

INSPECTION REPORT

LEVER EDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Great Lever, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105158

Headteacher: Mrs F D Barry

Lead inspector: Mr J E Billington

Dates of inspection: 13th – 17th October 2003

Inspection number: 256729

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	435
School address:	Lever Edge Lane Great Lever Bolton
Postcode:	BL3 3HP
Telephone number:	01204 333677
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Greenhalgh
Date of previous inspection:	April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school, situated in Great Lever, close to the centre of Bolton. There are 435 pupils on roll. The school has received the Schools Achievement Award three times, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investor in People status and the FA Charter Award. The school has a speech and language unit catering for 16 pupils, drawn from schools across the Bolton Education Authority. Just over 38 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. The school has 71 pupils whose first language is not English and who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Approximately 49 per cent of pupils come from an ethnic minority background and there are 22 pupils who are refugees or asylum seekers. In addition there are 133 pupils identified as having special educational needs (SEN) with ten having statements of need. The majority of pupils on the register have moderate learning difficulties. Additionally there are pupils with a wide range of other difficulties including; specific learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. Attainment on entry to the Nursery and to the school is very low and many pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are high levels of pupil mobility.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2779	Jim Billington	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English; Art and design; Music.
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15464	Denis Birdsall	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Design and Technology; Physical Education.
33088	Kate Russell	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and Communication Technology; Geography.
21816	Beryl Thomas	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; History; Religious Education; Foundation Stage.
20368	Sue MacIntosh	<i>Team inspector</i>	English as an Additional Language.
22391	Nick Smith	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special Educational Needs.

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	3
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	6
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UNIT	13
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	15
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and school is very well led and managed overall by the governors and key staff. Teaching and learning is very well planned and pupils are responsive and keen to learn; they achieve well. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Excellent leadership by the headteacher and very good leadership by key staff and governors.
- Very good planning and delivery of teaching and learning and very good behaviour and a positive approach to learning by pupils.
- Very good monitoring of the work of the school and taking action to improve learning.
- The school ensures that the needs of all pupils, irrespective of background, are fully catered for. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well supported and make good progress in relation to their previous learning.

The school has improved its results considerably since the last inspection in 1998. Key issues about raising standards in English, mathematics and science have been fully met. Pupils achieve very well and standards in these areas are broadly in line with national averages. National curriculum requirements in information control technology are now fully met. These improvements have resulted from the improved strategic management of the school. This is now very good and is the principal building block which has enabled important progress to be made in raising standards. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent. Her clarity of vision and organisational skills has enabled the senior managers and governors to be very effective. This has resulted in high quality and very well co-ordinated planning for teaching and learning. Additionally, the school monitors its own performance very effectively; pupils' progress is carefully charted and teachers ensure that all pupils' needs are met. Teaching and learning are systematically monitored and action is taken to bring about school improvement.

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	C	A
mathematics	D	C	C	A
science	D	D	C	A

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

Pupils achieve well across the school. Pupils enter the Nursery and Reception class with very low levels of attainment. They make good progress and achieve well. By the time they enter Year 1, pupils are achieving standards close to the average in the early learning goals except in communication, language and literature. Those pupils who have English as an additional language, while making very good progress, attain standards which are below average. Pupils continue to achieve very well so that by the end of Year 2 they are achieving average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with national averages. Inspection evidence indicates that in 2004 from the work seen during the inspection pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to attain at least average standards in English, mathematics and science with a proportion of pupils achieving higher standards in mathematics. Standards in the other subjects of the curriculum are close to those expected. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds

perform equally well and also reach the nationally expected standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their previous learning.

Pupils' personal qualities develop very well. They have very positive attitudes to school and to learning, and their behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils in the speech and language unit are very well integrated into the life and work of the school. Their personal qualities are developed very well and they are enthusiastic learners. Respect for the beliefs of others is a strong feature of the school and the school community shares in a range of celebrations and festivals. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance levels are average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall the quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good throughout the school, this ensures that pupils learn well, make good progress and achieve average standards in the core subjects of the National Curriculum.

The planning of the foundation subject curriculum meets the needs of all the pupils to ensure maximum achievement. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress is very effective and identifies the longer-term learning needs of all pupils. Teachers adjust their programmes accordingly and this leads to improved achievement. The work of the speech and language unit is planned in tandem with that in the rest of the school. Important emphasis is placed on developing the skills of speaking and listening and as a result pupils make very good progress. The school responds very effectively in meeting the needs of pupils acquiring English. The Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher and class teachers plan work tailored closely to meet the needs of those pupils acquiring English.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher is excellent and that of the key staff and governors is very good. The school is very well managed, school systems chart the results of decisions and their effect on the quality of education. The subjects of the curriculum are very well co-ordinated and the quality of teaching and learning is systematically monitored and action taken to secure improvement. The school reviews its financial decisions to ensure that value for money is provided for the expenditure made.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school and links with parents are good. Parents are very satisfied with the progress their children make. The inspectors agree with the positive comments made. Pupils expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school, highlighting the interesting work set and the support and guidance they received from teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no key issues arising from the inspection, but in order to improve further the school should address the following minor issues:

- Ensure that all pupils have consistent access to good quality literature.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills.
- Further develop pupils' independent learning skills.

The second two points have been recognised by the school and are included in the current school development plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses.

Most pupils are achieving well and are attaining at least appropriate standards in all subjects by the age of seven and eleven. This is a marked improvement on the previous inspection when the achievement of pupils was much lower across the school. Standards are close to national averages and are well above those found in similar schools. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve similar standards by the age of 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards well above those found in similar schools at the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- Standards close to the average in all the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception, except in communication language and literacy in the case of ethnic minority heritage pupils, who are in the early stages of learning English.
- Average standards at the end of Year 2.
- Average standards at the end of Year 6.
- Standards in the foundation subjects are at least in line with those expected.

Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the Nursery and the school is very low. Attainment at the end of Reception is close to the average in all the Early Learning Goals six areas of learning, with the exception of communication, language and literacy. Here, those pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), achieve lower standards. This represents good achievement in response to the well planned and delivered teaching as seen by evaluating the work of the pupils in the Foundation Stage, including work from the previous year.

2. The results of the unvalidated 2003 national assessments in Year 2 show that average standards had been sustained. Standards in reading and writing and in mathematics were in line with those found nationally. The good achievement of pupils is in response to the sustained good teaching they have received.

