

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ST AUGUSTINE'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Monsall, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105490

Headteacher: Mrs Dorothy Ivatt

Lead inspector: Ms Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 257586

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	163
School address:	St Augustine's Street Monsall Manchester Lancashire
Postcode:	M40 8PL
Telephone number:	0161 205 2812
Fax number:	0161 205 0793
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	David Winston
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Augustine's C of E Primary School is a small school with 163 pupils on roll, most of whom are of white British origin. The school is situated in Monsall, three miles from Manchester city centre, in an area of very high social deprivation. Five per cent of pupils come from black British Caribbean backgrounds with 2 per cent of pupils being black African. The school has recently admitted three pupils who have refugee status who have English as an additional language and are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is just above the national average. There are no pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. The range and nature of pupils' special educational needs includes specific learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and social, emotional and behaviour problems. Many pupils experience stress due to their poor socio-economic circumstances and poor attainment on entry. The school's uptake of free school meals is very high with 74 per cent of pupils being eligible for free school meals. The school is part of the Excellence in Cities Initiative and two learning mentors are funded to help raise pupils' attendance levels, standards of attainment and to work with parents. The school participates in the Manchester Inclusion Standard and is also affiliated to the University of the First Age which aims to encourage positive learning behaviour. In 2002 the school attained a Healthy Schools award. The school works in challenging circumstances as it serves a community where there are high levels of crime, substance abuse and violence. Attainment on entry to the school is poor in nursery and well below average on entry to Year 1. The school has encountered many barriers to raising standards due to the lack of permanent staff appointed. The headteacher has been in post for two years and it is only since September that she has had a full complement of staff. This has been one of the main reasons why improvement since the previous inspection has been slow to get off the ground and standards have not risen at a faster rate.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19938	B Matusiak-Varley	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Music Foundation Stage <sup>1</sup> English as an additional language
31718	D Shields	Lay inspector	
4099	R Braithwaite	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
23977	A Smith	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL53 7JX

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

This is an improving school with good features providing a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils, many of whom experience learning difficulties. Under the good leadership and satisfactory management of the headteacher, standards are rising, but are below national averages overall. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in the infants and juniors and good in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is satisfactory with good features and pupils have good attitudes to learning. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are not high enough in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), but they are especially low in writing in the juniors.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage of learning is good and pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, although they do not attain the Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup> on entry to Year 1.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are well supported in lessons by competent teaching assistants.
- The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and pupils learn well.
- Insufficient emphasis is placed upon the development of subject specific skills.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school looks after its pupils very well, but assessment data is not used sufficiently well to plan the next steps of learning.
- Attendance is too low and too many pupils miss school.
- The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator is good.
- The ICT suite is too small, there are too few computers in the school and pupils' achievements are inconsistent.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory with some good features. The headteacher has been in post for two years and, since her appointment, widespread underachievement has been tackled and standards are rising. Lack of permanent staff, especially a deputy headteacher, affected rates of progress but effective systems are now in place for raising standards. The best improvement has been in developing the quality of teaching, implementing systems for tracking pupils' progress, developing the foundation stage of learning and improving behaviour. The leadership and management of the school have improved and a clear educational direction has been established.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Historically, based on national test results, standards have been too low and pupils have been underachieving. National test results in Year 2 in 2003 indicated that, in comparison with all schools, standards in reading were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally, they were well below average in writing, and below average in mathematics and science. In Year 6 in the tests of 2003, standards in English and mathematics were in the bottom 5 per cent nationally, in science they were well below average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were below average in Year 2 in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. In Year 6 standards in English were below average, they were in line with national average in mathematics and above national average in science. The school did not meet its annual targets in English and mathematics. Inspection findings show that pupils' achievements are now satisfactory overall in English, mathematics and science. They are good in design and technology and music, and they are good in history and religious education in the infants. Standards are rising and are now below the national average by the time that pupils leave school.

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<sup>2</sup> These are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

Standards in writing are well below national average in Year 6 but that is because 50 per cent of the pupils are below average attainers and are on the special educational needs register. Pupils' achievements in ICT are unsatisfactory. By the end of the Foundation Stage children do not attain the Early Learning Goals, in spite of good achievement, because their attainment on entry to the nursery is poor.

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils behave very well and have good attitudes to learning. Attendance is unsatisfactory but is improving.

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

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good features in the infants and juniors, and it is consistently good in the Foundation Stage of learning. The curriculum is satisfactory, with good opportunities for enrichment, but there are weaknesses in curriculum planning that slow down rates of learning in foundation subjects. Basic skills of reading, writing and number are taught well. Links with parents are satisfactory; they are good with the local community and other schools.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff is good, and management is satisfactory but improving. Governors are dedicated individuals, who support the school, and governance is good. All statutory requirements are met. The headteacher has been instrumental in providing a safe and secure learning environment for her pupils, many of whom have turbulent lives. Due to good school self-evaluation, she has provided a very clear educational direction and has won the hearts and minds of staff, parents and pupils. Her vision is only now being fully implemented as the school has a stable, dedicated and hard working staff.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. They value all the staff and know that their children are being well looked after. Pupils love their school, and are very proud of the many changes that the headteacher has made. They know that they are valued and that the headteacher and staff have their best interests at heart. Procedures for seeking parents' and pupils' views are satisfactory.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, (especially in writing), mathematics, science and ICT.
- Ensure that data from assessment is used consistently to plan the next steps of pupils' learning.
- Raise attendance levels.
- Ensure curriculum planning identifies skills development in foundation subjects.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Whilst standards are below national averages, overall they are rising and pupils' achievements are **satisfactory**. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, those with English as an additional language and those pupils who are above average attainers achieve satisfactorily.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not high enough in English, mathematics, science and ICT and pupils' skills in writing are well below national averages in Year 6.
- Pupils' achievements in the Foundation Stage of learning are good due to consistently good teaching and achievements are very good in personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils in both the infants and juniors achieve well in design and technology and music and pupils in Year 2 achieve standards expected for seven-year-olds in history and religious education.
- Pupils' achievements in science are good, especially in experimental and investigative science, as are their achievements in number.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.4 (12.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.8 (11.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7 (14.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 20 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	22.2 (25.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.1 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.1 (29.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. The 2003 national test results show that standards have been too low for a considerable length of time. In comparison to similar schools, in the infants pupils attained standards that were in the bottom 5 per cent nationally in reading, standards were well below average in writing and below average in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics were in the bottom 5 per cent nationally and were well below average in science. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 were below the national average. Standards in mathematics were above national averages. By the end of Year 6, standards in English were below average, in line with the average in mathematics and above average in science. Too few pupils achieved the higher levels in both the infants and juniors. In both the infants and juniors the performance of pupils in all core subjects fell below the national average. There are no significant differences in attainment by gender. National test results must be treated with caution as the groups of pupils taking the test were small. One reason for the low attainment is that pupils' attainment on entry to the



school is well below that expected of pupils of a similar age nationally. Pupils have many barriers to learning, for example:

