

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105826

Headteacher: Mr Jed Morgan

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th February 2004

Inspection number: 257734

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 ¹
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	137 plus 35 children in the nursery
School address:	Ann Street Rochdale Lancashire
Postcode:	OL11 1EZ
Telephone number:	01706 647195
Fax number:	01706 711426
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Father Mark Harold
Date of previous inspection:	February 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St John's School is a small voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school situated in the centre of Rochdale. It serves a multicultural area recognised as having social needs. Currently there are 137 pupils (70 boys and 67 girls) on roll plus 35 children who attend the nursery: 21 full-time and 14 part-time. The background of pupils has changed significantly over the last four years. Almost three-quarters of the pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Half of the pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English language, which is high. Thirty per cent of pupils are refugees or asylum seekers and 20 per cent are traveller children. Eighty-seven per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The school has identified 36 per cent of pupils as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times of first admission or transfer to secondary school is much higher than that found nationally. When children enter the school, both at nursery and further up the school, their attainment is well below that expected for their age.

¹ Because St John's School is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic school the inspection of religious education and collective worship is carried out under Section 23 of the Schools Inspections Act 1996 (Denominational Education) by the inspector approved by the Diocese and appointed by the governing body.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25406	Paul Nicholson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs
9399	Roger Watts	Lay inspector	
21534	Kate Rawson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography History
23221	Lynda Parkinson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Personal, social and health education
30935	Kathleen McArthur	Team inspector	English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St John's School provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for its pupils. There are many barriers to learning, including a very low starting point for children entering the nursery, a well above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and so standards are well below average. Teaching, learning and pupils' achievement are **satisfactory**. The school is **soundly** led and managed and it provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of the school and he has successfully managed significant changes to staffing and the school's intake.
- It is a caring school, which provides a well-integrated and harmonious community for its pupils.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes do well.
- Assessment procedures and their use in helping teachers with their planning are unsatisfactory.
- The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is too narrow and has not been adapted sufficiently well to meet the needs of the pupils.
- Pupils' personal development, particularly their moral and cultural development, is good.
- Leadership of the curriculum is unsatisfactory, as subject leadership has not had sufficient impact on raising standards or improving teaching and learning.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in speaking and reading.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good.

The school has made **satisfactory** progress in planning how to address the key issues raised at its last inspection. The key issues identified at that time, including raising standards, developing assessment procedures and management structures, and improving the quality of teaching, remain important areas for development. Progress towards achieving these aims has been limited by a high turnover in teachers.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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*	E*
Science	E*	E	E*	E*

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Achievement in the **Foundation Stage** is good and children do well in all areas of their learning. Because of their very low starting point, children do not reach the expected goals for their age by the end of reception and standards are well below average. In **Years 1 and 2**, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They make steady progress in the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards remain well below average and results in national tests are very low. In information and communication technology (ICT) achievement is satisfactory though standards are below average.

Achievement is satisfactory in **Years 3 to 6**. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average and in ICT they are below average. Despite the many barriers to their learning, pupils make steady progress. The table above shows that the school does not do well in national tests compared with similar schools, but the high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal times makes this judgement unreliable. Throughout the school, pupils who are learning English as an additional language do well in speaking and reading so that they make similar progress to their classmates.

The school's provision for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** is **good**, with particular strengths in moral and cultural development. Consequently, pupils are well behaved in lessons and there is racial harmony within the school. Pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory, but their attendance is well below the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides an adequate education for its pupils. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good and so children make a good start to their time in school. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is satisfactory and pupils make steady progress in their learning. In these classes, the curriculum and procedures for assessing pupils' progress are unsatisfactory and reduce the impact of the teaching. The curriculum does not provide a good balance between a clear priority on the teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics and pupils' learning in other subjects. Throughout the school pupils are well cared for and there are satisfactory links with parents and the community. The school provides a good range of community activities to help parents support their children's learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher provides sound leadership and is particularly successful in managing significant changes at the school. He has a clear vision for improving the quality of education. The leadership roles of other staff and their impact on raising achievement are unsatisfactory because of the large number of new teachers. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and, together with the staff, they successfully promote the inclusion of all pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with all aspects of the school's work. They told inspectors that their children like school. Parents are comfortable approaching the staff and feel the school is well run. They are pleased with the way the school caters for children from a wide range of ethnic groups. Most pupils express positive views of the school. They know who to seek help from if they have a problem and appreciate the help staff give them. Pupils feel they have to work hard and particularly enjoy lessons when they include new and exciting activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- promote greater achievement for all pupils, especially in English, mathematics, science and ICT;
- improve the leadership and management of the curriculum so as to provide a more balanced and coherent curriculum to raise achievement and motivate pupils;
- develop whole-school procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress and their use in guiding teachers in more effective planning of activities;
- raise the proportion of good and better teaching so as to increase the rate of learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is **good**, and in Years 1 to 6 it is **satisfactory**. Standards are **well below average** because of the pupils' very low starting point.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are well below average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Children in nursery and reception do well and make a good start to their education.
- Pupils whose first language is not English make good progress in acquiring English and achieve at least as well as their classmates.

