

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LIMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105633

Headteacher: Mrs Elaine Hibbert

Lead inspector: Fran Gillam

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 256738

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:	204
School address:	Third Avenue Limeside Oldham
Postcode:	OL8 3SB
Telephone number:	0161 6811756
Fax number:	0161 6843346
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Steve Barrow
Date of previous inspection:	May 2002

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Limeside is an average sized primary school situated on a housing estate not far from Oldham town centre. There are 204 pupils on roll; just over half are boys. Children start in the Nursery in the September of the year of their third birthday and attend full time; their attainment is very low compared with children of the same age. There are 28 children in the Nursery and a further 26 children in the Reception class. Fifty-one per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is well above average. Almost all the pupils come from a white British background; three pupils come from other white backgrounds. There is a higher than average percentage of pupils on the school's special needs register and one pupil has a statement of special educational need. The range of difficulties experienced by pupils is wide with most pupils having difficulties with speech and communication. The number of pupils moving in and out of the school other than at the normal time of entry is very high; 35 per cent in the last year. The school is involved in a number of local and national initiatives and receives funding through the social regeneration budget to support work with parents and the community. In the last two years there has been a turnover of almost all the teaching staff.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21498	Fran Gillam	Lead inspector	English, information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage.
9446	Helen Griffiths	Lay inspector	
27591	Madeline Campbell	Team inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.
25203	Robert Cooke	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, religious education and special educational needs.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Limeside is a good school** where standards are rising, particularly for boys, and pupils' achievements are good. Teaching is effective; lessons are interesting and pupils' learning is good. Pupils enjoy school; their behaviour is very good and they take a keen interest in their work. The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The children in the Nursery and Reception class get a good start to their schooling.
- Throughout the school, almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because of good teaching. The small number of more able pupils do not always do quite as well as they might.
- Achievement is good in English, mathematics and art for all pupils; more able pupils' achievement in science could be better in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils like school; they work very hard and behave very well.
- There is strong teamwork because of the very good leadership of the headteacher; priorities are focused well on raising standards and this ensures that the curriculum provides a good balance and breadth of learning.
- There is a high level of care for pupils; their views are taken into account and acted upon.
- The school has good links with the wider community and provides some good opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning.

**The school is now more effective than it was and has made good improvement.** The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is better than it was; teaching has improved and standards have risen. At present, subject leadership and management are variable; there is some good co-ordination but not in all subjects. Improvement in this area has been hampered by almost all of the teaching staff being appointed in only the last 18 months.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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' achievement is good overall.** Children in the Nursery start school with very low standards in comparison with children of the same age. Although most children will not meet the goals expected for their age, they do well because they experience a good range of activities that builds on learning effectively. By the time children move into Year 1 standards have risen. Standards are below average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science by Year 2; pupils do well based on their starting point. They use strategies well in reading and in solving mathematical problems. Pupils throughout the school listen well but cannot always explain themselves clearly. There is some good quality artwork; pupils achieve well and standards are above those expected by Year 6. Pupils continue to achieve well in English and mathematics

by Year 6, even though standards are below average. There is a higher than average movement of pupils in and out of the school. Pupils in the juniors have had a legacy of interruptions to their learning resulting in gaps in their knowledge and understanding; the school has done well, providing well-focused support and teaching to ensure these pupils do as well as they can. Standards in ICT and religious education are below average but pupils' skills in using computers are good; in religious education they have a good knowledge and understanding of different faiths.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Pupils work hard, they love school and pay close attention in lessons. They have a strong sense of the difference between right and wrong, and this shows in their very good behaviour. The attendance rate has improved and is now average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good.** Teaching is **good**; most staff are skilful at meeting the needs of the different groups in their class. Occasionally, some teachers do not place enough challenge on the more able pupils because they do not allow them to tackle tasks independently or draw on their skills in other areas such as literacy. Pupils have a better grasp of scientific facts than they did at the last inspection but, in Years 5 and 6, teaching inhibits the more able pupils by restricting the opportunities they have to tackle investigations and solve problems. Nevertheless, teaching is much more consistent than it was; assessments of what pupils can do are used effectively to help pupils improve. Pupils find this very helpful and it spurs them on to do better. Pupils find their work interesting and fun; the curriculum provides a good balance of activities that are relevant to the ages and interests of the pupils. The school makes good use of the local community and has very effective links with the local secondary school; this is particularly valuable in preparing the older pupils for the next stage of education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The leadership of the headteacher is very good; she is supported very well by the deputy headteacher. Together they have built a strong staff team who share their aspirations for the school and their drive for raising standards further. Priorities for development are well conceived and the action taken effective; these have been the main reasons for the school's improvement. Governors are supportive and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses; governance is satisfactory.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. They appreciate the support and guidance their children receive, which they feel has a significant impact on how well their children do and behave. Pupils really like their school; they feel they are listened to and their ideas acted upon. All pupils indicated that they feel there is always someone they can go to if they have any worries or concerns; this reflects the high level of care there is for pupils.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the achievement of the more able pupils in science in Years 5 and 6.
- Ensure that all teachers plan effectively for the more able pupils in all subjects.





## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

From their very low attainment on entry **pupils achieve well**; standards are **below average** in English, mathematics and science by Year 6 but have been rising faster than standards nationally.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics and art.
- Children in the Foundation Stage do well; they get a good start to school.
- Standards reached by the small number of more able pupils could sometimes be higher, particularly in science and in Years 5 and 6.

#### **Commentary**

1. Most children in the Nursery start school with very low attainment; their ability to talk and make others understand their needs is particularly poor. Many have little experience beyond the home or in working and playing with other children. The children do very well in developing their personal skills due to the consistent approach of staff in the Nursery. The staff have high expectations of children to do things for themselves and behave well towards others. This is built on effectively when children move into the Reception class. The children's achievement in their personal development underpins much of the gains they make in the other areas of learning. Even so standards are well below average by the end of the Reception Year in all areas but children's physical and personal development. The exciting range of activities in both the Nursery and Reception class and the well-focused teaching ensure that children's experiences are worthwhile. Children develop a much better understanding and knowledge of the world in which they live; their use of language and range of words they use increase and they are able to use their imaginations and express themselves more effectively by the time they are ready to move into Year 1.
2. In spite of standards being below average in English and mathematics by Year 6 and below average in English and average in mathematics by Year 2, pupils achieve well. This is due to the good teaching in these two subjects and the efforts made since the last inspection to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement. At the time of the last inspection, pupils in Years 3 to 6 had many gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding. The school has invested considerable time and staff training in a project called 'Learning Matters', which has involved pupils much more in their own learning and raised their self-esteem. This has resulted in a positive climate for learning, in pupils in all year groups being much more confident to tackle their work, in teachers being more accurate in their assessments of what pupils can do and so devising work that meets the needs of all pupils more effectively and in bringing greater enjoyment and excitement within the curriculum to capture pupils' interest and motivate them. This has had a significant impact on how well boys are doing and the achievements of pupils with special educational needs. Over time the gap between the performance of boys in the school and boys nationally has narrowed and is now comparable in all but writing in the tests by Year 2 and science by Year 6. The performance of girls has also improved but not at such a fast rate.

