

INSPECTION REPORT

LUDWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Marple Bridge

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106057

Headteacher: Mr T Lee

Lead inspector: Mrs Heather C Evans

Dates of inspection: 8 - 11 March 2004

Inspection number: 256797

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:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	316
School address:	Lower Fold Marple Bridge Stockport Cheshire
Postcode:	SK6 5DU
Telephone number:	0161 4271446
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Appropriate authority:	Stockport
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Harrison
Date of previous inspection:	28.09.1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school in Marple Bridge, near to the town of Stockport. There are 316 pupils on roll and of these 45 have been identified as having special educational needs. There are six pupils who have statements of special educational need; this is similar to the national average. Pupils attending the school are drawn from a wide area, several coming from neighbouring counties. Whilst some pupils live close to the school in privately owned houses, each year an increasing number travel considerable distances from housing estates further away. There has been considerable mobility of the pupils attending the school since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils claiming their entitlement to free school meals is below the national average although there are indications that some families who would qualify prefer to bring packed lunches. Pupils' attainment on entry is assessed soon after starting school and it varies considerably with the prior experiences of children in each group. For the past two years the profiles of children joining the Reception classes show that attainment on entry was about average. Whilst a few children are from mixed race backgrounds all of them speak English very confidently and most of them speak English as their home language. The school is very involved in the 'Partnership Enterprise' where schools work closely with the local universities and colleges to support students in training. The school gained the 'Football Association Chart Mark' in 2001 and the 'Investors in People' award in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21374	Heather Evans	Lead inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education English as an additional language
24859	Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector	
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Religious education Foundation stage
30559	Jennifer Taylor	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an excellent school with many outstanding features where pupils achieve very well. Standards achieved are well above the expected level and pupils make very good progress. Overall the quality of teaching is very good. As a result, pupils learn very well in all subjects. The school provides a very rich range of opportunities for learning across the curriculum and there is excellent extra-curricular provision. It is firmly established at the heart of the local community. The school is superbly led and managed by a very strong headteacher with a dedicated team of people who are all totally committed to seeking ways of working towards excellence. Finances are very well managed and the school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership, management and governance of the school are outstanding.
- The procedures for assessment and the use made of collected evidence are excellent
- The overall quality of teaching is very good and as a result learning is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs or special gifts and talents is very good.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning and work and their relationships with one another are very good. Their views are sought regularly and their ideas are acted upon.
- The curriculum is very good and opportunities for extra-curriculum activities are excellent.
- Standards of achievement across the curriculum are always above and in many subjects are well above the expected levels.
- Links with other schools and the community are excellent.
- The facilities in the old 'temporary' classrooms are in urgent need of renovation.

At the time of the previous inspection in 1998 no key issues were identified, although some areas required additional work. With the exception of the dilapidated temporary classrooms, everything and more has been fully addressed with great success. The school has been very successful in maintaining its high levels of success. The cost of the capital work required to replace these classrooms is outside the possibilities of the school's allocated budget.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

The achievement of children and pupils across the school is very good. Most children attain and many exceed all of the expected learning goals by the end of their time in the Reception classes. Children in these classes make very good progress and achieve very well. Pupils' achievement is also very good in Years 1 to 6. The standards attained in statutory tests at the end of Year 2 in all subjects tested are well above average when compared with schools nationally. By the end of Year 6 for the past four years standards have been maintained at a level that exceeds national expectations in English, mathematics and science. There has been some variation between groups each year depending on the changing number of pupils experiencing difficulties in learning. Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, music and religious education are particularly good. Across the school levels of attainment exceed national expectations in all other subjects.

Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils like school and respect the established values. They arrive early, some coming to the before school care facility, and they are all eager to learn. Pupils are rarely late and most have very positive attitudes to school. Pupils' respect for what the school is offering them is obvious, especially in the way they tell of learning experiences, residential visits and competitions with other schools. Pupils' understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life is enriched by the wealth of opportunities provided. They celebrate with artists working in school, share in many sporting events and enjoy singing, making music and preparing for special productions for parents and the community. These strong elements play an essential part in achieving the harmonious and very well-balanced atmosphere that permeates this school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education including teaching, learning and curriculum provision is very good overall. The care and guidance of children is excellent . In one third of lessons the quality of teaching is excellent. This is because the teachers have a very secure understanding of the National Curriculum. Teachers know in detail about pupils' prior experiences, achievements and knowledge. As a result lessons are very well planned. They are packed with many stimulating opportunities and make effective links between different subjects. As a result pupils learn readily and achieve remarkably well. Most achieve the individual and carefully linked group targets set for them. They recognise what they know and readily demonstrate what they can do. The curriculum is organised around agreed topics and is carefully structured to cover all of the required subjects. The care and guidance provided by the staff are excellent. Parents value the work of the school and many are actively involved in their children's learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all excellent. The very experienced headteacher leads the school by example and demonstrates a clear, energetic and positive vision for the school's future. His continued dedication and inspiration provide excellent and strong direction for the teaching and support staff as well as for the very knowledgeable and hardworking governing body. With the management team they work together to ensure the continuing good of the school. Governors meet all legal requirements and manage and support their areas of responsibility superbly. They actively pursue the priorities set out in the detailed and structured school development plan. The work of the subject co-ordinators with one another and the linked governors is excellent. They are immensely effective when monitoring the planning for, and the outcomes of, work by their colleagues. The school uses the many talents of the support staff very well. Everyone shares fully in the process of working to maintain the well above average standards across the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

In conversations, at the meeting with parents and in the replies in questionnaires the overwhelming majority of parents expressed a high level of satisfaction about the school. A few parents expressed concerns about the school's response to the unacceptable behaviour of one or two pupils. The record of how these incidents have been managed by the school makes the inspection team confident that this small but important problem is being dealt with effectively. All of the pupils have a very positive understanding of the good things that the school offers them. They know that their views are listened to and are also aware that expensive improvements have to be dealt with in order. In discussions, pupils considered that whilst they still want new water fountains the waiting does not prevent them valuing the opportunities for learning in a school that they hold very dear.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

This is an excellent school with no significant educational weaknesses. An area for improvement that the governors and headteacher should pursue is:

- to liaise with every possible agency to seek ways of improving the facilities for the classes in the temporary classrooms as a matter of urgency.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' attainments and achievements across the curriculum are very good by the end of the Reception classes and are also very good from Year 1 to Year 6. The results in statutory tests for the past four years have been well above the national averages at the end of Year 2 and have been above or well above the national averages by the end of Year 6. The results have been maintained at the well above average level across the school for the last few years. This means that whilst high standards are being sustained the trend of improvement is not moving upwards at a rapid rate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Attainment levels for all pupils in information and communication technology exceed national expectations.
- Attainments in art and design and religious education are well above national expectations and attainments in music are excellent by the end of Year 6.
- In all other subjects, pupils in all classes achieve very well and attain at levels above those expected nationally.

Commentary

1. Although there is some variation in every group, when assessed, soon after entry to the Reception classes, attainment levels overall are close to average when compared with other children of the same age in the borough. The improvements in the provision for the Reception classes since the last inspection are proving to be very successful. Most of the children in the present classes are well placed to achieve or even exceed all of the expected learning goals before they move into work planned for the National Curriculum in Year 1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.3 (18.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.5 (17.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.1 (18.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (29.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.4 (28.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.2 (30.8)	28.5 (28.3)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The school has kept meticulous records and all of the pupils who have been at the school throughout their primary education have achieved very well. The provision of a new school in the area has caused a considerable number of pupils to move to the school nearer to their home. Pupils who did not attend the school before Year 3 have replaced these pupils and for

many of these pupils standardised test results are unavailable. The comparative results do not reflect the value added by the school as shown by the excellent data maintained by the school. The year group that was most affected by the changes was the class in Year 6 in 2003.

3. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are on course to greatly exceed the expected standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. In classes across the school, some of which cater for children in mixed ages, pupils are making very good progress and most are working above and many well above the expected levels. Pupils make especially good progress in reading and writing and all of the initiatives to increase the opportunities for extended writing are working well. In lessons, the challenge for pupils of all attainment levels is great. Those capable of working at a higher level are supported very well and are encouraged to succeed. Pupils with learning difficulties usually achieve their individual targets because of the carefully modified work and the dedication of the skilled teaching team and the very well-organised and trained support staff. In all other subjects, standards in all classes are above the expected levels. In information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, music and religious education, by the end of Year 6, standards are at a very high level. Overall, pupils do better than might be expected. This is as a result of the interesting work provided for them, the high level of challenge and the very high expectations of the teachers. The high quality teaching and the hard work put in by pupils with the support of their families make very positive contributions to their success.
4. In other subjects, pupils' skills and achievements in reading, writing and in mathematics and their skilled use of ICT help to lift levels to above those expected nationally. A strength of the school is the way in which pupils of all backgrounds and attainment levels are very well supported in lessons. Pupils are helped to learn particularly well by being constantly encouraged to extend their learning by pursuing their own interests through independent research and personal study. Pupils are prepared very well for each new step and the concept of learning for life is part of all of the planned work. In religious education, the school follows the recommendations of the local agreed syllabus and pupils' work extends to a level that is well beyond the requirements.
5. Pupils listen well to teachers and to one another. They speak, read and write at levels that are above and often well above the national average. In mathematics, too, standards are well above expectations. Pupils explain what they know and demonstrate what they can do very well and they use their knowledge and understanding of number without hesitation. They manipulate numbers using multiplication and division easily, confident that their understanding of the rules of mathematics will help them to find the easiest way of solving a problem. One pupil in Year 4, who had previously struggled with the link between multiplication and division, was seen to grasp the concept completely in one lesson and all of his friends celebrated his success spontaneously. Pupils endeavour to reach an acceptable solution as quickly as they can, always trying to beat their own personal best. The sharing of personal and group targets through ongoing assessment by teachers and pupils together enables pupils to plot their own way to success through personal endeavour.
6. Standards in science are also well above the national average because the work to help them to be scientists and learn through investigation is very well organised. Pupils' skills and confidence in planning, conducting and recording the findings of investigations were seen to good effect in all classes. Pupils show very good scientific knowledge by the end of Year 6. Across the school the completed individual and independent work in books, as well as that that displayed in classrooms, shows good levels of presentation and achievement in all aspects of science. The talented use of ICT lifts the presentation of some work in science to very high levels.
7. Work in ICT is interesting and challenging, as a direct result of the increased skills of the teachers since the last inspection. The increased number of up-to-date computers in every classroom, as well as the very well equipped computer suite, has enabled pupils to make excellent progress. The standards of pupils across the school, from Year 1 onwards are all at least one year ahead of the expected levels. Some pupils, who have computers at home, or

are members of the computer club, have skills that are much better than those regularly found in primary schools. All of the pupils are confident when using computers for word-processing, data handling or seeking information from CD-ROMs and the Internet to enhance work in other subjects. Across the curriculum, in all classes, the school has done well in building on the good work observed at the time of the last inspection. Standards have been maintained and improved; pupils develop very effectively as confident, highly motivated and well-rounded individuals.

8. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve very well. Progress is measured against the targets set in pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and their individual behaviour plans (IBPs) and also as part of the school's assessment procedures for all pupils. Pupils' IEPs are reviewed regularly and parents are fully involved. Targets that are attainable and measurable are clearly stated. Teachers adapt work to match the needs of less able and the gifted and more able pupils in their lesson planning. Pupils with special gifts and talents are very well supported. The very small number of pupils who speak languages other than English are all totally confident using English as their language for learning. In all lessons these pupils are fully included in all activities with their friends and make progress at the same rate.

Pupils' attitudes values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and achieve very well. Behaviour is very good. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to work and learning and behave very well.
- The school promotes a desire to learn and teachers have very high expectations for pupils' conduct.
- There is a very positive atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school that promotes a very high degree of self worth in all pupils.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Commentary

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and learning, both in the Reception classes and across the school. Children and pupils in all year groups enjoy sharing in the activities provided and show great interest and enthusiasm for every opportunity. Pupils have excellent relationships with teachers and other adults and are keen to take responsibility and show personal initiative. The feelings, values and beliefs of others are respected by all and pupils work hard to achieve the high expectations that the school has for them.
10. Behaviour is very good and pupils interact very well with one another. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement, and pupils' response to these expectations is good. Teachers use praise very effectively to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem. As a result, pupils learn with confidence and achieve very well.
11. The school works hard to maintain the harmonious atmosphere observed during previous inspections and pupils have a strong understanding of their own cultural traditions and those of others. Pupils and parents interviewed during the inspection week are totally sure that there is no trace of racial harassment. Pupils from the Reception classes to Year 6 state that whilst occasional instances of unacceptable behaviour do take place from time to time these are dealt with quickly by teachers. Persistent bullying is very rare and every pupil offering an opinion was sure that the school was a good place in which to learn, work and play. There have been no exclusions for many years.
12. Pupils have a clear understanding of the established rules and know what is right or wrong. They show a healthy respect for the feelings and opinions of others. The ethos of the school

ensures that pupils' spiritual awareness, self-knowledge and self worth are developed very well. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The regular assemblies, times of collective worship and lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) are very effective times for celebration and sharing. The extensive opportunities provided for visits to different interesting places and the talents of specialist visitors to the school promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.8%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

At 95.8 per cent, attendance is well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the quality of education is excellent. The quality of teaching and the totally integrated curricular provision are very good. An excellent range of diverse and interesting learning opportunities enriches the curriculum. The school is very successful in meeting the very diverse needs of all of the pupils.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good overall with many examples of excellence demonstrated across all phases and, as a result, learning by all pupils is also very good. Assessment is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have excellent knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and have very good relationships with the pupils.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations that challenge pupils' thinking very well.
- The pace of lessons is rapid and teachers make very good use of time.
- The planning is very thorough, detailed and precise; teachers select from a very rich range of methods that meet the needs of pupils across the school.
- Very interesting work enables the rate of learning to be very good.
- The strategies for assessment are excellent; these are superbly used to promote detailed long, medium and short-term planning.
- The use made of the information gathered through assessment is remarkably good.
- The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are very good and are working well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
13 (33%)	20 (51%)	5 (13%)	1 (3%)	0	0	0

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

13. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics, as well as over the entire range of other subjects across the curriculum, is very good and one third is excellent. As a result, pupils learn very well and make strong and measurable gains in their knowledge and understanding.

The quality of teaching seen at the last inspection has been reviewed, developed and improved to very good effect.

14. The proportion of excellent lessons exceeds that usually found in most schools. In all lessons teachers' knowledge of the subjects taught is very secure and the objectives set are clearly explained to pupils. Teachers show tremendous skills and initiative as they link the content of lessons to earlier work or to practical experiences that pupils remember. This is a remarkable strength of teachers' work in all subjects. The work provides good opportunities for revision and consolidation. Lessons in all classes including those providing for mixed age groups are very well organised. The methods chosen are always suitable. Teachers engage pupils' interest at the start of lessons; work is interesting and the pace of learning is brisk. Challenging work is evident and there is a shared sense of joy in learning. All pupils delight in their personal achievements.
15. Subject co-ordinators provide very high quality informed support for colleagues both informally and in more structured ways. The younger teachers contribute as fully as those with more experience and all expertise is shared. The procedures for the continuous assessment of each pupil's progress, attainment and achievement are excellent. The analysis of marking and test results for groups and individuals is clear, manageable and extraordinarily good. Teachers make very good use of all of the information gathered through evaluation and assessment. The systems in place provide a clear focus for the analysis of strengths and weaknesses and for setting relevant, measurable targets for improvement. Work is well matched to the abilities and needs of all pupils. Since the last inspection, when assessment strategies were praised, the use of assessment to promote work matched to pupils' ability has been further developed to a very precise and informative level.
16. The use of ICT as part of the tracking and assessment process uses programs that have been developed in the school to help teachers to track the attainment of all pupils and to target new work specifically to meet their identified needs. The success of this work is one of the reasons for the above and well above average standards that have been maintained over time despite marked changes in the nature of many classes.
17. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is very good. Teachers use the pupils' very detailed plans for learning and behaviour very well and incorporate the agreed targets into their lesson plans. Pupils with learning difficulties are fully included in all classroom activities. Pupils of all ability levels are constantly and appropriately challenged. Assessment and tracking procedures for pupils identified as having difficulties in learning are used very well to ascertain the rate and levels of achievement. Regular team meetings between the professionals are very beneficial in supporting both teachers and pupils. A part-time teacher provides additional, high quality, specialist teaching.
18. Teaching assistants have benefited from a programme of intensive training since the last inspection and their work is invaluable. Their skilled intervention and support enable lessons to move at a brisk pace. All pupils build well on the shared feeling of success. When the support staff work with the pupils capable of higher attainment, sometimes helping with in-depth research, their skills and initiative enable imaginative and innovative experiences to be shared. The very well developed partnership between the teachers and the support staff makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos of the school. Homework in all of the forms used by teachers, as described on the school's web-site, is a positive aid to learning.

The curriculum

There is a very good curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are excellent. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. .

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum enrichment is excellent through the wide range of clubs and activities, educational visits and visitors to school.

- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- The very effective procedures for reviewing the curriculum enable teachers to take positive actions through the skilful leadership and management of the subject co-ordinators with the linked governors.
- The accommodation is satisfactory but the facilities available in the 'temporary' classrooms are not as good as in the main building.