Commentary

1. At the time of the last inspection (February 2002), the school successfully came out of special measures. Standards were slowly improving from a very low base but were still low. Since that time the school has seen a continued steady rise in the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English with the arrival of a further number of asylum seekers and refugees. There are a significant number of barriers to pupils' learning that impact on the standards achieved, including:
 - the well-below-average attainment of children who enter the nursery;
 - half of pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English language, including 30 per cent who are asylum seekers or refugees;
 - over a third of pupils have special educational needs, which is well above average;
 - twenty per cent of pupils are traveller children, whose rate of attendance is very low;
 - a high mobility of pupils, such that less than half of the pupils in the junior classes entered the school at the Foundation Stage; and
 - a high turnover of teachers, with half the teachers new to the school in September 2003.
2. Consequently, the standards achieved by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 remain well below average and the results in national tests in 2003 were very low, and in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. Pupils, however, get off to a good start in the nursery and reception classes and make steady progress in Years 1 to 6. Overall achievement is satisfactory, though there is scope to improve pupils' achievement and raise the standards attained.
3. **Foundation Stage:** Children enter the nursery class with very low levels of attainment. Children have limited experience on which to base their personal and social development and build their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. A good start is made in nursery and children settle quickly to the classroom routines and their personal, social and emotional skills develop well. This good progress is continued in the reception class. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children achieve well in all areas of learning, including communication, language and literacy and their mathematical development. Because of their very low starting point, very few pupils achieve the expected Early Learning Goals² in the six areas of learning. On entry to Year 1, standards remain well below average.
4. **Key Stage 1** The trend in the school's average National Curriculum point score³ for all subjects is broadly in line with the national trend. Results are improving at a similar pace to

² Early Learning Goals - 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; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy children should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

³ The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by all of their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school as well as an average for all schools nationally. The National Curriculum level attained by

those nationally but are at a much lower level. Over recent years (2001-2003) the school's results in national tests at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have been well below average and in 2003 they were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. This was because in 2003 the proportion of pupils who reached the standard expected of a typical 7-year-old (Level 2) was very low. In reading and writing, just under half reached Level 2 compared with just over 80 per cent nationally. In mathematics, just under three-quarters reached Level 2 compared with 90 per cent nationally. None of the pupils reached the higher standard (Level 3) in reading and writing and only one reached it in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	11.1 (13.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	10.1 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	13.4 (15.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Inspection evidence indicates a broadly similar pattern in the current small Year 2 class. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are all well below average. This is because while a majority of pupils are on target to reach the expected standard for their age in each subject, a significant minority is not. Very few pupils will achieve the higher standard. However, pupils, including the large proportion who speak English as an additional language, make steady progress in Years 1 and 2 and their achievement in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology is satisfactory. Their standards, however, are below national expectations and reflect the limited experience pupils have of using computers both at school and at home.
6. **Key Stage 2:** The school's results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in 2003 were very low. This is because of the significant barriers to learning listed in paragraph 1 above. Results have been improving at a slower pace than in schools nationally. This reflects the significant change in the school's intake over recent years, which has seen the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language grow from 1 per cent in 2000 to 50 per cent at present. The school's test results compare unfavourably with those of similar schools⁴, but given the high mobility of pupils these comparisons are less than reliable.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.5 (24.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	22.4 (23.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	22.8 (26.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

7. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the current Year 6 are well below average in English, mathematics and science and below average in information and communication technology. An analysis of pupils' work shows they make at least satisfactory progress from a very low starting point because of sound teaching and high levels of support. Discussions with

each pupil, for example, in mathematics, is given a score. A Level 1 = 9 points, a Level 2 = 15 points, Level 3 = 21 points and so on. Therefore the average points score in mathematics is worked out by adding up all of the points based on the level attained by pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. This means that a school whose average points score for mathematics in the end of Year 2 national tests is greater than 15.0 is one whose pupils are performing above that expected for their age. The average points score for Level 4, the nationally expected level for pupils at the end of Year 6, is 27.

⁴ National Benchmark information groups similar schools together based on the attainment of the current Year 6 when they took national tests at the end of Year 2.

pupils show that many have difficulty in retaining knowledge. Given the numerous barriers to learning, overall achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, traveller children and those at an early stage of acquiring English language, is satisfactory. There is some evidence of individual pupils who entered the school within the last two years with little or no spoken language doing well and reaching average standards in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have **satisfactory** attitudes towards their school and behave **well**. Pupils' behaviour and personal development are **good**. Attendance and punctuality have greatly improved but are still **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New procedures have improved attendance and punctuality but these aspects remain a concern.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes are keen to learn and their personal development is good.
- Relationships are good and pupils are encouraged to respect others.
- Pupils know right from wrong and delight in the diversity of cultures within the school.

Commentary

8. All the parents who responded to their questionnaire believe that their child enjoys school but a significant minority of pupils responded that they did not. Children in the Foundation Stage show positive attitudes towards school because of good teaching in their personal, social and emotional development. They behave well and try to do their best during activities. They work independently but do not often work co-operatively with others. In the rest of the school, pupils' attitudes are very much related to the quality of the teaching. When the teacher has a stimulating and encouraging style, pupils show that they are motivated to learn, answer questions keenly and work hard. It was also particularly noticeable that they enjoyed working on computers. In other lessons, however, they sometimes find it difficult to sit and listen and, when they work, often the quality of their presentation is poor.
9. Most pupils behave well in lessons, but a significant few do not and sometimes disrupt the learning of others. Sometimes the teacher has to spend too much time on behaviour control. Last year 15 pupils were excluded for short periods, usually because they did not respond to other sanctions for disruptive behaviour. So far this year, only two pupils have been excluded, for similar reasons - a substantial reduction. Around the school, and at play and dinner times, although pupils are sometime boisterous, they generally are considerate towards others and have good relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils from all groups work and play well together and there is little evidence of bullying. Pupils know who to seek help from if they have a problem. They are encouraged to share their feelings and discuss attitudes towards others in 'circle time'⁵ and such activities raise pupils' social awareness. Most pupils understand right from wrong and can talk about the impact of their actions on others. Older pupils are beginning to recognise that consideration for others can be a principle for deciding how to behave morally.
10. A striking feature of the school is the wide range of ethnic groups and cultures among the pupils. The school community is proud of the way in which all these groups mix together whilst being aware that they each have something to contribute to the whole. Pupils are encouraged to value others' cultures in such events as 'cultural diversity' day when pupils can experience music and dance from across the world, and from within their own community.

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 of interruption from other children.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Black or Black British – African
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
48	5	0
34	8	0
2	0	0
6	0	0
2	0	0
24	0	0
3	0	0
47	2	0
6	0	0

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

11. Although last year attendance was very low compared to the average primary school and unauthorised absence was very high, the actual percentage of pupils attending was much better than the year before. The school now has good procedures for monitoring absence, reminding parents to give reasons and supporting those who find it difficult to send their child to school regularly. Pupils are rewarded for good attendance, with the best attending class being published in the local newspaper. Staff from the traveller education service use their knowledge of the community to encourage and support parents and pupils. However, much of the absence is still incurred by absences while travelling and by a few pupils whose attendance is very poor. The education welfare service takes action against these pupils' parents and has had some successes in improving their attendance. The high unauthorised absence is incurred because parents do not give any reason, despite the school contacting them several times. Too many pupils, of all groups, are a few minutes late each morning and, although this is improving, learning for all is disrupted while they settle in.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.4	School data:	1.4
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The school takes good care of its pupils and there are satisfactory links with parents.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **satisfactory** and at times good. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make **satisfactory** progress in their learning. Learning is better in the Foundation Stage, where teaching is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been some improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- Good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures children make a good start to their time in school.
- Teachers make effective use of support staff to help pupils in their learning.
- There is good inclusion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, traveller children and those who have special educational needs.
- Whole-school procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.
- Teachers manage the pupils well and ensure behaviour is good.
- Teachers' planning is not always sufficiently focused on what pupils are to learn.