3. The unvalidated results of the 2003 national assessments for pupils in Year 6 show that standards in English rose over the previous year and were above those found nationally. Standards in mathematics also showed improvement and were in line with those found nationally. Standards in science were similar to the previous year and below those found nationally. However, pupils' achievement has been consistently above that expected and this has been the result of a well planned, coherent learning programme which is delivered very effectively.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (25.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.8 (26.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.6 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Overall, pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 by continuing to make good progress to attain average standards. From the observation of lessons and from pupils' work, this good achievement continues and current pupils are on course to attain average attainment at the end of Year 2. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 continues to improve and during the inspection, evidence indicates that a proportion of pupils are working above expected levels particularly in mathematics. Pupils with EAL are also on course to achieve similarly.
5. Overall, pupils literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory. They enable pupils to access fully all aspects of the subjects of the curriculum.
6. Pupils are attaining standards that are at least in line with those expected in information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Years 2 and 6. Younger pupils are able to use a good range of software to support their learning in literacy and numeracy, particularly those with special educational needs (SEN). Older pupils are able to present work in a range of forms, including the school newspaper, labels for their trays and a range of work in subjects, enhanced by pictures. Older pupils also use the Internet to gather information in subjects such as science and history. This represents good achievement in a range of ICT skills, which support pupils' achievements in other subjects.
7. Pupils achieve well in music. They develop a wide range of skills and show good interpretation of their ideas. The standards attained at the end of Year 2 and 6 are above those normally found. An important contribution to the standards pupils achieve has been the specialist music teaching bought in by the school from the local education authority (LEA) music service. Additionally, this has also given confidence to teachers and has resulted in improved teaching in music across the school.
8. In all other subjects pupils' knowledge and understanding are similar to those normally found. This represents very good achievement and is a marked improvement to the findings of the previous inspection.
9. Pupils with SEN and those with EAL are supported very effectively. Collaboration between the Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher and class teachers is very effective and places particular emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills. The result is that pupils with EAL make very good progress over time and reach the nationally expected standards. Pupils with SEN achieve well. They make good progress in relation to their previous learning. They achieve the well planned targets set for them in their learning and in their individual education plans (IEPs). Pupils in the speech and language unit also make good progress. Higher attaining pupils were observed working at the higher National Curriculum Levels during the inspection and also make good progress.
10. Having started from a very low base, the most significant features of both younger and older pupils' attainment and achievement, is that they match the national average. The improvements are due to high quality management that has ensured that the statutory curriculum is being delivered fully and effectively. In addition, important enrichment activities are available to all pupils. The quality of teaching has also considerably improved since the last inspection and this has led to improved learning and pupil achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are **very good**. They behave very well in lessons and around the school. Pupils' moral, spiritual, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils attitudes to learning and to school are very good.
- Pupils behaviour is very good and they form very good relationships with others.
- The personal development of pupils is very good.
- The school promotes good attendance very well.
- Not all parents support the school by ensuring their child attends regularly and on time.

Commentary

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.6 %
National data	5.4 %

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.9 %
National data	0.5 %

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll
435

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
12	1

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

11. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn. All pupils have very good attitudes to learning; they try hard and concentrate well. Pupils are keen to participate in the wide range of activities provided outside lessons. They take a pride in their work and achievements.

12. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations staff have of their behaviour. They listen very well, are polite and very willing to help others. Incidences of bullying are rare and are dealt with very quickly. Pupils form very good relationships with their peers, teachers and other adults. The mutual respect between staff and pupils is of a high order. The school is a very harmonious community in which every individual is valued.

13. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils are most willing to take responsibility and undertake it in a mature, sensible way. They appreciate the wide range of opportunities they have to contribute to the school community, for instance through the school council. The school fosters pupils' self esteem and confidence very well so that they develop into thoughtful young people who take a full part in the social life of the school. Pupils are helped to understand the principles of right and wrong. They respond very well to the many opportunities they have in lessons, assemblies and other activities to reflect on their experiences and marvel at the wonders of the world around them, as in a Year 3 science lesson when they discovered the effect different liquids had on an eggshell. The school offers a wealth of opportunities for pupils to find out about their own and other cultures and pupils speak knowledgeably about, for example, the importance of pilgrimage to Moslems and the art, music and dance of India. All cultures represented within the school community are valued and celebrated.

14. The school monitors and promotes attendance very well. Parents are strongly encouraged to ensure their child's regular, prompt attendance. All unexplained absences are followed up thoroughly and the school has successfully reduced its levels of unauthorised absence in 2002-2003. Authorised absence remains higher than average.

15. Parents do not always support the school's efforts to improve attendance. In particular, the level of absence due to holidays taken during term time is very high and accounts for one per cent of the authorised absence in 2002-2003. Some parents do not routinely inform the school about the reason for absence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

16. Overall the quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. The teaching is very good overall. Teaching observed in lessons in infant classes was very good overall. Teaching observed in junior classes had a high proportion of very good teaching. When this is linked to very good planning and a well co-ordinated programme of teaching and learning, teaching overall was judged to be very good across the school. This leads to very good achievement by interested and well motivated pupils. Teachers plan and assess work in core subject lessons very well so that pupils make very good progress. Pupils with EAL and those with SEN also make very good progress.

Teaching and learning

17. Overall the quality of teaching is very good. It is very good in all sections of the school and pupils respond very well to well structured and interesting lessons. Pupils are making very good progress and achieve well, especially in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers' subject knowledge and methodology is very good.
- There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils.
- There is very good lesson planning to challenge pupils of differing abilities especially in the core subjects of the National Curriculum.
- There is very good assessment of pupils' achievement in lessons.
- Formal assessments and the use of the information gathered to plan the curriculum are very good.
- There is systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning to bring about further improvement.
- Access to good quality literature is not consistently available to all pupils.
- Opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills and to develop their skills of independent learning are not provided consistently.

Commentary

18. The strengths in teaching far outweigh the weaknesses. Since the last inspection in 1998, the headteacher has ensured that the quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy has improved to its current level. As a result pupils' achievement has improved consistently to the point where it is broadly in line with national standards. There has been systematic monitoring of the teaching and learning and planning across the curriculum. The procedures used to support teachers are very effective.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in [number] lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	38	32	10	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

19. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and this is enhanced by the use of leadership teams in core subjects. The use of older pupils to support younger pupils' learning in reading was successful last year and is in the early stages of being reintroduced this academic year.
20. In the lessons seen, teachers' very good relationships with pupils ensured very good behaviour and a very positive approach to learning. This is having a real impact on learning and the achievement of pupils. Pupils feel confident to join in class discussions and make oral contributions in lessons.
21. Teachers' plan lively and challenging lessons especially in English, mathematics and science, with work at several different levels to meet the needs of individuals or groups of pupils of differing abilities and competence in English. They use very effective questioning to check on pupils' learning in lessons and to then identify what they should teach next. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher targeted questions to challenge the high attainers as well as those with SEN. Teachers know their pupils well and plan a range of learning opportunities, which match closely their needs.
22. Teachers' regularly assess pupils' work in literacy and numeracy identifying the levels, at which they are working and setting them individual targets for achievement. This is a well developed process across the school and has been extended to include all subjects of the curriculum. This learning is well co-ordinated and effectively focussed over the medium and long term to promote maximum achievement.
23. The school has rightly focussed on improving the quality of teaching and learning in literacy, particularly writing and on numeracy since the last inspection. Teaching and learning have improved markedly in these areas, though on occasion older pupils in Year 6 do not always have consistent access to good literature and opportunities to use and apply the mathematical skills they have learned are underdeveloped. The monitoring of the teaching and learning in all subjects has been developed and is being carried out by the headteacher or subject co-ordinators and their teams. The monitoring of what is taught ensures the coherent delivery of the individual subjects as pupils move through the school, though opportunities for pupils to develop the skills of independent learning are not consistently provided for older pupils. The careful deployment of skilled teaching assistants provides support for pupils' learning very effectively. This focussed support linked to careful planning and very good teaching ensures that the school curriculum is very inclusive, enabling all pupils to learn very effectively.

THE CURRICULUM

24. The quality of the curriculum is **good** and fully meets statutory requirements. The school has appropriately focused on the implementation of national strategies relating to numeracy and literacy but has successfully maintained development of other subjects, especially ICT and music. The accommodation is well used and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The school and its grounds provide an environment which supports learning effectively. Curriculum provision is enriched very well by many out of school activities. This is a very inclusive school, allowing all pupils to make good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The breadth and balance of the curriculum is very good.
- Long term planning provides equality of access for all pupils, including those with SEN and EAL.
- The environment has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- The needs of pupils are carefully taken account of so that all of them make progress.
- Links to personal, social and health education (PSHE) are highly effective.
- Opportunities for celebrating the diverse ethnic background, religion and culture of the school population are very effective.
- Good resources support learning opportunities effectively.
- Time allocation for all pupils is above the recommended minimum.
- Extra curricular activities enhance pupils' learning and personal and social development very well.