- They have poor communication skills.
  - Many come from homes where there is high unemployment and socio-economic circumstances are unfavourable.
  - A high percentage of pupils have not experienced many rich pre-school experiences.
  - There are several pupils who are malnourished.
  - Attendance does not always figure highly on some families' agendas.
  - Several pupils do not have access to books and educational toys.
  - Pupils experience difficulty in staying on task and remembering what they have learnt because of their weak concentration skills.
  - Pupils struggle with transferring what they have learnt in English and mathematics into other subjects.
  - A high proportion of pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour and struggle with boundaries, they also have difficulty in controlling their emotions.
2. The school does well in promoting good learning habits and creating a purposeful and secure learning environment within which pupils can flourish.
  3. Standards are rising and are now below the national average by the time pupils leave school as opposed to being in the bottom 5 per cent nationally as they were previously identified in the national tests in comparison with all schools. Teachers are very hard working and are conscious of the need to raise standards. The good systems of school self-evaluation, tracking pupils' progress, implementation of performance management and good monitoring of teaching and learning, alongside consistent behaviour, are starting to pay dividends.
  4. The biggest improvement in pupils' achievement can be seen in the Foundation Stage and the infants where pupils are making better progress due to children's good achievements in the Foundation Stage of learning, which are now filtering through the school. Pupils are now acquiring basic skills to access the curriculum, their achievements are good and this is now having a positive effect on standards in the infant department. Children in the Foundation Stage of learning in personal, social and emotional development achieve very well but they do not all attain the expected standards in this area of learning and attainment on entry to Year 1 is just below that expected of pupils of this age nationally. Pupils achieve well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development but their attainment on entry is well below that expected of pupils of this age.
  5. This year the school has a high proportion of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 who have special educational needs and who are below average attainers, and there has been a high percentage of mobility in Year 6. Nearly 38 per cent of pupils in Year 6 did not start their education at the school. This naturally represses end of year results.
  6. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking, listening and reading are below average. In Year 2, standards in writing and spelling are below average but in Year 6, due to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, standards in writing and spelling are well below average.
  7. In mathematics, standards are below the national average with a particular weakness in handling data in Year 6. However, pupils' achievements in using and applying number are good throughout the school. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory in mathematics.
  8. In science pupils' achievements are good in experimental and investigative science. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain average standards in science and achieve well. In Year 6 pupils achievements are satisfactory but standards are below national average largely as a result of pupils' weak recording skills.

9. In religious education, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus but, by the end of Year 6, pupils do not attain the required standards, nevertheless, their achievements are satisfactory. Standards in ICT are below national averages and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory, because of limited resources and lack of identification of ICT in teachers' planning of work for other subjects. In design and technology, music and history in Year 2, pupils meet national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievements are good. This is good improvement since the previous inspection when standards in design and technology were below national expectations. In music satisfactory standards have been maintained.
10. No judgements can be made on geography, art and design and physical education as insufficient lessons were seen, but the school is providing a satisfactory coverage.
11. The school has recently admitted three refugee pupils who have English as an additional language. These pupils make satisfactory progress but as yet the school is assessing their levels of competence and devising suitable strategies to support their learning. These pupils' achievements are satisfactory but more resources and teacher intervention are needed to help them learn basic vocabulary to access the curriculum.
12. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good because of the very effective and targeted support they are given. In lessons, the teachers and support staff interact well with the pupils with special educational needs. They ensure that the pupils are fully integrated into the work the class is doing and that any extra support that is provided challenges the pupils to achieve well. For example, in a religious education lesson in the ICT suite, pupils demonstrated very limited word processing skills. Individual attention was given to every pupil and they quickly picked up how to change font size and centre work. The achievement of pupils who are above average attainers is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent at times, because the use of assessment data is not yet fully developed to move pupils on in their learning, and too few opportunities are provided for independent learning.
13. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This is good improvement on previous inspection findings, when their rates of progress were judged as satisfactory. There have been many barriers to raising standards since the previous inspection in 1998:
  - The school has not had consistently stable leadership, especially in relation to having a permanent deputy headteacher;
  - The school has faced staffing problems due to recruitment and retention issues;
  - The headteacher had not had a well established senior management team including a special educational needs co-ordinator;
  - The behaviour of pupils prevented effective learning from taking place, because there was a lack of secure systems to ensure that pupils consistently behaved well.
14. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory but provision for ICT still remains unsatisfactory in spite of the hard efforts of the school to improve the ICT suite. Standards in ICT have not risen sufficiently. With the present complement of staff and the good leadership of the headteacher, the school is well placed to improve standards quickly and efficiently.

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

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and other personal qualities are **good**. Pupils' moral development is very good, their spiritual and social development is good and pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is below average and punctuality is satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good attitudes to school help them to achieve well, especially in practical subjects and activities.
- Relationships and pupils' behaviour are good throughout the school.
- There are insufficient opportunities for independent learning.
- The cultural diversity of this country is not celebrated as much as it could be.
- Attendance is monitored very closely and rates are improving.

## Commentary

15. Pupils like the school and show an interest in school life. They participate enthusiastically in activities. For instance, school clubs, which allow pupils to develop their interest, are well attended. In lessons that are of a practical nature such as design and technology and physical education, pupils' attitudes are always good. However, in those subjects where they need to record their work through writing, the pupils' attitudes are not always as positive.
16. Pupils form good relationships with each other and with their teachers and most pupils develop a sense of self-discipline. They contribute to their own classroom rules and there is a well-structured system for rewards and sanctions that is clearly understood by all. These effectively support the development of good behaviour. There is no evidence of bullying and pupils are confident that their teachers would deal rigorously with any incidents. There have been eight fixed period exclusions and the school has followed all the correct procedures in dealing with these issues.
17. The school takes care to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. All staff work hard to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem and as a result pupils are beginning to develop a better concept of self worth. However, the school does not provide sufficient opportunities for independent learning and for allowing the pupils to take on greater responsibilities, consequently these skills for adult life are not being developed adequately.
18. Pupils have a good knowledge of right from wrong, the provision for moral development across the school is very good and it is well ordered and a fair place to be. The school provides good opportunities for its pupils to develop spiritual awareness. In Year 2 pupils expressed how being able to write prayers in silence made them feel calm and good. Year 6 pupils demonstrated high levels of concentration in a music lesson. In nursery, the children were able to tell the teachers how listening to a piece of music by Mozart made them feel. These experiences result in many calm and purposeful classrooms where feelings are valued. Whilst cultural development is satisfactory, more opportunities need to be systematically planned for across the curriculum ensuring that all aspects of cultural diversity are celebrated.

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.1
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.5
National data:	0.4

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

19. Over the last 18 months unauthorised absence has significantly reduced. This is because of the school's increased focus on promoting the need for regular attendance. The learning mentor funded by Excellence in Cities Initiative monitors attendance very well. She plays a significant role in following up cases of non-attendance and works closely with the educational welfare officer to help those families who do not ensure their children attend school regularly. Despite the school's best efforts, not all families ensure their children arrive at school on time each day. This puts pupils at a disadvantage because they often miss the introduction to their lessons.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	143	8	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	9	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0

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

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and the satisfactory curriculum is enriched with a good range of visits, visitors and after school clubs.

#### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching, learning and assessment are **satisfactory** but the use of assessment to plan the next steps of pupils' learning is unsatisfactory overall.