3. Standards are rising faster than the national trend and the school does well in relation to its targets; the two tables below show the increase in pupils' average points scores from 2002 to 2003. When the results of tests taken by pupils in Year 2 and 6 in 2003 are compared with schools in similar circumstances, pupils at Limeside did very much better in Year 2 and much better in Year 6. Even with a much higher percentage of pupils moving in and out of the school during Years 3 to 6, the pupils in last year's Year 6 did better than expected based on their test results when they were in Year 2. This is a measure of the school's success to ensure they provide well for all pupils and so improve standards and speed the pupils' achievements.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (13.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.4 (10.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (23.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.2 (23.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (26.4)	28.6 (28.3)

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

4. Standards in science are below average but should be higher; pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Even though pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are better than they were at the time of the last inspection, in Years 5 and 6 not enough challenge is provided for the small number of more able pupils to devise and carry out scientific investigations. As a result, these pupils mark time and their rate of progress is slower than their classmates.
5. In almost all year groups there are some good links made and opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, ICT and numeracy skills in other subjects. Pupils use their ICT and reading skills to download information from the Internet and to research, for example, historical events, geographical features and scientific facts. In all but Year 6, pupils of all abilities use their writing skills on a regular basis to record information. The small number of more able pupils in Year 6 are sometimes not challenged to work independently; other than when they are taught literacy and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils' competence in literacy, numeracy and ICT is satisfactory. At present, it does not come naturally to most of the pupils to recall information and identify links between different aspects of their work but this is improving as a result of the 'Learning Matters' project. The expert guidance of the co-ordinator for this aspect of the school's work provides a model for staff on how pupils can be encouraged to express their ideas and make decisions.
6. Standards in ICT and religious education are below average; pupils' achievement is satisfactory and good in religious education. In ICT, pupils are developing good skills in using computers but there are some gaps in their knowledge and understanding by Year 6 in areas such as monitoring, testing and recording results. In religious education, pupils have a clear understanding of different faiths; this is

addressed well but sometimes worksheets and the challenge in writing do not extend the more able pupils. Standards in art are above average and the pupils' achievement is good. Pupils develop artistic skills systematically and produce some good quality artwork. There are good links established between art and other subjects and this ensures that pupils have a wide range of experience and time to develop their artistic skills, knowledge and understanding in purposeful ways and to a good standard.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and their behaviour is **very good**. The school makes every effort to encourage pupils to attend school regularly; attendance is **good**. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very eager to learn, take a lively interest in all activities and work hard.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good because pupils know this is expected of them.
- Pupils have very good relationships with each other as well as with adults.
- Opportunities for social development are very good.
- The school has done much to raise the pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity in today's society.

### **Commentary**

7. The school works hard to create a purposeful atmosphere and the 'Learning Matters' project has resulted in pupils wanting to come to school and has helped to establish a positive view of learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This has helped to raise their self-esteem, both within and outside lessons. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They are well aware of how teachers expect them to behave and appreciate the praise they receive for such action. This is also true in the Nursery and Reception class. Children start school with underdeveloped personal skills; consistent approaches and good models of behaviour for them to copy ensure that they learn to socialise and get on with others quickly; their personal, social and emotional development is very good.
8. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils co-operate well in lessons, discussing their work and carrying out practical activities sensibly. For example, in an art lesson, where a variety of activities was taking place, pupils adept at modelling clay supported pupils who found rolling or moulding the clay difficult. In a science lesson, pupils organised their group work so that all members had a go at the 'fun' parts of the experiment, as well as taking turns recording what they had found out.
9. There are many opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take on responsibility. Playground buddies ensure that pupils are not isolated at playtimes, pupils answer the telephones at lunchtimes and juniors are proud to be members of the school council. This contributes to the very good social development of pupils, helping them to understand the part they can play in supporting others. Teaching also organises activities where pupils are expected to co-operate and support each other; the pupils rise well to the challenge and work very well with one another. There are many lunchtime and after-school clubs that also encourage pupils to socialise. Visits also extend the pupils' social interaction with the community.

10. The cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school. The 'Linking Schools' project has given pupils a close link with a local primary school which has a high multi-ethnic intake. This relationship has given pupils from both schools the opportunity to be involved in joint art, drama and musical activities which have greatly helped in raising pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of the local community and is helping to break down barriers. At the meeting prior to the inspection, parents felt that this was an important move on the school's part and welcomed the interest it had sparked in their children.
11. Attendance and punctuality have been improving over recent years. Unauthorised absence is now in line with national rates, although a few families still have problems with attendance and punctuality. In addition, some parents still take their children on holiday in term time despite the school's requests not to do so. There are good procedures to monitor attendance, including telephoning parents on their children's first day of absence. The Educational Welfare Service monitors attendance on a weekly basis. It supports the work of school effectively.

***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. There were eight fixed-period exclusions last year, relating to four pupils, who have now left the school. The decision to exclude the pupils was used appropriately as a last resort in accordance with clearly understood procedures. There have been no exclusions this year.

***Ethnic background of pupils***

***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	207	8	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is effective and supports pupils' learning well. The school provides a good range of experiences both in and outside normal lessons; these motivate the pupils and help to establish a positive climate for learning. There are purposeful links made between subjects and these capture the pupils' interest and make their learning meaningful. There is a good level of care for the pupils, and links with parents and the wider community are good. The school has established very useful and effective links with other schools.

**Teaching and learning**

Pupils learn **well**; they are interested, work hard and develop their ideas and increase their understanding effectively as a result of the well-focused and **good** teaching they receive. Pupils have a clear idea of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve because teachers’ assessments are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception class and throughout the school are good overall but at times some teachers do not set their sights high enough for the small number of more able pupils.
- The ‘Learning Matters’ project is raising the quality of teaching and helping pupils to learn effectively.
- Teaching in science in Years 5 and 6 could be better for the more able pupils.
- Resources such as learning support staff are used very effectively to help pupils learn.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	5 (15%)	16 (48%)	10 (30%)	1(3%)	0	0

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

- Teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection. There is now a permanent complement of teachers and this has provided greater stability for pupils’ learning in the last 18 months.
- There is consistently good teaching in the Nursery and Reception class. The provision in the Reception class now builds well on the work children do in the Nursery. This is because teachers in both classes plan together and ensure that the activities provide enough challenge to take learning forward. Staff working with children concentrate very well on developing the children’s talk and helping them to be independent. This is particularly important as many of the children enter the Nursery with very poor vocabulary and underdeveloped personal skills which would help them to mix and play with others more effectively. Planning is structured carefully so that every opportunity is taken to extend the children’s vocabulary. Teachers in both the Nursery and Reception class identify key words to be introduced and questions to ask the children to extend their thinking and encourage longer explanations. The positive interactions between adults and children provide a good model for the children to copy and are evident in the way that the children work together in a friendly manner and the respect they show for other’s feelings.
- Throughout the school, pupils often settle quickly to their work because teachers make it clear what they are to learn and why. This also captures the pupils’ interest and pupils say they find their lessons interesting and fun. Planning is often focused well on what the different groups are to learn. This builds in challenge for the more able pupils and ensures that the pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support. Learning support assistants make a consistently good contribution in lessons. They enable pupils to test out their ideas, they listen and question pupils to encourage discussion and give confidence to pupils to try things for themselves. Teaching makes very good use of this additional support to aid pupils’ learning; their input in lessons is carefully planned. The focus on the more able pupils is often well conceived in most lessons but occasionally not enough opportunities are available

for them to develop their ideas and extend their learning, particularly in Year 6. This occurs when teaching does not capitalise on these pupils' well-developed literacy skills, for example, to support note taking in geography or to record events in religious education. By comparison, in literacy and PSHE lessons in Year 6, taught by another member of staff, teaching really make best use of what the more able pupils have to offer. It shows in the quality of written accounts where the more able pupils choose lively and apt language to record, for example, historical events.

