

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JAMES CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Worsley Mesnes, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106437

Headteacher: Mrs Kathleen Moran

Lead inspector: Susan Walker

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th June 2004

Inspection number: 257687

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 aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	229
School address:	Tyrer Avenue Worsley Mesnes Wigan Lancashire
Postcode:	WN3 5XE
Telephone number:	01942 703952
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Adrian Dance
Date of previous inspection:	8 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St James CE Primary School serves an area of high deprivation and attainment on entry is low. There are 229 pupils on roll, which is about the same size as other primary schools nationally. Pupils are taught in ten classes, some of which are mixed-age. Virtually every pupil is of British white ethnic origin with very small numbers of pupils from other ethnic groups. There are tiny numbers of traveller pupils and refugees / asylum seekers. There are more boys than girls in the school. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is an issue in some classes. Almost half the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Forty two per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average and there are five pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. During the inspection there was a supply teacher in Year 1 and the deputy headteacher was absent.

The school is part of the leadership development strategy in primary schools. It is a Young Enterprise registered centre and is part of a behaviour and attendance project. It gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003, the Healthy School's Award in 2003, the Ecological and Conservation Organisation (ECO) award (green flag) in 2004 plus an Excellence in Curriculum Development Award. It has an Excellence in Work Related Learning award. It was awarded Investors in People status in 2002. The school is working towards Wigan's Quality Standard in

Early Years. St James provides a family learning programme in the four core subjects and the community occasionally uses its facilities.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21678	Susan Walker	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage ¹ English History Special educational needs
31718	Denise Shields	Lay inspector	
2911	Eric Steed	Team inspector	English as an additional language Science Religious education Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship
25577	William Jefferson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Music Physical education

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¹ 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

St James CE Primary School is a satisfactory school. Pupils make good progress in lessons because they are well taught. Attainment is well below average in English and below average in science and mathematics at Year 6, because pupils never catch up on their low start, and high numbers move in and out of the school. However, the school is well led and managed, completely committed to inclusion, and provides very good support to pupils' learning. Value for money is satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well below the national average in English, mathematics and science in Year 2.
- Standards are well below the national average in English and below average in mathematics and science in Year 6.
- The way in which the school guides and supports pupils is a significant strength.
- Links with partnership schools and the community enhance pupils' learning.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- The school is committed to inclusion and leadership and management are good.
- Teaching is well planned.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Areas designated for improvement have been sorted out with varying degrees of success. While the school has improved pupils' achievement at Years 3 to 6, it has been unable to raise standards, except in information and communication technology (ICT), where facilities have improved markedly. The school has maintained its positive features such as effective leadership and the quality of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. It has increased pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural society, provided an interesting curriculum to encourage pupils to learn and improved its links with parents and the community.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **good** because pupils are provided with an interesting curriculum and they are well taught by a large number of adults. In most classes, including the reception class, around a third of pupils are on the register of special educational needs and large numbers of pupils move in and out of the school. This has a marked impact on the standards attained by the whole class. Children enter school with low standards of attainment, especially in their personal and social development and in all aspects of communication skills. Few children will attain the levels expected for their age at the end of the reception year. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 standards are well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards remain low in English, and are below the national average in mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are average because the facilities have improved. In mathematics, however, the number of pupils achieving better than average standards has risen significantly this year.

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	E
mathematics	E	E	E	D
science	C	E	E	D

*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.*

In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged 11, standards were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils made insufficient progress from age seven to 11 in all three subjects. In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well below the national average in reading and writing and in the lowest 5 per cent in mathematics in comparison with all schools nationally. Standards remained well below the national average when looked at in comparison with schools with a similar number of free school meals.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities are good. Standards in moral, social and cultural development are **good** and those of spiritual development are satisfactory. Attendance is unsatisfactory and affects pupils' achievement. Punctuality is satisfactory for most pupils, but some miss out because they are not in school at the beginning of lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are good, particularly in English, mathematics and science and in Year 2 and in the reception class. A major barrier to learning is pupils' limited vocabulary and their limited writing skills. This affects what they can record and retain. There are very good procedures for checking what pupils know and understand in English and mathematics. The curriculum is good, based on practical experiences and is enlivened with visits and visitors. Pupils receive very good care and good support and guidance from adults. The care provided in the 'nurture room' is a strength. The school's links with parents and the community are good and it has very good links with other schools and colleges, which improve pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher's leadership is good. She has put in place good initiatives to sort out the school's priorities and is committed to inclusion. Management is good. The leadership and management of key staff are good. The governance of the school is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents like this school and what it provides. They praise aspects such as teaching, leadership and management and the introduction of pupils to school life. Pupils enjoy coming to school and appreciate what it provides, because it is an oasis of calm in their lives. They have clear opinions about their favourite subjects and activities and the school takes notice of their views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the level of pupils' attendance.
- Develop the role of the subject co-ordinator.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **good**. Standards are **low** in the reception class, **well below the national average** in Year 2 and predominately **below average** in Year 6, except in English, which remains well below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effective use of teaching assistants promotes good achievement.
- The number of pupils on the special educational needs register lowers overall standards.
- Pupils' lack of skill in writing and their limited vocabulary hinder their learning in other subjects.
- Few children in the reception class will attain the Early Learning Goals².

Commentary

1. Pupils' achievement is good overall because the school has wisely invested in teaching assistants so that learning can be supported. Parents feel that their children make good progress. Pupils are provided with a practical curriculum to motivate them with visitors and visitors to maintain their interest. However, their sporadic attendance or lateness at the beginning of the school day limits some pupils' achievement.
2. Children enter school with well below average skills, particularly in personal and social development and communication skills. There are very few children who are above average on initial testing. Most years about a third of the children attain the expected standard in the Early Learning Goals, which does not give them a good start in Year 1 and 2. Currently, four out of ten children, predominantly boys, are already on the register of special educational needs and few children are expected to reach the required standard. However, children are well taught, they are interested in what they do and they achieve well in lessons because of the good number of adults who support them.

² Early Learning Goals 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.

