year R classes showed that these areas of learning are planned very carefully and form an important and appropriate part of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of their learning. Mostly good teaching and learning was seen and these areas are co-ordinated very effectively. In **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**, children learn how to keep healthy, know that people follow a range of beliefs and practices and understand how computers can be used to support learning. They study a range of environments, exploring seaside and beach habitats, for example. In **Physical Development**, children enjoy lessons in the hall, share large wheeled toys and explore climbing frames in the very well resourced outdoor play areas adjoining the Nursery and Year R classes. They understand the impact of exercise on their heartbeats and develop good awareness of the needs of others through many and varied opportunities to share toys and play with others. In **Creative Development**, children benefit greatly from the very well equipped and organised indoor and outdoor areas. Learning is enriched significantly by the teachers' precise use of teacher-led sessions, for example, by the plentiful opportunities given to the children to learn through making their own choices. Observations of children choosing to paint, to draw, to play with musical instruments show that they readily share ideas and derive much benefit from each other.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall, provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are above the national average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching in English is good and as a result pupils achieve well.
- English is well led and managed.
- Work is not always well matched to pupils' ability levels and consequently does not always challenge all pupils.
- Pupils' progress is monitored carefully and clear targets are set to help children to improve.

Commentary

44. Standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are average by the end of Year 2 and are above the national average by the end of Year 6. These represent good achievement by the pupils by the time they leave the school and good improvement since the time of the last inspection. By Year 6, pupils understand and recognise the use of similes and metaphors in poetry. They work independently to practise and perform poetry, improving their understanding through collaboration. They write interesting stories in a range of styles and recognise the features of different types of non-fiction writing.

45. Overall teaching is good. It is good both for pupils in Years 1 and 2, reflecting recent and continuing improvement and it is for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers tell pupils clearly what they are expected to learn and build well on previous work. They use questioning very well to draw out learning and to check pupils' progress. Teachers explain tasks clearly and frequently demonstrate exactly what pupils have to do. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and this produces a positive response from pupils. Observation of lessons shows that good teaching is now promoting good learning across the school. This shows that teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved as a result of strengthened planning and supportive professional development and is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
46. Occasionally teaching is less effective when teachers do not match work well to pupils' ability levels, particularly in mixed age classes. In these classes the individual tasks set for pupils do not always challenge them sufficiently and they do not achieve as well as they could. Teachers' knowledge is less strong in some areas and this limits their ability to explain the subject matter clearly.
47. The English co-ordinator is a very good teacher of English and leads and manages the subject well. She is well supported by colleagues and by an active literacy governor. She has monitored planning and pupils' work and, as a result, has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has identified areas for development and the school is focusing well on these areas. This is helping to support the rise in standards.
48. Teachers use assessment well to check pupils' writing and spelling skills. They involve pupils in setting broad targets to be achieved by the end of each year. These are displayed prominently in the classroom as a reminder. Pupils' work is marked with a range of positive and useful comments and these help them to improve. Where appropriate, these comments include specific individual targets which children are expected to focus on. The pupils understand this system and know how they can improve.

English across the curriculum

49. Literacy has been well developed through pupils using their reading and writing skills to support work in other subjects. For example, a story was used well as a conclusion to a science lesson in Year 1, while a lesson on connectives in Year 4 was linked closely to work on the Tudors. Teachers also provide good models of spoken language for pupils across the curriculum and focus well on specific language for the subject.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with other subjects, especially science and ICT, are good.
- Teachers' careful planning and knowledge of the subject promotes good learning.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Work set for pupils in mixed age classes does not match all capabilities.
- Targets for learning are not always specific enough to be effective.