Commentary

25. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. The strong focus on the full implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies has resulted in improved standards and achievement in English and mathematics. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning across the curriculum. Provision for religious education and collective worship are good, as shown by the Divali assembly held during the inspection, involving many members of the school community. Improvements have been made to the curriculum for music, ICT and design and technology since the last inspection. The school provides effective PSHE, which is reflected in many aspects of the taught curriculum and in the wider life of the school, for example through the school's 'Fruit Only' policy at break time and the very good relationships which exist between all those working in and visiting the school. The curriculum for under five pupils is of very good quality.

26. Very thorough planning is in place to provide a whole school curriculum which is broad and balanced and to enable links between subjects to be planned systematically. This ensures equality of access for all pupils including those with SEN and EAL. Individual educational plans (IEPs) are well used by staff to adapt planned learning to meet the needs of these children. Teaching assistants and special needs assistants are very effective in supporting teachers to meet the needs of all pupils in order to maximise the progress that they make. The code of practice for SEN is fully implemented for pupils with SEN. There are no disapplications from the National Curriculum.

27. The use of monitoring and assessment in subjects has resulted in learning which takes account of pupils' needs. Good use of time by all teachers provides maximum learning opportunities for all pupils. Links between subjects are well developed resulting in opportunities for creative and innovative approaches to learning. Curriculum teams are effective in leading and managing the curriculum, supported by the excellent leadership of the headteacher. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects and the very good school development plan provides a clear focus for improvement.

28. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of school life; this is evident through the very effective school council, which has elected representatives from all year groups. Two teams of break time monitors from Year 6 take their roles seriously and proudly.

29. The school provides a very good range of extra curricular activities; some of these are run by staff from the school and others by external agencies. School clubs include a range of sports clubs, including football, netball and dance, as well as clubs to enhance other areas of the curriculum, such as ICT, maths, science, music and art. The curriculum is also enriched and extended by a range of educational visits and visitors to school.

30. The building and its external environment are spacious and very well used to enhance the learning of the children. The school is well kept and cared for; it is very clean and well organised. The attractive library has recently been refurbished and is currently housed in the foyer and has been identified by a number of pupils as their favourite part of school. Here they can read a wide range of books in a relaxed atmosphere. The school hall is large and well equipped. The ICT suite is well equipped and well used to support learning, but is too small. As a result working conditions are crowded when full classes use the suite and teachers experience difficulties in moving around to assist individual pupils. This can sometimes slow learning when a number of pupils need help at the same time. Most classrooms are large, with good storage facilities and suitably equipped with carpeted areas and clearly defined areas for learning. There are several smaller rooms to provide additional teaching space and storage for other subjects such as English, mathematics and music. There is a computer linked to the network and a colour printer in each classroom. Notice boards and displays around the school provide a balance between providing information and celebrating pupils' work.

31. The large grounds are well maintained to provide a very secure and safe environment containing a mix of playgrounds and grass areas, a football pitch and netball court; good seating and some shade is provided. Because of the range of opportunities provided the wide range of pupils' needs are catered for. Pupils can take part in physical activities or sit quietly with their friends. As a result good social development takes place. The conservation area provides an interesting focal point.

32. Resources for learning are good for most subjects and are stored in accessible cupboards in corridors. Support staff are very well deployed and make a significant contribution to the progress of pupils.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The school's procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive very good support, advice and guidance throughout their time in school. The way the school involves pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is outstanding.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school is a secure, caring environment in which pupils feel safe.
- Each pupil has a trusting relationship with at least one adult in the school.
- Pupils receive very good support and guidance underpinned by teachers' very good knowledge of their individual strengths and weaknesses.
- The school has effective induction arrangements for pupils.
- The school council is an excellent forum for pupils to air their views and improve their school through due democratic processes.
- There are no weaknesses.

Commentary

33. The school works hard to promote very high standards of care for all its pupils. It provides them with a clean, safe and secure environment in which they are happy and can learn well. The procedures for child protection are comprehensive and known to all staff. Very good provision is in place to meet the medical and dietary needs of pupils, and to ensure that health and safety requirements are met.

34. Pupils are confident that there is always an adult to turn to in times of need. Relationships throughout the school are mutually respectful and based on trust. From their earliest days in school pupils understand that they can share their concerns with a trusted adult and when they do so the response is prompt and effective.

35. Teachers monitor pupils' academic progress and personal development very well and ensure that all pupils are able to achieve their best. Pupils receive very clear advice so that they can make good progress. Individual needs are very well met and the school involves external agencies, such as the behaviour support service, at an early stage so that pupils benefit from specialist help.

36. Induction arrangements are very good. Parents and children are made aware of school routines and expectations so that children settle quickly into school life when they enter the Nursery or Reception classes. The school has very good arrangements in place to support pupils who enter the school at other times. These include a 'buddy system' and early thorough assessment ensures that pupils' learning needs are met. Parents appreciate the induction arrangements.

37. The processes for seeking pupils' views are outstanding so that all pupils are actively involved in school improvement. The school council is a very mature and responsible group, confident that they make a significant contribution to the improving quality of school life. They take justifiable pride in their roles and achievements, for example setting up and running a healthy tuck shop and the reading buddies scheme. Class discussion time is used to involve all pupils in discussing the issues raised in council so that its decisions are fully democratic. Pupils' ideas are taken seriously and, when they are put into action, pupils take a high level of responsibility in carrying them out.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

Overall the partnership with parents, links with the local community and other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Parents hold the school in very high regard.
- The school provides parents with a wide range of good quality information about its life and about their child's work and progress.
- The school values the views of parents and acts quickly to deal with concerns or complaints.
- Courses are held to help parents support their child's work.
- Links with local schools and the community are good.
- There are no weaknesses.

Commentary

38. Parents are very supportive of the school and speak highly of it. No significant concerns were raised at the parents' meeting or by the questionnaire. Parents are confident that their children make good progress because the teaching is good and teachers have high expectations. Parents feel well informed and are comfortable to approach the school with any concerns.

39. The school keeps parents well informed. All parents receive a calendar informing them of the many formal and informal opportunities they have to consult with teachers. Information is available in community languages as well as English. The school makes very effective use of its website in order to share good work and information with parents. Pupils' reports give their parents a clear picture of their strengths in each subject and indicate where improvement is needed. The parents' meeting gives the opportunity to discuss pupils' achievements and to set targets. For pupils with SEN the school holds an additional meeting. Parents are able to discuss progress, review IEPs and work with school in setting future learning goals.

40. The school regularly seeks parents' views and acts on their concerns. For example, last year a significant number of parents expressed uncertainty about the homework arrangements. In response the school issued the homework policy and a booklet to all. Almost all the parents who made their views known to the inspection team were happy with the homework arrangements, which is evidence of the success of the school's strategy.

41. Parents have the opportunity to attend a range of open mornings and courses. The school provides sessions for parents to learn about aspects of the curriculum, such as reading. These offer the chance to learn and try out new strategies. With the help of outside agencies, courses are held for parents on a range of topics, including ICT, football coaching skills and behaviour management. Attendance at these events is low but growing.