3. Nearly half the Year 2 pupils are on the register of special educational needs. The school has sensibly split the cohort into two classes, (Year 2 and Year 2/1) which allows the average and the small group of higher attaining pupils to progress at a slightly faster rate. In this year group, a third of pupils have moved in and out since the reception year and this too has affected overall standards. The best teaching in the school occurs in the Year 2 class and pupils achieve well. However, they are still playing 'catch up' and consequently they fail to attain the national norms.
4. In Year 6, more than 40 per cent of pupils, particularly boys, are on the register of special educational needs. Although overall numbers have not changed greatly since Year 2, nearly 50 per cent of the pupils have altered. Some pupils only stay for short periods or leave and return. The school has wisely arranged Year 5 and 6 pupils into three parallel classes and teaches the least able special needs pupils as a separate group for English, mathematics and science, in order to cope flexibly with this situation. However, despite good provision this arrangement still does not enable pupils to attain the national norm.
5. In mathematics, however, the number of pupils achieving better than average standards have risen significantly this year.
6. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. It has made good provision for their needs by putting all the government initiatives in literacy and numeracy in place to try and increase the pace of pupils' achievement. In addition it has programmes to increase pupils' knowledge about letter sounds and uses the computer programs to teach spelling and mathematics and specific resources to teach reading. The 'nurture group'³ takes care of pupils' emotional needs.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.1 (11.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.8 (11.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.3 (14.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

7. In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well below average in reading and writing and in the lowest 5 per cent nationally in mathematics when judged against all schools nationally. When teachers checked how well pupils were doing in science, standards were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. Standards were well below average in comparison with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances. The picture does not vary much from year to year and the trend is below the national average. In 2003, 39 per cent of pupils had moved in and out of the class since the reception class and 22 per cent were on the register of special educational needs, with two pupils having a Statement of Special Educational Need.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.6 (24.8)	26.8 (27.0)

mathematics	24.7 (25.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.1 (27.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

8. In the 2003 tests for pupils aged 11, standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science. When progress from aged seven to age 11 was considered the school was well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science in comparison to similar schools. The picture is more positive than this most years. In this year group, half the pupils had moved in and out of the school since Year 2 and 40 per cent were on the register of special educational needs. The school did not meet its targets in literacy, but was not far off in mathematics. The trend is variable from year to year, but at present is downwards.
9. Both boys and girls are frequently below average in the national tests, although either group can do slightly better from year to year. More boys than girls are on the register of special educational needs from an early age.
10. A co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils has been appointed and training is booked for 2004/5. There were no significant issues regarding the progress of the small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or traveller pupils. The school quickly involves teachers from the local education authority to assess and support them.
11. Improvement is satisfactory, as the school has tackled progress in Years 3 to 6. The previous inspection team was correct in their assumption that standards were on the way up. This lasted for a few years, but the downturn in the calibre of pupils has meant that the school has been unable to maintain it.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities are good. They behave well and have good attitudes to work. Attendance is below average. Overall provision for the personal development of pupils, including their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** is good. Attendance is **unsatisfactory** but punctuality is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although attendance has improved over the last three years, rates could be better.
- The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good and their appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions, including multi-cultural issues, is good.
- Pupils' personal development is good.
- Pupils' relationships with others are good.
- Behaviour is good and aids pupils' achievement.
- A few pupils are persistently late at the start of the school day.

Commentary

12. This is a happy school. Most pupils are welcoming and are well behaved both in lessons and about the school. Parents are generally content about the positive attitudes and values that the school promotes. Pupils of all ages like school and say they are fortunate in having very caring and supportive teachers. They do not like it when individual pupils do not behave satisfactorily. Because most have positive relationships with teachers and supporting adults, they respond well and try hard to do everything that is asked of them.

Pupils work well as part of a pair or small group because they are trusted to get on with tasks in a sensible manner. They share resources well and year groups take a keen responsibility in keeping the school clean and tidy.

13. All but a few boys with recognised behavioural difficulties behave well both during lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Older pupils cheerfully help younger ones about the school and in the playground. Although bullying was not evident during the period of inspection, pupils say that bullying in a variety of forms does take place. They are confident that all teachers and most lunchtime assistants respond immediately to instances of name-calling and harassment and that the school takes all such issues seriously. Parents generally agree with this opinion.

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	222	1	1
Mixed – any other mixed background	2		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2		
Any other ethnic group	3		

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

14. One pupil is currently excluded from attending school for a specified period of time. This is very much a last resort. The headteacher will quickly seek guidance or involve individuals from a range of external agencies to try and maintain these pupils in education and help them to cope with and try and overcome their difficulties.
15. Pupils’ personal development is very good as a result of the very positive personal, social and health programme. In weekly assembly, pupils show pride in their achievements and are motivated to put hard work and effort into all they are asked to do. All achievement is celebrated. All pupils feel teachers are fair and listen to their opinions so they are happy to share their worries or concerns in group discussions. Most are developing skills of ‘taking turns’ and listening to the teacher and to each other.
16. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility well. The school council collects opinions from each class and, after discussion, negotiates with the school senior managers about suggested changes that will benefit the school community. The school invites all pupils’ opinions via questionnaires. This is particularly good practice.
17. The school provides well for pupils’ moral and social development through a consistent behaviour policy and moral focus during lessons. The contribution pupils make to the life of the school supports their social development well. Their cultural development is good, including good provision for learning about life in multicultural Britain. Work in the humanities and religious education is enhanced by a recognition and understanding of festivals and meeting visitors from the local community. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Pictorial evidence of vast numbers of daffodils in full bloom around the school helps nurture a sense of awe and wonder concerning the world around them. An

absence of religious artefacts is most noticeable and this does not develop a Christian ethos throughout the school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

18. Arrangements to monitor and promote attendance are satisfactory. There is good liaison with the educational welfare officer who visits the school each week. The school emphasises the need for regular attendance and punctuality with pupils and their families, but more could be done to promote this aspect. However, the school's ability to improve attendance further is severely hampered because there is no one available to rigorously promote the need for pupils to attend school regularly and on time, for instance, by first day contact with parents. This is because the school has temporary administrative staff and the deputy headteacher is currently absent. The school is further hampered because it does not have access to a computerised registration system that would help it to analyse and monitor both attendance and punctuality far more closely. The unsatisfactory and often patchy attendance of a small minority of pupils holds back their achievement. Pupils who are frequently late are put at a disadvantage because they miss the introduction to their lessons and this slows their progress.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. There are **very good** assessment procedures in English and mathematics. The curriculum is **good**. Pupils receive **very good** care and **good** support and guidance from adults. The school's links with parents and the community are **good** and it has **very good** links with other schools and colleges, which improve pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good in the reception class and in Year 2
- Teaching assistants are well prepared to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils' limited vocabulary and their limited writing skills are a major barrier to learning.
- There are very good assessment procedures for English and mathematics, but insufficient use of collected data in other subjects.
- There is good use of data to plan work for individual pupils in English and mathematics.
- There is very good use of assessment to plan work for all children in the reception class.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	7 (14%)	23 (48%)	18 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

19. The school has maintained its record of all teaching being satisfactory, with over half the lessons being good. However, there are now more very good lessons than at the time of the previous inspection. The good quality teaching policy underpins what happens in most classrooms and supports pupils' learning. Parents feel that teaching is good.
20. Teaching is good for children in the reception class. It is well matched to the needs of children of their age. There is a good balance between adult led and child selected activities. The good number of adults means that children are well supported in their learning.
21. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science. Teachers provide good role models for pupils as they demonstrate strategies and introduce new vocabulary. Questioning is used well to consolidate learning and is effectively matched to the needs of all pupils. Pupils are told the purpose of the lessons and this is revised in the final sessions of lessons.
22. Teaching is good and sometimes very good in the Year 2 class. This teacher tends to plan imaginative and challenging lessons, which consolidate learning in a range of areas. This was well demonstrated when pupils had to work together to make a programmable toy reach a flour mill without mishap.
23. The school makes good use of the expertise of teachers from the local high schools. This gives pupils a chance to improve their learning by using different materials and techniques in preparation for transfer at age 11 years.
24. Teaching assistants are universally used well to support learning. Their good preparation and training makes sure that they make the same teaching points as teachers and so learning proceeds well in individual lessons. Their use of 'focus sheets' on which they

note what pupils have achieved and where problems have arisen, supports day-to-day assessment very well.