16. Whilst teaching and learning are good in English and mathematics, it should be better in science in Years 5 and 6. The greater independence that the more able pupils have in English and mathematics is not so evident in science. Pupils' learning of scientific facts is better than it was but the more able pupils do not have enough chances to put this knowledge and understanding into solving scientific problems. This is because teaching provides too much guidance and little opportunity for the more able pupils to select the resources they need to undertake investigations. As a result, these pupils could learn and achieve more and so help to raise standards in science further by Year 6.
17. The school has invested considerable training and support for the 'Learning Matters' project and the positive outcomes of this work are evident in the teaching and pupils' learning throughout the school. The project requires pupils to be actively involved in, and take responsibility for, their own learning. Pupils were asked:
- What does your teacher do that helps you to learn?
  - What does your teacher do that makes it hard for you to learn?
  - Can you think of a time when you learned something?

The pupils' responses were:

- Tell us what we are learning.
- Let us work together.
- Let us ask questions.
- Give us time to finish our work.
- Tell us what we need to do to improve.
- Don't say the same thing over and over.
- Don't interrupt us all of the time.

From this the staff worked together on whole-school consistency in planning, marking, developing a code of conduct to ensure a positive climate, identifying the key skills pupils were to learn and experience, involving pupils in evaluating their own work and building in structures and scaffolds to aid learning. In the short time this work has been fully operational, and with almost all the teaching force being new to the school, the outcomes are clearly proving successful. There is year-on-year improvement in the performance of boys and girls in the national tests. Boys and girls are motivated to learn with the boys showing more rapid progress. All pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further; pupils talk knowledgeably about what they felt held them back in their learning and all pupils in Year 6 attend a homework club at lunchtimes because they 'want to learn and do their best'. Pupils respond very well in lessons and this shows in the high level of good behaviour and the way that pupils work hard. Marking is almost always consistent but it is especially good in English with well-focused praise and clear guidance for pupils. Planning in almost all subjects focuses well on the different groups within the class and teachers' questioning is probing and effective in making pupils think more deeply or extend their explanations. It was evident in the lessons seen that teachers have taken careful notice of the pupils' views and this has helped to develop very good working relationships and a thirst within pupils for learning. This reflects in the pupils' achievements and the improvement in standards throughout the school.

## The curriculum

The school offers a **good** range of curricular opportunities and **good** opportunities for enrichment. The accommodation and resources are **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Since the last inspection, there has been very good improvement in the curriculum for ICT.
- Planning provides some good and purposeful links between subjects; lessons in PSHE widen pupils' knowledge of others.
- The range of activities and the use of visits out of and visitors into school enrich the curriculum.
- The activities in numeracy and literacy provide good coverage but there are some gaps in the provision for music and mapping skills in geography.

## Commentary

18. Throughout the school, planning makes purposeful links between subjects to make learning meaningful and to make the best use of the time for teaching. ICT is used effectively across the curriculum and lessons often involve the combining of ICT skills with learning and research in other subjects. History and geography are often linked to art and craft and the recording of data in science lessons often involves mathematics. Pupils' development in PSHE is successfully supported by good opportunities in lessons and assemblies for pupils to think about others and consider their own behaviour. The school nurse helps older pupils with understanding puberty and hygiene.
19. There is a good range of activities outside normal lessons, which includes a variety of sports such as lacrosse, hockey and football. The school makes good use of local sports facilities and older pupils use specialist rooms at the local secondary school. Visits out of school, for example to the Gallery in Oldham and a Jewish Museum, successfully support learning in art and religious education. A residential visit for Year 3 pupils helps pupils to develop independence; this is shared with pupils from another local school whose intake has a high number of pupils from ethnic minorities. This experience helps the pupils to mix with and learn from pupils from different backgrounds.
20. There has been a strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy and this has proved successful with pupils' achievements in these areas being good. This has been important given the very low level of attainment when children first start in the Nursery. Since the last inspection 18 months ago, there has been a greater focus on bringing excitement and enjoyment to the curriculum. Developments in the curriculum have been hampered by the changes to staffing and this has resulted in uneven progress in the way some subjects have moved forward. This has had the most negative impact on music and mapping skills in geography. The school has taken action to try and compensate for the deficiencies by making effective use of the links with the secondary school. The secondary school staff teach mapping skills and provide opportunities for pupils to work on keyboards as part of the music curriculum, which is plugging some of the gaps. By comparison, there has been very good improvement in the provision for ICT. There is well-equipped computer suite; the school provides two computers for individual pupils to work on specific support programmes and a number of laptops for classroom use. In addition, the ICT curriculum now meets statutory requirements with all elements taught.
21. The accommodation is light and spacious and resources are good. There are appropriate plans to develop the playground as a more useful environment for learning and play.



## Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare and safety is **good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is **good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Systems for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and cared for.
- There are effective procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- All adults know pupils very well and provide good levels of care.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work is good.

## Commentary

22. There are good arrangements for children when they start school. These include home visits and preliminary visits to the school, which successfully prepare both parents and children for the first steps in schooling. There is a strong bond of trust between pupils and all adults who work in the school. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt there was at least one adult to whom they could turn for advice. The learning mentor provides very good support for pupils. All adults know the pupils very well and monitor their personal development through class notes, the 'Points for Prizes' and the golden certificates schemes and annual reports. Parents felt strongly that their children are well supported and cared for. Targets are well focused for both academic and personal development. Academic monitoring is used well to inform pupils how they can improve and pupils in discussion were very well aware of how they were progressing and what they should do to improve.
23. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the learning support assistants. They ensure that pupils are fully involved in lessons by giving well-timed guidance and posing questions to help these pupils think more clearly and to check their understanding. The targets in pupils' individual educational plans are precise and easy to follow by teachers and assistants; they provide small steps of success that give these pupils confidence and ensure that they do not rely too much on the support of others.
24. There are good health and safety procedures. All staff are very aware of what they should do if they have any concerns. Links with social services, especially through the learning mentor, are good; this ensures that the school has up-to-date information about pupils' individual circumstances and needs, including those in public care. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are good. School security is good and pupils are supervised well at lunchtimes and playtimes; pupils say they feel safe and secure. There are regular checks to ensure that pupils are kept safe and all staff, including the caretaker, support this good practice.
25. Pupils' views are sought regularly through the school council, PSHE lessons and assemblies. Pupils in their questionnaire felt very confident that their views would be acted upon. For example, the school

recently organised a survey of pupils' views on learning and as a direct result, the school implemented the 'Learning Matters' programme to help pupils with learning skills.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

There are **good** links with parents and the community and **very good** links with other schools and colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Information and the opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning are good; the uptake for the adult learning programme is increasing.
- The 'Unity in the Community' project is establishing effective links between the school and the wider community.
- Regular links with pupils from other schools improve pupils' understanding of different cultures.