Commentary

19. All subjects of the National Curriculum are covered very well, including pupils' personal, social and health education. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been adapted very well to closely match the needs of the pupils in this school. The recommendations of the revised Code of Practice for pupils with SEN are fully implemented. All pupils are included in every subject and aspect of school life.
20. Pupils benefit very well from all that the school has to offer. There are exceptional opportunities for pupils to participate in an extensive range of additional activities including eleven different sports. Many pupils learn to play musical instruments and several are members of the choir and wind band. Pupils have the opportunity to experience the flavour of both French and Spanish languages. Other clubs include drama and computer clubs and pupils enjoy using the climbing wall. The many visits to places of interest extend pupils first hand experiences and make a significant contribution to their learning. Older pupils enjoy visiting York and the Isle of Man. Here pupils experience a wide range of more adventurous activities, for example kayaking. The staff are supported in these ventures by a number of enthusiastic and willing parents and voluntary helpers. Very positive and useful links with the local college provide additional opportunities for pupils to develop art, music and drama skills. Other visitors to the school share their experiences, for instance a member of the British Legion talked about life during World War II to illustrate to pupils the privations of wartime. A Rabbi has explained about the Jewish faith and customs.
21. Pupils are very proud of the work of the School Council and take their responsibilities very seriously. The buddy system works very well. Pupils take part in many fund raising events for charity including a 'Bad Hair Day' to raise funds for Comic Relief. There are strong links with the community. The school presents music and drama productions and makes contributions to the festivals and celebrations of the local church and community including active participation in the annual Marple Bridge Carnival. These opportunities contribute well to the social and cultural development of all pupils.
22. The headteacher and the senior management team review and refine the curriculum very effectively. Subject co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility very well. As a team they are committed to ensuring the very good provision for all subjects. They share a whole school perspective for each subject and check that there is good progression within subjects through long term planning supported by medium and shorter-term evaluation. They have implemented the plans to link subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science, ICT, the humanities and creative subjects very well.
23. Staffing levels are very good. There are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced teachers, supported by a good number of teaching assistants to cover the full curriculum. The accommodation is satisfactory. One of the classes situated in the temporary classrooms does not have direct access to running water. Two other classes have only limited access but they do have toilet facilities. The temperature within these classrooms fluctuates considerably causing some discomfort. Through their ingenuity, determination and dedication the staff manages to deliver the full curriculum but the premises are very basic when compared to those in the main building. This is frustrating for staff and pupils alike.
24. The recent project, supported by the parent teacher association (PTA) to improve the outside play facilities has resulted in a very attractive, high quality environment for learning. The

grounds support a stimulating range of outdoor activities including an environmental garden, study areas, wet land area and a tree trail in addition to sports and games areas. There has been sensitive planning to ensure the outside areas are accessible to wheel chair users. The interests of all pupils have been considered with the provision of quiet areas for reading and board games. Storage facilities ensure that resources are maintained in good condition. A large attractive carpeted area has been designated for the library, adjacent to the main entrance. This space is the hub of the school and is well used by pupils, staff, parents and visitors. There is a very good range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils' personal research. There is a plentiful supply of good quality resources for all subjects including a superb facility in the computer suite. Every resource is readily accessible to pupils and teachers and is used imaginatively to support pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school has very good arrangements in place to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health & safety. It provides excellent support and guidance and has excellent arrangements in place to seek pupils' views and act upon them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extent to which each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with adults in the school is excellent.
- Pupils have excellent access to well-informed support, advice and guidance.
- The school has very good procedures in place to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- The school has very good arrangements in place to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety.

Commentary

25. Pupils share a very caring environment where everyone feels valued and is treated with immense care and great respect. Pupils of all ages learn with confidence. The very good induction arrangements in the Reception classes, coupled with the care and concern shown by all staff, ensure that children feel valued and supported at all times. A very small group of parents expressed concerns with the induction system and the school is very willing to modify its procedures to try to resolve such difficulties whilst remaining mindful of the best interests of all of the children.
26. There are very good child protection procedures. The designated staff member is well aware of her role, and has received recent training. This has been shared with all other members of staff. There are regular health and safety audits along with very good procedures for monitoring and assessing risks. Several people are trained in first aid and accidents are meticulously recorded.
27. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. They are cherished and their work and progress are tracked meticulously. Teachers work very well with teaching assistants who all offer a high level of support. This group of pupils makes very good progress. Those pupils with special skills or talents are also identified and are given additional encouragement and support as required. They prosper well and bring credit to themselves, their families and the school. There are excellent arrangements for the involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. The school council is used very effectively as an important vehicle for involving pupils in the life of the school. In addition, lessons in PHSCE and the use of circle time give pupils the opportunity to share their views and opinions.
28. The school has excellent arrangements for the monitoring of the provision of support, advice and guidance that pupils receive. Pupils' progress is monitored superbly well through regular meetings between teachers and members of the support staff. Besides this the school makes very good use of the computer system, designed by the headteacher, to record pupils' academic performance as well as other skills and achievements.

EXAMPLE OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

Using assessment procedures to track the value added for individuals and groups

The quality of the procedures for assessment, using a computer program developed by the headteacher, is outstanding. The analysis and evaluation of all marked work, including the results of statutory and some optional tests, are used to track the achievements, performance and personal development of every pupil whatever their talents, skills or barriers to learning. Everyone is special and the review of individuals' progress towards agreed targets is meticulously charted in a detailed and practical way. The use made of each strand of the assessment process enables teachers and pupils to plot very personal learning paths using all that the school has to offer. Small achievements build into great strides and tiny slips are spotted before they develop into issues. The program tracks pupils' gains systematically and enables teachers to be sure that the added value between the phases and across classes is maintained at the best possible level. The local education authority has seconded the headteacher to help other schools to use the system as part of his role as advisory headteacher with responsibility for assessment and evaluation.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has excellent arrangements to involve parents through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- Links with the community are excellent.
- Links with other schools and colleges are excellent.
- The school has very good mechanisms for the transfer of pupils.

Commentary

29. Parents have a very high opinion of the school. This is demonstrated by the fact that it is heavily oversubscribed each year. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire thought that they were kept well informed about how their children were getting on. They say that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or any problems. Most state that they are sure that staff treat children fairly and that staff regularly seek the views of parents, taking account of their suggestions and concerns. A small group, however, felt they were not kept sufficiently well informed about how their children were getting on and that the school did not sufficiently seek the views of parents or take into account their suggestions or concerns. The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made, and found no evidence to support the negative views expressed by the minority group.
30. The school makes very good provision for parents to learn about the school and about pupils' standards and progress. The school brochure is a very well produced document, giving full information in an easy to read style about the ethos of the school and all facilities that the school provides. Regular newsletters give up to date information about school events. The annual written reports on pupils' progress are of a very good standard providing full information on a subject by subject basis on pupils' progress and achievements, helpful targets are set for improvement. The annual governors' report to parents provides good factual information of the school's future plans and fully complies with national legislation. All of this information, and much more, is readily available on the school's comprehensive and very attractive web-site. There are three consultation evenings for parents each year where parents can discuss their children's work, behaviour and progress with staff. In addition, a number of information evenings are arranged throughout the year for parents to learn about the programme of statutory testing, (SATS) as well as courses about mathematics and prior information about the drugs and sex education programme. Parents say that it is easy to arrange times to meet the headteacher and staff should they have any concerns. Records show that the school is very active in approaching parents to discuss pupils' progress.