42. Community provision is very good, enhances the school's role in the community and extends pupils' learning. Community links are very effectively managed by the deputy headteacher. The school is located in a regeneration area and this provides a number of opportunities for community involvement. Community links are very effectively managed by the deputy headteacher in conjunction with other colleagues. The school has close and effective community links with the Behaviour Support Unit and with Bolton Social Services both in connection with school specific issues and wider matters such as general behaviour management and child protection policies.

43. The school has very effective links both with officially constituted community bodies and with community groups. The deputy headteacher manages the links very effectively both to the benefit of the school and its pupils and to that of the community. Links with Social Services are very good and the school works closely and effectively with them on matters of family support and child protection. Another important connection is with the Bolton Education Support Team (BEST) based at the nearby high school. The school works closely with them on a range of important matters including attendance, behaviour support and family learning activities. This group has a members from a range of disciplines and provides a wide range of different types of support for families and pupils. In conjunction with the school's attendance team, it has been an important component in improving the school's attendance.

44. Working with the nationally funded 'Surestart' programme the school has provided information technology courses for parents and this has provided important insights for parents into developments in the school's ICT curriculum and in giving them initial access to important information technology skills.

45. The school has also done important work with local community groups. Dancers from the local Asian community have made an valuable contribution to the life of the school and have helped broaden pupils' appreciation of the richness and variety of community culture. The work done by the school in raising money for charities has both supported community development and has helped to develop a sense of community responsibility in pupils.

46. The school has good links with other local schools including the nearby partner high school, where good transfer arrangements are in place. There are also good links with the community and these extend pupils' learning. For example, the school works with the local high school in an innovative way to widen pupils' experiences in physical education. Dancers from the local Asian community made a tremendous contribution to the Divali celebration held during the inspection by teaching pupils music and dance as well as by performing. Links with other external services including Social Services, the Education Welfare Service, Police and other community groups are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

47. Overall the leadership and the management of the school are **very good**. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management. Key staff and governors are very effective and have a very clear view for the future development of the school based upon a solid understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Management systems are fully in place and the roles of subject co-ordinators and teams are very well developed.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are excellent.
- The effectiveness of the governing body is very good.
- The senior management team (SMT) and all other key staff are also very effective.
- Special educational needs (SEN) and educational inclusion are very well managed.
- All management systems are in place, these have and are continuing to have a positive impact on improving the educational provision provided by the school and on raising pupils' standards.

Commentary

48. The headteacher, who was newly appointed at the time of the last inspection, provides inspiring leadership and excellent management. She has a clear educational vision of the direction in which the school needs to move. This is shared with and fully understood by the whole school community. She is totally committed to providing a quality education for all pupils and has developed management structures to bring this about. She maintains her teaching role. This enables her to remain fully aware of the needs of her pupils at a classroom level and also act as a very good role model for her staff. This has a positive impact on the quality of teaching in the school and the standards that pupils attain.

49. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the full staff. The deputy headteacher, in effectively managing the links with outside agencies makes an important contribution to the management of the school. Knowledge of the individual circumstances of pupils informs planning and the deployment of teaching assistants. This has a positive effect on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The SMT, drawing on their experience and expertise, carry out the duties in terms of leadership and of management effectively. The school's self-evaluation processes are excellent. The school makes full use of its own and national assessment data and information to challenge the school's performance and set challenging improvement targets.

50. The governing body are equally committed to school improvement. Over recent years they have supported the headteacher and staff in their endeavours to maintain and raise standards. To ensure that improvements are made they hold the school to account through rigorous monitoring systems. The governing body has clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body, in a balanced partnership with the headteacher, has responsibility for a fully devolved budget. All school improvement decisions are made following a full consultation process with all interested parties. The costs of these decisions are fully itemised. All financial systems are in place and the budget is spent effectively with due reference to the principles of best value. The expenditure per pupil is very high compared to other schools. This is a demonstration of the commitment of the leadership and management of the school to the needs of its pupils. The budget carry forward is fully allocated. The finance officer carries out her responsibilities very thoroughly and effectively.

51. Curriculum leadership has improved dramatically since the last inspection. The core subjects have curriculum teams. Curriculum leaders carry out all the required layers of monitoring. These include, for example, pupils' work scrutiny, an examination of curriculum planning and, where planned, for classroom observation. This monitoring has had and continues to have a positive impact on the raising of pupil standards. Middle management is very effective across the school

with the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage being excellent. Special educational needs (SEN) are effectively managed by the co-ordinator. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and learning is planned to take their need into account. The recognition and celebration of the range of cultures found within the community is very well managed by the school. This makes an important contribution to the school's success in being fully inclusive. There is effective communication and linkage between the headteacher, deputy headteacher, governing body, SMT, curriculum teams and curriculum leaders. All meetings and actions are recorded. The school measures the effectiveness of its decisions and uses the information as a platform for further school improvement.

52. Performance management systems for teaching and all support staff are effective, as is the induction programme for the two newly qualified teachers (NQTs). The continuing professional development for all staff is a school priority. This has enabled staff to improve their knowledge and their teaching skills and to carry out their management responsibilities more effectively. The school ensures that professional development is available to both teaching and non-teaching staff.

53. As the governing body and middle managers are now fully aware of and involved in school improvement, the overall leadership and management of the school has made very good progress since the last inspection.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,426,900.00
Total expenditure	1,316,971.00
Expenditure per pupil	2869.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year 2001/2002	81,093.00
Balance carried forward to the next 2003/2004	109,929.00

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UNIT

54. The school has a 16 place speech and language unit catering for both infant and junior age pupils and there are two members of staff, one for infant age pupils and the other for juniors. The school has had full financial control over the unit for just over two years. Pupils attend from other schools across Bolton and admission is decided by a panel consisting of representatives of the school, LEA and the speech therapy service. On average pupils spend five terms in the unit before returning to their own school, transferring to mainstream classes at Lever Edge or moving to other provision. The unit is fully integrated into the life of the school and the pupils receive very good teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Admissions are well planned by the management committee.
- Pupils in the speech and language unit are very well integrated into the life of the school.
- Teachers working in the unit have very good specialist knowledge and plan work in conjunction with their colleagues in the rest of the school.
- The school makes provision for pupils to maintain contact with their original school where this is desired by their parents.
- Teaching is of very good quality and gives very good emphasis to the development of speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils learn well and make good progress in relation to their previous learning.

Commentary

55. Pupils in the speech and language unit make very good progress in relation to their previous learning. They are enthusiastic learners and planning for pupils' learning in the unit is very thorough and done in conjunction with the rest of the school. It provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced. Links between subjects are planned systematically in conjunction with teachers in the rest of the school. Particular emphasis is given to developing the skills of speaking and listening. Individual targets are well used by staff to adapt planned learning to meet the needs of these children. Teaching assistants are very effective in supporting teachers to meet the needs of the pupils in order to maximise the progress that they make.

56. Monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress is used very effectively to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met. Good use of time by all teachers provides maximum learning opportunities for all pupils. Links between subjects are well developed and the use of language across the curriculum enables pupils to achieve well. Clear targets, which pupils understand well, provide the focus for improvement. As a result pupils in the unit make very good progress in relation to their previous learning. Pupils' IEPs are very well drawn up and parents are fully aware of the learning targets which have been set for their children.

57. The pupils are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life and this improve their self confidence as well as ensuring an enriched range of experiences. This has beneficial effects on the progress they make and on the standards they achieve.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Nursery and in Reception is very good, enabling all children to achieve well and is a strength of the school. Care must be taken though when looking at the achievement of children across the Foundation Stage because only 75 per cent of children who enter the Reception class attended the part time Nursery.