Commentary

50. Standards at the end Years 2 and 6 are average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. These show that most pupils have achieved satisfactorily over time. Evidence shows that, because they have received additional support, several pupils with special educational needs have achieved well. However, these standards are higher than those reached in last year's National Curriculum tests and reflect the work of the school in raising standards, and in particular the greater challenge now offered to potentially higher attaining pupils. Although standards could be higher, especially in numeracy, they represent an improvement in response to strengthened provision. This is already having a positive impact on the pupils' problem-solving skills, which are developing well. Pupils were observed learning well in most of the lessons seen as a result of good teaching. As a consequence standards continue to rise. Pupils enjoy working in a variety of practical and visual ways because teachers provide interesting tasks, which pupils can relate to their own experiences and interests.
51. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers plan lessons well. They include a mental 'warm-up' session, share learning objectives well with pupils and return to them in the closing stages, to reinforce what has been learned and assess stages of progress in each lesson. As a result, pupils are attentive, they get on with their work and learning is good. In some lessons, pupils' concentration is remarkably well focused, such as when pupils in Year 5, (on Derby Day) put the laws of probability to the test, by exploring the chance and likelihood of events, using what they already knew, to predict outcomes perceptively. Teachers are generous with their time and many are very dedicated. They show this by spending much time out of lessons, preparing specific practical materials, often hand drawn, for younger pupils or making collections of relevant artefacts, for older pupils, to add to the school's already good learning resources. This has a beneficial impact on pupils' learning.
52. There are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' books. Not all teachers give clear guidance for pupils to show how they might improve. Occasionally there is no clear connection between teachers' marking and the continuing assessment of pupils' achievement. All teachers have high expectations for the neatness of pupils' work and this is a very positive feature of pupils' books. Pupils are encouraged to express mathematical problems in good levels of spoken and written English, which helps them to clarify and refine concepts. The teaching assistants are well informed of lesson objectives and make a good contribution to the learning of younger pupils. However, there is little additional teacher support in Years 3 to 6 to benefit pupils' learning.
53. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and appropriately. Teachers work well together, to use assessments appropriately to provide for individual pupils' needs and consider the standards they can realistically attain. However, this is not so well developed in the mixed age classes and consequently has a less beneficial impact on learning.
54. Leadership and management are good. The mathematics co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and has worked hard to provide formal training sessions for teachers as well as more informal, individual advice. This has made the subject more attractive and accessible to pupils and has brought about good improvements. Since the last inspection, standards have been well maintained. Improvement in provision has been good and national initiatives have been integrated well into daily practice. These are having an increasingly effective impact on standards through the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. Overall, mathematics is used and developed well across the curriculum. There are very good examples of pupils using mathematics in ICT and science. Pupils in Year 6 confidently plan

holidays from a complex list of clients' requirements, switching quickly between web sites to achieve best prices, departure times and hotels, and they find additional excursions, within the budget, to suit clients' needs. Pupils in Year 2 use Venn diagrams to classify plants and animals and match with their habitats. These activities extend pupils' numeracy skills as well as enriching learning across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and represent good achievement by the pupils.
- Teaching and learning are good and lessons are planned very effectively.
- The pupils apply themselves very conscientiously and enjoy their work and this aids learning.
- There is a strong and consistent emphasis on learning through practical investigation.
- The subject is led well.

Commentary

56. Good teaching and the pupils' very eager responses lead to good learning and good achievement for all groups of pupils by the end of Year 6. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2, except that pupils' investigation skills are above average. Overall these standards at the end of Year 2 represent satisfactory achievement by most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and potentially higher attainers. Inspection shows that a whole school focus on learning through practical enquiry is having an increasingly beneficial impact on pupils' learning and achievement. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
57. Discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work showed that pupils in Year 2 use diagrams well to explain how an electric circuit can be created to light up a bulb. Most show an appropriate knowledge of plants and animals and several use Venn diagrams accurately to classify them. Occasionally the over-use of work sheets to record their findings limits the pupils' skills in evaluating why outcomes to experiments have occurred. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have made good progress and evaluate their findings perceptively. They show a good knowledge of 'fair testing' and understand the need to restrict variables during investigations of magnetism, for example.
58. Teaching and learning are good across the school. They are particular strong for older pupils where the teachers cultivate the pupils' increasingly mature approaches to learning. This results in challenging tasks and perceptive responses from the pupils. Very good planning that sets out clear learning intentions, warm relationships, very good use of resources, and in Year 1 and 2 classes, very good use of teaching assistants are key elements that enable teaching to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Occasionally work could be more closely matched to pupils' prior attainment in Years 3 and 4 and this limits achievement. Teachers generally use ICT satisfactorily to enhance learning but there is inconsistent use in a few classes. Teachers make effective use of assessments of pupils' work to ensure that, over time, information is used well to inform teaching and learning and the needs of individual pupils.