31. The school has excellent arrangements for seeking, valuing and acting on the views of parents. Regular surveys of parents' views are sought and these are collated through the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) whose officers liaise well with the school to ensure that parents' views are not only sought but are also acted upon. The excellent arrangements to deal with any parental complaints were discussed by parents interviewed during the inspection week. These parents stated that the school actively sought their views and valued their opinions. The school has been successful in encouraging parents to help in school. There is a large number of parents and 'friends of the school', who help to support pupils' learning in many ways; for example, hearing pupils read, help in lessons, supervision at playtime and lunchtime or helping with special events such as the Harvest Festival. All parents are members of the PTA; this organisation arranges many social events during the year such as the Summer and Christmas Fayre, family and children's 'discos', quiz nights, and sponsored walks. Last year raised they raised the magnificent sum of £10,000 for school funds. Their efforts are much appreciated by the school.
32. There are superb arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education. Pupils in Year 6 visit the receiving comprehensive school for 'taster' days and staff from that school come into school on a regular basis to meet prospective pupils in subjects such as French and physical education. Pupils from Year 6 attend a science challenge day provided by the linked secondary school. Parents are invited to information evenings at the school where teachers from the secondary school explain how they provide for the developing pupils. As a result of the excellent transfer arrangements, pupils settle very quickly into secondary school life.
33. The school has excellent links with the community. Pupils take part in concerts at the local Anglican Church and make many visits to other local places of worship. They recently visited the science museum in Manchester and went pond dipping in the local canal. The school participates in many community events including the Marple Bridge Carnival, Church Arts Competition and many sporting events. Pupils raise funds for local and national charities including Wish Upon A Star, Frances House, Barnardos, and the local hospital. The school is involved with the Lion's Association and many speakers from the community come into school, including local historians, members of the police and fire brigade, as well as nurses, artists in residence, potters and the warden of the local Country Park. Pupils regularly visit senior citizens' homes and take harvest gifts to the residents. Links with other schools and colleges are excellent. The headteacher is very involved with many local groups committed to raising standards of education in the local authority area. He is seconded to the local education authority as an advisory headteacher for primary schools in evaluation and assessment.
34. The school welcomes many students in training from the Manchester Metropolitan University and had gained the status of a Partnership Promotions' School. Both the headteacher and the deputy headteacher work with the University and the school is linked to another local training college helping to train students as teaching and care assistants.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance of the school are all excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has excellent vision and aspirations for all aspects of the school's development and these are reflected in the very high achievements of all pupils.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher, senior teachers and all staff are excellent.
- The role of the governing body is very strong in all aspects.
- All aspects of strategic planning are very good and have contributed to the very high levels of improvement in standards and all aspects of provision since the last inspection.
- The school's assessment, monitoring and tracking systems and their use are exemplary.

- The financial planning and the principles of best value are very effective.

Commentary

35. The leadership, management and governance of the school are all excellent. The headteacher has extremely high expectations of himself, the staff and pupils. His excellent vision is mirrored in the challenging yet enjoyable range of activities that are available. He ensures that pupils benefit from all government and local initiatives. The school is committed to introducing and developing a flavour of learning modern foreign languages and is at a more advanced stage in this respect than most other schools. He is totally committed to the inclusion of all pupils to every opportunity. His expertise and experience are highly valued by the governors and staff. He constantly drives the school forward and has ambitions in all areas where further improvements can be made. As a result of these outstanding qualities, the school has maintained standards at a level well above the national average for several years in spite of a changing profile of the school in terms of attainment on entry and socio-economic features. The deputy headteacher, senior management team and all of the curriculum co-ordinators support him very well. They are exceedingly successful in promoting an environment where personal, creative, physical and academic achievement are recognised and celebrated. Every teacher has a linked governor and all governors are very firmly committed to the school's aims. There is a strong corporate approach to management where each person has a leading role.
36. The deputy headteacher gives excellent support to the headteacher, senior management team and pupils. Whilst working unobtrusively her positive manner derives from an excellent understanding of the needs of all pupils and involvement at all levels. She has brought an excellent level of professionalism to every part of the school's development. The curriculum innovation based on rigorous evaluation and amendment of styles is fully adopted as part of the teaching and learning programme. The leadership and management by all of the members of the senior management team are very effective and efficient. The subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science constantly monitor teaching and learning and rigorously track standards in the subjects to ensure that the very high standards are maintained. They are observant and enthusiastic, quickly recognising patterns before they become issues and taking direct action. They offer excellent support for newly qualified and recently appointed staff. Co-ordinators and managers of all other subjects monitor planning, completed work and displays and have many opportunities to observe lessons.
37. The school has developed its own system of performance management for teaching assistants, which contributes to their knowledge and understanding and enhances the quality of provision in the school. The record for the professional development and promotion of staff to senior posts, thereby creating further opportunities, is impressive. The headteacher has created an excellent balance between stability, ambition and mobility thereby avoiding stagnation and lack of impetus.
38. Members of the governing body use their extensive range of experience to ensure the highest possible quality of provision. There is a very positive and productive relationship between the governing body and the school. Governors have great confidence in the headteacher yet hold him accountable, asking many searching questions. Governors are fully involved in all major decision making processes. Through their curriculum and classroom links governors have a very good understanding of standards and provision in the school and are actively involved in monitoring and evaluating all elements of the school's performance. They set challenging targets for the headteacher and rigorously monitor his performance. The culture of performance management of all people in the school is an outstanding and well-established system of school improvement. The governors meet all of their legal and statutory requirements very well.
39. Governors seek very good value for money, not simply in cost but also in quality. This is reflected in the high quality of resources and the extremely pleasant outdoor provision. Overall, the governing body has a thorough working knowledge of the school; they know what is working well and this directly informs their decision-making. Their well-informed strategic planning contributes to very good levels of development that build on what is already high

quality. The governors and headteacher are not afraid to make bold decisions when they are for the benefit of the school and successfully ensure that this is an inclusive school where the needs of all pupils are met.

40. Financial, resource and personnel management is outstanding and demonstrates a remarkable balance between vision and ambition. The accounting systems ensure that the best needs of all pupils and staff are met. Governors are aware of the parts of the accommodation needing improvement but understand that the school's income is too limited to finance such major improvements. They recognise that it is the resourcefulness, persistence and imagination of the teachers and teaching assistants that prevent these areas becoming barriers to effective learning.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	629385
Total expenditure	637352
Expenditure per pupil	2036

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-10058
Balance carried forward to the next year	-7967

41. The school benefits from excellent, highly professional, very efficient administrative support. Very detailed information concerning income and expenditure is maintained. The senior managers are very well informed about spending patterns. The planned expenditure for each curricular area is managed very well. All subject co-ordinators consult with one another and the governing body about their subject needs and whenever possible funds are made available to meet their requirements. With the headteacher, the governing body ensures that each year the allocated funds are devoted to the needs of the pupils presently attending the school. The most recent auditors' report was favourable. The deficit figures shown in the financial information reflect a reducing debt, agreed with the local education authority and is within the two per cent of permitted overspend.

EXAMPLE OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher, curriculum leaders and the governors together is excellent.

This is because every governor is linked to a teacher and is thoroughly conversant with every nuance of that co-ordinator's curriculum responsibility.

The ethos and ambition of the school resembles that of an extraordinarily successful orchestra where everyone has both a leading and supporting performance role.

Each individual fulfils a range of responsibilities as rigorously as do instrumentalists when following an orchestral score. In the creative atmosphere of this school they are guided by the sensitive leadership of the headteacher who, like a conductor, has vision and aspirations whilst keeping the 'big picture' in mind. The performers collaborate and support one another, strengthened by the solo performances of individuals that lift standards to levels well above those usually found. A group of seasoned and extremely well-informed people, in this case the governing body, constantly evaluate the effectiveness of the headteacher, acting as the conductor, and his staff. They ensure that the highest possible levels are achieved and that all of the school's ambitions and aims are financially viable.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **very good with some excellent features** and has significantly improved since the time of the last inspection. Children are now very well prepared for transfer to Year 1. They enter one of the two Reception classes in the September before their fifth birthday. Prior to entry children have experienced a wide range of nursery and pre-school provision and attainment on entry is average overall with a significant number achieving below average standards. Attainment on entry is not as high now as it was at the previous inspection. Children achieve very well due to very high quality teaching, a greatly enriched curriculum and excellent assessment procedures. They benefit from very high quality support from teaching assistants and parental involvement.

The curriculum is very well planned to provide an exceedingly wide range of interesting, challenging and relevant activities. It is further enhanced by children sharing in learning opportunities with a very imaginative range of visits and visitors. All staff work very effectively as a cohesive team carefully monitoring all aspects of children's learning and personal and social development. The external and internal accommodation is satisfactory overall and is used very effectively to enhance children's learning. The outdoor provision is very good and there are abundant opportunities to develop children's physical, creative and scientific skills. Although the internal accommodation is satisfactory for the needs of the curriculum, there is only one tap and the governors, headteacher and staff are aware that this aspect of the accommodation is the weakest part. At present there is no outdoor shelter to allow the curriculum to be taught in all weathers but the school improvement plan shows financial provision for the erection of a free-standing structure, to provide shelter. They have carefully considered this design with the understanding that it would not be financially viable to attach it to the existing building.

The leadership and management by the co-ordinator and senior management team are excellent. They have a deep understanding of the many strengths and areas for development in the Foundation Stage. The excellent and rigorous on-going tracking of all aspects of children's learning and development guides planning for the next range of activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and develop very positive attitudes because of the exceedingly good teaching and very high expectations of all staff.
- The enriching range of special events and celebrations contributes very well to the development of their Christian beliefs and understanding of the cultures and customs of people in multi-faith Britain.
- Very supportive relationships are established and most children are confident learners who behave very well in class.