Commentary

12. At the time of the last inspection teaching was satisfactory overall but a key issue for the school was to improve teaching where it was unsatisfactory and increase the amount of good teaching. Since then there has been significant staffing changes with half the teachers new to the school in September 2003, including three newly qualified teachers. The current quality of teaching is broadly similar to that seen in 2002; the strengths noted then have been maintained and there have been improvements in some areas. During the inspection, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good; overall it was satisfactory. Good teaching was observed in each stage of the school. Children's learning is good in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress in their learning. There is scope to raise the quality of teaching and learning through the sharing of good practice noted during the inspection in the good and better lessons.
13. Teaching is consistently good in the nursery and so children make a good start to their learning. This good progress continues in the reception class, where teaching is good overall. Teachers have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and ensure a good balance between whole-class activities and learning through group and independent activities. This is an improvement on the last inspection. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The creation of separate Year 1 and Year 2 classes has meant activities are more suited to the needs of the pupils and this is beginning to impact on pupils' learning. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and at times good. Effective use is made of support teachers in Year 6 and pupils benefit from work in smaller groups.
14. Teachers throughout the school successfully promote inclusion and equality of opportunity. They value the contributions of the pupils and ensure their personal needs are well met. Relationships within the classrooms are good and pupils feel that teachers give them help when they are stuck and listen to their ideas. Teachers make effective use of the good level of support staff available. Teacher assistants are well deployed and work effectively alongside the teachers in supporting the inclusion of all pupils in classroom activities. The school has provided appropriate training for staff and so useful strategies for supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language are used in all classrooms. Modelling of language and good questioning techniques are often used to good effect by teachers and teaching assistants. The learning support assistants, who are specifically linked to pupils with special educational needs,

ensure these pupils make similar progress to their classmates. They competently reinforce pupils' learning, manage well those with behavioural difficulties and ensure all make steady progress towards their individual targets. Helpful advice and, in some lessons, good support is provided by the traveller education service, so that traveller children make satisfactory progress in their learning while at the school.

15. Teachers manage the pupils well and their insistence on good standards of behaviour and their consistent use of rewards and sanctions results in pupils being attentive and well behaved. Pupils' work is regularly marked but the quality is variable. Marking is most effective in those classes where thoughtful comments help the pupils to understand what they know and what they need to improve. In a few classes day-to-day assessment is used well to modify planned activities so that they better meet needs of the pupils. The school makes satisfactory use of termly assessment activities in English and mathematics to track pupils' progress. However, whole-school procedures for assessing and recording what individual pupils know and can do in the core subjects are not in place. Teachers' planning is therefore not always as effective as it could be because it often highlights the activities pupils are to complete rather than focusing on what pupils are to learn. In other subjects whole-school procedures for assessing and recording the progress of groups of pupils are similarly not in place. The newly appointed assessment co-ordinator is aware that this is unsatisfactory and has suitable plans in place to address this weakness.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	9	15	1	0	0

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

The curriculum

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has not been adapted sufficiently well to meet the needs of the pupils.
- The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is too narrow and not well balanced.
- There is good enrichment of the curriculum.
- There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- There are a good number of support assistants, who have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Commentary

16. The statutory curriculum is in place, including provision for religious education and collective worship. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, however, are inadequately covered in Years 1 to 6. There is not a clear overview of how all subjects are to be planned and taught throughout Years 1 to 6 and so the development and progression of skills in each subject is missing. The school has identified in its improvement plan that the redesigning of the curriculum in the light of recent national recommendations is a high priority. The changes in teaching staff have been significant this academic year and the staff as a whole is still working at becoming an effective team. This is slowing down the development of the curriculum in Years 1 to 6.
17. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is well balanced. All the areas of learning are given adequate time and attention other than provision for outdoor activities. There is a good balance between whole-class and group activities. The indoor accommodation is good because it is spacious and allows the nursery and reception classes to work as one unit when required. It allows easy communication between staff so that the two classes are clearly

seen to be one key stage. The outdoor resources are satisfactory but are not well utilised or developed to support the teaching of all the areas of learning.

18. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 rightly places strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This is needed because pupils have very few skills and understanding when they enter the school. The amount of time given to the teaching of English and mathematics, however, is a great deal more than is usual. It is currently too much because it is at times counter productive. This means that the curriculum is not as coherent or as relevant as it should be. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory but there is scope for improvement, as they do not exhibit real enthusiasm for learning. The curriculum does not impact positively on them because it is not sufficiently relevant to their needs or providing interesting topics through which they can learn and develop their skills. The effect of the higher priority on giving too much time to English and mathematics means that the school has not explored the possibilities of teaching English and mathematics through other subjects such as history, geography and design and technology. This wider and more interesting curriculum is not being used to support teaching and learning.
19. The school makes good efforts to enrich the curriculum through after-school clubs and activities out of school hours. At certain times there are focused activities. These are whole weeks of concentration on particular themes such as the environment or the arts. Artists in residence also take part in enriching the curriculum. This type of work, however, is not well integrated into the normal everyday curriculum and so its impact is lessened.
20. The school works hard so that there is good equality of access and opportunity for all groups of pupils. Teachers have had appropriate training in the teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language and so plan effective activities to improve their speaking and listening skills. The effective use of the traveller education service, which is based in the school, ensures that some activities and topics reflect their culture. Learning support assistants are well deployed in all activities to help those pupils with special educational needs. The number of support staff is good and they have a positive impact on pupils' learning and they are used wisely in almost all lessons.
21. The accommodation is satisfactory with some strengths. The classrooms are a good size and are light and airy. There is a computer suite and a library. The breakfast club, however, also uses the library, and so too many large tables take up space making it difficult to access the books. The library is not a significant feature in pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

This is a caring harmonious school. Procedures for ensuring welfare, health and safety are **good**. Pupils receive **adequate** support and advice and the school seeks their opinions **satisfactorily**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support for pupils from the traveller community is good.
- There is good support for pupils who join the school part way through.
- Individual target setting is inconsistent and insufficiently focused on short-term objectives.

Commentary

22. Child protection procedures are securely in place and the school has satisfactory liaison with outside agencies. Staff are well trained in first aid care for pupils who are ill or who have accidents. Most pupils are confident and secure, although some are worried about misbehaviour by a few. The outside play areas are well supervised however and there was no evidence of any undue conflict. The site is safe and secure and equipment is regularly checked for continued safe operation. Regular risk assessments of the premises are carried out but the governors need to play a more active role in these. When pupils are taken off-site for

educational activities, risk assessment is carried out in line with regulations. The school has a satisfactory statutory Race Equality Policy.

23. The school provides education for children from a well-established traveller community. They are supported by the local traveller education service, which is based in an office at the school. Because of their lifestyle, travelling for a significant proportion of the year, these pupils require help to plan schoolwork while they are away and to integrate when they return. This is done well and, in particular, traveller pupils have a better system of assessment and individual target setting than the rest. The service also gives good support when pupils transfer to secondary school and this has resulted in a higher than average success rate in such transfers, which are sometimes difficult to achieve for some traveller children.
24. Staff know pupils well, despite the high teacher and pupil turnover. When the pupils seeking asylum arrive, often knowing no or very little English, the school takes good practical steps to welcome them and ease their integration, for example, by pairing them with another pupil who speaks their language. Pupils discuss personal issues regularly in class and, with the help of the local education authority, the school is running a course for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to encourage better behaviour and responsibility. The system for rewarding good work and behaviour works well in most classes and pupils appreciate the incentive it gives.
25. Pupils are set targets for improvement in English and mathematics but these are often too long term and are not consistently referred to by teachers in the context of the objectives for a lesson. They are not backed by rigorous assessment, so that pupils do not have appropriate short-term targets, which would enable them to make more rapid progress.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, the local community and other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has the confidence of its parents.
- Arrangements to discuss parents' concerns are good.
- Parents are insufficiently involved in their child's education.
- Some of the information required for parents is missing or is insufficient.