### **Commentary**

26. The school provides good documentation for parents through its prospectus, the governors' annual report and pupils' school reports. Parents are well informed about current events through regular class and school newsletters. Parents' views are appropriately sought from time to time by questionnaires arranged through the governing body and importantly their views are taken into account and acted upon. There is good provision for parents to become involved in the life and work of the school. For example, a number of parents attend family learning workshops held during the school day and 12 parents are enrolled on a 'helping in schools' course. This has been successful in encouraging some parents to go on to further training as learning support assistants. There is a parents' room and this is used as a base for parents to learn skills that will help them support their children's learning. In some families this is having a positive impact because parents are keener for their children to attend school. Also parents regularly help their children with reading and other work at home. The very active parent teachers association is very successful in fund raising and supports the school well.
27. There is immediate contact with parents if pupils have unexplained absences. This is backed up successfully by the learning mentor who makes home visits where there are concerns about attendance or other issues impacting on pupils' learning. These contacts have alerted parents to the importance of their children attending school and resulted in improved attendance rates and almost all pupils and parents developing more positive attitudes towards the school.
28. The school is actively involved in a 'Unity in the Community' project. This project encourages pupils to mix with pupils from other schools and from different ethnic backgrounds; this is proving successful in breaking down racial barriers. There are also close links with a local Methodist church. Activities such as these give positive support to pupils' personal and social development. Visits by the school nurse for talks to older pupils about puberty and hygiene and visits to a local hospital contribute to pupils' learning about PSHE. A project on looking at ways to improve the local environment involving the school council has made a useful contribution to pupils' environmental and social awareness and citizenship.
29. Links with other schools are very good. Oldham's 'Linking Schools Project' brings together pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Limeside pupils form close friendship links with pupils from different

ethnic backgrounds by working together on art, music and drama projects and by attending workshops and theatre performances together. There are very good links with a local secondary school. Secondary school staff do some teaching at Limeside and pupils from Limeside also attend lessons at the secondary school where they have the opportunity to use the sporting and computer facilities. By the time of transfer, all pupils are familiar with the new staff and surroundings. Instruction by secondary school staff in a range of subjects makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Positive links with pre-school children are facilitated by the school's involvement with the local 'Sure Start' programme.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**; governance is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a well-focused staff team because of the very good leadership of the headteacher.
- Most subject leaders do a good job but there is unevenness in the co-ordination of some subjects.
- Priorities are focused well on improvement; the action taken is proving successful.

### **Commentary**

30. The headteacher has in the last 18 months built a team of staff who share her drive for improvement. This has been after a difficult time for the school and a period of high staff turnover. Her determination, coupled with the very good support of the deputy headteacher, has kept the pace of improvement moving quickly. This reflects in: the improving tests results year on year; the now good achievement of the pupils; and their very good attitudes and behaviour. The governors are kept well informed. They are aware of the school's strengths and where improvement is needed. The governing body fulfils its duties conscientiously and gives good support to the headteacher. Governors are developing a more proactive role in testing out whether the school is doing as well as it possibly can, by questioning more regularly the decisions made about developments.
31. The focus on raising standards has been firmly placed at the door of improving teaching and learning and bringing enrichment to the curriculum. In a relatively short period of time, the 'Learning Matters' project is proving successful. It is giving pupils a voice and involvement in their learning, raising teachers' confidence and ensuring that teachers look for and make purposeful links between the different subjects of the curriculum. This has resulted in pupils being aware of what they are learning and why and gives real meaning to the activities they are offered. There is a climate for learning in the school, pupils say how much they want to learn, different groups are almost always well catered for and individuals feel valued. This is a school that knows how well it is doing and is fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Information from tests is thoroughly analysed and used to focus support and help where it is most needed.
32. Subject leaders are taking increasing responsibility for evaluating what is happening in their subjects, although there is some unevenness in the quality of this work. Developing the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders has been hampered by the high staff turnover and the school having a stable complement of teaching staff only since September. Nevertheless, the need to develop some work further is well known; work is already underway to remedy any weaknesses. Importantly, the school has recognised some deficiencies and has used, for example, the support of a local secondary school to provide experiences in music and design and technology for some of the older pupils.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	643107
Total expenditure	610952
Expenditure per pupil	2504

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	43395
Balance carried forward to the next	32155

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Twenty-eight children attend the Nursery full time. A teacher and one qualified nursery nurse teach these children. Twenty-six children are in the Reception class; they are taught by a teacher and a learning support assistant. The pattern of standards when children first start in the Nursery is very low compared with those expected for three year olds. Children's achievements are good overall. Early indications show that children will not reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception year in all the areas of learning inspected in depth. It is not possible to make a firm judgement on the provision for children's physical development because not enough work was seen in this area of learning. Teaching is good; teaching children how to get on with one another and to settle into the Nursery and the Reception class is very good. Teaching is better than it was at the time of the last inspection.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children achieve very well because of the very good focus on developing their personal skills; teaching and learning are very good.
- Very good relationships exist between staff and children in the Nursery and Reception class.
- Staff have high expectations of how the children should behave and set very good models for the children to copy.

#### **Commentary**

33. When children first start in the Nursery, their ability to follow instructions and learn routines is underdeveloped and standards are very low compared with children of the same age. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, standards have risen but are still below those expected for children of their age; children's achievement in this area of learning is very good. The staff work hard with the children, setting them small steps to achieve that enable the children to succeed and this builds their self-esteem; teaching is very good. The children learn the Nursery routines quickly and within six months of starting Nursery most children are able to sustain concentration, share equipment and take turns sensibly. Much of the teaching in personal, social and emotional development underpins the work in the other areas of learning. This ensures that expectations are reinforced through the range of different activities on offer and that learning in this area is set within meaningful contexts. For example, children in the Nursery were encouraged to wait patiently for their turn to handle and cut up fruit whilst making a fruit salad. Staff in both the Nursery and Reception class treat children consistently, setting clear expectations of behaviour and establishing the difference between right and wrong. These good role models are copied by the children and are a significant reason behind the very good relationships between adults and children. Children get on very well with each other; older children in the Reception class are able to negotiate their turn in activities and talk with and listen to what others have to say. Boys and girls get on well together although in the Nursery boys tend to gravitate towards boys, and girls towards girls; the staff are aware of this and choose mixed gender groups for more directed work.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff promote children's talk very well; teaching and learning are good.
- Children do well both in the Nursery and the Reception class.
- There are exciting and varied activities to promote children's reading, writing and talking.