Commentary

42. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because of the very good teaching and the contributions by teaching assistants. They are well placed to exceed the expected goals by the end of the year. They have a very good understanding of fair and acceptable behaviour because of the consistency of routines and caring attitudes. Children listen to and participate in many interesting activities and stories and most speak clearly and confidently. They are continually encouraged to feel proud of their achievements and are reminded of the very high standards of behaviour expected. They share equipment and take turns, putting up their hands before answering questions. Children work very well together with minimal adult

intervention. They behave very well, share resources, especially the wide range of books, take turns when using computers and share construction equipment very well. The teacher and teaching assistants create a very caring atmosphere where children feel special and valued from the time they arrive in class to the end of the day.

43. Teachers prepare children very well for life in multicultural and multi-faith Britain through the richness of experiences from different cultures and their involvement in a wide range of activities related to many faiths. They celebrated Chinese New Year and designed and made a Chinese dragon.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and all staff provide many opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills in all areas of learning.
- Children achieve very well in every aspect of this subject.
- The children achieve very well in reading because of very good teaching and very effective involvement of parents.

Commentary

44. From discussions with children and the analysis of completed work, it seems that the majority of children are well placed to exceed the expected levels in this area of learning. They achieve very well in speaking and listening because the teacher plans many varied opportunities for group discussions in all areas of learning. They were seen sharing books, listening to stories and practising writing skills. All staff plan many opportunities to develop children's vocabulary through probing questions.
45. Higher attaining and most average attaining children read fluently and accurately with exceptionally good understanding. The books chosen are matched to their abilities and interests very well. They show very good reasoning skills and retell stories in the correct sequence. The lower attaining children read familiar texts well and benefit from repetition of vocabulary and picture clues. During the inspection children in both classes read 'Handa's Surprise.' This story enhanced their understanding of sequence and of life in another country. Children enjoy books and speak with interest and understanding about their favourite books. Their reading skills and enjoyment of reading are very well promoted in each class. During the inspection children classified a wide selection of books as either fiction or non-fiction.
46. Very good relationships give children the confidence to speak and adults listen intently responding to their comments. The teachers have developed very rigorous and tightly structured plans for the teaching of sounds with the emphasis on children's abilities to say the sounds, recognise them in print and practise them in writing. The majority of children hold pencils correctly and, as a result, they form letters accurately. The planned use of ICT in this area helps to develop children's understanding in many aspects of literacy. Standards show very high levels of improvement compared to their attainment on entry to the school.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are excellent.
- The quality of the teaching and children's learning and achievement are excellent.
- The teachers plan a wide range of structured activities to ensure that children understand number and apply their skills to other areas of learning.

- Children have very positive attitudes and confidence in applying mathematical skills.

Commentary

47. Standards are high and most children are well placed to exceed the expected levels by the end of the year. Higher-attaining children already exceed them. Children achieve very well in this area of learning because of excellent teaching and rigorous assessment. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and use excellent systems for assessment to guide planning. Children's knowledge and understanding are very good in all aspects of number, shape and space and problem solving. Most children count to 50 and order numbers accurately. The higher attaining children write number sentences using money to 20p. They have very good mental skills. Average attaining children add and subtract money to 10p and lower attaining children buy objects and count to 5p. Most recognise a wide range of two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. They create interesting mathematical patterns showing a very good awareness of order, shape and colour and have a very good understanding of days of the week, months of the year and seasons. Teachers are very successfully incorporating ICT into this area of learning to develop children's understanding of number and the properties of some two dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Most children are very confident in this area of learning, enjoying the activities and work.
48. The provision for gifted and talented children and those with special educational needs is excellent. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very well adapted to meet the needs of all children. All aspects of teaching are strengths. The teachers plan an exceptionally wide range of mathematical activities associated with other areas of learning and this further enhances children's understanding and interest. Teachers provide excellent challenging activities for the older pupils within the class.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a very enriching range of activities.
- Excellent opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing and mathematics are included in the planning.
- Children have very good opportunities for using computers.
- The Foundation Stage co-ordinator plans an excellent range of visits and visitors to enhance children's learning.

Commentary

49. All aspects of teaching and standards are very high in this area of learning. Analysis of meticulous planning and discussions with children show that achievement is very high. Most children already exceed the expected goals for this area of learning. In the short time since they have been in school they have become very confident, articulate and interested learners. Their learning is very well developed by their work within the wide range of planned investigations. They know that switches control many machines, for example computers, CD players and washing machines. Children have many opportunities for making models from construction equipment.
50. Children have a very good understanding about some essential aspects of a healthy lifestyle. They know about the effect of running and exercise on their heartbeats during a physical activity. Their discussions with the health visitor reinforced this understanding. During "snack time" their understanding was tested when they selected from a range of different fruits. They identify most external parts of the human body, know the five senses and classify them according to physical features, habitats and feeding habits. Children know many differences between the characteristics and abilities of babies and five-year-olds as a result of the informative guidance from a health visitor. They develop their personal and social

understanding of the amount of care that a baby needs and relate this knowledge to younger brothers and sisters.

51. Children link the story, 'When will it be spring?' and the poem, 'The Spring Flowers' to their observations of flowering bulbs, planted in the autumn term. They planted bean seeds and know some of the conditions needed for plants to grow. Children know the different stages of a bulbs development from being planted in the ground in the autumn to growing roots, leaves and eventually flowers. Children have used presentation software to create shapes and this has enhanced their mathematical understanding and their ICT skills. Children used both digital and disposable cameras.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are very good.
- All staff make very effective use of the available accommodation including the hall.
- The outdoor accommodation and resources are very good.

Commentary

52. Although no physical education lessons were observed during the inspection, children use a variety of wheeled and other equipment in the very attractive secure area. They are very well supervised during breaks and lunchtimes and used all equipment with very good levels of agility, co-ordination and awareness of others. Standards are above those expected for children of this age group.
53. Children handle construction equipment, paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with very good levels of dexterity and accuracy. Most children hold pencils correctly and consequently their standards of handwriting have improved very well during the year. Children identified as needing additional help are given very good support and encouragement and achieve as well as other children in the class.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good overall and excellent in the musical aspect.
- Opportunities for storytelling and role-play are very good. This area of learning makes a very good contribution to children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Children's very positive attitudes are reflected in their knowledge and confidence when discussing their work.
- The accommodation is satisfactory but one unsatisfactory aspect is the lack of water supplies in both classes.

Commentary

54. From the lessons observed, displays and discussions with children, most of them are well placed to exceed the expected levels in this area. Teaching, learning and achievement are very good and are excellent in music. Planning shows that over the year children have a very wide range of creative opportunities. They experiment when mixing paint and using modelling materials. A particular strength is their very good awareness of shape and texture in art. During the inspection they created very realistic and intricate models of fruit with very good proportion of shape and texture. They use paint programs on the computers to generate pictures based on a wide range of interests. All adults extend children's language and

encourage their imaginative and collaborative activities. They understand and can explain what they are learning from each activity.

55. The excellent teaching of music contributes to the very high standards achieved. Children sing tunefully with a very good understanding of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. Their oral skills develop well as they copy and compare rhythms as they play a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. During the inspection children identified many sounds on the 'sound walk'. They know the names of many instruments and match their sounds to the effects needed in their class compositions. They follow the visual score, which they have composed. The musical elements of creative development are some of the excellent contributory factors to children's personal and social development. Every week children share singing time with pupils in Year 1 and 2 and, during the inspection week sang many songs including one from Ghana. They sing with very accurate pitch, excellent rhythm and a good feel for the style of music.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above the national average.
- The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good.
- Literacy is used to very good effect in other subjects.
- There is very good leadership and management of the subject including superb assessment systems that are used very well.
- All of the teaching assistants are deployed very well.
- All pupils behave very well and have a very good attitude to learning.

Commentary

56. Attainment levels in Year 2 are already well above the national average in reading, writing, speaking and listening. In Year 6 attainment overall is well above the national average. The high standards and achievement identified in the previous inspection have been maintained. During the past four years the results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 have fluctuated dependent on the nature and abilities of the pupils taking the tests; however, they have been maintained at a well above average level.
57. Overall the quality of teaching across the school is very good. The very good input of teachers and time invested by the well-trained support staff have a significant and very positive impact on the progress that pupils make. Lessons are very well planned and take into account the needs of those pupils capable of higher attainment as well as those with special educational needs. The predominantly very good teaching, combined with the pupils' very good attitudes and willingness to succeed, ensures that achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good. Marking is consistent and assessment is used exceedingly well to help all teachers plan for future development. Learning is enhanced by dedicated, targeted support offered by the skilful teaching assistants.
58. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils are attaining standards in speaking and listening and in reading that are better than those found in most schools and better than might be expected. The pupils in Year 1 demonstrate very good skills in communication, language and literacy. They are able to form and ask pertinent questions; for example, in role-play they ask 'the tiger' why they are coloured as they are. These skills are further developed through planned programmes and the hard work of pupils, teachers and support staff. Most pupils become confident communicators by the end of Year 2. They demonstrate good listening skills when responding to the teacher's questions. Pupils are attentive and eagerly participate

in discussions, as observed in lessons in Years 5 and 6 when they analyse the characters in 'The Angel of Nitshull' by Anne Fine and decide that a bully can be identified "because he adopted a really aggressive manner".