25. Teaching is good for pupils who have special educational needs. It is based on the needs of their individual educational plans. Pupils have access to good quality tuition from a range of adults who think hard about the resources to motivate them.
26. A major barrier to learning is pupils' limited vocabulary and their limited writing skills, which affects what they can record and retain. Pupils' learning is supported by a homework club, which is targeted at specific pupils. Parents are satisfied with the standard of homework provided. Pupils' awareness of their own learning has recently been improved by the introduction of a new system of analysing their own needs, where pupils have considered what they are good at and why they need to improve. Discussion with pupils show that they understand their targets for improvement and understand why they are told the purpose of the lesson.
27. The assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is good in English and mathematics across the school. A comprehensive tracking system, based securely on checked, collected data, takes account of the rate of individual pupils' learning to predict medium and long-term attainment. Short-term targets are set to ensure that the predicted targets are met. In other subjects, assessment data is not used with sufficient rigour to track progress, to set targets or to be certain that planned work always coincides with all pupils' requirements to make progress. In science this has led to higher attaining pupils not being given opportunities to carry out their own investigations because relevant data has not, until recently, been available. Although English writing targets are available, there was little evidence that they were applied to writing in other subjects. An exception to this general rule is the setting of targets for pupils with special educational needs in accordance with their individual education plans.
28. Together with her colleagues, the assessment co-ordinator analyses the results of statutory national tests, optional tests and other diagnostic procedures used by the school. Strengths and weaknesses are noted and shared, with the weaknesses added to the school's improvement plan.
29. Marking is regular, supportive and encouraging. There is inconsistency in the use of marking to inform pupils of what they need to do in order to improve their current work. This aspect of marking is sound in English and mathematics but, lacking the basis of specific set targets in other subjects, is elsewhere often too general in nature.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** breadth of curricular opportunities and a **good** range of enrichment activities for all pupils. Resources for learning are **good** and the accommodation is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provided for the reception year is a strength.
- There is very good provision to prepare pupils for their next school.
- Provision for equality of access and opportunity for pupils is good.

- The programme for visits and visitors is planned carefully to enrich understanding of learning that is taking place in classrooms. There is a good emphasis on work related activities.
- Subjects across the curriculum are used effectively to help to develop pupils' literacy skills.
- Innovative links with other schools are contributing very effectively to pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

30. The school has secure plans to teach all subjects, as at the time of the previous inspection. The effective improvements made in the intervening years means that the current curriculum provision is good. All statutory requirements are fully met and all pupils enjoy equal access to all activities. Daily acts of collective worship are properly provided for each class.
31. Provision for the reception year is good. It is well matched to the needs of young children and is specifically designed to improve both social and communication skills.
32. Plans are taken from national guidelines and these are amended accordingly to take account of school community needs in medium-term planning. Plans provide well for individual needs in English and mathematics, but work is still required to provide as effectively in other subjects. Policies are in place for all curriculum areas and are reviewed on a regular cycle by the staff. Links between subjects are particularly good for enhancing pupils' speaking skills and broadening their vocabulary. All teachers play an effective role in this learning.
33. This is an inclusive school for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, pupils from ethnic minority and traveller backgrounds are valued and are encouraged to take a full part in the life of the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The curriculum is carefully thought out, so that pupils get many opportunities to practice the basic skills that they need and which are written on their individual education plans. Pupils for whom English is a second language have received very good support from the school and the local education authority and make good progress. Within the first week of entry to the school two pupils received three visits to assess their needs from local education authority support staff. Provision for traveller pupils is similarly effective, with visiting teachers supporting pupils.
34. The curriculum is very well planned to ease pupils' transfer to the secondary school of their choice. Pupils' work on units of work, which are designed to show high school teachers what they can do, and they also receive very good opportunities to work with a wider range of materials when they are taught by high school staff.
35. The school's provision for enrichment opportunities is good, overall. There is good practice in ensuring that visits and visitors coincide with learning that is currently taking place in classrooms. Many visits are undertaken so that pupils have a good awareness of life in the work place and reception class and Year 6 pupils take part in Young Enterprise projects. During their time in school pupils all have the opportunity to undertake a residential visit in the Lake District. This is properly planned to develop additional spiritual, social, moral and cultural skills together with specialist physical activities.

36. Extra-curricular activities are good. A wide range of activities are provided by school staff and outside instructors, including subject booster classes, sports, music and dance, mathematics, French and computers. Pupils would also appreciate the introduction of science and art clubs.
37. The school makes the best use of all the available space. In particular, space is used well to enable adults to work outside the classroom with small groups of pupils, and this has a positive impact on their achievement. Since the previous inspection improvements have been made to the accommodation, such as the addition of an ICT suite and an enclosed play area for children in the Foundation Stage. This has had a positive impact on helping to raise pupils' standards of achievement in these areas. However, the open plan nature of the building means that noise from adjoining classrooms can be heard. This occasionally distracts pupils. Outside there is a large hard surface play area that is now surrounded by a security fence, which has helped to reduce vandalism. Although the playground has been marked so that pupils can play games, there is no seating or shaded areas where pupils can sit if they wish to be quiet. Resources in subjects such as ICT and in the Foundation Stage have improved since the time of the previous inspection. Resources in geography are supplemented well because of good liaison with a local secondary school.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive **very good** support, advice and guidance. There are **good** opportunities for pupils to be involved in and to influence the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good liaison with external agencies helps to ensure that boys and girls of all ages, abilities and backgrounds are very well cared for.
- All pupils have very good and trusting relationships with at least one adult in the school.
- The 'nurture room' makes a significant contribution to the support of the most vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils' opinions are regularly sought and their views are valued.
- Induction arrangements are very good.