Main strengths:

- Outstanding leadership and management ensure all children receive a flying start to their education.
- Achievement is good because children are keen to learn and their needs are effectively met through a very well planned exciting and enriching curriculum, which includes a strong programme of outdoor activities where children sustain their enjoyment well.
- The provision for the high percentage of children who have very little or no English in both Nursery and Reception is very good.
- Overall teaching is very good and results in very good learning taking place.
- Very comprehensive and analytical assessment procedures are organised precisely to give the school a very clear insight into children's progress, within and across stages, and for achievements of the different ethnic groups, gender and children with SEN. Assessment is very closely linked to the new profile.
- A very good induction programme in both the Nursery and in the Reception together with very good links with parents enables children to settle quickly and happily into this very happy secure environment.
- The use of visits and visitors enhances the curriculum well.
- The opportunities the children have to develop their ICT skills are very good.
- The Foundation Stage is used as an example of good practice by other schools and external agencies.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**.

58. Children achieve well because teachers place great emphasis on developing personal social and emotional skills. Adults are very good role models, listening with genuine interest to what the children have to say and always prepared to spend time talking to and interpreting for them. This promotes children's trust and confidence. Children whose home language is not English and those with SEN receive the best in care. Children are happy to come to school and enjoy the wide range of activities provided. They listen carefully to instructions such as to line up, get into a circle and engage well with others in the class, taking turns and sharing. This shows very good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching in both the Nursery and Reception classes where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The curriculum provides a good balance of adult initiated and self selected activities. There are clear expectations for very good behaviour and children quickly adjust to the routines established. Simple class rules are understood well by everyone. In Nursery, children are learning how to put on their coat and find their own peg, in Reception the children are being taught to develop their independence in dressing and undressing and to take care with their own personal hygiene.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

59. Standards in communication, language and literacy are poor for most children in Nursery and for the children who have just started school in Reception. Many children have difficulty in expressing themselves in English as many are at a very early stage of English acquisition. Achievement is very good because children are well challenged with a very good range of appropriate activities and very good quality resources. There is very good language support for the children whose home language is not English and these children make very good progress. There is a strong focus on talking to adults and listening to the stories and rhymes used in class in their own language. Few children are able to use talk to organise, sequence and clarify their thinking, ideas, feelings and events. They use limited language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. Through very carefully planned structured play the child is developing new vocabulary and skills needed for writing. Teacher's expectations are high and children respond positively. When some children start school many of them have very limited knowledge of books and how to handle them. The library and book corners in the classrooms provide children with a very good start to enjoying books. Children in Reception are being encouraged to read the first picture books in the Oxford Reading Scheme and a few are able to recognise Floppy, Kipper, and Chip. Pupils with SEN are very well planned for and supported. As a result they make good progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language is **very good**.

60. Children achieve well because they are given many opportunities to develop mathematical skills across all areas of learning inside and outside the classrooms. Classrooms are rich with numbers, number patterns and appropriate resources for children to use. Teaching is very good. Support given to pupils with little language and those with SEN is very good. The use of singing number rhymes and counting, using sing along cards and visual aids, reinforce counting and number well. Understanding mathematical language and concepts is preventing children achieving the higher levels in mathematics. At this early stage in the year the majority of children in Reception are unable to solve practical problems understand the concept of addition and subtraction and talk about three-dimensional shapes and their properties well enough. By the end of the Foundation Stage a significant number will still be working within the steps of the early learning goals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

61. Achievement is good. Well-planned opportunities extend children's knowledge and understanding in a wide variety of areas. Children will learn about living things, their senses, different cultures and beliefs and changes over time through a very well planned curriculum. Visits such as to the farm, the safari park the squirrel reserve enrich the curriculum as children observe animals and their babies. The adults extend vocabulary of the local area when the local environment is explored and investigated. The many visitors to the Foundation Stage also enhance the curriculum and help children to take part in dance, drama, performing arts, juggling, flower arranging, pottery and how to look after animals. All of these activities make the children confident investigators, curious about living things and events. Children are given very good opportunities to find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use information technology and programmable toys to support their learning very well indeed.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

62. At this stage of the school year children are still well below average in their physical development. Teachers plan very well to provide very good opportunities to develop these skills. As yet they have little spatial awareness to move confidently, imaginatively and control their movements. The imaginative development of the outdoor play areas for the Foundation stage is a major factor in helping the children to make very good progress in the development of their physical skills. There are good opportunities everyday for the children to play with sand and water as well as small objects such as threading beads and rolling and cutting to develop their skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

63. This area of learning is particularly well planned in both the Nursery and Reception classes. The very attractive displays in the cloakrooms and classroom show that teachers respect the children's efforts and help to stimulate further learning. Particularly good is the skilful way the Nursery and Reception children are introduced to music supported by music displays reinforcing learning about the sounds the untuned instruments make. An area in the classroom devoted to the story of the 'Rainbow Fish' helps to create a bright and purposeful environment and provides a focus for future learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Pupils achieve very well compared to similar schools.
- The co-ordinator and the English team provide strong leadership.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the progress of pupils with SEN.
- Planning is very good.
- Monitoring is very effective.

Commentary

64. Children enter school with levels of language and literacy well below those expected nationally. Standards, in all aspects of English, at the age of seven and eleven are now broadly in line with national expectations with a number of pupils likely to attain above the expected level by the end of the year. This reflects a marked improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls or in the achievement of pupils from ethnic minority heritages. Pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress in relation to their previous learning.

65. Throughout the school, staff work hard to ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop and extend their speaking and listening skills. In a Year 2 lesson discussion was used to good effect to enable pupils to refine and improve their use of chronology in linking sections of

stories. Older pupils in a Year 6 class discussed the structure of newspaper reports, identifying key features and then used their new knowledge to construct their own articles. Teachers use challenging, subject related vocabulary regularly and to good effect. Pupils of all ages make very good progress.

66. Pupils make very good progress in reading as they move through the school with the majority of pupils attaining expected standards with some pupils working at higher levels. Phonics are well taught and pupils use their phonic skills effectively when reading unfamiliar words. Older pupils can discuss books they have enjoyed reading and talk about their favourite authors. The home school reading diaries are used effectively and enable parents and teachers to support children's learning. This has a positive impact on improving pupil performance. The school council has planned a 'reading buddies' scheme and is currently matching older pupils with younger 'buddies'. This programme which ran in the previous academic year is successful in raising the self esteem of pupils and their enthusiasm for and success in reading.

67. Standards of attainment in writing have improved substantially over the last four years. This is due to high quality, imaginative teaching and very effective planning and assessment. The majority of seven year old pupils are making very good progress. Eleven year old pupils are also achieving well and making very good progress. Standards of handwriting and presentation are good as a result of a consistent approach. Spelling is at expected levels throughout the school with pupils using more complex spelling patterns as they progress. Teachers' marking is of high quality. Learning targets are set out in pupils' books and there are very good examples teachers' indicating to children what they need to do next to improve their work. This is done consistently across the school.

68. Pupils with SEN and those for whom English is an additional language are very well supported in English lessons. The learning tasks for them are appropriate to their needs and support staff make a very significant contribution to their learning. These pupils make good progress.

69. Teaching in three out of the four lessons seen was very good. Teaching in half the other lessons was judged to be of good and the rest of satisfactory quality. This is reflected in the progress made by pupils. Teachers plan very effectively to meet the varying needs within the classes. They use questioning imaginatively and encourage pupils to refine and improve their work, pupils respond positively and enthusiastically. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing and take every opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills. Whilst teachers use high quality literature in many reading activities, some older pupils do not have consistent opportunities to do so. This results in a minority of pupils not always being stretched in the development of the breadth of their reading.