### Commentary

34. Many children when they first start Nursery have a limited range of words with which to make their feelings and needs known. Standards are very low on entry but by the time children move into Year 1 standards have improved. They are still well below average but children's achievements are good. This is related to the balance and good range of activities on offer that are both teacher directed and those initiated by the children themselves. Adults in both the Nursery and Reception class engage children in talk. They ensure that their interactions support learning and give children the time to consider their responses and draw on previous learning. A good example of this was evident in the Reception class when children were working in the 'Garden Centre'. To give the less able children confidence the adult took on the role of customer, asking the children to undertake different tasks such as making up a flower arrangement, answering the phone to take a telephone order and planting seeds. As the activity progressed, the adult's input diminished and the children took over and played out their roles effectively. Repetition of key words ensured that children used apt language and all children involved sustained interest for up to 25 minutes. In the Nursery, staff are also skilful in making learning fun and capturing the children's interest in activities that draw on the children's natural curiosity. For example, more able children were asked to feel some objects in a bag and guess what they might be. Questions such as "What does it feel like?", encouraged children to use a range of words and when they made a guess at what the object might be then they were asked, "How do you know?" This ensured that as much talking took place as possible and children were expected to explain their reasoning. For this more able group learning was good because they formed sentences and extended their vocabulary successfully.
35. The children enjoy listening to stories. In both the Nursery and Reception class they join in with well-known rhymes making the first steps towards developing their memory skills to support their reading. In the Reception class, children are developing strategies to help them with their reading by using pictures to predict what might be happening in the story. The choice of text provides repetition of key words and children use their memory well to read with the teacher. More able children recognise the most common words they come across in reading and can use their knowledge of letters to spell out three-letter words. Most of the children in the Reception class can identify the title of a book, the writer and illustrator.
36. There are plenty of opportunities for children to develop their skills of writing across the areas of learning. In the role-play areas they are able to 'write' orders in the 'Florist Shop' in the Nursery and 'Garden Centre' in the Reception class. Children in the Nursery often recognise and make good attempts to write the first letters of their name; older children in the Reception class can write their names and some of the more able are beginning to write a short sequence of words that express meaning.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to develop mathematical understanding.
- Teaching is good, children respond well and their achievement is good.
- There are some good links made with mathematical development and the other areas of learning.

### Commentary

37. When children start in the Nursery their mathematical understanding is underdeveloped and very low compared with children of the same age. Standards are well below average by the time they are ready to move into Year 1. As with most of the activities on offer in the Nursery and the Reception class, in mathematical development activities are interesting and make learning fun. This shows in how the children work well together, supporting each other's learning and sustaining interest for extended periods. This ensures that children learn well and their achievements are good.
38. Children benefit from direct, good teaching and from activities that promote their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Staff provide jigsaws, computer programs, and matching games for numbers, objects and shapes, which children enjoy and complete enthusiastically either on their own, with a partner or in a small group. In a direct teaching activity in the Nursery, children's needs were met effectively. For the more able the challenge ensured that they had the opportunity to count, match objects with numbers and gain a good understanding of language such as 'more than' and 'less than'. From working with numbers up to five the challenge increased and the children worked accurately with numbers beyond five and up to 15. Throughout, the children's interest was evident and the questions posed ensured that they extended their answers, supporting their talking effectively. With the less able children, the steps in learning were smaller. This built in success and the children showed great pleasure in their achievements.
39. By the time children are in the Reception class, they understand terms such as 'add on', 'less than' and 'take away'. These terms are reinforced well for children of all abilities through well focused and purposeful activities, which often link well with the other areas of learning. The theme on 'Living things' was supported well in a good activity where children were given different sized boxes containing seeds. Children were asked, "Do you think you have a lot of seeds in your box?"; as the children answered they were asked to explain their reasoning. Some children thought because their box was bigger than another child's that they would have more seeds, some shook the boxes to try and tell. The interest when the boxes were emptied and comparisons made was tangible; children first guessed how many seeds there were and were delighted when their guesses were near. As the session progressed, the children's ability to estimate improved; they concentrated hard and consolidated their understanding.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children benefit from good teaching and a wide range of activities that extend their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Children are interested in learning about new things and this supports their learning well.

### **Commentary**

40. Most children do not have a wide range of experience beyond their own home and the immediate community. Their knowledge and understanding of the world are much lower than that expected for their age when they start Nursery. Children's achievement is good; their knowledge and understanding extend but are still well below those of most children of the same age by the end of the Reception Year.
41. Children enjoy the activities provided and their enthusiasm is a key component in how well they do in both the Nursery and the Reception class. Good teaching shows in the careful planning that identifies clearly what the children are expected to learn and the key vocabulary that should be introduced and reinforced. This enables any adults working with the children to be fully aware of what is expected of the children and how they should structure their input to support the children's learning. It is evident that adults take careful notice of the planning because it reflects very well in their interactions with children and the way they manage activities. The children's natural curiosity shows in the way they handle objects and try to determine how they work. The theme on 'Living things' reflects well in the work undertaken in the Nursery and Reception class. The 'Florist Shop' and the 'Garden Centre' give children the chance to learn the names of different plants, to learn what makes plants grow and to observe the changes in the plants as they grow. Some of this work links well to other areas of learning as children 'write' orders, count seeds and use their imaginations to act out the parts of a florist and gardener. Children in both the Nursery and Reception class use computers confidently; they know how to open programs, manipulate the mouse and how to click and drag objects on the screen. Children take turns and work well together when using computers and their use is well integrated into the children's learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is not possible to make a secure judgement on the provision for physical development as only a short session was observed in both the Nursery and the Reception class. There are plenty of opportunities for children to handle equipment, build models and use the hall and outdoor area to develop their larger body movements such as running, jumping, climbing and cycling. Most activities have an element within them where children need to pick up small objects, handle tools and manipulate objects.



## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lively and interesting activities capture children's interest.
- Teaching supports learning well and children have some good opportunities to use their imaginations to develop their ideas further.
- Creative development supports learning in other areas successfully.

### **Commentary**

42. Children's creative development is very low on entry; they achieve well and by the time children are ready to move into Year 1 standards are well below those expected for children of that age.

43. The children sustain interest for long periods, becoming engrossed in the activities and using their imaginations to develop their ideas. Children in the Nursery are happy to talk with adults and engage them in their activities. For example, children working in the water imagined they were the 'Three Bears' and that they were making porridge for breakfast. They worked well together for up to 30 minutes, recalling key points from the story and using language suitable to the situation. Children in both the Nursery and Reception class have experience of a wide range of activities that allows them to express themselves, and to create and develop their ideas. Purposeful links between the different areas of learning make learning meaningful and reflect the good quality teaching. Children learning about living things act out roles in the 'Florist Shop' or the 'Garden Centre' with good support from adults. The children use their imaginations well and engage in meaningful talk. The children observe plants growing and different types of flowers, and they experiment with colour and texture to make their own representations of plants. There are chances for children to sing and make music. Planning for this area of learning is well conceived and enables children to experience activities that inspire and challenge them.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good; they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils learn well in lessons because of the effective teaching.
- Almost all teachers make effective links with other subjects to develop the pupils' literacy skills further.