Commentary

38. The pastoral care of pupils is a significant strength of the school. It ensures that a caring and sensitive atmosphere permeates the school's work. All adults regularly share information with each other, and as a result, individuals and their home backgrounds are very well known to staff. The school has access to an extensive range of specialist support agencies, and uses their expertise extremely well. The headteacher will quickly seek guidance or involve individuals from such agencies in the support of some pupils. This means that the school maintains these pupils in education and helps them to cope with and try and overcome their difficulties. The two nursery nurses, who work in the 'nurture room', in particular, show an extraordinary commitment and concern for the needs of pupils in their care. The support for these most vulnerable pupils helps them develop both their basic academic and social skills and so make progress with their learning. Pupils confirm they feel supported by these adults and say they help them when they are experiencing difficulties.
39. The school provides a happy atmosphere in which pupils say they feel safe and secure. They know that there is an adult they could go to if they are worried at school. One older pupil states "you can talk to so many people if you have a problem". Pupils are encouraged to behave well, and to respect and value the views of others. This results in good behaviour and a good level of racial harmony throughout the school. Pupils confirm that 'name calling,' or bullying, does not happen very often and say that if they tell an adult it all gets sorted out very quickly. Pupils from differing ethnic backgrounds say that instances of name calling related to racism are rare.

40. Pupils receive very good academic guidance. They say that teachers listen to and value what they have to say in lessons and help them with their work, although a pupil in Year 5 agreed, “you have to try first before you ask for help“. Assessment information is used well to enable pupils to know how they can improve their work in subjects such as literacy and numeracy. Teachers share academic targets with pupils to help them understand how they can improve their learning. The school seeks the views of pupils in a variety of ways including the use of questionnaires. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the school council and can cite changes that have been made as a result of their suggestions, such as the playground markings.
41. Staff follow the agreed policies and 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 or help in school. There are very good arrangements for supporting children who start in the reception class. This helps them to quickly feel at home and adjust to the routines of school life. The very good liaison with the ‘starter group’ based in the school is a contributory factor towards this. There are equally very good arrangements that support pupils who start school part way through the year. One pupil states “I was nervous at first but now I have lots of friends”.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents and links with the community are **good**. Liaison with schools and other education providers is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school uses its links with other schools and colleges to very good effect.
- Relationships with almost all parents are good.
- All parents do not support the school by getting their children to school regularly.
- The community is used well to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development.

Commentary

42. The local and wider community, business and commerce provide a rich source of visits and visitors. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the visits they have made to Wigan Pier or Knowsley Safari Park. They take part in local events, for instance, as part of the Ecological and Conservation Organisation school initiative. The church, with which there is a close link, is involved in school life, and is regularly used for school events and for visits made by individual classes. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, and improve standards of achievement.
43. Very close links have been established with other local primary schools through the WOW⁴ cluster, as well as with local secondary schools and colleges. An extensive range of events and initiatives has resulted from this, such as improving transition arrangements at the end of Year 6, professional development for teachers, development of specific curriculum areas and a wide range of courses run for parents. These joint projects have had a positive influence on pupils' standards of achievement, for instance, in art and design and science. Discussion with staff who visit from the secondary schools indicate that relationships are very good and all initiatives are planned to provide the maximum benefit to all that take part. In addition the partnership with the local college, for example, has contributed well to parents' involvement in and support for their children's education.
44. The school tries very hard to encourage parents to come into school and take an active role in their children's education. As a result most parents hold the school in high regard and are pleased with the progress their children are making. Written information is good, including regular newsletters and curriculum workshops as well as the provision of homework books and bags for pupils. Records indicate that most parents do support homework, but a small minority clearly does not.

45. Annual end of year reports are unsatisfactory because they provide too little information for parents. The school is aware of this and is in the final stages of the process of agreeing a revised format for them. There is very good informal daily communication with parents, because the school is used as a source of information and guidance on a whole range of issues outside education. Almost all parents appreciate this and find the school approachable and appreciate the support and opportunities that are provided for their children. Despite the school's efforts to establish a good working relationship with them, a few parents do not support the school's efforts to encourage them to ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to attend their children's annual review but do not always do so. Many parents support the school in other ways, for example, by raising funds to purchase equipment, painting the fence in the Foundation Stage and a small group help in classrooms or with school trips. Parents have been consulted on specific school issues as well as through a questionnaire consultation, their views are valued and the school seeks to respond positively, where possible, to suggestions made such as by improving the information provided about what children will learn.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher's leadership and management are **good**. The leadership and management of key staff are **good**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher knows where her school is going, she is committed to inclusion and has the ability to motivate staff to work even harder.
- There are very good induction procedures for staff and the continuing professional development of staff is very good.
- The staff who manage the reception class, Year 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 make a good contribution to school life.
- The school makes a very good contribution to initial teacher training.
- The subject co-ordinators do not observe lessons to look for strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.
- The governing body provides a good level of challenge and awareness.

Commentary

46. The headteacher is an effective leader and has a clear vision for the school's development, which is correctly focussed on raising standards in English, mathematics, and science. Her focus and commitment have been recognised in the number of awards the school has received and the improvement in pupils' achievement. Equally her determination to provide a very inclusive school is recognised by the number of external agencies who support the school and its pupils. Parents approve of the leadership and management of the school.
47. The very good continued professional development of teaching and support staff is central to the aim of raising standards. All teachers accept opportunities to attend a wide variety of courses, related to the priorities written in the good quality school improvement plan.
48. The senior teachers work effectively as a management team with clearly designated areas of responsibility. The teacher who manages the reception class and Years 1 and 2

and her colleague who manages Years 3 to 6 do an effective job. They have managed the on-going absence of the deputy headteacher very well. The school continues to run smoothly and effectively.

49. Teachers new to the school speak very highly of the welcome and continuing in-depth support they receive from the school and also the local education authority. The school contributes significantly to the professional development of student teachers. For a small school it plays a major role in training a proportionately large number of students who are very well supported by mentors appointed from the staff.
50. The co-ordinators for assessment and special educational needs provide good role models for other staff. Subject leadership is generally satisfactory, but management is good. Most subject leaders currently check teachers' planning and the co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science also monitor work in pupils' books. An important area for development is the involvement of subject leaders in monitoring teaching and learning in lessons. At present the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the local authority staff carry out this role.
51. The governing body is well organised and is prepared to challenge the headteacher's proposals. Governors have established an effective 'buddy' system with individual members of staff so that they are better informed about the way that the school is run. A good number have a very regular presence in school and this enables the governing body to have a good grasp of the school's strengths and its areas for development. The new chairman is an experienced governor and the chair of the finance committee brings rigour and expertise to the role. These strengths have allowed the governing body to make difficult decisions about staffing in order to balance the budget. The governing body meets all statutory requirements.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	680,458	Balance from previous year	54,168
Total expenditure	680,688	Balance carried forward to the next	53,938
Expenditure per pupil	2,872		