59. The subject is led well; the curriculum is effectively planned in the longer term and is enriched by careful lesson planning in the shorter term. The quality of teaching, the planned curriculum and resources for learning have all been improved well since the last inspection. The enjoyment and collaborative skills that pupils derive from their work in this subject have a very positive impact on their personal development and subsequently on the standards they reach.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

60. The co-ordinator for ICT leads and manages the subject well and, as a result, there have been significant improvements since the time of the last inspection. The school now plans and covers all areas of the curriculum for ICT appropriately across the whole school. Resources have improved significantly and the co-ordinator has led staff training to ensure they are used effectively. Systems for assessing pupils' work are not always effective in aiding future teaching and learning.
61. As only two lessons could be seen during the inspection, no judgement can be made about standards. In the two lessons seen teachers made good links with pupils' work in mathematics. They demonstrated good questioning skills, gave clear demonstrations and explanations and involved pupils well in their learning. Pupils in Year 2 logged onto computers, selected and loaded software and used a graphical program to produce pictograms. Resources for ICT are good and were used well in these lessons. However, the lessons could have been organised to make better use of the restricted space in the computer suite.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. Although satisfactory overall, teachers now need to develop the use of ICT more consistently as an effective teaching tool to support the teaching of other skills and knowledge across the curriculum. A few examples of good links between ICT and other subjects were seen, for instance, work on changing the size and style of text drew effectively on work on poetry in English and work on graphs in Year 3 involved inputting data from science. Co-operation during these research activities has a good influence on the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. Geography and history were not inspected.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned and carefully themed lessons and assemblies encourage good spiritual development.

- Cultural diversity is very well celebrated.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Assessment is satisfactory but is inconsistent across the school.

Commentary

63. Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. These standards reflect good achievement for pupils across the range of prior attainments and backgrounds and good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils of all ages develop a good understanding of the festivals, practices, values and beliefs of a wide range of world faiths. They make useful links between what Christians believe, finding useful similarities as well as different approaches. Pupils in Year 1 understand that Passover is a festival celebrated by Jewish peoples and know the religious significance of foodstuffs, bitter and sweet and salty, traditionally arranged on the Seder Plate. Pupils learn about traditions and beliefs of other communities, through well-chosen stories such as “Rebecca’s Passover” by Adele Geras. They were surprised to find that, like themselves, she lives in Manchester. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed real interest and above average awareness and asked sensible questions about Sikhism. They were amazed to learn that it takes 48 hours to read just one Holy Book from The Guru Ganth Sahib, from start to finish. In Year 5 pupils compared public meeting places used for worship and contemplation in their own locality, with the purpose of the Vihara or Buddhist Temple. They talked easily at a mature level about the search for ‘enlightenment’ and used vocabulary such as ‘Karma’ and ‘Nirvana’ with confidence and in context.
64. The school has strong links with the local Church of England parish and benefits from a close and purposeful contact with the clergy, who take regular assemblies using themes agreed beforehand with the school. This relationship, in partnership with the parents’ and teachers’ association, has been successful in providing pupils in Year 6 with a personal copy of the ‘New International’ version of the ‘Junior Bible’. Pupils benefit from visits by representatives from other religious communities in the locality.
65. Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons well, they make their high expectations for pupils’ behaviour very clear and pupils develop a good sense of right and wrong, based on the understanding of the impact of selfishness or wrongdoing on other people. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and to each other and show respect for each other’s ideas. Teachers use stories, rhymes and songs effectively, to focus pupils’ attention and raise important questions about life issues. In Year 6 pupils composed their own prayers, of thanksgiving, petition or asking forgiveness. They later combined ideas to produce a school prayer, which pupils in all classes recite by heart and with reverence, in assemblies or at the end of the school day.
66. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and hardworking. The subject makes a very good contribution to the inclusive ethos of the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall but at times they are not tightly focused enough, to ensure that all pupils are building progressively upon their knowledge and understanding in successive years.