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

- Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage of learning.
- Support staff make a very valid contribution to pupils' learning.
- Teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory due to limited resources.
- Pupils are encouraged to do well and staff have high expectations of their pupils.
- Links with literacy, numeracy and ICT are not yet firmly established in teaching foundation subjects.
- Behaviour is managed well and pupils learn in a safe learning environment.
- Staff are hard-working and dedicated.
- Assessment data is not sufficiently well used to plan the next steps of pupils' learning and as a result above average attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by a hard working and knowledgeable special educational needs co-ordinator.
- Teaching assistants are well used to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

#### **Commentary**

*Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (10%)	15 (39%)	18 (48%)	1 (3%)	0	0

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

20. The staff have only been together as a team for just over a year. They are very hard working individuals who are dedicated to the pupils in their care and keen to improve on their previous past performance.
21. Staff work closely together to ensure that teaching approaches are consistent across the school and are committed to improvement. Pupils learn satisfactorily with several examples of good achievement. They know what is expected of them in terms of behaviour, hard work and commitment to task, even though learning for them is difficult. Teachers provide a calm atmosphere for learning, pupils know their efforts will be appreciated and they generally try hard to do well but, where the isolated example of unsatisfactory teaching is seen, pupils lose focus because the work is not sufficiently well matched to their needs because of the underdeveloped use of assessment data to plan the next steps of pupils' learning.
22. In the Foundation Stage, children learn well because good learning habits are established, assessment data is used well to plan the next steps of pupils' learning, and basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are taught effectively. Plenty of opportunities are provided for the children to learn using their senses. There is a strong emphasis on developing children's language so that they can access all aspects of learning.
23. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall with examples of good practice. Teachers have a firm grasp of how the national strategies can be used to enhance pupils' learning and adaptations have been made to suit the school's particular circumstances. This means that pupils are acquiring the basic skills to access the curriculum. Some teachers are now planning opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other subjects but this is not yet consistent practice across the school and has been identified as an area to be addressed in the school development plan.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps detailed and up-to-date records of pupils' barriers to learning and ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Teaching assistants are used well in all classes and provide for pupils with special educational needs very effectively. They are clear about what they are doing to support the pupils they are working with. Consequently this supports the pupils' good achievements. Strategies to address pupils' needs are clearly identified in their individual education plans. The pupils are mainly supported within classes but are withdrawn on some occasions so that their specific needs can be addressed. The individual education plans for the pupils contain clear targets that are manageable and practical and are effectively implemented. The expertise of outside agencies is well used to support learning and, as a result, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to targets identified in their individual education plans. Support staff including learning mentors, make a valid contribution to pupils' learning. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory but, as yet, not all staff are fully aware of how to intervene in these pupils' learning and on rare occasions these pupils do not receive sufficiently tailored resources to meet their needs. For example, in a design and technology lesson in the juniors, insufficient emphasis was placed by the teacher in developing pupils' subject specific vocabulary when making buzzers. The school is rightly seeking support from the local education authority for these pupils.
25. Assessment is satisfactory overall in English and mathematics but is not developed sufficiently rigorously in foundation subjects to ensure that teachers have a detailed record of pupils' skills acquisition. At present, the school is in the very early stages of using data from assessment to challenge all groups of pupils and whilst there are examples of good practice across the school its use is inconsistent and is unsatisfactory overall. The headteacher has identified this as an area to be addressed. The teaching of ICT over time is unsatisfactory due to limited resources. During the week of the inspection the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall but at present the use of ICT to support learning is limited and is unsatisfactory overall.

26. The school has made good improvements in developing teaching since the previous inspection. The best improvement has been in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and in the teaching of pupils in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is now well monitored by the headteacher, and is improving due to the rigorous systems implemented for performance management.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is **satisfactory**, but there are good opportunities provided to extend learning outside of lessons. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory but resources in ICT are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources in ICT are unsatisfactory overall.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is good.
- The school provides insufficient opportunities to develop subject skills.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities are offered.
- Opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT are not formally identified in planning and are unsatisfactory overall.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.

## **Commentary**

27. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Although the curriculum is broad and balanced, many foundation subjects lack clear identification of how children will progress in acquiring subject specific skills. The school has rightly placed a high priority on ensuring pupils have access to literacy and numeracy, but as a result pupils across the school are given insufficient opportunities to develop the necessary skills and knowledge needed in many of the foundation subjects. In addition there are no formal and planned opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum and consequently a significant majority of pupils struggle to transfer and apply their skills into different contexts.
28. The school meets requirements for religious education and the locally agreed syllabus is adhered to. Good provision is made for personal, social and health education and citizenship, including sex education and alcohol and drugs misuse.
29. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and consequently make good progress and achieve well. They are well supported by the teachers and the support staff. Individual education plans effectively promote learning and are implemented well. A good level of support is in place to enable the pupils to sustain their attention and concentration and to participate in lessons.
30. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage of learning is good. The curriculum is well planned, resources are good and plenty of opportunities are provided for children to learn using their senses.
31. The school offers its pupils a good range of extra-curricular activities, for example, choir, recorders, sewing club, and sports activities. The well-attended breakfast club provides a good start to the day for many pupils and they clearly enjoy eating and playing together. There is satisfactory equality of access for all pupils. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Too few opportunities are identified in planning and the headteacher is presently addressing this issue.
32. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory except in ICT where there have been insufficient improvement in resources to keep up with developments. A satisfactory

number of staff and support staff are employed to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. The school has implemented an effective scheme of work for ICT but has too few ICT resources to implement it fully.

### Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive good support, advice and guidance. Pupils' involvement in the school's work is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's systems and procedures ensure that boys and girls of all ages are safe and very well cared for.
- Adults who work in the school know the pupils well.
- Pupils think highly of the school and are very content with the care and guidance they receive.
- Pupils' views are valued but there is no process for seeking their opinions on a regular basis.
- Induction arrangements in the nursery are very good.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs but pupils with English as an additional language require further support in spite of satisfactory provision.

### Commentary

33. The school is a happy community in which pupils say they enjoy most of their lessons and feel safe and well cared for. Teachers monitor pupils' personal development well, although they do it informally, through discussion. Pupils are encouraged to behave well, to respect, respond to and value the views of others. This results in good behaviour and a good level of racial harmony throughout the school. Pupils confirm that everyone in the school is friendly and that name calling or bullying are rare. Pupils from ethnic backgrounds equally state that instances of name calling related to racism are rare. One older pupil states "the headteacher takes this sort of thing very seriously". Pupils appreciate the way their work and effort are valued and celebrated, and especially like the celebration assembly and the star of the week.
34. In discussions with inspectors, pupils were willing and very eager to talk about what they enjoyed about school and where they thought improvement could be made. It is evident that they think very highly of their teachers and the headteacher. Older pupils state "we are very proud of this school". As part of the school's daily routines, all adults in the school take time to talk to pupils. In lessons, teachers listen to and value what pupils have to say. There is no system, however, to seek their opinions formally on a regular basis, and so the school is not able to take pupils' opinions into account when agreeing priorities for improvement. The school acknowledges the need to address this aspect.
35. Staff follow the agreed policies and very clear practices relating to health, safety and child protection very well. These procedures permeate all aspects of school life and are very clearly understood by all concerned that work at the school, help at the school or visit the school. Relationships with pupils are good and when teachers notice or are told pupils are having difficulties they take action quickly to put matters right. Pupils confirm there is an adult they can talk to if they are unhappy. One girl commented "teachers comfort you when you are sad". Pupils state that teachers will help them with their work, but as a Year 2 girl says, "you can ask for help with your work, but you must try yourself first". The learning mentors, funded by the Excellence in Cities initiative, in particular, show an extraordinary commitment and concern for the needs of boys and girls of all ages. Pupils confirm they feel very well supported by the learning mentors and say they help them when they are experiencing difficulties. This emphasis on care and support throughout the school helps pupils to manage the problems they are experiencing and because of this many are able to enjoy their lessons and make progress with their learning.

36. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs receive good support from the adults within the school. The special needs co-ordinator, teachers and support staff are fully committed to helping the pupils to make progress in meeting their targets. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory overall but they do not get enough help in lessons.
37. There are sensitive arrangements for supporting both parents and their children when they start in the nursery class. This helps children to quickly feel at home and adjust to the routines of school life. Home visits ensure that staff gain valuable information about the children. This enables them to identify those who might have special educational needs so that additional support can be provided at an early stage. The visits also help to establish an early partnership with parents.
38. Since the previous inspection, good improvement has been made in establishing procedures for supporting pupils' academic achievements, attendance and conduct.

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

Links and liaison with the community are **good**. The school's partnership with parents is **satisfactory**. Liaison with schools and other education providers is also **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Links with the community improves the quality of pupils education.
- Although the school welcomes parents help and support, they are not as closely involved in their children's education as they could be.
- The school makes every attempt to work in partnership with the parents of the pupils with special educational needs.

### **Commentary**

39. Since the appointment of the new headteacher relationships with parents have improved. This is confirmed by their positive views expressed through the questionnaire and comments at the pre-meeting. When referring to the headteacher one parent states "she is marvellous and really cares about our kids!" a view echoed by many others. The school tries very hard to encourage parents to come into school and take a more active role in their children's education, their participation is slowly improving. There are many formal and informal opportunities for parents to talk to teachers. The headteacher, in particular, encourages parents to come in, at any time, if there are issues to discuss, this means that any concerns are quickly addressed, and many parents state they appreciate this. The learning mentor, who has responsibility for monitoring attendance, is forging trusting relationships with parents and this is helping to improve pupils' attendance rates. Where their children are directly involved parents give good support to these events, such as concerts or class and celebration assemblies. However, many parents are not apparently supporting their children's learning either at school or at home. Although the views of parents have been sought as part of the healthy schools initiative, the school acknowledges the need to both seek the views of parents in a more systematic way and find ways to encourage them to play a greater part in their children's education.
40. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to contribute to and attend the reviews of the progress their children are making. The special needs co-ordinator actively seeks out parents to ensure they have been involved in the review process.
41. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the visits they have made into the wider community, and the visitors, who have come to the school, such as the artists, theatre groups and musicians. Many pupils also have the opportunity to take part in concerts linked to the arts, for instance, at the Bridgwater Hall. Pupils' experiences are broadened by all these opportunities. Members of the nearby community visit the school to attend concerts and school productions. Pupils also



participate in events in the community such as carol singing at local care homes for the elderly. These opportunities also make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

42. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection, and the school continues to do all it can to ensure that parents are seen as true partners in their children's learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and governance of the school are **good**. Management is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides good leadership.
- Management overall is satisfactory and improving but co-ordinators are in the early stages of monitoring standards in their subjects.
- Teamwork throughout the school is good.
- The school improvement plan, whilst detailed, does not identify its most immediate priorities clearly enough.
- The governing body is very well led by the chair and makes a good contribution to the management of the school.
- Day-to-day administration is very good.
- Management by the special needs co-ordinator is good

### **Commentary**

43. The headteacher is an effective and determined leader. When she was appointed two years ago, standards had deteriorated over time and were very low, numbers were falling and the school did not have a stable staff. Since then she has led the school to a much stronger position. There is a stable staff, numbers are increasing, standards are slowly rising and the school is a valued centre of the local community. Her pastoral vision, especially, has helped pupils to have greater self esteem, respect each other and property and belongings, and feel valued and cared for in their school community. Most importantly, though, her pride in the school has been transferred to many others – pupils, staff, governors and parents. As a result, she is rightly held in very high regard by all connected with the school.
44. The headteacher, though, is realistic enough to know that this is only the start of her journey. Although pupils often make good progress in the school, it is inconsistent and not in all subjects. The rapid improvement in care, attitudes and relationships has not been entirely matched by improvement in standards. This inspection showed that some areas of the curriculum like science and mathematics are developing well. However, other subjects, such as writing in English and ICT still need considerable improvement. The headteacher and her new, enthusiastic deputy are now focusing strongly on the development of an effective management team which can take over responsibility for the many identified priorities for improvement in the school.
45. All staff in the school, and governors, feel that they are part of a strong and vigorous team with high aspirations for the whole development of the child, and the continued improvement in standards. The deputy headteacher, who is a good teaching role model for the school, and several new co-ordinators, are determined that they will respond positively to their school priorities. The senior management team has produced a new school improvement plan. Whilst this correctly identifies a considerable number of priorities it is at present unwieldy and somewhat unrealistic in the timescales it has set. The most important areas for improvement are not sufficiently highlighted for urgent action, and are competing with many more minor areas for development. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to be involved in the monitoring of their subjects more actively. This is because the headteacher has been setting the criteria and

agenda for their roles through her extensive monitoring of planning, learning and teaching. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching and learning is good. It has been rigorous and effective and has led to improvement in teaching. The headteacher and deputy both have considerable workloads, but planning for effective delegation, and training for other managers, is now being implemented. The skills and commitment of the support staff in the school match those of the teaching staff and very effective teamwork is clearly evident from the start of breakfast club at 7.45 am to the finish of the extra-curricular clubs at the end of each day. With the present complement of staff the school is well placed to move forward.

46. The leadership and management of special educational needs and the Foundation Stage of learning are good, but they are unsatisfactory for pupils with English as an additional language. The special needs co-ordinator's overall approach to reviewing procedures and documentation for the pupils with special educational needs is thorough and well organised. The governors are supportive of the work done with these pupils and provide appropriate resources for this area of school provision, effectively contributing to the good achievement of the pupils.
47. Governance of the school is good. Although the governing body experiences some difficulties in filling all of its posts, especially those of parent governors, it is still an effective and knowledgeable unit. It is particularly well led by a chair, who has a very experienced educational background. The governors have a considerable knowledge of the school and its pupils, and have clear sighted and accurate views of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have established additional committees to deal with specific aspects such as ethos and Inclusion, and are working very closely with subject co-ordinators in main subject areas for improvement in standards. The staff appreciate the strong support of the governors in the challenges they face on a daily basis. The chair is an effective link between the school and the parents, and is also very well known to the pupils.
48. The school conducts good and regular self-evaluation and its conclusions about its performance, and priorities are accurate and realistic. Performance management is good. It has been introduced within the last two years and appropriate pupil progress is defined and supported by rigorous opportunities for continuous professional development. All staff, including support assistants, have regular opportunities to train both together and as individuals. Induction of staff new to the school is well planned and effective. The school also offers good opportunities on a regular basis to trainee student teachers. Teaching staff are often difficult to recruit, but the management of the school has been successful recently in recruiting and retaining effective teachers.
49. The school has a satisfactory understanding of best value principles. It knows that there is a need to improve consultation within the school community and also, if possible, with parents. Financial management is good. There is a clear understanding of strategic planning of expenditure in its relation to school needs and priorities over the medium term, such as its commitment to retaining small classes, at least in the mornings. Day-to-day administration is very good. The calm and experienced school secretary is a considerable asset to the school. She always has a cheery smile for parents, pupils and visitors.
50. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good, and the headteacher has set up good systems and procedures to ensure that the school runs smoothly. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

*Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	553,438.29
Total expenditure	605,649.81
Expenditure per pupil	3,785.31

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	87,560.30
Balance carried forward to the next	35,348.78



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

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

Provision for children in the foundation stage of learning is **good**.

51. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the nursery and reception class by one teacher, two nursery nurses and a learning assistant. Attainment on entry to the nursery is very poor in all areas of learning and most children have not had pre-school learning experiences. Many of them cannot articulate their needs and have poor social skills. Staff are very hard working and know the needs of these young children very well. Good provision is made for these young children to develop their experiences and provide them with a safe and secure learning environment. The quality of teaching is good with examples of very good practice in the teaching of basic skills. Pupils achieve well in all areas of learning but their achievements are very good in personal, social and emotional development. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is well below that expected of children in all areas of learning except personal, social and emotional development, where it is below expectations of pupils of this age.
52. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. A well-structured and detailed curriculum has been put in place, teaching is now good, especially the teaching of initial sounds, early reading skills and early knowledge of number, and the assessment of children's progress is thorough. However, the Foundation Stage co-ordinator has only been in post a very short length of time and, whilst effective systems to raise standards are in place, they have not had time to embed fully in practice or to reflect raised standards. One of the biggest barriers to learning is the lack of children's pre-school experiences for which staff have to compensate consistently when planning work for these pupils.

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

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

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

- Warm and supportive relationships mean that children feel secure and become confident.
- Good routines and consistently high expectations of behaviour mean that children quickly know what to do in different situations.
- Teaching is very good and children learn quickly.

#### **Commentary**

53. Children do not attain the expected standards on entry to Year 1 but achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment because of the very good teaching. Staff are well versed in what young children need to grow in confidence. Staff quickly get to know the children and their families and establish very positive and trusting relationships. Children respond very well to the clear guidelines and learn how to share, take turns and help each other. Snack time is a delight in both the nursery and reception class and children are polite to one another responding with please and thank you. Children are encouraged to take turns and to help one another. A small group of children were looking at books together in one session and happily shared a book with a child who joined them. Staff warmly encourage children to do things for themselves such as tidy up their toys, put their coats on and mix paint but are quick to intervene if they start struggling. In the nursery, staff patiently wait for children to pick out their milk but they offer help to those who experience difficulty in finding their name cards. Children feel secure, well supported and happy when they enter the Foundation Stage.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken by staff to promote pupils speaking and listening skills.
- Writing and reading skills develop quickly because basic skills are taught well.
- More opportunities could be provided for above average attaining pupils to record their work formally.

### Commentary

54. Children do not attain the expected standards and their attainment on entry to Year 1 is poor overall. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment but they have significant gaps in their learning. Teaching is effective. Staff place great emphasis on demonstrating correct sentence construction, vocals and initial sounds of objects. A particular strength in the teaching is the good modelling of early reading and writing skills. The classrooms are full of interesting activities so that children want to talk and explore and adults are always at hand to provide models of good language that the children can follow. For example, in the 'garden centre' staff model how to ask for seeds and pay for them. In the 'Sunbeam Café' good opportunities are provided for children to practise early writing skills by creating imaginary menus. However, more opportunities could be provided, for above average attaining pupils to record their work formally through more focused modelling of writing by teachers and support staff. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children can sequence the story of the 'Little Red Hen', sing a variety of rhymes and know several initial sounds. Children are encouraged to record their ideas, in the nursery, a member of staff asked children to show her how they wrote their name and after they had made a series of marks praised their efforts and said "this is how I write my name". Children watched carefully and identified certain letters. Careful checks are made on how children are developing their skills, which enables staff to provide suitably graded tasks to meet children's needs.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical skills are practised daily.
- There is good support for children's mathematical language and children learn well.
- Children love practical activities and eagerly sing their number rhymes.
- Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to form their numbers correctly.

### Commentary

55. Children do not attain the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage, and attainment on entry is well below that expected of children entering Year 1 nationally. Children's achievements are good because of the good quality of teaching. Staff plan a good range of opportunities for children to learn about shapes, measurements and numbers through practical activities and also make sure that they use these skills at all times. Children know about shapes, they can identify and name a circle, triangle, rectangle, and use the computer to match shapes. They know their numbers securely up to five but have difficulty in matching the appropriate amount of cubes to numbers over five. Children struggle with writing numbers correctly and, with very simple addition, too few opportunities are provided for them to form their numbers correctly. Children love singing number rhymes and staff emphasise mathematical language effectively so that children can talk about what they are doing. The good quality of teacher intervention is helping raise standards, especially in counting up to five and recognising simple shapes. In the outdoor play area every opportunity is taken by staff to

encourage mathematical language. For example, when playing with balls children are asked to develop their language of next to, pass to the right and to the left.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good gains in learning about different festivals and customs.
- There are plenty of opportunities for children to learn using their senses.

### **Commentary**

56. Children's achievement is good but their attainment on entry to Year 1 is well below that expected nationally. Children use the computer well to support learning and are generally interested in the world around them. They are particularly interested in celebration especially festivals such as Divali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year. They marvel at Chinese fans, chop sticks and the wonderful dragon they have made. They quickly learn that different religions celebrate a range of festivals and that Diwali is the festival of lights. Many pupils cannot remember days of the week and struggle with identifying when something is old and new and confuse days of the week and months of the year. They can use the mouse to match objects on the computer and several higher attaining pupils can identify the letters of their names on the keyboard. Children have good opportunities to explore shops in the local area but many of them struggle with identifying oldest and youngest members of their immediate family. The recent visit to the garden centre encouraged children to look at plants in their environment. Teaching is good and children learn well. Staff ensure that every opportunity is taken to encourage children to learn about their surroundings and use their senses when tasting different types of food. Children are gaining good insights into the multicultural nature of our society but, above all, staff are capitalising on children's natural curiosity to explore the world around them. For example, when exploring hot and cold, children are given good opportunities to develop their observational skills and good opportunities are provided for children to explore a range of textures such as bark, twigs, leaves and compost. Children are fascinated by watching plants grow and they marvel at the way baby animals grow. Many have good knowledge of the needs of babies and eagerly tell the teacher of what babies like to eat. Staff offer clear explanations, repeatedly pointing to objects and getting pupils to repeat the names in an attempt to increase their vocabulary.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a well equipped outdoor environment.
- Work is well planned to develop control both of small and larger physical movements.

### **Commentary**

57. Children do not attain the expected standards on entry to Year 1 and in spite of good achievements their physical skills are well below that expected nationally. Children's achievements are good because of the good quality of teaching and learning. For example teachers demonstrate how children should tiptoe, stretch their bodies, find a space, and be careful not to bump into a friend. Children have good access to a well-equipped outdoor play area and staff make full use of the good opportunities provided for children to explore space and engage in turn taking activities. Children's pencil control skills are weak. Many do not hold their pencils correctly and they have difficulty using scissors. Children climb well and use wheeled toys confidently. Good learning opportunities are provided for children to draw, paint,

assemble and model. Staff check how children hold their pencils and crayons and encourage them to grip them correctly.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to engage in creative play but have difficulty in their undertakings through a lack of vocabulary.
- A good range of resources are used.
- More opportunities could be provided for staff to engage in role-play with the children.