59. Reading is promoted strongly in the school. Pupils demonstrate a keen interest in books and are able to discuss confidently their preferences for certain authors and styles of writing. The home-school reading diary is a very useful link between teachers and parents. As a result, most pupils' enthusiasm for reading begins early. For example, they eagerly discover the meaning of words while studying the work of Florence Nightingale at Scutari Hospital. They describe the smell of burning wood and the 'scuttering rats'. They recognise the similarity in spelling 'draughty' and 'naughty' and the teacher grasps this opportunity to reinforce their understanding of spelling patterns. By Year 6 most pupils read fluently and with good expression that reflects the meaning of the text. There are very few pupils who experience reading problems and need to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words but some less able younger pupils still find this a more difficult task. They persevere very well sounding out unfamiliar words, sometimes with help, and invariably succeed.
60. The high standards seen in writing across all age groups show that the actions initiated by the teachers to improve the quality of writing across all subjects is proving to be successful. This approach to writing is lifting pupils' work in writing for a range of different audiences to a very high level. Pupils are able to write accounts to indicate that there may be bias in writing. They write reports of the Armada from the English and Spanish points of view. The standard of writing and the presentation of work in all classes are very good. By Year 6 pupils write in a neat cursive style of which they are proud. Pupils respond positively to the very good teaching and they work hard. A wide and interesting range of well-organised strategies is used to good effect to support pupils' learning.
61. Some pupils require additional support, particularly those with specific learning difficulties. Some problems are associated with speech and communication and others with behavioural and emotional problems. The help provided is often through tasks being adapted to match closely to pupils' needs and abilities. This modified work and skilled support enable them to succeed and make good progress. Support assistants provide very good additional teaching and guidance to complement the work of the teacher. The targets set out in the pupils' Individual Education Plans are the focus for additional support. These targets are shared with parents. Similarly those pupils who achieve very well are provided with additional or different tasks that challenge them and enable them to achieve higher levels.
62. The subject is led and managed very well. Results of tests are analysed in detail and clear and very challenging targets are planned to exactly match the next stage of pupils' learning. The systematic monitoring of planning and assessment is very well organised and has been very extremely effective in maintaining standards at their present levels. The subject leader is a keen advocate of the subject and is committed to developing the subject further. She is particularly committed to developing writing skills. She encourages close liaison between staff and keeps abreast of new developments through effective links with the LEA and the local university. All of the staff endeavour to create a stimulating environment through displays of books and pupils' work to encourage and stimulate learning.
63. The library has been very well developed and is the hub of the school. Pupils, staff, parents and visitors use it well. They benefit from the use of a computer as an additional resource. The wide range of reading material is supplemented by loans from the local authority library loan service. In addition each classroom has access to a good stock of books including many from a wide selection of structured reading programmes. Non-fiction books are classified, using a well-understood system used by the pupils is simple and practical Pupils take their reading books home regularly.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

64. Throughout the school the pupils' literacy and language skills are constantly being very well applied and improved in other subjects. Examples include a study of a portrait of Henry VIII followed by pupils recording their observations about his appearance. Older pupils read 'Carries War' and used this knowledge to form the foundation for their own 'Diary of an Evacuee', as part of their study of World War II. English makes a very good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. Overall the promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum is very good.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **very good** overall, with many **excellent** features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above the national average.
- Pupils achieve very well and have developed excellent attitudes to the subject due to the very good teaching and very high expectations of all staff.
- The leadership and management of the subject are excellent.
- The assessment, monitoring and tracking of each pupil's work are excellent and contribute to very high levels of achievement.
- The excellent opportunities for investigative work and the extensive application of numeracy to other areas of the curriculum develop pupils' understanding very effectively.
- Pupils' ability to incorporate ICT into their learning is well above the levels found in most schools.

Commentary

65. There have been very good improvements in standards, the quality of teaching and learning and in the leadership and management of the subject since the last inspection. Teachers' excellent planning includes a very wide range of investigations in all classes and pupils expect to be challenged. Most pupils in Year 6 are working at levels well above the national average with higher attaining pupils achieving very high standards. Gifted and talented pupils achieve very well because of additional provision of an exceedingly high quality.
66. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well in all aspects of mathematics and in some lessons their achievement is excellent. The majority of pupils select from a very wide range of methods for problem solving and planning investigations; for example, their understanding of place value is reflected in their ability to multiply and divide using decimals to two places. Their understanding of the equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages is very secure. When solving number problems mentally, they use a very wide variety of methods and explain their reasoning. Pupils have a very good understanding of the angle properties of triangles and quadrilaterals and construct angles with high levels of accuracy. They organise their work very methodically; they justify their reasoning and manipulate numbers easily and confidently. During discussions the majority of pupils in Year 6 showed a very good understanding of the magnitude of numbers and the need for methodical working in calculations and investigations.
67. The very high standards in Year 2 are reflected in pupils' knowledge and understanding of place value to 1000. Higher attaining pupils understand place value to over 1000. They have very good mental recall of multiplication tables and add and subtract two-digit numbers mentally. Pupils apply their number skills very effectively to all aspects of mathematics. They tell the time, to quarter to and quarter past the hour and classify a wide range of two and three-dimensional shapes using a range of properties including symmetry. Their data handling skills are also well developed. Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils become very confident mathematicians. They rise to the challenges set by the teachers, try different approaches when solving problems and show very high levels of mathematical reasoning.
68. Pupils of all attainment levels show tremendous enthusiasm for the subject. They are highly motivated and extremely well behaved. Pupils' relationships with each other and their teachers and teaching assistants are very good. The school has very successfully and rigorously

introduced and developed the National Numeracy Strategy to meet the challenging ethos and high expectations of all pupils.

69. Pupils' very high achievement levels are a direct result of very good and often excellent teaching. All aspects of teaching are strengths. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and understanding and these are reflected in very good teaching of basic and advanced skills, which contribute to pupils' very good levels of understanding. Planning for all groups, including gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs, in all classes is very good and is based on excellent tracking of pupils' attainment and achievements. Sufficient time is given for the revision of earlier learning and, as a result, pupils consolidate their learning very well. Teachers question pupils and use their responses to assess their understanding. They have extremely high expectations of pace of work and presentation. Consequently pupils know how well they have achieved and their presentation is very good. Teaching assistant are pivotal to pupils' achievements and they engage actively in all aspects of planning and teaching and make very strong contributions to the high standards.
70. The excellent leadership and management by the co-ordinator and senior management team have successfully raised achievements and the profile of mathematics throughout the school since the previous inspection. The excellent systems for assessment, monitoring and tracking give all teachers secure evidence from which to plan. Target setting is very well founded on a wide range of information about each pupil. The leadership and management of the subject ensure that those pupils in the mixed aged classes achieve as well as those in the single age classes because of the excellent ways in which work is matched to each pupil's ability. Daily planning, year group organisation and curricular changes are soundly based on excellent analysis of standards. The school is constantly seeking ways of improving all aspects of mathematics. The high standards in mathematics are further enhanced by the very effective use of ICT across all strands of the subject.
71. One of the key strengths of the subject is the active involvement of the governor for mathematics at all levels of leadership, management, teaching and accountability within the school. She has an outstanding knowledge and insight into the strengths and areas of development in mathematics due to her rigorous involvement in all aspects including monitoring of standards and performance management within the school. This excellent partnership between the governor and the school and the equally strong leadership by the headteacher ensure the excellent leadership and management of the subject in spite of the absence of the co-ordinator.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Pupils frequently use mathematics as an integral part of their work in other subjects. This is carefully planned to match the abilities of all pupils and extend their understanding of mathematics in the world. Pupils select from a wide range of options using graphs and charts when recording data in geography and science. They skilfully use their knowledge to present shape and pattern in art and design and undertake calculations with large numbers when comparing and contrasting historical periods and important events in religious education.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and well above average standards have been maintained for several years.
- Teaching and learning are consistently very good throughout the school.
- The leadership and management of the subject are exemplary.
- The links with other subjects through the topic approach to work and learning are superb