52. The school's finances are managed well. The headteacher and governors have introduced effective procedures for evaluating spending, as for example, in the strategic deployment of staff and support staff. The school's carry forward will be used to support staffing in 2004/5. The school has managed effectively its reduced income due to the falling roll. Considerations of best value for money are good. The school is well supported by the local education authority.
53. There are a number of barriers to raising achievement. Most notable are many pupils' under developed language and numeracy skills and the low expectations of a significant number of parents. In addition, a large proportion of pupils move in and out of classes, and sometimes leave and return, throughout the school year. Particularly effective aids to overcome these barriers include the 'starter group' for children of nursery age which is staffed and managed by the school, the 'nurture group', all the support initiatives to raise the pace of learning and the school's on-going endeavours to involve parents in their children's learning.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. Many of the children in the reception class have attended the 'starter group,' which is housed and managed in the school. Nevertheless, attainment on entry is lower than at the previous inspection and few children attain the national goals for their age. A large number of children are summer born and more than a third of children are already on the register of special educational needs. This is a different picture from the previous inspection when most children achieved the national goals. Parents have a good relationship with the reception class staff and praise the way in which their children were introduced to the classroom, for instance, through story sessions. Parents accompany visits so that they can help children discuss what they have learnt. This good relationship is fostered by homework initiatives and 'Inspire', which covers speaking, listening, and developing early literacy and numeracy skills.
55. The reception class is very well led and managed by one of the local education authority's leading teachers, who is aiming for the local education authority's early years quality mark. The class is staffed by, a teacher, a nursery nurse and a student. The curriculum and teaching are both good. The number of adults in the reception class means that children can be taught by ability in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. This is effective in allowing them to learn at their own speed. Assessment procedures are very good. Improvement in provision is good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good relationships between children and adults and this creates an effective learning environment.
- Planning is very good.
- Healthy eating has made a positive impact on provision.

Commentary

56. This area of learning has a high profile throughout the school day and is taught very well. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and routines are very well established at this time of the year, consequently children behave well. They are rewarded by stickers that lead to treat times, such as 'chocolate cake day'! The staff create a well-planned and orderly atmosphere in which children feel secure and ready to learn. Children work together co-operatively under the supervision of an adult. Staff have a realistic grip on how long the children's attention span will last. A very good range of activities for the youngest children, those with special educational needs, and those at an early stage of English is provided to encourage them to learn and to consolidate concepts. All children are encouraged to try first before they ask an adult for help. Children are given small responsibilities, such as tidying up in order to develop their confidence and independence, and older and more able children take messages to other

adults within the unit and inform other children which activity they are participating in. Children learn about healthy eating through planting seeds and the snacks that they receive at 'snack time'. Achievement is good from their low starting point, but few will attain the national goals.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because children are taught by ability for part of the time.
- There is a very good activity to develop children's knowledge of letter sounds.
- All adults demonstrate basic skills very well.

Commentary

57. In all activities, there are very good opportunities for children to develop their language skills, which are low, when they start the reception class. Most reception children acquire more vocabulary as they progress through the reception year, but are still below average when they start Year 1. This is because of the number of summer born children and those on the register of special educational needs.
58. Teaching is good. Children enjoy showing what they know about how words are formed and the fast paced 'show me the whiteboard' session gives the teacher a clear idea of how children are progressing. Almost all children confidently chant the chorus of '*We're Going on a Bear Hunt*' and those who are at an early stage of learning English join in with the most frequent phrases. Children are very well challenged by the difficult task of sequencing a good number of phrases from the book. This task requires them to work together using all their knowledge of letter sounds and how sentences are formed. They achieve well, but few are at the expected stage despite very good teaching. All adults use the same teaching points of finger spaces, capital letters, and basic punctuation to enable children to succeed at their level.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress because they are taught by ability for part of the time.
- Children are given very good support and guidance to allow them to learn.
- Children's inability to retain information means that they will not reach the national average.

Commentary

59. Because of the good number of adults, children are given good support to manage their behaviour so that they make steps in their learning. Secure relationships and encouragement keeps more able children on task when they throw a dice and then write down the sum involved.
60. Good resources, support and encouragement allow three quarters of the children to count in tens. Well-targeted questions allow children to explain which number has been removed from the number line. All adults make the same good teaching points that allow pupils to learn how to count accurately. This leads to good achievement as the lesson progresses, but few will reach the national goals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits and visitors enable children to extend their knowledge of the world.
- Lessons are well planned and the adults continually suggest important words to extend children's thinking.
- Children's language and communication skills limit their ability to explain and record what they know.

Commentary

61. The staff make good provision to take children off the estate where they live and out to farms, parks and baby clinics. This helps them to begin to understand the world of work and they make a booklet about people's jobs in the community.
62. Teaching is good. In a well-planned science activity children explore a good range of toys to find out how they move. The good selection of toys animates children and they try hard to demonstrate and explain what is happening. They begin to use unfamiliar words such as 'twist and turn' and to sort toys into appropriate groups. They make valiant attempts to draw and label what they have discovered. The nursery nurse provides a good practical activity when she takes a group of children around the school to draw any wheeled vehicles they discover.
63. By experiencing 'Diwali day' children learn about other cultures and the occasional higher attaining children successfully record what they learn. Early geographical skills are developed well through making a map of the visit to Leyland's farm. Although achievement is good, few will attain the national goals

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Boys have better than average ball skills.
- Teaching is good and staff have worked hard to make an interesting outside area.
- The outside area promotes good learning.

Commentary

64. Lessons are well planned. Children are presented with good opportunities to use tools, for instance, as they make biscuits. All can knead with enthusiasm and cut out bear shapes. They use rollers to print with objects, but the result lacks skill.
65. The outside area is cleverly designed to motivate young children to explore and consolidate their skills. The development of skills with balls, bikes and other outdoor equipment is well resourced and children achieve well. Children's ball skills are developed through their participation in activities led by coaches. Boys can kick and return footballs with force and accuracy and a few can hit and return small balls using plastic bats. All boys and girls can ride bikes and push prams around the outside area with good respect for others' activities. Although few will attain all aspects of the national goals, more are nearer the national average in these skills than in any other aspect.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits help children to develop their creativity.
- All aspects of creative development are well planned and delivered.
- Sometimes the youngest children do not receive sufficient support from adults to develop their skills.

Commentary

66. Teaching is good. Children are given good opportunities to use natural leaves, twigs, and fruits gathered on expeditions to Haigh Hall to make natural sculptures. They are interested in materials and can express their preferences for which they like, but seldom know what they are called. They use their developing mathematical skills to produce careful sketches of a figure surrounded by symbols, in the style of Klint.
67. Sometimes, when the youngest children are using creative materials while older pupils are working on literacy and numeracy tasks, opportunities are missed to encourage them to develop their skills, for instance, in painting.
68. In a good music lesson the teacher seized the opportunity to take the lesson outside so that children could experience 'swishing through the long grass' as in their favourite story. Musical resources are good and the older and higher attaining children are beginning to know the names of a good number of them. Good planning allowed the few more confident children to demonstrate that they can clap their names accurately and the adults and these children showed the rest how to do it. Very good relationships encourage others to try to do so. While achievement is good, few children will attain the national goals.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well below the national average.
- Achievement in lessons is often good.
- Record keeping in reading is good.
- 'Talking partners' is an effective initiative.
- Although teachers' questioning is good pupils' tend to be slow to respond.