### **Commentary**

58. On entry to Year 1 children do not attain the expected standards and overall standards are well below those expected of children of a similar age nationally. Pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, thoroughly enjoy their singing, painting and music sessions and love to participate in the role-play situations but they have difficulty in extending their play, because they lack basic vocabulary. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and use good quality resources. Children are encouraged to talk about how different colours make them feel, for example, they know that orange represents warmth and that white is a cold colour. Children really enjoy themselves in the role-play area, they eagerly run about "mowing the lawn" in the garden centre and ordering cups of tea in the café. They have access to good quality instruments and thoroughly enjoy accompanying nursery rhymes with percussion instruments. However, more opportunities could be provided for staff to participate in role-play activities and model language for children.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are provided for speaking and listening.
- Standards in reading and writing are below national averages in all years and above average attainers, whilst making satisfactory progress, could be challenged even further.
- Pupils' skills of research are unsatisfactory.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Library resources are not plentiful enough to support rigorous development of research skills.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress but do not receive enough adult help in the classrooms.
- The use of assessment to plan the next steps of pupils' learning is not sufficiently developed and is unsatisfactory overall.

### **Commentary**

59. In the 2003 national tests the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 were very low and well below average compared with similar schools. In Year 2 standards were very low in reading and well below average in writing, but were below average compared with similar schools. Despite the best efforts of teachers, pupils really struggle in the acquisition of language skills. Analysis of attainment on entry shows many pupils enter school with very low levels of communication skills. In some year groups there are high proportions of pupils on the special needs register, for example, 50 per cent in Year 6. There are also a number of pupils who have experienced emotional trauma. There are many barriers to learning but throughout the school

pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school has recently acquired a very small number of pupils with English as an additional language. These pupils make satisfactory gains in learning but do not receive the support in lessons that would help them to access the curriculum.

60. Although pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average by the end of both Year 2 and 6, they are given plenty of good quality opportunities to talk with one another and they clearly enjoy these interactions. Whilst this has resulted in giving the pupils the confidence to speak, in Year 2 they still struggle with their choice of words and organising what they say. In Year 6 some pupils do not speak audibly and many of them have difficulty choosing vocabulary and communicating complex ideas.
61. Overall standards in reading are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The good systems for school self-evaluation have highlighted weaknesses in reading. The decision to teach guided reading in a daily session additional to the literacy hour is starting to have effects on improving fluency, but pupils struggle with meanings of words and understanding of texts. Despite this they enjoy reading, speak enthusiastically about books and can talk about their favourite authors, but their skills of research are unsatisfactory and too few pupils are able to find the correct information in texts.
62. In writing, standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. Spelling and handwriting are poor across the school. Many pupils have significant difficulties with spelling and poor handwriting skills often result in presented work that is of a low standard. Writing is currently the focus of a whole school target for improvement, but it is not sufficiently focused to ensure a clear understanding of what is needed to raise standards. Teachers work hard and give realistic praise for pupils' efforts, but there is a lack of consistency across the school in expectations, in understanding of the National Curriculum levels in writing and in establishing what is acceptable in a piece of written work produced by the pupils. Therefore, the use of assessment in planning the next steps of pupils' learning, whilst improving, still has weaknesses and is unsatisfactory overall
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in all years, with some examples of good practice. Lessons are generally well planned and prepared. Teachers know the pupils well and support and extend learning through effective questioning. Where teaching encourages pupils to be more actively involved, such as in role-play situations, they display good attitudes and show interest and enthusiasm for their work. Pupils' attitudes towards work that involves writing are not as good, particularly in the juniors. Their lack of ability in this area, low confidence levels and negative views on writing are contributory factors. Consequently the quality and quantity of written work suffer. Staff work hard to overcome pupils' barriers but, as yet, the use of ICT does not have a high enough profile in learning and is unsatisfactory overall. The very poor literacy skills of pupils with special educational needs inhibit their learning, although they are very well supported by teaching assistants. Support staff ensure pupils have fully understood the information presented by the teacher, by checking understanding and modelling the skills required, so that the achievement of these pupils is good. Achievement of pupils who are above average attainers, and those who have English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall, but the use of assessment to plan the next steps of pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. This is because teachers are just coming to grips with skills underpinning level descriptors and, whilst pupils have been set writing targets, they are not consistently applied to other subjects in which pupils are expected to write. Teachers are beginning to make links with literacy in other subjects but, as yet, this is not fully consistent throughout the school. It must be remembered that staff have only worked together as a team since September and already much has been done to improve the quality of pupils' written work.
64. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory; the co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and high levels of enthusiasm. She is committed to raising standards within the subject. Resources are satisfactory, but the school library lacks sufficient books to support all areas of the curriculum and to ensure that it becomes a useful resource in the development



of reading and research skills, and ICT is not used sufficiently well as a tool to support pupils' learning in classes. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection and pupils' progress is now satisfactory.

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

65. Provision for pupils to use their language and literacy skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for speaking and listening are provided across a range of subjects, such as in science, where pupils discuss in pairs which materials are magnetic. In reading, and particularly in writing, pupils' low levels of attainment inhibit development of these areas across the curriculum.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

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

- Standards are below average at the ages of seven and 11, but are improving, and pupils achieve well in numeracy.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well.
- Achievement in numeracy is good in Years 1 and 2.
- The use of assessment to plan for higher attaining pupils is underdeveloped.
- Pupils have good speaking opportunities in mathematics and the teaching of mental mathematics is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped and is unsatisfactory overall.

#### **Commentary**

66. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in mathematics were described as being in line with national expectation throughout the school. Shortly afterwards though, standards started to decline and have been low or very low for several years. The evidence from this inspection shows that standards in mathematics are improving although they still remain below the national average at the ages of seven and 11 years. Pupils in the infants achieve well in numeracy. Nearly all pupils are attaining average standards, but too few reach an above average level. In Year 6 last year, no pupils attained a higher Level 5. Pupils enter the school with very low mathematical knowledge but make good progress in both the reception class and Years 1 and 2. In their four junior years, the progress of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported and achieve well throughout the school. Most other pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. The very small number of higher attainers - about two or three in each class - are not stretched enough in order to reach the higher levels of which they could be capable. Pupils with English as an additional language are competent in undertaking numerical calculations but struggle with mental mathematics and problem solving. Their achievements are satisfactory overall. Inspection findings show that standards are below national averages and pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
67. Teaching and learning are generally good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in the juniors. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers concentrate well on teaching basic skills, there is frequent good consolidation work, and pupils are given many opportunities to develop their understanding of number. Teaching and learning in the junior classes are satisfactory. Again, teachers spend much time reinforcing earlier mathematical knowledge and encouraging basic skills development. Number work and problem solving are taught well, but there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge of shape and space, and to understand data handling through the use of ICT. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress and needs in mathematics is generally accurate and satisfactory overall. The use of ICT is

underdeveloped and is unsatisfactory overall due to unsatisfactory resources and lack of space for more computers to be put in the ICT suite. However, this analysis is not used well enough in planning for the small number of higher attaining pupils. These pupils often tackle the same work as the rest of their class and are not consistently extended or encouraged to work independently. Teachers throughout the school use mathematical language well, explain the meanings of words and encourage pupils to discuss and explain the way they try to solve mathematical problems. The teaching of mental mathematics is good, teachers give good explanations and encourage pupils to use a variety of strategies to develop their mathematical thinking but pupils struggle with problem solving in spite of the teachers' best efforts to help them understand which number operations to use in their calculations. Their marking is usually accurate and helpful. However, far too many miss-spellings of mathematical words in pupils' books are not corrected, and pupils are not yet developing consistently good habits in presentation and accuracy.