70. The management of English is very good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and leads a team who co-ordinate work across the school. Monitoring the subject and advice from an experienced colleague from the LEA Literacy team has given her a clear view of the strengths and needs in the subject. Resources are satisfactory but she is aware of the need further extend the range of material to support the literacy strategy. The library is well used to support work in English across the school. The school needs to review the range of reading undertaken by pupils in order to ensure that all pupils have consistent access to high quality literature. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils cultural and social development through the study of literature and discussion. Moral issues too are highlighted giving pupils insight into issues of right and wrong.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. At the time of the last inspection this was identified as area for improvement. There is strong evidence to show that this is happening on a consistent basis. Time is taken in maths, science and history lessons for pupils to be introduced to and to practise the use of appropriate new technical vocabulary. Discussion with Year 6 pupils about writing related to work on the Tudors revealed good links between history and literacy.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching enables pupils to learn and achieve well.
- Pupils display above average standards at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6.
- The teachers assess effectively and set targets for pupils.
- Curriculum planning is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards mathematics and enjoy lessons.
- Pupils' number skills are well developed.
- Special educational needs (SEN) pupils receive very good support.
- Pupils with EAL receive very good support.
- The subject is very well led and managed by the curriculum co-ordinator and the numeracy team.
- Good results in national tests in recent years.
- The 'using and applying' component of the subject is underdeveloped.

Commentary

72. During the week in the mathematics lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning in both key stages was good overall. From the scrutiny of pupils' work, the impact of the quality of teaching over a period of time is also good overall.

73. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in response to the teaching they receive. Early basic number skills and concepts are taught well. However when introducing some new concepts teachers need to ensure that the appropriate mathematical words or terminology also receive appropriate emphasis. Work expected of pupils is well matched to the varying abilities found within each class. Lessons are well managed and time is used effectively. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in all lessons. The high expectation that teachers have of their pupils ensures that they work hard throughout each lesson. Teachers use good questioning techniques to challenge pupils and use praise well to recognise and celebrate achievement.

74. The overall quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 was good. However some very good teaching was observed in this key stage. The key features of the very good teaching seen were very thorough teacher preparation, pupils handling resources to gain a better understanding of their work and very good teacher questioning that enabled pupils to think and give a more considered response. This very good teaching results in very good learning. A key feature of this learning is that pupils are encouraged to persevere with their work until their understanding is secure. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards the subject are equally good in this key stage.

75. Pupils' number skills are well developed in both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 2, before they move on to the next school, most pupils are confident at recalling basic number facts and in working out difficult computations mentally.

76. The planning for the subject is good. The programme planned for the pupils is in line with the expectations of the national numeracy strategy. From the analysis of timetables, extra time is given to the teaching of the subject in some year groups. This investment of time is having a positive effect on raising standards. Plans are in place to give more emphasis to the using and applying aspects of the subject. At this stage this aspect of the mathematics programme is underdeveloped across the school. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use mathematical games and to carry out investigations and problem solving. Quality experiences in this area of mathematics will further enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.

77. Infant and junior pupils of all abilities, including the more able pupils, make good progress. This is confirmed by the above average results achieved in national tests in recent years.

78. In all lessons SEN pupils and EAL pupils were well supported by classroom assistants who were very skilled at intervening in pupils' learning. They used well timed questions which encouraged pupils to think carefully about their work and prompted them to make the next step. As a result pupils consistently made good progress.

79. Tracking systems in the form of progress sheets are in place to follow pupil progress through the school. These assessments and other tests are used to set targets for the pupils and to determine the support they might need. These careful assessment procedures ensure all pupils, including the more able, make good progress. All national and school performance data is used to direct and evaluate the school's performance in the subject.

80. The subject is very well led and managed by the newly appointed subject co-ordinator. All monitoring systems are in place and are continuing to impact on the raising of pupil standards. The co-ordinator is ably supported by the numeracy team.

Mathematics across the curriculum

81. Pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects of the curriculum. For example in Year 6, pupils in science had to present information using line graphs from the results of experiments on dissolving. Pupils also have access to an after school mathematics club. Pupils are actively encouraged by the teachers to join this club so that they can have the opportunity to use and extend their mathematical skills.

82. The school has made very good progress in the quality of teaching and learning and the provision for this subject since the last inspection. The dramatic improvement in pupil standards in mathematics is a direct consequence of these improvements.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- A love of science is evident across the school. *'We can't wait for our science lesson.'*
- Teaching stimulates the pupils and challenges their understanding.
- Good use is made of assessment to track pupils' progress.
- There is very good support for the many pupils whose home language is not English, pupils with SEN and for the higher attaining pupils in Year 6.
- Resources are very good.

Commentary

83. Standards in science are now average for seven and eleven year olds. This shows a marked improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below and science was a key issue. Progress is very good.

84. Teachers use a wide variety of teaching strategies to ensure all the pupils can access the science curriculum successfully including those with EAL. Very good use is made of illustrations, pictures, books and videos so that those who have difficulty with language are helped to understand. Good opportunities are given for pupils to discuss and reflect before commencing on their experiments. As a result, pupils become adept at planning investigations, identifying things that can change, what they are going to measure, as part of their initial planning.

85. A video, *Fourways Farm* linked to the book, '*Who's been eating?*' helped pupils in Year 1 understand the dietary needs of animals and helped them to begin to sort things into groups. In year 2 the video, '*The effects of Heat,*' helped the pupils to make observations and simple comparisons and to decide whether what happened with their investigation using chocolate buttons was what they expected.

86. Lessons are well planned and objectives clearly defined. All pupils are set realistic targets, which help to identify the next steps in their learning. Assessment strategies are in place to test pupils understanding at the end of each block of work. Results showed that Year 3 pupils had remembered a lot about healthy eating and looking after teeth and that most of the Year 4 pupils showed a good understanding of the skeleton. In a very good lesson drawing together the learning on, '*Dissolving,*' in Year 6 the higher attainers were set a science challenge to explain, *How to test,* whilst the other pupils discussed a series of statements to decide if they were false or true predictions.

87. The hard working and effective science co-ordinator has successfully raised the profile of science across the school. The science club encourages '*Discovery learning*' and '*Steps into Science*' boards are placed strategically in corridors to celebrate pupils' ongoing science work. Standards of teaching and learning are monitored and checks are made at regular intervals. The subject is well placed to continue to develop even further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good overall, with some very good features.
- Pupils make good progress and have positive attitudes to their ICT work.
- The subject is effectively led by the ICT team who provide guidance to teachers on planning, resources and staff development; they monitor the subject well and are aware of the strengths and areas for development of ICT provision in school.
- Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good because there has been appropriate investment in new hardware and a range of software, there is a new ICT suite and computers are available in all classrooms.
- Members of staff have received appropriate training so their ICT skills and confidence have improved which helps them to deliver the National Curriculum requirements of ICT as a discrete subject and to support learning in other subjects.
- Resources for control technology are limited, but the school has plans to address this during the current academic year.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to communicate through the use of e-mail.
- The ICT suite is well equipped but is currently too small.
- Computers in some classrooms are on trolleys which are of an unsuitable size for the age of pupils using them.