Commentary

69. Achievement is good. Most pupils do progress noticeably from year-to-year if they stay in the school. It is, however, true that attendance clearly affects the pupils' progress. This is particularly so for pupils who are given extra provision.

70. In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well below average in reading and writing. Standards were well below average in comparison with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances. The picture does not vary much from year to year and the school does not improve as much as schools do nationally. In the national tests for pupils aged 11, standards were well below average in English. When progress from aged seven to age 11 is considered the school was well below average in English. The picture is more positive than this most years. The large amount of movement in and out of the classes and the significant number of pupils on the register of special educational needs can explain such standards.
71. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 have to spend time teaching concepts and skills that are usually mastered at a much earlier date. The school puts in place the government initiatives and these are taught well. The pupils' lack of English skills is impacting on what they can do in other subjects but the introduction of 'talking partners' is effective in developing communication skills.
72. The quality of teaching and learning is good and teachers provide good role models for pupils, for instance, in reading. Lessons are well managed and resourced by good quality materials. Teachers ask good questions which are skilfully tailored so that pupils of all abilities have good opportunities to answer them. However, while pupils behave well in lessons, they tend to ignore opportunities to show what they know by answering questions. Teaching assistants are universally used well to support learning. Their good preparation and training makes sure that they make the same teaching points as teachers and so learning proceeds well in individual lessons. Although the use of ICT is still developing, the Year 2 teacher is beginning to use technology successfully to record pupils reading poems or to write poems on the computer. Marking is satisfactory, with examples of better practice where teaching points definitely tell pupils how to improve their learning.
73. A temporary co-ordinator is in place and leadership and management are satisfactory. Raising standards in reading and writing is a school priority. The library provision has been improved and with parental help, pupils get good opportunities to use the facility. Assessment procedures in reading and writing are very thorough. Good quality reading diaries help parents to follow the progress of their children. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. The provision for this aspect is satisfactory. This is a school priority and teachers are thinking hard about opportunities to develop the curriculum so that pupils use their speaking and writing skills in other lessons. 'Talking partners' are being used effectively across all areas of the school. Drama is also being developed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average in Year 2 and are below average in Year 6, but the number of pupils achieving better than average standards has risen significantly this year.

- Overall, pupils' achievement is good, because the quality of teaching and the use of assessment are effective in promoting good learning.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and this helps them to learn.
- The management of the subject is very good.
- Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Commentary

75. In the 2003 national tests, standards were well below average in Year 2 and also in Year 6. Standards have fallen since the time of the previous inspection when, standards were average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6.
76. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good. However, standards are well below those expected nationally in Year 2 and they are below average in Year 6. In both year groups the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is large and in Year 6 the number of pupils who have moved in and out of the school is very high. These factors have a significant impact on overall standards. Inspection evidence and school assessment procedures both indicate that the proportion of pupils likely to achieve higher than expected standards in 2004 has risen significantly.
77. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' concentration and involvement in lessons. This means that many pupils understand the mathematics being taught and can complete tasks in a purposeful, working environment. Teaching assistants and support staff make effective contributions to pupils' learning and good behaviour. Their use of 'focus sheets' on which they note what pupils have achieved and where problems have arisen, supports day-to-day assessment very well. When lessons are good or better, they are developed with good pace to sustain interest, and as a result most pupils remember what they have been taught. The school uses a very good range of tests, the results of which enable teachers to have a good knowledge of what pupils have learned and what areas of learning need to be revisited. This information enables the school to set targets and then to track individual pupil's progress. Marking is undertaken systematically in most classes and in a manner that tells pupils how they might improve.
78. In most lessons, pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and many Year 6 pupils say it is one of their favourite subjects. However, when teaching is less than good, a significant minority of pupils are disruptive and affect the pace and productivity of lessons. Most pupils co-operate well and nearly all show a clear eagerness to succeed. Relationships are good and many are confident to demonstrate their mathematical understanding, when invited to write on the board or to explain a strategy they understand. Younger pupils work well together and happily share materials in support of their learning.
79. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils are well supported. They are taught in groups in Years 4 to 6 so that they can learn at their own pace. All government initiatives to support their learning are in place.
80. Subject management is very good and leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, who is clearly excited by developing mathematics, has recently introduced extra half-hour sessions to further support pupils' learning. This initiative is intended to develop pupils' independence and their ability to use and apply mathematics. Further development of her

role would include the monitoring of such sessions and also the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. She has a very good grasp of assessment procedures and leads whole-school staff meetings related to mathematics curriculum. The school's designated governor works alongside the co-ordinator during an after-school numeracy / ICT club. This provides good insight for the governing body into how mathematics is being taught. Resources to support the teaching of mathematics are good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

81. The school has recently adopted nationally approved schemes of work for most curriculum areas. They identify a good range of planned opportunities for teachers to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding. They also enable them to appreciate the importance of the subject in many aspects of life. For example, pupils practice fine measuring skills, when 'making' in design and technology lessons. Some teachers successfully use interactive whiteboards during numeracy lessons. This good practice enables clear presentation of mathematical concepts and motivates pupil involvement.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6.
- Overall, standards in Year 2 have fallen since the previous inspection.
- Achievement in science is good because pupils behave well and show good attitudes in lessons.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject.
- Assessment information is not used with sufficient emphasis to set targets and to help pupils to understand how to improve their current work.
- The co-ordinator lacks opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

82. In the national tests in 2003 standards were well below the average for all schools at Year 6. When the school was compared with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances, standards were below average. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. Since that time, the standard of pupils on entry has fallen. There are now unusually large numbers of pupils with special educational needs in every year group. Teachers and pupils work hard and consequently pupils' achievement is good as they progress through the school.
83. A barrier to learning for the majority of pupils is their well below average skills in speaking, reading for meaning and writing. Good emphasis is placed on the introduction and practice of new vocabulary, and in providing opportunities to practise speaking skills. Work in pupils' books, however, is dominated by the use of commercial worksheets – as at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils irrespective of individual ability tend to use the same worksheets. Pupils who were interviewed displayed significantly more knowledge orally than they were able to write in their books. There is strong emphasis on

learning through practical experiences and this approach provides many good opportunities for pupils to extend their scientific knowledge and understanding. Examples seen included field studies to check predictions about the habitats of mini beasts in the school's conservation area, and an investigation into where the greatest concentration of bacteria might be in the classroom.