67. Work in the subject has a very beneficial effect on the pupils' spiritual development. The quality of teaching has improved well since the last inspection and this has led to an increase in standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and music were inspected in full and are reported below. Physical education and design and technology were sampled.

68. In **physical education**, mainly good teaching was observed with teachers demonstrating a good level of knowledge and skill. Lessons were planned well and learning was enriched by the spacious facilities and the plentiful supply of good resources. At times learning was restricted to satisfactory by the distractive influence of noise from traffic on the adjacent motorway. This made it difficult for the teachers to be heard and limited the amount of teaching of skills. The pupils behaved very well though and enjoyed their activities, especially team games, and learning was lifted by their positive attitudes and the teachers' well-balanced programme of activity. Physical education benefits from a high profile throughout the school and from ongoing improvement. The well-planned curriculum is strengthened by the school's participation and success in the 'Active Mark' Scheme that has led to the creation of a very good range of after-school clubs. These are supported very strongly by the links with local sporting groups, such as Lancashire Cricket Club, Sale Sharks Rugby Club and Manchester United Football Club. The co-ordinator gives good leadership, supports colleagues effectively and plays a key role in developing the curriculum. The pupils' regular enjoyment of sports has a beneficial impact on their social and spiritual development.
69. In **design and technology** lessons for all pupils from Years 1 to 6 alternate with lessons in art and design on a termly basis. Due to the timing of the inspection in relation to the planned curriculum it was not possible to observe any lessons. Evidence was gathered from a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussions with staff and pupils. These showed that the school has rectified the weakness in planning identified at the time of the last inspection. A new, effective, nationally recognised scheme of work has been appropriately adapted for use by the school and this enables pupils to learn from a full range of practical opportunities. The subject is led appropriately, but a new format for the assessment of units of work has not yet been implemented and this is restricting the teachers' ability to develop the pupils' skills to the full.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of work by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Displays of pupils' work provide a stimulating focus for learning.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons and these engage pupils' imagination and promote creativity.

- Work in pupils' sketchbooks indicates that there is scope for a more specific emphasis on the teaching of drawing skills.
- Procedures for recording and assessing pupils' work are inconsistent.