68. Pupils throughout the school enjoy mathematics. They are very enthusiastic in their mental arithmetic sessions, which also play an important part in developing their confidence in speaking. They co-operate with each other well in small groups, although few have the skills to work well independently. Many are familiar with their targets for learning and are happy to explain them.
69. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The subject leader is in her first year of responsibility for mathematics. She is well supported by a knowledgeable governor who is very well informed of the best methods of teaching mathematics. She is aware of the shortcomings in the use of assessment in planning and the need to prescribe more challenging work in all classes, albeit for a very small minority of pupils. Only if these aspects are addressed effectively will improvement continue.
70. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and good systems of self-evaluation are in place to raise standards.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

71. The basic skills of numeracy are taught satisfactorily in the school but there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in a wider context, such as in ICT and science. Occasional references are made to, for example, dates in history or measuring in design and technology, but these opportunities are not expanded enough to really benefit the learning of numeracy skills across the curriculum. At present the use of mathematics across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards and their achievements are good.
- Teachers are working very hard at ensuring that pupils have good opportunities to develop their experimental and investigative skills.
- The use of ICT is under-developed and is unsatisfactory overall.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged because assessment data is not used sufficiently well to plan the next steps of pupils' learning.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to evaluate their findings in relation to their hypothesis.

## Commentary

72. Standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average due to the high percentage of pupils who are below average attainers and who have special educational needs. Nevertheless, pupils' achievements are satisfactory, but the achievements of above average pupils, whilst satisfactory, could be better because at present the use of assessment is not sufficiently developed to plan the next steps of pupils' learning.
73. The recent emphasis on developing pupils' skills and knowledge of experimental and investigative science is paying dividends and pupil in both the infants and juniors are developing good skills of observation, fair testing and identifying a hypothesis. However, in the juniors pupils struggle with evaluating their findings in the light of their hypothesis. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards and achieve well because curriculum coverage is good and plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to record their work.
74. Teaching and learning are good, and as a result, pupils learn well and develop positive attitudes to learning. Generally teachers have secure subject knowledge and offer good explanations. Their secure knowledge shows in the confidence with which they discuss scientific matters. For example, in Year 6 the class teacher gave good explanations of how valuable micro-organisms are to our well-being. In a Year 4/5 class, when pupils were taught by the co-ordinator, they used their previously acquired scientific skills to solve the problem of how to dry clothes faster but were unable to write down their findings because of their weak literacy skills. Teachers work very hard to ensure that problem solving activities are closely linked to pupils' interest levels and real life contexts. Teachers generally push pupils hard and this is having a positive effect on learning. Teachers insist that pupils have to give detailed answers as to why they have undertaken a particular course of action. This was particularly the case when pupils in the upper juniors had to explore and explain findings linked with the development of micro-organisms and the contribution Lister and Pasteur made to medicine.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has provided good guidance for staff in ensuring that they are fully aware of strengths and weaknesses in test results. Resources have been appropriately organised and are satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not used sufficiently well to plan the next steps of pupils' learning. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Sound standards have been maintained but the use of ICT has not been sufficiently well-developed and is unsatisfactory overall.
76. Good emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' skills of experimental and investigative science as a result of good systems of school self-evaluation. Pupils are now receiving sound learning opportunities to develop their skills of setting up and writing up their experiments but insufficient emphasis is placed on ensuring that pupils, especially in the juniors, spell key scientific works correctly. In the juniors, good opportunities are provided for pupils to record their findings in a variety of ways but the use of ICT to develop pupils' research skills is not prevalent in all lessons and is unsatisfactory overall. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, with good improvement seen in the teaching of experimental and investigative science.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average throughout the school.
- Resources have improved slightly but are still unsatisfactory.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use their ICT skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT are very good.

- The use of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

77. Standards, as at the previous inspection, are below average throughout the school. However, this rather bleak picture should not disguise the fact that there has been some considerable improvement since then. The poor resources described at that time have been improved, but this has not been enough to keep up with the rapid pace of change in ICT over the last few years. The schools' ICT resources are still considerably inferior to those seen in many schools today. Although there is a computer 'room' it is incompatible with the need for a good learning environment. It is small, cramped, poorly ventilated and noisy. No more than half a class can be learning in there at the same time. Consequently, logistical problems make teachers planning even more difficult, and some staff clearly do not enjoy teaching in this learning environment. There are computers in the classrooms, but these are not used often enough by pupils to compensate for their already limited learning opportunities. Pupils are therefore unable to develop their skills and increase their learning so that their standards of attainment will rise. The achievement of all groups of pupils in ICT is unsatisfactory throughout the school.
78. A small number of opportunities for at least satisfactory teaching, learning and achievement were nevertheless observed during this inspection but, over time, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use the skills that they have acquired in ICT to support learning in other subjects consistently. Staff are knowledgeable, they offer good explanations and a detailed action plan has been produced to enable teachers to focus more on using ICT in the classroom. During the week of inspection pupils in Year 1 learned about identifying 'key words' to be used in giving and receiving information. Pupils in Year 2 have learned to use an art program to create 'flood fill' pictures. In Year 3, pupils progress to providing information about themselves in letters to another school, which they deliver by e-mail. Pupils in Year 6 have been taken to a local community centre and have made moving 'buggies' and monsters over the last few weeks. In all these lessons, teaching and learning are at least satisfactory, but these opportunities are too infrequent to enable pupils to make consistent progress in the development of their skills. The curriculum covered is satisfactory, all elements of the programme of study are taught but the lack of resources prevents pupils from using their skills to develop even greater familiarity with the subject.
79. The pupils themselves are hugely enthusiastic and have good attitudes to learning. They concentrate hard, although often chattering excitedly, but this is always about the work in hand. In discussion with pupils in all year groups, they made it clear that they enjoyed 'ICT and computers' greatly and wanted very much to 'do more'. Their social development is enhanced when they are involved in ICT work.
80. Improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory overall in raising standards but it has been satisfactory in improving some aspects of resources such as the ICT suite.
81. The continued deficiencies and lack of progress in raising standards in ICT indicate ineffective leadership and management in this area of the curriculum, since the previous inspection. However, the recently appointed deputy head has now taken over the role of leading the subject. She is very well aware of the deficiencies in ICT in the school and has produced a fully costed and timetabled action plan, which includes bidding for grant monies. Outside financial support will be needed, as the school certainly cannot improve sufficiently its unsatisfactory resources from its own limited budget, especially in developing the ICT suite. Key elements of the plan also include further staff training, and provision of greater learning opportunities for pupils even with the present resources. Assessment at present is unsatisfactory. The school management is in no doubt that this is a very urgent priority for the development of pupils' skills and learning.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. The use of ICT across the curriculum is a reflection of the overall picture of the subject in the school, and is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils occasionally use ICT to gain information, as when pupils in Year 6 learn about micro-organisms in science. It is used in literacy through word processing, and in mathematics in creating graphs. However, these opportunities are limited and in subjects such as geography and history there has been no use of ICT.