Commentary

26. Parents have positive views of the school. They feel it is well run. The school makes parents welcome and they feel confident that they can raise concerns with staff. They receive good general information about what is happening in school and how their child will be taught. Important letters are translated in the main minority languages and staff are available to interpret when parents raise issues. A start has been made in teaching some parents English and in the family literacy project parents learn how their children learn. The traveller education service acts as a good contact between parents and school, as does the family liaison worker.
27. Although many parents are supportive of their children's work and of the school in general, too many are either unwilling or unable to do so. Only about a quarter of parents returned the questionnaires – which were issued in most of the languages used in parents' homes - on their views and, although those returned were very positive, this low response indicates a certain apathy. Virtually no parents help in school on a regular basis, although the school encourages them to do so. The lack of clear guidance on the amount and frequency of homework, and lack of insistence on daily reading at home, means that parents are not given the chance to help more in raising standards.
28. The governors' annual report to parents omits a financial statement of sufficient detail. The school prospectus is insufficiently precise about sex education and the rights of parents to withdraw pupils from worship or religious education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is **satisfactory**. The leadership of other key staff is **unsatisfactory**. The school is **satisfactorily** managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has shown good skills in strategically managing the significant staff changes as well as the very rapid changes in the school's intake and, with the enthusiasm of new staff and the new leadership team, has kept morale high.
- Management of the curriculum is unsatisfactory: subject leadership has little or no impact on raising standards or improving teaching and learning.
- The headteacher has been proactive in communicating and sustaining a clear vision for an inclusive school.
- Recent developments, such as the establishment of a new leadership team and the induction of three newly qualified teachers, have been managed well and are having a positive impact on teaching and learning, especially in the Foundation Stage.
- Good management of finances means that money has been carefully targeted to increase staffing in order to raise pupils' achievement and attainment.

Commentary

29. Since the last inspection in 2002, the school, in keeping its relative position the same in the context of the very significant barriers to raising achievement, has made satisfactory progress. These barriers include significant staffing changes – half the teachers started in September 2003. In the past, staff absence and mobility led to a lack of continuity in pupils' education, and difficulty in developing some subjects. Another barrier to raising achievement is the high incidence of pupil mobility, which has a negative effect on pupils' progress and standards. Less than half of the current Year 6 pupils started in the reception class. In the past two years, the headteacher has had to divert time and energy to managing the school's very rapidly changing intake. This has been successful. The school is a good inclusive community with a good ethos. A stronger management structure is emerging and subject leaders will be in place for all subjects by September 2004, when newly qualified teachers take on subject leadership roles. Recently developed links with a federation of other schools is clearly intended to support the improvement of management, though it is too soon to measure any impact. The way changes have been managed and the school's awareness of its strengths and weaknesses indicate that it is well placed to improve further. However, pupils' low standards remain a cause for concern and the development issues identified in 2002 remain substantially the same.
30. A new leadership team of three has been gradually developing its role since last September, when a new deputy headteacher started at the school. The team is beginning to demonstrate practical management skills for moving the school forward. Particularly notable has been the good induction of three newly qualified teachers since September. The leadership team have ensured that these new teachers have received well-targeted support from a range of outside agencies to help them develop their teaching skills in the context of the school's large number of traveller children and pupils who speak English as an additional language. The impact of this good management has been their developing confidence, high morale, supportive teamwork, and their ability to plan carefully for the needs of the pupils in their class. This has a positive impact on the quality of learning in these classes, which is often good. The headteacher's staffing deployment in the Foundation Stage has meant that the quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good since the last inspection. Good, strategic use of the budget has allowed the creation of two separate classes in Key Stage 1 and for extensive opportunities for setting and group teaching in Key Stage 2. This high pupil-teacher ratio helps secure pupils' satisfactory achievement overall.
31. Staff are very positive about the school and the challenge it gives them to develop their professional expertise and they enjoy the diverse background of all their pupils. The governing body shares this enthusiasm. Many of the governors are also new to the school. Nevertheless,

they have a satisfactory understanding about the school's strengths and weaknesses, fully supporting its inclusive practice. They have a satisfactory understanding of the school's priorities for development from the sound improvement plan. They offer good support to the headteacher and are satisfactorily developing their knowledge and understanding about teaching and learning and their monitoring role.