### **Commentary**

44. Pupils from Year 1 to 6 achieve well from the well below average standards at the end of the Reception Year. Standards are below average by Year 2 and Year 6; reading is stronger than speaking and writing. In the junior year groups, many pupils have had to catch up on their learning following their low achievement levels when they were younger. Teaching is effective in meeting the needs of the different groups and this speeds pupils' learning and contributes effectively to pupils' achievement. Boys in particular are doing well. They are motivated to learn and find the topics they are expected to read and write about interesting and relevant.
45. Recent developments within the school and the strong focus there has been on improving the quality of teaching in literacy has resulted in good improvement since the time of the last inspection. This shows in the continuing rise in standards and how well the school does in comparison with other schools in similar circumstances. The 'Learning Matters' project has had a positive impact on the way that pupils are encouraged to learn. Pupils' views are listened to and used effectively to guide teaching and make adjustments to the curriculum. It has resulted in a consistent approach to teaching English and assessing pupils' work. The co-ordination of English is good; the subject leader has a clear idea of where the strengths and areas for improvement lie, for example correctly identifying that the use of literacy across the curriculum is not yet consistent. Along with senior managers, she analyses pupils' performance and this is used well to focus extra support where it is most needed. She also ensures that good practice is shared; for example, some of the aids for learning are used in all classes to help pupils plan their writing more effectively.
46. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide well-focused and useful comments to help pupils understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve further. This has a significant impact on pupils' writing, especially in the junior classes where it is evident that pupils act on the guidance and strive hard to do better. This is evident in the way the pupils by Year 6 use paragraphs more consistently in their writing, spell more accurately and choose lively words to capture the interest of the reader. Throughout the school, planning is well conceived and ensures that the different groups are challenged to do their best. By Year 2, this shows in the way more able pupils write for different purposes and choose language best matched to suit the situation. Most work is presented neatly and ICT is used well to help pupils promote their literacy skills further and present their writing in different ways. Journalistic writing benefits from being presented as a newspaper report, giving pupils a pride in their work and giving more purpose to their learning in both literacy and ICT. The range of writing is broad and pupils are developing a good understanding of when to use different types of writing for different situations, such as presenting a balanced argument, recording an historical event or writing requesting some information.
47. Reading skills are supported well through work in ICT. By Year 6, pupils know how to download information from the Internet and sift the information for the key points. Throughout the school, standards are close to average in reading. Pupils of all ages and abilities have strategies they use consistently to help them understand the text and read unfamiliar words. This is because skills in reading are taught systematically; guided reading is usually helpful in guiding pupils in their reading although for some of the younger pupils in the infant classes reading independently at these times is challenging.
48. Pupils listen well; they take notice of what others have to say and usually their responses show they have understood the content of the discussion. The pupils' speaking skills are not as well developed as their listening skills; this reflects the very low standards that many of the pupils start school with. Teachers and other adults are well aware of the pupils' difficulties in speech and provide time for pupils

to think and formulate their answers. Even so pupils need encouragement to expand on their responses. Skilful questioning ensures that pupils do just that and high expectations also ensure that pupils know they cannot be passengers and that their responses are expected and valued.

49. Time is used well in lessons and usually the balance between direct teaching and individual work is well judged. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support; teachers use learning support assistants very well by involving them fully in the pupils' learning.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

50. In almost all year groups there are effective links made between language and literacy and other subjects. This is evident in the writing of prayers and accounts of visits to a Jewish museum in religious education. Recounting historical events using journalistic writing, such as the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb, and in narrative form about life in Victorian Britain, are some good examples of pupils using their writing skills effectively. In subjects such as PSHE, pupils have some very good chances to express their views and discuss areas of interest to them. Across subjects, teaching builds in opportunities for pupils to contribute. Reading features strongly as pupils surf the Internet for information and use non-fiction books to gather information. In Year 6, there is not so much evidence of this approach, other than when the deputy headteacher takes the class, and especially for the more able pupils. In subjects such as geography and religious education there is too much that is copied and in science in both Years 5 and 6 there are too few opportunities for the more able pupils to write about their scientific findings from their own perspective.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good overall although occasionally the more able pupils could do better.
- Teaching is good but some teachers are not always consistent in their marking and expectations of pupils' presentation.
- Support for less able pupils and those with special educational needs is good.
- There are good arrangements to track how well pupils are doing.
- The pupils have a good range of mathematical opportunities.

### **Commentary**

51. By Year 2, standards are average; by Year 6 standards are below average. Many pupils in the older year groups have had a legacy of poorer teaching when they were younger and have had quite some catching up to do. The strong focus on improving numeracy has proved successful, as the school has seen continued improvement in the test results for both seven and 11 year olds over the past three years. Pupils' achievement is good based on their starting point. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are well supported and the work is well matched to their needs. The achievement of the more able pupils is sometimes impeded by their completing additional calculations when they have already mastered the task. This is not in all classes but over time means these pupils are not making such rapid gains as their classmates.

52. Pupils enjoy learning; they find their work interesting and work hard. This is due to the good teaching they receive. Most lessons are planned carefully, setting out clearly what the pupils are to learn and teachers share this information with the pupils so that they know what they are doing. Teachers set out to make the work stimulating and interesting and in most instances this is the case. Occasionally, some of the work the more able pupils meet has too many repetitive calculations and this leads to these pupils marking time and not always working to their full capacity.
53. Most lessons move along at a brisk pace and at these times pupils at all levels are continually challenged to move on to the next step. Teachers and pupils celebrate success with enthusiasm and this helps pupils to work as hard as they can. Teachers provide a range of activities that include problem solving, practical work and investigations as well as a suitable balance of basic number work, which ensures that the pupils' learning is varied. In Years 1 and 2, photocopied sheets are used appropriately to consolidate other work and to assess how well pupils are doing. Learning support assistants play a full and active role in the pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of their skills to support the less able and pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are involved in their learning; teachers use well-focused questioning to draw in the different groups and to check how well the pupils understand the work. Older pupils receive homework that reflects what they are learning in class. There are some opportunities for homework to be done in school and very good opportunities for older pupils to receive extra help during the lunch hour.
54. More could be done in some year groups to encourage pupils to present their work more carefully. Whilst most work is marked and corrections are expected, teachers make limited use of constructive comments to tell the pupils how well they are doing or to challenge them to do better.
55. There are good assessment procedures in place and good target setting and tracking of pupils' progress towards these targets. However, the process for evaluating teaching and learning is not picking up on inconsistencies in provision; this is recognised by the school and is part of the programme for improving the work of subject leaders.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. Mathematics is well used across the curriculum, particularly with older pupils. In science in Years 5 and 6, the timing of absorbency rates, the measuring of angles of reflection, recording pulse rates and the recording of plant growth in graph form are good examples. Mathematics is also used well to produce time lines in history lessons and graphs for comparing rainfall in different locations in geography. Activities in the computer suite often combine mathematics and ICT well. Higher and lower attaining pupils in Year 6 use appropriate individual computer programs on a rota basis to support their learning in mathematics.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors.
- More able pupils need to be given greater challenge in science in Years 5 and 6.
- Leadership of the subject is good.