Commentary

73. Very good and frequently excellent teaching enables pupils to achieve standards that are well above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The standards achieved are consistently high because the school concentrates on pupils being scientists and conducting interesting experiments and investigations. This allows pupils in Year 3 to 6 to build on the good practices established in Years 1 and 2. Pupils of all prior attainment get a fair deal as work is matched very closely to their earlier experiences. The intricate links made with other subjects through the topic approach enable learning to be incorporated into the whole life of the school. This is managed very well and science is never seen as a discrete and separate pocket of information. Those pupils with special educational needs succeed equally well because, besides having specially tailored work, they are very well supported by skilled teaching and very well-informed teaching assistants. Those pupils capable of working independently are provided with very many opportunities to go beyond the level of the majority of the class and to discover for themselves the next steps in the process being studied. This means that time is used very well and all pupils are encouraged to work to their capacity.
74. Teaching and learning are very good in all year groups. Excellent relationships allow teachers and pupils to work superbly well in a calm and purposeful way whilst allowing for times for reflection and fun. Lessons are very well planned often including options for individual development that extend the pattern of learning into interesting by-ways that link with work in allied subjects and then lead back into the main purpose of the lesson. These activities provide strong links that make knowledge secure through a variety of experiences. Resources and pupils are managed very well with apparent ease as a result of immaculate planning. In lessons the different approaches regularly make the speed of learning brisk and time flies. Teachers question pupils very skilfully, causing them to think of answers to solve problems and to demonstrate their understanding of complex issues.
75. Assessment procedures are built into every lesson at the planning stage and possible alternative strategies are listed to engage pupils' imagination and to extend their thinking should the first approach fail to capture their interest. Teachers use these processes to adapt their work within lessons and into the next steps in planning as they find out where pupils have mastered work or where they need additional reinforcement. Short evaluation sessions aid progress and ideas are readily shared between groups of pupils. The use of information and communication technology is inspirational. Pupils instinctively use computers to extend their research and to present their work to ensure that they achieve very high quality in their completed work. Marking is thorough, in books and project files, often beside pupils, where a comment or a word is enough to refocus pupils' thinking.
76. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new in post but is supported and encouraged very well by the previous subject leader. The change is part of the school's programme of professional development and the very effective systems for planning and assessment are still in place. Time to observe colleagues in the classroom and to offer support is a normal feature of all subjects. Additional time to support new members of staff is provided readily, both formally, within the system and informally whenever the need arises.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent very well informed leadership has had a very positive impact on increasing the quality of provision.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve very well and standards are now above the expected levels across the school.
- Teaching is very good overall from the reception class to Year 6.
- The use of the subject to promote and extend learning in other subjects is developed to an excellent level.

Commentary

77. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line for pupils at the end of Year 2 and were better than in most schools by the end of Year 6. The provision of a well-equipped computer suite as well as many 'stand-alone' computers in classrooms has been an expensive but well worthwhile investment. The increased emphasis on using skills learned in information and communication technology (ICT) to improve the quality of learning across the curriculum is impressive. All of the staff have undertaken training and the scheme of work has been modified to extend what is expected to what is possible and ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are covered fully. As a result, pupils use all of the skills learned instinctively to increase their learning. Pupils have been enabled to increase their skills to well above the levels expected for their age across the school. Pupils in Year 2 work well at Level 3 and in Year 6 most pupils are working comfortably at Level 5 and some have achieved very high levels of competency. The standards achieved by all pupils are now above those expected nationally. The most capable pupils are working at levels expected for the next phase of education.
78. Pupils in all classes are confident and competent users of computers. They know the usefulness of ICT in their work and in the outside world. For example, pupils readily collect information and present it on spreadsheets and graphs discussing amongst themselves as to which form of display will best suit their needs. They use secure search engines to access websites on the Internet. Their skills in control technology are equally strong. When working with control systems to organise communications with 'aliens' and to control a 'space vehicle', pupils made complex and very difficult work appear easy. The school has good access to an extensive range of relevant software. Close links with the local secondary school mean that work with sensors is just another part of what the pupils do well. Additional work developing the school's web-site has meant that a group of pupils share the mastery of intricate and demanding skills. Pupils delighted in preparing items about the inspection and including photographs of inspectors at work as a lunchtime activity.
79. Teaching is very good overall and is excellent in Years 5 and 6. This has a positive effect on raising standards. Every teacher and most teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and they all explain learning requirements to pupils with clarity and confidence. Lessons are superbly planned and the learning objectives are made very clear. Good emphasis is placed on the development of relevant technical vocabulary. Teachers achieve an excellent balance between formal instruction and the time allowed for pupils to practise skills. This results in very rapid learning. In all lessons skilful questioning fully involves pupils in their own learning and support is well targeted at those who need it most. Positive attitudes and very good behaviour are important factors in pupils' achievement in lessons.
80. The leadership and management of the subject are superb. Strategies to raise standards have been managed very well and are fully linked with the planned work for all subjects. The co-ordinator has a very good overview of provision and standards across the school. Excellent assessment systems are used very well to chart each pupil's progress and these enable teachers to provide work exactly matched to attainment levels that extends learning and stimulates pupils' interest and enthusiasm.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

81. The use of ICT across the curriculum is extraordinarily well developed and is exceptionally effective. Pupils' instinctive use of ICT in many lessons is an outstanding strength of the school. The pupils' understanding of the scope and use of the subject to support and extend all other work shows how well they have been taught. Teachers' planning for other subjects always identifies opportunities for the use of ICT. In lessons teachers and pupils support work in other subjects using their computer skills as a matter of course. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing. They use software programs to improve their skills in reading, spelling and numeracy. Pupils use CD-ROMs and the Internet regularly for personal research in other subjects such as history, geography, religious education and art

and design. Data handling in science, using computer skills, is a strand of work that has been developed to good effect alongside similar work in mathematics. The carefully linked topic approach enables pupils to use ICT as a valuable support for all of their independent and classroom related work.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

Provision in both geography and history is **very good**.

These subjects are taught as parts of a practical, comprehensive and carefully linked topic process not as separate discrete subjects. The previous report indicated that attainment in these subjects was typical for the age of pupils and it is very difficult to make practical judgements and comparisons between attainment levels in 1998 and the present time. The previous report stated that pupils enjoyed their work and that their progress was good. As part of this inspection in addition to lesson observations, the judgements are supported by discussions with pupils and teachers as well as by the scrutiny and analysis of pupils' work in their books and in work displayed around the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management of both subjects enable standards and achievement to be maintained at a high level in both subjects.
- The very good teaching results in standards that exceed the expected level and in pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour towards learning.
- There are very strong links between and across other subjects and the contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is very good.

Commentary

82. Both subjects receive adequate time over each term as a result of very careful planning and close liaison with all staff. Plans are monitored and evaluated by the subject co-ordinators who readily identify the strengths and any emerging weaknesses within the subjects and take prompt action. The very good planning and preparation result in very good teaching and pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. This enables standards overall to be at a level that are consistently above those most often found in schools nationally. As a result of imaginative and stimulating lessons pupils are interested in their work, collaborate well with one another and behave very well. Pupils present their written work very well in a variety of ways and take great pride in the very attractive way in which they maintain their books.
83. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics including the contrasting environments of the Lancashire coastline and St Lucia. They are enthralled with their study of the work, life and times of Florence Nightingale. Older pupils are developing their knowledge of World War II and the effects of contrasting climates. Pupils use their ICT skills for research superbly well and confidently use power point presentations as an alternative method of recording and sharing their findings.
84. The deep knowledge and enthusiasm of the teachers means the pupils benefit from many first hand experiences that enrich the curriculum. These include many visits to places of local interest, for example Stockport Air Raid Shelter and the Museum of Science and industry in Manchester where younger pupils enjoyed work with members of the Blackfoot Indian tribe. The subjects benefit from an interesting range of high quality resources. School resources are supplemented by loans of artefacts and books from the local authority library service. There are very strong, planned links with other subjects, principally literacy, numeracy, art and ICT. Drama, in the form of role-play, is used very effectively to bring the subjects to life; for example younger pupils questioned 'Florence Nightingale' about the conditions she experienced at Scutari hospital. Pupils are encouraged to record their findings through independent writing activities. Their writing illustrates the strength of the contribution these subjects make to their

social, moral, spiritual and cultural education, for example, writing sensitively about the life of an evacuee during wartime and the effect on the community if the local high street is closed to traffic.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainments across the school are very high.
- The leadership and management by the co-ordinator are excellent.
- Achievement throughout the school is very good.
- The curriculum is very good and enriched by a range of visits, visitors and resources.