84. This good emphasis on investigative work has not, until very recently, resulted in pupils being given opportunities to consider an area for investigation, devise a test, make sure that it is fair, and carry it out. Too often investigations involving all pupils are over-controlled by teachers. In all classes there are pupils whose abilities are sufficient for them to be able to undertake their own investigations and they need to be given the opportunity to do so if they are to attain the above average levels in national tests. For example, potentially higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to talk about water as a solid, liquid and a gas. They understand how each state occurs and that each is reversible. They know that ice melts and can be turned back into ice by putting it in a freezer.
85. Teaching is usually good. Teachers have good subject knowledge – as stated in the previous report – and devise interesting and varied investigations, but teaching fails to be very good because pupils are denied opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Resources are used well. Books of good quality are available to pupils, either from the school's stock or borrowed from the local library loan service. ICT is accessed effectively as an alternative source of information, for example, to identify the creatures found in the school grounds. Whilst mathematical skills are used in lessons, they are usually part of a class exercise and are not used to help pupils to work out individual investigations.
86. Pupils behave well in class where they consistently show good attitudes to their lessons. For many pupils science is a favoured subject. All pupils are fully included in every activity, but for the higher attaining pupils the level of engagement is not always sufficiently challenging. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for well and given good levels of support either by their teachers or by well-informed support staff. Planning for spiritual, social and moral development is a feature of lessons. Pupils are helped to be aware of the excitement of their discoveries, to treat creatures and the environment with care and to collaborate and co-operate effectively in pairs and groups.
87. Work is marked regularly and comments are encouraging. However, because formal targets are not currently set for science, it is not easy for teachers to offer constructive comments to point pupils to improvements aimed to achieving a known goal. The purposes of the lesson are shared effectively with the pupils and teachers ensure that they are met.
88. Leadership is currently satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in post for one year, she is knowledgeable and very enthusiastic. She has sensibly used her year in post to liaise with colleagues to audit strengths and weaknesses and to bring about satisfactory improvement. She is aware of the difficulties posed by lack of formal assessment because she has seen the good effects of assessment in English and mathematics in setting targets aimed towards individual improvements. Through organising science booster classes she has become aware that some pupils are quite capable of devising and running their own investigations. The headteacher has enabled the co-ordinator to test and prove her beliefs by working with Year 6 pupils in the period following the

national tests. Management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has not yet been given opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms in order to share good practice with her colleagues. She has forged very good links with the science department of a local high school so securing the specialist knowledge of a visiting teacher. Pupils are benefiting greatly from this initiative.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of resources is good.
- Year 2 pupils are taught imaginatively.
- The use of computers to support pupils' learning is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are used well to demonstrate to their classmates.

Commentary

89. Currently, standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. The achievement of all pupils, regardless of background or ability is good.
90. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils have clearly been taught the basic skills of logging on and knowing which icons to use. Staff make good use of higher attaining pupils to demonstrate new skills and this encourages others to try. There is a good curriculum and all strands are taught. Resources are enhanced with provision of interactive white boards. Effective use is made of them, particularly during mathematics lessons. Classrooms do not have computer provision to support curriculum areas during lessons, but the provision of a mini-suite adjacent to infant and early-years classrooms, is a valuable resource.
91. Year 2 pupils program a programmable toy to follow a set course to deliver flour to a mill. Good prior teaching and learning is evident from pupils' great interest and enthusiasm. Programming is carried out with great confidence, while classmates check inputs against their own calculations. The teacher's challenge is made and accepted.
92. Subject leadership is satisfactory and the co-ordinator provides good management. The co-ordinator has introduced a nationally approved scheme of work that supports teachers' planning well. She has overseen successful improvements in resources. Assessment procedures follow local authority guidelines that are levelled to national curriculum requirements. All teaching staff have successfully undertaken training with a consequent increase in confidence. The co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning and this is an important area for development to promote even higher standards. Pupils' awareness of proper, controlled use of the Internet is regularly reinforced in accordance with school policy.
93. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were average in Year 2 and were below average in Year 6 and so improvement has been good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

94. Provision is unsatisfactory. Teachers are beginning to use the computer suite and interactive whiteboards to support learning in other lessons, notably numeracy. The school is aware of the issue and it is a target for improvement in all co-ordinators' action plans. Throughout the school there is little evidence of such work being undertaken in the evidence presented.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good curriculum innovation and enrichment.
- The Ecological and Conservation Organisation initiative supports the development of geographical skills effectively.
- Pupils' literacy skills limit what they record.
- The subject is well managed.

Commentary

95. The achievement of all pupils is good. Standards throughout the school are broadly average when compared with those nationally. Pupils know and understand much more than they can write about.
96. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is well supported and enriched by a well-planned variety of visits and visitors. The planned curriculum takes pupils' well below average literacy skills into account and relies greatly on discussion and practical experiences rather than formal recording. Knowledge and understanding of contrasting locations is well developed. The school plans well to develop pupils' understanding of life in other countries, for instance, pupils develop their mapping skills by plotting their place of origin on a world map.
97. Pupils' learning is well supported by the well-established Ecological and Conservation Organisation initiative. This provides very good support of environmental change and its effect on sustainable development. Year 4 'eco-warriors' are monitored by Year 6 'watchdogs' when they involve themselves in environmental concerns. Re-cycling, litter and environmental improvements form major elements that are now justly rewarded by presentation of national 'Green Flag' environmental status for the school.
98. Leadership is satisfactory and the subject is well managed. Teachers' planning is monitored and whole school feedback is given related to areas for development. However, there are no opportunities to visit classrooms to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Resources in support of teaching are good and plentiful. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average, because pupils do not retain what they have been taught.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors.
- There is a good range of books and artefacts to help pupils' widen their understanding.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills.
- A good amount of time is devoted to history.
- Older pupils have little understanding of the reasons for change or the impact it makes.

Commentary

99. Standards are below what might be expected of pupils nationally. All pupils whatever their age and ability achieve well.
100. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' planning is good. It shows that pupils' learning is built up over more weeks than usual, so that pupils can spend time on difficult concepts. Teachers check what pupils know at the beginning of a topic and show pupils what they have learnt by the end, so that they can take a pride in their learning. However, pupils do not retain information from topic to topic or apply what they know to new areas of learning. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to gain information from the Internet or to use books to carry out research about aspects of history. However, pupils' literacy skills let them down when they record what they have found out. Teachers make effective links with geography, such as when pupils made a map of the factory development across its site. More able pupils use their literacy skills well to make booklets about what they know. Teachers make effective links to the development of pupils' drawing skills, as they are given good opportunities to sketch historical artefacts such as lanterns and irons.
101. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The co-ordinator is determined to establish good links with literacy. The curriculum is good and based wherever possible on practical experiences, as when pupils visit the De Roma ice cream factory and track its development. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good from a well below average starting point.
- Pupils generally have secure knowledge of bible stories.
- There are good links with personal and social education, a factor that aids pupils' understanding of the religions studied.
- Good links are being forged with members of the Islamic and Jewish faiths.
- The use of commercial worksheets to record work does not always support pupils' needs to improve their literacy skills by writing in their own words.

Commentary

102. Standards are satisfactory in both Year 2 and Year 6. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils'

achievement is good because for the majority of pupils their knowledge and understanding on entry to the school was well below average. Throughout the school pupils' knowledge of bible stories is often good, however, their understanding of the content of the stories is less secure.