## Commentary

57. Pupils build well on the early scientific experiences in the Reception class and their achievement is good even though standards are below average by Year 2. The pupils receive good quality teaching; lessons capture the pupils' interest because they know what they are going to learn and why. Lessons are prepared carefully, so that resources are close to hand, support pupils' learning and help to develop their understanding further. For example, the pupils understand the conditions plants need in order to grow; this is because they have looked at pictures, had stories read to them and have carried out investigations and observed what was happening. Teachers challenge the more able pupils to do their best and well-focused support for pupils with special educational needs means they do well. This support helps the pupils to learn by encouraging the pupils to only ask for help once they have tried things for themselves. The mixture of whole-class, group and individual teaching allows the different groups to work at a pace suitable to their needs. Teachers have a clear understanding of how to teach science.
58. By Year 6, standards are still below average; pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although the work in Years 1 and 2 is built on and extended well in Years 3 and 4, older pupils get only a satisfactory range of scientific experiences. All classes carry out practical investigative work but pupils in Years 5 and 6 get little opportunity to plan and carry out their own investigations. There are also limited opportunities for them to choose the method to record their findings or to write up their experiments using their own ideas and skills acquired in literacy. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates because they are well supported by well-briefed classroom assistants. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. This is because of the inconsistency in the way the more able pupils are challenged to do their best. For example, better aspects of teaching in Year 4 reflect in the quality of the planning and how this is shared with pupils. Lively introductions, the consistent use of scientific terms and stating clearly what the pupils were going to learn, prepared pupils well for the task. In addition, the work was planned so that there was support available for those who needed it most and the more able pupils worked hard and to their capacity. By comparison, in Year 6, explanations confused the pupils; they were insecure about the purpose of the investigation or how to carry it out. For the more able, expectations of how they were to record their findings were too low and did not make best use of their literacy and numeracy skills.
59. Work in science supports the development of pupils' personal skills well because they learn to work effectively in groups or with a partner. Most teachers' subject knowledge is secure; throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on developing scientific vocabulary. Most teachers relate well and set high expectations of good behaviour. Teachers make use of the pupils' numeracy skills to measure and record results. ICT is also well used for data-handling, research and recording. However, there is scope for the greater use of pupils' literacy skills, especially with the oldest pupils.
60. Leadership and management of the science are good. The role of the subject co-ordinator is well developed and the improvements she has driven are evident in Years 1 to 4. Pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are better than they were, and to combat some of the weaknesses evident in the older classes she spends time undertaking extra work with Year 6 pupils. This is so that they fully understand the process of scientific investigation. In these sessions, pupils are given opportunities to use ICT to record, analyse data and draw conclusions, all of which is helping to raise their attainment in science. The subject leader recognises the need for further staff development in Years 5 and 6.



## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils have good skills in word processing and in using computers but there are still some gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- There has been very good improvement in the 18 months since the last inspection.
- ICT is well integrated into other subjects but pupils need to have more freedom to make their own choices about when to use ICT to support their learning.

### Commentary

61. At the time of the last inspection, provision was unsatisfactory; since then improvement has been very good. Standards are below average by Year 6; pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall with some good achievement in the skills of using computers. By Year 2, standards are average; pupils build soundly on the good provision in ICT in the Foundation Stage.
62. In a comparatively short time the school has improved the quality of teaching – it is now satisfactory – and access to computers. Improvements in teaching reflect in the systematic way that skills are now being taught and the pupils' ability by Year 2 to explain how they would open programs, adapt and refine their work, save files and print their work. Throughout the school, pupils have a clear understanding of how technology can support their work and by Year 6 they are aware of how technology supports the world of work. Older pupils are adept at explaining how they use the Internet to find information and how they have used *PowerPoint* to present this information as a slide show. They have some understanding of using emails but have only had one chance to send and receive messages. Pupils are strong on finding things out and have had some good opportunities to develop their ideas using the computer to organise and reorganise their writing. However, they have had little experience of testing or monitoring events, for example using sensors to check temperature and record the findings. The subject leader provides good support to colleagues and the confidence of teachers has grown; co-ordination of the subject is good and has contributed well to the improvements made in the last 18 months.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

ICT is used well in most subjects to support pupils' learning. It is used particularly well to record events in history, present work in literacy and reinforce understanding in mathematics. It is well integrated in most subjects so that pupils have the chance to design work in art and record instructions in design and technology as well as download information for scientific research. At present, teachers tend to make decisions about when pupils will use ICT to support their work; pupils do not have enough opportunities to decide when ICT could help them, for example, to record and display scientific results or if it would be the best medium for sharing information with others.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography and History**

Only one history and two geography lessons were seen during the inspection. There was therefore insufficient evidence to make sound judgements about standards and pupils' achievement. However, the following observations were made from the lessons seen, from discussions with pupils and from evaluating pupils' work in books and on display.

There is suitable coverage of geography and history in most classes but the development of some skills is inconsistent. This reflects the school's recent concentration on raising standards in English, mathematics and science. In addition, the school has had a large turnover of staff and co-ordination of both subjects suffered as a result. The school is aware of the deficiencies in both subjects. There are clear plans in hand, and development of both subjects is underway. The teaching of skills in geography is hampered by the lack of globes, printed maps and other geographical materials to support pupils' learning.

Better work was seen in both geography and history in Years 3, 4 and 5 than in other year groups. In Years 3, 4 and 5 geography and history is often appropriately linked to other subjects such as art and literacy. Work on Egypt in Year 4 shows good links between geography and history and is supported by colourful and interesting artwork. A good link between geography and ICT was seen in a study of rivers in Year 5. In these classes there is often variety in the outcomes of pupils' written work and teachers make an effort to use a constructive comment to explain to pupils how well they have done and how they could improve. This is not the case in other year groups and more could be done to develop consistency in teachers' marking. There are some useful displays of work in Year 6 which is appropriately linked to the development of thinking skills and to literacy. However, some work by the more able pupils lacks challenge, with them completing the same writing activities when they are capable of more. Sometimes the balance between subjects leaves too little time for pupils to develop geographical or historical skills. For example, in Year 3, pupils spent too much time assembling a mosaic rather than concentrating on the historical work.

There is a very good display of photographs and ideas drawn together by the school council following their visit to the local area but at present, limited use is made of the school grounds, the local area and educational visits as resources to develop and enhance the humanities curriculum further.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of different faiths.
- School assemblies, visits and visitors and the 'Linking Schools Project' contribute well to pupils' religious education.
- Displays are used effectively to celebrate pupils' learning and to share information.
- The writing of the more able pupils in Year 6 does not reflect the quality seen in their English books.