Commentary

88. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and 6. Pupils use a range of information technology skills appropriately and make good progress. Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' work indicates that younger pupils are able to use simple graphing software to generate graphs of their journeys to school and drawing software to produce, save and print pictures, including pictures in the style of the artist Jackson Pollock. Year 2 pupils used the internet to investigate life in a Mexican village which they were studying in geography. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use word processing software and Year 4 pupils are using 'Excel' to generate graphs

of the results of their investigations in mathematics. Year 6 pupils have used the internet and CD-ROMs to undertake research. All pupils were able to log on to the network and select software, with support from teachers and adult helpers. Key Stage 2 pupils were able to access their own files on the network, and knew the importance of saving their work.

89. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and this is supported by thorough planning and links are made to other areas of the curriculum. Teachers use the available time well, model what is expected of pupils and refer to and build upon pupils' knowledge and understanding. This resulted in good teaching. Where teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and provide challenge in the lesson, teaching is very good. All pupils make good progress because tasks are appropriate to pupils' ability and pupils are supported well by teachers and adult helpers so that all pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, can access the curriculum and make progress. Pupils work well together, support each other and are enthusiastic and confident learners. No gender differences were noticed.

90. There are an appropriate number of computers available to pupils in a networked suite and computers in classrooms which are also connected to the network, including the internet. All pupils have their own username to enable them to access the software and to save and retrieve their work; each class has an e-mail address, but there was little evidence of the use of e-mail throughout the school, apart from a little in Year 3. The ICT suite has an interactive white board, computer and projector, which teachers use to effectively demonstrate the skills which pupils follow; limited use was seen of the full interactivity of the whiteboard. The school has a suitable range of other equipment, including a scanner, digital cameras and video cameras, a colour printer in each classroom, two laptops and projectors available for use in classrooms. Additional control technology is required to support the work of the older pupils. Some teachers have laptops provided by the school to support their work. A timetable for use of the ICT suite ensures that all classes throughout the school are given time in the room. Some technical problems were experienced during the inspection with the new computers, but teachers and pupils coped well despite the difficulties.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

91. During the inspection pupils in Key Stage 2 were observed using Excel to create graphs to support their learning in science and mathematics. Evidence from pupils' work shows ICT is being used well to support learning across the curriculum, especially in art, numeracy, science and literacy. Year 4 pupils have used a drawing package to create pictures in the style of the artists Seurat and Mackintosh. Pupils have opportunities to use computers to apply their numeracy skills, for example to create and analyse graphs, produce repeating and symmetrical patterns. Their literacy skills are developed, for example for creating poems and newspaper reports.

92. The school website is a very good feature of the school; it is informative, up to date and includes a range of pupils' ICT work.

HUMANITIES

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Enquiry skills are built into every well-planned unit of work.
- There is a good awareness of the need to link history with literacy, with particular emphasis on understanding historical terminology.
- Use of monitoring and assessment are well developed.
- Good resources.
- Give chronology a higher profile.

Commentary

93. No history had been taught in Year 2 and 6 so far this school year. Scrutiny of work from the other classes indicates that pupils are making good progress as they move through the school.

94. Pupils, including those with EAL and those with SEN, have a very good start in Year 1. Enquiry skills are developed well as pupils build up their class Toy Museum. They are enjoying learning how to handle artefacts correctly, observe and express similarities and differences and write simple sentences using relevant historical terms.

95. Mystery and suspense was built into a Year 4 lesson based on three of the wives of Henry VIII. The pupils were observed enthusiastically discussing each of them and the meaning and relevance of phrases like, *'like a blushing rose without a thorn.'*

96. Overall resources for teaching and learning are good. The school makes productive use of trips to Ribchester and Helmslow Mill to give pupils in Year 3 and 5 a better understanding of Roman and Victorian times.

97. There has been good improvement overall since the previous inspection. This is the result of a good new co-ordinator who monitors and evaluates planning, teaching and children's books well. There is a new policy and scheme of work, an effective use of tracking and good quality resources including good use of ICT.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils to make good progress.
- Subject leadership by the geography team is good.
- Maps are well used to support learning.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not help pupils improve their geography subject knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Too much work remains unfinished by pupils of all ages.

Commentary

98. Judgements were made from lesson observations, analysing pupils' recent work and displays in school and talking to pupils. Five lessons were seen during the inspection. Only two year groups were studying geography at the time of the inspection, as the focus for the other year groups this half term was history.

99. Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and in Year 6. All pupils make good progress in the subject. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to ask questions and to identify and name features. Year 3 pupils are able to anticipate what the future of the local area will be. Older pupils are able to explain the reasons for their opinions and Year 5 pupils can explain the importance of the River Nile and of the need for irrigation in Egypt. Throughout the school pupils are given opportunities to compare places, by looking at similarities and differences, which they are able to do well for their ages. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about and enjoy their geography.

100. The subject is well led by the geography team who have been in post for just over one year. The long term curriculum plan has recently been revised and clearly indicates opportunity for all pupils to access their subject entitlement. Medium term planning is based on a scheme produced by a neighbouring authority and its implementation is due for review later this year. Links with other

subjects are evident, particularly with literacy, seen through poetry, letter writing and some very good zigzag books of the journey of a river; there are also appropriate links with numeracy, particularly through the use of graphs. Monitoring of pupils' work and of teachers' planning help the geography team know the standards pupils have achieved and the strengths of the subject. Assessment procedures are in the early stages of development. A portfolio of samples of pupils' work is useful. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but teachers' comments are generally focussed on pupils' spelling, effort and presentation, rather than on how pupils can improve the quality of their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding. There is little evidence of pupils being involved with evaluating their own work. The subject team have established a consistent approach to progression of skills across the school and a means of promoting the use of geographical vocabulary. Priorities for the future have been identified as further development of ICT and increased opportunities for fieldwork.

101. Good teaching occurs when lessons are well paced with a certain amount of appropriate challenge, support and guidance and appropriate resources are used. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils and create differentiated learning opportunities and use teaching assistants well to promote high standards for all pupils in the subject. Too much work in books from pupils of all ages remains unfinished.

102. A range of maps and globes are well used throughout the school to support pupils' learning. Mapwork is developed well when it is linked to other work in geography, such as in Year 5 when pupils plan a route from Bolton to Blackpool and in Year 6 when contours are taught as part of work about mountains. The whole school board theme during the inspection was geography; boards in the corridors showed a very good range from all year groups, including a wide variety of pupils' work and stimulating photos, artefacts and maps.

103. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection because teaching is better, with less reliance on worksheets; resources have improved and opportunities for pupils' investigative and ICT work have increased.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There is a good curriculum that fully reflects the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Children demonstrate a developing understanding of their own and other faiths.
- Teachers value different children's beliefs.
- Provision in whole school and class assemblies develop different religions and celebrate festivals.
- The good level of new resources and artefacts, including visitors and visits to places of worship ensures teaching and learning is of good quality.

Commentary

Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 meet national expectations. All pupils make very good progress across the school. Pupils demonstrate their knowledge of both aspects of the curriculum – Learning about Religions and Learning from Religions.

104. The study of world religions is planned clearly throughout the school. Teachers encourage pupils to talk about their faith and pupils are very interested in listening to what they have to say. In a very good Year 6 lesson the contribution from the Muslim pupils was impressive. Artefacts from Islam had been brought in and shared openly, the internet had been explored for information to help all the class produce an information leaflet based on the different functions of the Mosque and its role

in community life. They worked diligently to complete the task because the purpose was to share it with the younger pupils in the school.

105. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use a wide range of teaching strategies to involve all the pupils in discussions, which effectively promotes the pupils spiritual development. Pupils have a good understanding of the place of celebration in religions and are knowledgeable about the major Christian celebrations of Christmas and Easter. There was an excellent assembly based on Diwali, which involved pupils, parents and other organisations from the community.

106. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to address all the issues from the last inspection. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively. Assessment is in place.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their work in the subject.
- The problem/design/make/evaluate process is fully established across the school.

Commentary

107. Overall standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected of pupils of these age groups. Some pupils are achieving higher standards. Progress for all pupils across both key stages is good.

108. During the week of the inspection pupils in Year 5 were engaged in a planned design and technology project. The project was suitably designed to enable the pupils to work through the full design process over the week. Essentially they were able to consider the ingredients to make a biscuit/design a biscuit/evaluate their design/make decisions to improve and then bake them. Due to the skill of the teacher and her enthusiasm, the quality of teaching in these lessons was very good. The quality of learning was also very good as the pupils enjoyed the lessons and were always fully engaged in producing their best work. All health and safety issues were carefully addressed and pupils were able to use appropriate tools and equipment.

109. The subject is well managed by the subject co-ordinator and curriculum planning is thorough across the school. Assessment processes used to track pupil progress within the subject are effective because they chart what pupils know, understand and can do, the information is then used to plan the next stage of learning. All pupils have an equal access to the full range of activities within the subject.

110. Given the improvements in planning, curriculum coverage and the leadership and management of the subject, the school has made very good progress with the design and technology provision since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The curriculum is broad and stimulating.
- Pupils enjoy their art and design and they use a wide range of skills and techniques and a number produce work of a better than expected standard.
- Planning is good and pupils benefit from the structured development of skills and techniques.
- Sketch books are used well to develop basic techniques such as proportion and perspective.

Commentary

111. Standards reached by the seven and eleven year olds are similar to the level expected for pupils of similar ages, with a significant proportion of pupils attaining higher standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant and rich. Teachers have a good subject knowledge and understanding and pupils benefit from a well planned programme.

112. There is a good range of creative opportunities available to pupils. They are competent when using different media, and are confident in evaluating their own work and that of other pupils'. This was well demonstrated in a Year 2, lesson which linked work on Mexico in geography with making Mexican masks using clay. The lesson was very well planned. Children discussed their work purposefully as they developed and evaluated their masks. The teacher skilfully enabled all pupils to share the strengths and areas for development in their work with one another.

113. Too few lessons in art were seen to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. The work in Year 1 is built on successfully in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. There is a good range of work on display throughout the school and a comprehensive art portfolio of pupils' work which shows the influence of other artist's work such as the Year 3 pictures completed in the style of *van Gogh*. Pupils confidently produce pictures in the style of *Paul Klee*, and can compare and contrast the styles of different artists they have studied. Skills and techniques are well taught and scale and perspective are confidently handled by older pupils. Pupils in Year 4 can use a viewfinder to produce effective work with a specific focus. They make insightful comments on the work they do in art, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

114. The subject has a firm place in the curriculum and there are clear links with other subjects, notably history and geography. The co-ordinator monitors standards, teaching and learning. In addition a comprehensive portfolio has been compiled representing the work done across the school. This provides a useful reference point for staff.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in singing are good and lessons are well planned.
- Teaching is good and the school benefits from the teaching of a specialist music teacher each week.
- Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

Commentary

115. Music is carefully planned for within the curriculum and standards are generally above those found nationally. The school uses the skills of a specialist music teacher from the LEA each week. This has important benefits in raising standards. In lessons, and in assemblies, pupils sing tunefully and with real expression. Pupils are encouraged to sing with feeling and to fit the mood for the purpose. For example, in a Year 2 music lesson pupils sang 'Hickory Dickory Dock' tunefully in two parts. Pupils play chime bars in time with a repeated singing rhythm. Boys and girls fully participate in music making activities. Pupils in Year 6 can sing complex rounds using a drum to provide the base rhythm. Music is used well in lessons and in assemblies. For example, an African drum provided a valuable opportunity for pupils to study the instrument and discuss the mood it created when used.

116. The quality of teaching is good. Musical skills are developed well. Most pupils in Year 2 can name the instruments they use. Pupils handle instruments carefully. In a very good music lesson pupils composed a good quality series of complex rhythmical patterns accompanied by instruments, due to very good teaching. They make good progress due to very clear explanations from the teacher. Pupils' progress is effectively built on through a coherent music programme. Music makes a good contribution to pupils social, cultural and spiritual development.

117. It was not possible to hold discussions with the co-ordinator because of sickness. The evidence indicated that the subject is well managed. Planning is detailed and the use of LEA support is an important contributory factor in improving teacher's confidence and skills in teaching. Curriculum provision in music has made good improvement since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils have good attitudes and work hard.
- The assessment of pupils' physical development is good.
- Physical education is very well managed.
- Pupils receive a wide range of out of school and lunchtime activities.
- When appropriate, pupils need opportunities to reflect on their performance so that they can consider ways in which they can improve.

Commentary

118. The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons was good. In all lessons appropriate reference was made to the health and safety considerations that pupils have to make when exerting themselves physically. A minor weakness in the teaching and learning of the subject is that pupils generally need more opportunities to reflect on their performance in order that they are able to think of ways to improve their skills. Standards, in terms of the skills that pupils display, at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are in line with those expected of pupils of these age groups. Some pupils are achieving higher standards. Progress for all pupils across both key stages is good.

119. In one lesson observed, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed the opportunity to go swimming and were achieving the required standard. This swimming lesson was essentially taught by LEA instructors. Their endeavours ensured this was a successful experience for all pupils. In addition to this, the personal teaching contribution made by the class teacher enabled individual pupils to make very good progress. Pupil behaviour whilst travelling on the swimming coach and in the swimming pool

was exemplary. It is the decision of the leadership and management of the school to invest an additional amount of the school budget into providing swimming for the pupils. This investment is giving value for money as pupils, as well as enjoying the swimming lessons, are making good progress.

120. The physical education curriculum is very well managed by the curriculum leader. Her personal enthusiasm for the subject sparks off pupil interest across the school. This was evident in a lesson in the school hall where Year 2 pupils made good progress and thoroughly enjoyed the planned activities. The pupils made good progress because the activities planned were designed so that they could develop their skills sequentially.

121. The assessment of pupil progress is a strong feature of the physical education provision.

122. There are many opportunities for pupils to undertake extra physical opportunities at lunchtime and after school. These activities and clubs include cricket, football, gymnastics, dance, netball and ballet. This investment of time by teachers and classroom support staff is paying dividends, as pupils have had considerable success in these activities recently. Resources and their use in lessons are good.

123. Given the improvements in the quality of resources, assessment, curriculum documentation and the leadership and the management of the subject, this aspect of the curriculum has made very good progress since the last inspection. These improvements have had a clear impact, improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards of achievement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in PSHE is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very effective use of 'circle time' for pupils.
- The school's policy provides a coherent framework for PSHE through the curriculum.
- The School Council is developing an important sense of the responsibilities of citizenship among pupils of all ages.
- The school's programme for PSHE including alcohol and drug misuse is very effective.

Commentary

124. The process of discussion by the class of personal and social issues known as 'circle time' is very effectively managed by teachers to allow all pupils to confidently take part. They offered their views in a mature way and other pupils listened carefully. In class discussions too pupils listen and consider the views of others in a mature way.

125. There are many opportunities through collaborative work in lessons and at playtimes for pupils' social skills to develop well. The opportunities to take responsibility and show an understanding of citizenship understanding are strongly enhanced by the opportunity to take part in the school council.

126. The current provision for sex and relationships education and drugs education is good. The school is working very effectively to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
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	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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