## HUMANITIES

83. Insufficient work was seen to inform an overall judgement about provision in geography. Some evidence on display and in pupils' books together with discussions with them show that pupils in the juniors undertake a study of an Indian village and are able to make comparisons to life in Manchester. Pupils talked clearly about their studies of the local environment and what they could do to improve it. Younger pupils are involved in making a diary of the activities of 'Brown Bear'. Across the school, pupils' weak writing skills reduce the quantity and quality of their written work and there is little evidence of the use of ICT to add depth to the quality of pupils learning. Only two lessons in history were seen during the inspection, both in infants' classes, so no overall judgement in provision can be made. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well. They have very limited knowledge of the world when they come into the school, but then make good progress in their historical knowledge. Pupils in Year 2 know many facts about the life of Florence Nightingale, and the Great Fire of London. Pupils in Year 1 are learning to compare old toys with those of the present day. Learning and teaching in these years are generally good. As pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not studied history this term, there was little evidence of their work, and no judgement is possible on teaching, learning or standards.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits to local places of worship enhance learning.
- Learning in religious education contributes well to the development of pupils' multicultural awareness.
- There is a lack of written evidence to support learning in classes.
- Pupils' research skills and opportunities for work independently are underdeveloped and are unsatisfactory overall.

## Commentary

84. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, whilst at the end of Year 6, standards are below average. This is a similar position to that found at the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory overall and already it is clear from the analysis of pupils' work and interviews with pupils that standards are rising, as evidenced by the average standards attained in Year 2, but it will take some time for these standards to filter through the school and impact on standards attained in Year 6.
85. Pupils in Year 2 have studied the main elements of Christianity. This has been enhanced by a visit to Manchester Cathedral that helped pupils to empathise with the importance of places of worship and the need for silence whilst visiting them. Pupils know the signs and symbols associated with Christianity and can articulate important things in their own lives for which they are thankful. By the end of Year 6, pupils know Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, but there is limited evidence of recording of pupils' work. Discussions with pupils highlight that they cannot recall much of what they have learnt in relation to Bible stories but they know that Jesus died on the cross and that he suffered many setbacks in His life. However, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to work independently and their research skills are weak. The subject gives

pupils the opportunities to consider how different people view life and this prepares them for life in a multicultural society.

86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers provide opportunities for discussion within lessons and pupils' attitudes are good. Scrutiny of work, however, shows that there are insufficient opportunities in the juniors for pupils to record their work in books. This does not help to develop their writing skills and their knowledge and understanding are not consolidated. Although planning is generally good, there is a lack of clear identification of how aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding can be developed into purposeful writing.
87. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, as are resources, but the library could benefit from more books to help pupils develop their research skills. There are no assessment procedures in place and this is unsatisfactory overall. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory overall and pupils in the juniors are now following the agreed syllabus and making satisfactory progress.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

88. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision for physical education, as only one lesson, and a part of another was observed during the inspection. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn to swim in Years 3 to 5 and most of them are able to swim by the age of ten. In the brief observations of lessons in Years 2 and 3, pupils were attaining standards in line with expectation for their age in gymnastics, using large apparatus. Learning, teaching and achievement by all groups of pupils was satisfactory. Pupils, especially older ones, have opportunities to take part in extra-curricular sport such as soccer. Art and design was not identified as a focus for the inspection and no teaching was seen. However, from displays around the school, analysis of teachers' planning and from scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks, a satisfactory curriculum is being adhered to and pupils' work seen is of average quality in both the infants and juniors. Sketchbooks are not used regularly to record pupils' progress in art and design skills.

### **Design and technology**

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

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

- Pupils make good gains in sewing and enjoy the practical nature of design and technology.
- In the juniors pupils enjoy making pneumatic models.
- Pupils struggle with writing up their evaluations.
- Good links are made with pupils' previous learning.

### **Commentary**

89. Standards in design and technology meet the national expectations of seven and 11-year-olds nationally and pupils' achievements are good due to the good quality teaching and good curriculum planning. No lessons were seen in Year 2 and Year 6 but interviews with pupils and scrutiny of displays and teachers' planning shows that improvement since the previous inspection has been good because of the improved resources and curriculum planning.
90. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils plan and evaluate their designs well, clearly demonstrating the need to take on board the identification of the needs of consumers, resources, mark, measure and predict why designs might not be appropriate, but they struggle with writing up their evaluations due to their weak literacy skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils have produced elaborate designs for Joseph's coat of many colours, exploring a good range of fastening techniques. They have designed good quality moving cars, made a wooden frame and explained the importance of axles for wind up cars. In the juniors, pupils made good gains in identifying a range of buzzers and readily look at different types of switches which can be

incorporated into designs for a torch as designed for a Manchester City football supporter. Pupils learn well because they can think of situations when a battery powered light might be used and how it will meet the user's needs. All groups of pupils are aware of the importance of appearance, function, safety and reliability of materials used. Pupils apply their knowledge from science of electric circuits carefully when undertaking their planning and make good gains in learning about the appearance, function, safety and reliability of battery powered light sources. The quality of teaching is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, give good explanations and make good links with pupils' prior learning especially in science. As a result pupils learn well.

91. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good and pupils' rates of progress have improved from being unsatisfactory to good, however, the use of ICT to support learning is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and there are satisfactory resources to support learning. Assessment and its use is unsatisfactory overall.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils sing well, the choir is a credit to the school and pupils thoroughly enjoy music lessons.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- Teaching is good with examples of very good teaching seen.
- Good use is made of visiting musicians to the school.
- Pupils do not know many works of famous composers.

## **Commentary**

92. Standards in music are at the level expected nationally by the age of seven and 11 and pupils' achievements are good. The introduction of a new scheme of work is starting to pay dividends. Pupils are following a satisfactory curriculum and are developing their singing skills well. The choir is a credit to the school. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and are developing really good singing techniques. They think about correct breathing, poise and the enunciation of words. However, not all pupils know the names of a range of composers and their works. In lessons seen pupils have good attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching is good with a very good lesson taken by the headteacher. In these lessons, pupils learnt very quickly because of the very good explanation given and the very good use of time. In Year 6 pupils composed an ascending and descending tune using pitched instruments, and made good gains in learning because of the clear, precise instructions given by their class teacher. Pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 can name a range of composers, Tchaikovsky's Waltz of the Flowers being their favourite.
93. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The headteacher has made a good start at developing the subject. Resources are satisfactory overall but as yet the use of assessment is underdeveloped and is unsatisfactory overall. Good use is made of visiting musicians to the school. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Good standards in singing have been maintained. There is now a good scheme of work and teachers are clear as to what is expected of them.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very caring community where everyone is treated equally
- Pupils learn and achieve well in broadening their knowledge of good citizenship, and healthy living

### Commentary

94. The school promotes personal, social and health education well both across the curriculum and in specific lessons. Younger pupils learn about 'taking part' and devise their own 'playtime rules', particularly in connection with the use of good quality play equipment. Health education is promoted strongly, using guidance from the National Care Trust, and the school is striving to achieve a Gold award for healthy schools. Older pupils have been appointed as playground 'buddies' at breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils are being encouraged more and more to have their say about what goes on in the school. A strength of the school is that all pupils know that they have adults around them who they can trust and go to when they have problems or are unhappy.
95. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods, such as hot seating in drama lessons, passing a toy in Circle Time<sup>3</sup>, to encourage pupils to talk about their emotions. All staff are very sensitive to the many needs of the pupils in the school and are aware that many of them have underdeveloped skills of emotional literacy. Good emphasis is placed upon helping pupils understand how to control their emotional reactions to situations. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have a good understanding of what it means to be a good citizen. They are aware of the responsibilities for looking after our planet, why rules are important and the importance of treating everyone with respect.
96. This area of education has been developed very positively in the past two years and continues to do so, because of the effective leadership and management of the co-ordinator.

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<sup>3</sup> During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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