Commentary

70. Standards of work in Year 2 are above average and this represents a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Year 6 they are also above average. Achievement by all age groups is good. Pupils enjoy image-making activities. They use a wide range of drawing implements and media to good effect such as pencils, pastels, charcoal and wax crayons. Pupils understand and can use elements of textural rendering, expressive line and tone. Sketchbooks show there are few opportunities to learn the skills of accurate representation on a step-by-step basis and for this reason drawing skills are underdeveloped. Conversely, pupils paint well. This is because teachers carefully promote techniques in colour mixing and pupils mix correct consistencies of pigment and apply it well. For example, pupils in Year 1 mix blue and yellow to make green when painting flowers. They know that secondary colours are made by combining two primaries. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed participating in a felt-making workshop at the Whitworth gallery, basing their designs on a variety of multi-cultural patterns, which they observed 'first-hand' and adapted creatively. In Year 5 pupils link ideas well in work on symmetry and shape within ICT and mathematical understanding. They produce well-observed drawings of plants, in oil pastel, from observation, showing good use of blending techniques. Pupils appreciate the work of artists from European and other cultures. In Year 4, groups of pupils chose works from Piet Mondrian, Bridget Riley, Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso and Jamaican and African artists very well, as starting points for their own designs when customising 'flat pack' furniture from a high street store. They linked skills in art and design with skills in design and technology successfully. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well and enjoy the subject. Appropriate opportunities are provided for those pupils identified as talented, to extend their image-making capabilities.
71. Teaching is good. Teachers put much thought into planning attractive learning activities, which promote pupils' imagination and creativity as well as celebrating cultural diversity and achievement. Teachers plan artwork to fit a curriculum map, where pupils learn all subjects centring on a shared theme, over a period of a few weeks and this is often appropriate. There are occasions when this practice leads to ad hoc choices rather than purposefully and progressively planned exercises and pupils don't build as effectively on prior learning. Teachers have good knowledge and present interesting lessons. Consequently, most pupils make good gains in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers' marking in sketchbooks is satisfactory but is less informative for artwork than for the design and technology exercises that are recorded in the same books and this limits their use in assessing pupils' progress.
72. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has good ideas for subject improvement. There have been no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms but she receives good information from colleagues. Displays of pupils' work celebrate achievement and make a good contribution to the inclusive ethos of the school. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Music

Overall the provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is very good and as a result, pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of productions and performances and these involve a large number of pupils.
- The subject is led and managed very well.

Commentary

73. Standards are above the national average by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6. This reflects the good rate of improvement in music since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 pupils sing tunefully, tap out a beat using body instruments and clap complicated rhythms; by Year 6, pupils are composing, performing and evaluating their own music confidently and are using appropriate terminology to describe their work. These above average standards are reflected by the quality of singing in assemblies throughout the school, in which pupils participate very enthusiastically. They also represent good achievement for all pupils.
74. Teaching is very good overall. The specialist music teacher is very positive, offering numerous rewards to pupils, and clearly enjoys the subject. This enjoyment is communicated to and shared by the pupils, who are interested and enthusiastic. She draws out good learning points from pupils' performances and uses these to improve the performance of all pupils, while she reinforces learning well at the end of the lesson. She uses the correct terminology, including terms such as glissando and tremolo, throughout and, as a result, pupils are becoming familiar with the terms. As a result of this very good teaching, pupils' achievement is good throughout the school and a significant number of pupils are achieving even more successfully.
75. The school puts on a wide range of productions and performances that develop their interest, enthusiasm and confidence in music. These have included a Christmas performance by pupils in Years 1 and 2, a musical revival to celebrate the school's fiftieth anniversary involving pupils from Years 3 to 5, and a performance of Grease by Year 6. Every pupil in the school is involved in one of the productions each year. Music groups such as the school band, the choir and the recorder group perform regularly in school, in church and in the community. For example, the choir have performed in the Trafford Centre and last year, and joined with choirs from other schools to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee.
76. The school employs a specialist teacher as co-ordinator and she leads and manages the subject very well. She has implemented a very effective scheme of work, co-ordinates the wide range of productions and performances and leads a range of groups. As she teaches each class on alternate weeks, observed by the class teacher, and plans the other lessons which are taught by the class teacher, this specialist teaching not only

contributes to above average standards for the pupils, but also helps to develop teachers' knowledge and skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

77. The school has a good curriculum plan that links well with the school's strong ethos of valuing pupils and their efforts. Discussions in lessons build upon topics introduced and are explored during whole school and year-group assemblies, for example, responsibilities of living in a community. The development of the children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength within the Foundation Stage and begins the very effective ethos of care and support that permeates the whole school. The school's success in achieving awards such as 'Healthy Schools' and 'Active Mark' in sports reflects the effective commitment and success in developing the pupils' personal qualities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Overall standards achieved | 3 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 2 |
| Attendance | 3 |
| Attitudes | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 2 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 2 |
| 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).