## Commentary

63. Most pupils achieve well because they listen and respond well in lessons and assemblies. By Year 6, pupils show a good understanding of Christianity and other faiths. There is good coverage of the religious education syllabus throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they share this knowledge well both in lessons and in assemblies. When questioning pupils, they take care to ensure that all pupils are involved by altering the focus of the questions or by looking for responses from certain groups. Less able pupils, and pupils with special educational needs, are well supported not only in discussion but also in their written work. Learning support assistants guide them carefully but ensure that the pupils do not rely too much on additional help by encouraging them to read or to have a go first. Teaching in Year 6 does not always capitalise on the writing skills of the more able pupils by allowing them to record their work independently. This is at variance with what is seen in some other year groups where pupils write their accounts of visits or their own version of well-known stories from the Bible or other faiths. Standards are below those expected.
64. The 'Linking Schools Project' provides very good opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of different faiths by sharing activities such as art, music and drama with pupils of the Muslim faith as well as visiting a mosque. There are close links with a local Methodist church. Visits by a local minister and the Salvation Army contribute to pupils' learning about Christianity. Other visits include a visit to a Jewish museum by older pupils. Assemblies contribute well to pupils' learning by addressing issues such as Christian festivals and linking these to celebrations in other countries and by different faiths.
65. Pupils' work in religious education is celebrated and shared with other pupils in the attractive displays around the school. Displays of Islamic tiles resulting from the 'Linking Schools Project' and pupils' accounts of a visit to a Jewish museum are good examples. School productions with an Easter theme and a performance of the musical *Joseph* have contributed positively to pupils' understanding of Christianity and stories from the Old Testament. The school celebrates festivals from other faiths as well as the main Christian festivals.
66. There are good cross-curricular links that help support pupils' learning. Good examples in Year 5 are creation stories linking religious education and literacy, and the making of Seder plates linking religious education and art. The writing and display of prayers in Years 1 and 2 also effectively link religious education and literacy.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in **physical education** and **design and technology** and only two were seen in **music**. Discussions were held with pupils from all classes about the above subjects and pupils' work evaluated, where it was available. It is not possible to judge the overall quality of provision from the limited evidence available.

In **music**, pupils were observed singing in assembly and two lessons were observed. In collective worship, they sing to a recording with great enthusiasm. Their singing is tuneful with clear diction. In the two lessons seen, teachers used a published scheme for support. Younger pupils are developing ideas about dynamics and note duration and make informed choices about instruments and the tone they **produce**. Year 3 pupils worked hard to keep a two-beat rhythm and although the teacher introduced variations to the pattern, several pupils found this hard. The headteacher is the co-ordinator and is aware that older pupils still have

gaps in their knowledge and competence in music and has plans in place to address the shortfall. Music contributes well to the 'Linking Schools Project' as both schools involved use the same published scheme, allowing joint musical experiences where all pupils know the same songs and teachers have used the same approaches to the subject. Older pupils have good musical links with the local secondary school which they attend for keyboard skills, singing and music workshops. These provisions contribute to the development of musical skills, performance and appreciation.

In **design and technology**, there was limited work on display and no lessons were seen. However, planning does indicate that the subject is covered sufficiently well. The subject contributes to religious education through the making of Seder plates, to science through designing and making a torch, and to literacy where pupils write clear, detailed instructions about how to make a model flowering plant. In all examples, the design process was used and pupils evaluated their work and offered ideas for possible modifications.

In **physical education**, the school is favoured by having two halls which are not used for dining so pupils get opportunities for a wide range of activities. Although no lessons were fully observed during the inspection, it is obvious from talking to pupils and displays around the school that pupils enjoy physical activity. The school makes every opportunity to give pupils as many different experiences as possible. This is within lessons and through activities after school which include basketball, netball, judo, football coaching and lacrosse. Older pupils go swimming weekly and younger pupils have a short residential experience where they learn to live and work together, which contributes well to their social development. The subject is well linked to other curriculum areas, for example, to music when following a rhythm during dance, to science when monitoring pulse rates and the effects of exercise on the body and to PHSE where pupils took part in a charity skipping event which raised their awareness of health education.

## **Art and design**

The provision for art and design is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' standards are above average and they achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Art and design is developed well through other subjects.
- Pupils are given a wide range of artistic opportunities.

### **Commentary**

67. It is evident from the high quality displays around the school, from scrutiny of pupils' work and the two lessons seen that work planned in art and design is relevant to the age and interests of the pupils. Pupils really enjoy their art work; they work hard and are rightly pleased with their success. Standards throughout the school are above national expectations due to skilful and knowledgeable teaching, a wide range of resources offered to the pupils and the high expectations that teachers have of what the pupils can achieve. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to experience different media and art forms from other cultures and countries. For example, pupils in Year 2 are working on a range of activities which will contribute to a display based on Monet's 'Water Lilies'. They use dyes and fabric paints to make a drape and they create three-dimensional water lilies using clay. Enthusiastic, skilful teaching motivates the pupils; they work as hard as they can and make good progress in the

development of their art skills. Older pupils plan a map for an Aboriginal native to follow in order to hunt prey. This is created using Aboriginal-style art techniques and symbols, developing pupils' awareness of artistic interpretations from different cultures. Year 6 pupils visit a local gallery and then use the visit as a starting point for ICT work, in the style of a Bangladeshi artist, contributing well to their cultural development and raising awareness of global art.

68. Teachers have good understanding of how to teach art and design. This shows in the systematic teaching of basic skills and techniques and in encouraging pupils to observe carefully. They ensure that pupils know how to use tools for moulding and the importance of drafting their work before a final copy is made. Teachers insist on high quality work and are very encouraging so that pupils do their best. Pupils learn how to improve their skills by appraising their own work and the work of others in a positive, constructive way. Art and design is used well to enrich other areas of the curriculum. Older pupils link with the local secondary school in design and technology projects and a visit to the local church is a starting point for observational studies of church furniture. ICT is used well to create symmetrical pattern work as well to replicate the work of professional artists.
69. Subject leadership is good. The school promotes the subject skilfully and uses bright displays to celebrate pupils' achievements and enhance the learning environment. The 'Linking Schools Project' has given pupils rich opportunities to join with another school to create paired art work. Year 5 pupils created 'Adventurous wild flowers' following a gallery visit whilst younger pupils had created ceramic tiles bearing Islamic symbols. This contributes to pupils' developing awareness of the cultural diversity within their community.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- PSHE lessons support pupils' learning very well.
- Teaching provides some very good opportunities for pupils to express their views.
- Some challenging work is tackled very well and gives the pupils the confidence to interact and work with others effectively.

### **Commentary**

70. Teachers use PSHE lessons to develop pupils' personal skills very well. They are sensitive to the pupils' needs and plan very carefully to ensure that all pupils are comfortable and able to take part. This planning is explicit about what the pupils are to learn and this is shared clearly with the pupils, giving clear purpose to the activities. Pupils like to know what is expected of them and this helps to build very effective working relationships. Teachers set very good examples for the pupils to copy in the way that they speak with the pupils and the value they place on their input. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and treat others with respect and courtesy. Praise is well directed and encourages pupils to try their best. Well-constructed questioning encourages pupils to think carefully, consider their answers and express themselves with developing clarity.
71. Expert teaching in Year 6 pulls together the threads of work covered in literacy, helps pupils to empathise with others and provides some excellent opportunities for pupils to express themselves. In

the Year 6 lesson, the teacher tackled some difficult issues based on the argument ‘Are zoos a good idea?’ The work covered in literacy where pupils had been working on balanced arguments had given the pupils a good understanding of the views of people for and against zoos. The pupils used this information very well to back up their opinions and to get their points across. Pupils were confident to raise questions and challenge the views of others, respectfully. At the end of the session, pupils expressed clearly how the lesson had impacted on their feelings and identified the things they felt good about, such as, “I worked well with my friends”, “I asked questions clearly” and “We worked well as a group and got there in the end”. Lessons in PSHE have a significant impact on how well pupils take part in lessons, and on their behaviour and willingness to take responsibility, and help to give them the confidence to have a go and to persevere with their learning.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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