Commentary

85. The standards in pupils' written work and displays are well above expected levels and discussions with pupils demonstrate their excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject. From this evidence pupils achieve very well in their deep knowledge and understanding of a wide range of religions and the impact of understanding from religions. The curriculum extends beyond the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
86. Visits to many places of worship and visitors from many religions give pupils many practical and visual learning opportunities. All pupils, including gifted and talented and those with special educational needs, are very well included in all activities and achieve as well as other pupils.
87. Through their work on world religions pupils learn very well about the beliefs of people from a wide range of beliefs and traditions. They have a very good understanding of what people from different faith hold in common. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 visit a mosque and a synagogue and develop a very good understanding of the importance of religion to people's daily lives and rituals. A local priest visits school to explain concepts of Christianity, such as Trinity and Easter.
88. The co-ordinator provides excellent leadership and management and her excellent personal knowledge and commitment contribute to many initiatives. She rigorously monitors planning, pupils' work and whenever possible teaching and learning.
89. The very well developed links between subjects ensure that pupils have many opportunities for applying research and writing skills to their learning. The standards of presentation are very high and enhanced by carefully drawn illustrations. The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils, especially their knowledge and understanding of the many religions celebrated by people in multi-faith Britain. Standards have significantly improved since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

A strong feature of the school is the integrated programme of 'topic' work in these subjects, all of them linked and supported very well by information and communication technology, The extra-curricular activities that involve many disciplines enable pupils with different ages, prior attainment and interests to be fully involved.

Art and Design

The provision for this subject is **very good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent curriculum is enriched by visits to art galleries and visitors.
- Teaching, learning and expertise are very good and in some cases excellent.
- The contribution by a teaching assistant who is a professional artist contributes to very high standards.
- The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

90. As well as the lessons observed, discussions with pupils, scrutiny of sketchbooks and the analysis of many excellent displays reflect very high standards throughout the school. Attainments by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are at levels well above those expected from pupils in their age groups. They use an excellent range of techniques and media. Their outstanding observation skills were evident when they painted in the style of Edvard Munch with excellent awareness of shape and perspective in his picture "The Scream". They mixed shades very carefully to match tones in the reproduction and related his art to their knowledge of his childhood. Pupils in the art club in Year 2 painted African Masks with outstanding attention to detail, tone and symmetry. An excellent collage based on the picture "Starry Night" shows very good understanding of movement, tone and very creative collage work.
91. Pupils are surrounded by very high quality art and are influenced by art from many styles and cultures. They participate in a wide range of community activities and have very positive attitudes based on enthusiasm and very high levels of skills. Pupils in Year 6 produced very life-like art in the style of L.S. Lowry during the history topic on Britain since the 1930s. The challenges given to gifted and talented pupils and support for pupils with special educational needs ensure that all pupils are included in all activities and achieve very well.
92. Throughout the school pupils used a wide range of media including ICT and clay. Throughout the six years in school they benefit from an excellent and varied curriculum. Their sketchbooks show excellent progression of skills especially in the development of pencil sketches, still life and portraits. This confirms the very high levels of improvement made since the previous inspection and the impact of excellent leadership and management.

Design and Technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a total commitment to the usefulness and high quality of the products made.
- The first designs are tested and evaluated to very good effect.
- Work is constructively linked with that in other subjects particularly, but not exclusively, to art and design, mathematics and science
- Shared planning by teachers across the curriculum about the nature and purpose of work undertaken is very effective.
- The enthusiasm, confidence and knowledge of pupils of all ages are tremendously high.
- Pupils are very pleased to show how the products that they have made are being used.

Commentary

93. The small number of lessons observed, together with the extensive collection of completed work indicate that standards attained are above the national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is because teachers work together very well with the skilled guidance support and advice of the very well organised subject leader. Work is clearly linked to a purpose and practical ideas are carried through to fruition. The items are designed to meet a need and are then used in other lessons or productions. They have to be functional and durable. During the process of design and making, all ideas are tested and then initial ideas and designs are modified, refined or enhanced so that they are of an acceptable standard. In

this way pupils learn that only high quality work is acceptable. The work seen showed very positive links with science, history, mathematics, ICT and art and design. Pupils know very well which subject they are working in but slip easily into a pattern of using and selecting information learned in other subjects in order to complete their present task.

94. Work in food technology in Years 3 and 4 was linked very usefully to pupils' understanding of the effect of heat on ingredients and detailed observations of how mixtures looked and were changed. Pupils in some classes have attempted to fix motors to their models of monsters using their understanding of circuits in electricity. These same skills were used to light models of Tudor houses that were completed to a high standard. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a wide range of construction kits and recyclable materials to create and make a range of models either to support work in other subjects or just for fun. In Year 5 pupils making automata using a system of cams found the work interesting but difficult. They continued to work together, discuss their problems and persevere until they got things right and were justly proud of their completed machines. The range of working models, including racing buggies, in Years 5 and 6 involved evaluations of how cogs and wheels worked. These ideas were then linked with work using control mechanisms in information and communication technology.
95. During the inspection the quality of the teaching seen was very good. The way in which designs in sketch books are marked and the quality of completed work on display indicate that across the school all of the teachers work to the same high standards in this subject as they do in others. This is because the subject is led and managed very well and the resources provided for pupils are very good, both in the testing stage and for the final products. Pupils in all of the shared discussion groups were eager to share their work with others and were keen to explain how they had developed their earliest ideas through to completion.

Music

The provision for music is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music has an exceedingly high profile within the school and the community.
- Standards throughout the school are very high and all pupils achieve very well.
- The excellent leadership and management by the co-ordinator have an exceptionally strong impact on standards and pupils' achievements.
- There is excellent provision for instrumental tuition by visiting professional musicians.
- The quality of teaching is excellent.

Commentary

96. Pupils achieve exceptionally high standards in singing, instrumental music and knowledge and understanding of music from a very wide range of cultures and styles. These reflect the excellent leadership and management by the co-ordinator and the support given by other teachers and teaching assistants and visiting teachers. Pupils have many opportunities for performing throughout the year both in school and in the community. They attend many performances and listen to visiting musicians. Music makes an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments.
97. During the inspection, some pupils learning brass instruments performed at a very high standard with excellent dynamic variations and feel for the contrasting style of the music. They showed excellent awareness of the needs of ensemble playing and the requirements of the conductor. The visiting teacher's excellent personal skills and teaching were accompanied by sensitive awareness of the needs of each pupil in both performance and the theory of music. Over half the pupils eligible for instrumental tuition benefit from this provision.
98. Pupils in this school learn a wider range of instruments than found in the majority of other schools. During the band rehearsal, where pupils in Years 4 to 6 performed, they showed very good awareness of the conductor; many followed the musical scores accurately and played

with very mature interpretation of the dynamics and notation. Pupils enjoy the richness of their musical experiences, are enthusiastic performers and many have achieved high standards in external music examinations. Parents are very supportive of all the musical opportunities which the school offers.

99. The leadership and management of the subject have contributed to the very high levels of improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator successfully involved other music specialists within the school in the subject. They are very supportive in choral and orchestral activities.

Physical Education

Provision for physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good participation in most local and district sports competitions.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic.
- The exceptional number of well supported extra-curricular opportunities.
- The quality of teaching across the school is very good.

Commentary

100. Attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is above national expectations. This indicates that the good standards observed at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. In the lessons and clubs observed the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils achieve well, as a result of their own enthusiasm, keenness to improve and good coaching. The school records indicate that standards in swimming certainly exceed national expectations with many pupils swimming longer distances. The annual 'swimmarathon' to raise money for charity was supported by more than a hundred pupils just before the inspection, many pupils swimming long distances. There has been good improvement in pupils' attainment in gymnastics.
101. Pupils in all year groups know the importance of warming up and cooling down exercises in relation to muscle tone, heartbeat and breathing. Pupils show increasing control and use of speed and tension to express feelings and moods as they get older. For example, pupils in a Year 4 lesson combined balance, poise and elevation in linking travelling movements during a gymnastics lesson. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 work well together when developing skills in managing control and speed, when making good use of space and when controlling and passing footballs and netballs.
102. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' physical ability, healthy life-styles and positive attitudes. There are eleven sports available to pupils including football, netball, athletics, tennis and lacrosse. School teams take part in friendly competitions with neighbouring schools. Very good community links are formed with other local schools. Valuable in-service training is obtained from the local education authority and from a number of the professional sports clubs around the school.
103. The quality of teaching is very good overall. The subject is managed and organised very well by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Other teachers willingly devote additional time to after-school practices and provide very good support for the subject leader. There is an excellent scheme of work and the teachers' detailed planning ensures that the full range of physical education activities is covered.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

104. Few lessons were observed in this area of the school's work and so no judgement has been made about overall provision. The school sees this work as an important part of its work and pupils' attitudes, achievements and self-worth are valued and promoted very well. The very high quality of teaching and excellent curricular enrichment, including a wide range of visits to places of educational interest and visitors to the school, contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how important elements of the community and society work. Circle time gives pupils opportunities for voicing their opinions and concerns. Opportunities provided during school assembly and collective worship encapsulate the concept of family, caring and belonging. The headteacher and staff have sought and acted on pupils' opinions very well including those of the school council. Pupils have therefore developed a very good understanding of how a democracy works as a result of the many opportunities for experiencing this good practice during their time in school. All aspects of a healthy lifestyle are very well covered in the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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