103. In the two lessons seen the quality of teaching was overall satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are satisfactory. Coverage of the subject is secure because teachers follow either the locally agreed syllabus or national guidelines. Planning ensures that visits and visitors are relevant to the course of study being undertaken. Whilst pupils are not excited by their studies they express the opinion that the work followed does help their tolerance of others, with the practical elements of visits and visitors being especially useful to them.
104. Leadership and management are good. The acting co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and works hard to ensure that relevant, good quality resources are available to her colleagues. The school is in the latter stages of changing the focus of its studies to nationally available guidelines. The co-ordinator has properly ensured that pupils have not missed aspects of learning during the changeover. Owing to the change, there is an increased use of assessment of pupils' understanding from accessing the end of unit expectations available within the national guidelines.
105. Links between religious education and studies and discussions in personal and social education are good. These help pupils to understand ideas such as fellowship, tolerance and friendship. Resources for the subject are good and with the visits made, help pupils' understanding of religious symbolism. Teachers benefit from having access to packs covering the world faiths taught, good relationships with local Christian churches and chapels, and visits to a synagogue and visits from members of the Jewish faith. The mother of a refugee pupil has brought additional understanding of Islam through visiting the school. There is very good practice in enabling younger pupils to gain first hand knowledge of their similarities with Muslim children through well-organised visits to and from pupils in a Bolton primary school. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is linked effectively in teachers' planning for their religious studies through good attention to personal and social education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

106. Due to timetabling arrangements, two lessons were seen in art and design and one lesson was seen in both design and technology and music. Judgements cannot be made about provision, standards, teaching and leadership and management in all subjects sampled.
107. In the lessons observed in **art and design** the evaluation of work was a good feature of teaching and learning. In both cases, the process led to pupils understanding how their current standards might be improved. Innovative arrangements in Year 6 enable pupils to benefit from contact with a specialist art teacher from a local high school. During this lesson pupils showed commendable perseverance in learning new observational drawing techniques. Younger pupils also gain considerable understanding of art and design during the working visits of artists from the local education authority's art centre. Pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve well. Consequently, drawing is a good feature of displayed work throughout the school. Pupils have good access to a range of media including an ICT program to draw in the style of famous artists. The development of skills

in both two and three-dimensional work is satisfactory. Art techniques are used effectively across the curriculum, most usually in science and religious education.

108. In the **design and technology** lesson observed pupils were challenged effectively to investigate how four different wheeled-vehicles were given forward motion. Good questioning, by the teacher and her support staff, enabled pupils to draw upon the information gained during a recent science lesson to make decisions. Discussion and recording of the exercise contributed well to the development of literacy skills. Pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve well. Samples of design and evaluation sheets show that older pupils undertake research before considering a range of designs, materials and construction techniques in the making of slippers. This work clearly demonstrated good use of national guidelines by teachers to underpin planning and teaching. The standard of work produced throughout the school is at the levels expected for pupils' ages. There has been satisfactory attention to overcoming the weaker areas of provision that were mentioned in the previous report, but there remains insufficient use of ICT.
109. The school has an effective transition programme with its feeder high school where pupils get good opportunities to use a greater range of materials and specialist teaching.
110. In **music** lessons, lower junior pupils create satisfactory lyrics to accompany small group musical performances using xylophones. They satisfactorily explore how sounds and words can be combined in an expressive manner whilst incorporating appropriate clapping and swaying upper-body movement. Performance is recorded to enable later evaluation. The lesson provides good opportunity for fun and enjoyment in addition to musical development.
111. Planning shows that good opportunities to cover the full curriculum are made for the subject during the year. Music of Vivaldi is the assembly theme during inspection week and this good practice provides introduction to the works of great composers in support of pupils' cultural development. In assembly, pupils try to sing tunefully in two parts with teacher support and encouragement, in line with the expectations for pupils' ages.
112. Leadership is satisfactory and management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator plays guitar well in assembly and shows good knowledge and understanding of the subject. He has introduced a new scheme of work that teachers say provides good support in raising standards. Transition units are currently being established with the feeder secondary school. Music workshops by visiting specialists provide valuable sessions of pupil involvement in samba, singing and dance activities. Currently, there is no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Resources to support the teaching of music are satisfactory. At the time of the previous inspection standards were in line with national expectations in Year 2 and in Year 6 and so improvement is satisfactory.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for swimming is good.
- Sporting activities outside lessons broaden pupils' skills.
- A few teachers do not have sufficient understanding of how to develop pupils' skills.

Commentary

113. At both Year 2 and Year 6 standards are as expected for pupils nationally. Pupils' achievement is good.
114. Teaching in lessons is satisfactory and pupils gain additional skills from their involvement in extra-curricular activities where they receive good quality tuition from outside coaches. All achieve well when practising skills of rolling a ball and controlling its rebound from a wall. This very good lesson is built on pace, challenge, and good subject knowledge in the teaching of basic skills. Because of the teacher's skilful management, pupils' are enthusiastic learners and their behaviour is very good. Where knowledge is insufficient, pupils do not develop suitable skills, which they can later transfer to team games.
115. Year 6 pupils experience a four night residential trip to the Coniston area of Cumbria. Such visits provide very good opportunities for orienteering and other outdoor pursuits, in addition to very valuable social development. Pupils benefit from an extensive, well-maintained grass area and large playground space, which provide very good opportunities for pupils to practise skills that they learn both in small and large team competitive games. Year 2 pupils have swimming lessons throughout the year. This good provision enables consolidation of water confidence and also swimming expertise, at a young age
116. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The co-ordinator intends to broaden the number of initiatives to extend the range of curricular opportunities by including athletics and either tag-rugby or football. Opportunities for pupils to practise games skills learned during lessons in competitive situations, is an area for further development. Resources to support the teaching of physical education are good. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strength of the provision is recognised in the awards the school has gained.
- A range of visits and visitors strengthen the curriculum.

Commentary

117. Standards in personal, social and health education are as expected nationally. Pupils' achievement is good.
118. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The programme for personal, social and health education has expanded very effectively by matching learning to the needs of pupils in the school. Provision for both sex education and countering the misuse of drugs has improved following good liaison with specialist outside agencies.
119. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator has a clear grasp of future priorities. The introduction of a school council has successfully promoted pupils' good understanding of individual and community life. It has had an impact on decisions made about the playground environment, playground activities and the provision of water bottles in classrooms. In 'circle time'⁵ and other lessons, pupils talk about their feelings with a view to taking responsibility for their own actions.
120. A number of relevant awards have been gained. Health education is delivered through personal, social and health education and the school has been awarded the Healthy Schools' award. The school has been awarded the Ecological and Conservation Organisation award (green flag) and the 'Eco warriors' monitor the internal and external environment of the school. This develops their sense of citizenship effectively. The school's commitment to ensuring that pupils are aware of the world of work pervades the curriculum.

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

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