32. Leadership and management of the curriculum are unsatisfactory. The headteacher has not established a curriculum overview to ensure teachers are quite clear what should be taught when. Teachers use different planning systems, not all of which identify key subject vocabulary, and few of which ensure that pupils systematically learn key ideas and skills through the activities planned for them in each subject, which is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of literacy and numeracy are particularly weak and therefore a cause for concern. Subject leaders have action plans but do not take all the required action. They attend training courses but do not sufficiently swiftly disseminate key information. The headteacher has made very good use of the services of local Advanced Skills Teachers to meet the needs of the newly qualified teachers by allowing them the opportunity to develop a view of what is 'good teaching'. This has been an effective approach to professional development because it has had a direct positive impact on the quality of teaching in these classes. The headteacher has ensured new teachers have mentors and they have welcomed observations and critical feedback. Both of these strategies are an effective use of resources and are a constructive model for all staff. The leadership team knows that its role in the future has to be to support, which they do well, and also to hold staff to account for their work and make sure that tasks are completed by set dates. Currently, although performance management procedures are satisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection, actual targets for pupils' progress are too vague, rarely challenging, and not measurable.
33. Expenditure per pupil is high. The carry-forward for 2003 was high but prudent in the face of staff changes and fluctuations in the number of pupils on roll. The predicted carry forward for 2004-5 is lower because extra money has been well directed to support the changes needed now to improve standards and achievement, especially in the appointment of teaching assistants and extra teachers at the end of Key Stage 2. The school takes satisfactory note of best value principles. Given its circumstances and context, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	555,962	Balance from previous year	12,900
Total expenditure	526,092	Balance carried forward	42,770
Expenditure per pupil	3,372		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language

The overall provision for pupils who speak English in addition to their home language is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully integrated into all classes and fully included in the range of activities offered by the school.
- These pupils are well supported by all staff and make good progress in speaking and reading in English.
- Some language acquisition techniques are not used consistently well in all classes.
- The school welcomes and celebrates the wide variety of cultures represented by the pupils and pupils from all cultures and backgrounds mix well together.
- There is a good partnership with the parents, well supported by the community education provision.
- The new assessment systems do not yet show clearly how much progress pupils make.
- The school makes good use of the support provided by the local education authority.

Commentary

34. The school provides good support for pupils who speak English in addition to their home language. All members of staff have received training in the skills needed to work with pupils who speak English as an additional language. Learning and support assistants are well deployed to help these pupils in all activities. Consequently, pupils support one other well and show satisfactory attitudes to their schoolwork. Pupils are fully included in all activities and many attend the extra-curricular clubs, including football, guitar, fitness, computers and the Breakfast Club.
35. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and sometimes good as they learn to speak and read English, but writing skills develop more slowly. Teachers' lesson plans include suitable activities to improve their pupils' language skills. Pupils may be paired with a competent English speaker for discussions. Overall, pupils make similar progress to their classmates and some older pupils, as they have become more competent in English, make good progress in subjects such as mathematics and are on target to achieve average standards for their age. Some language development techniques, including remodelling or repeating new words, are not used consistently in all classes. Opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills are limited if their teachers talk a lot in lessons. Pupils enjoy using computers, but the audio option for instructions is not always available, making it difficult for pupils who have not acquired sufficient reading skills to follow the instructions on screen.
36. The school celebrates the wide variety of cultures represented by the pupils and displays flags and maps, and books about their home countries. Pupils from all cultures and backgrounds mix well together when playing and in lessons. Parents and families have a good relationship with the school. This is helped by the community education provision, which is valued by both school and the parents. Newcomers are well supported and, for example, provided with a school uniform to help them feel part of the community quickly and to assist their families. The school governors are fully supportive of the school's aim to welcome all, regardless of religion or cultural background.
37. There are new assessment systems to record and monitor the pupils' competence in English, and to help teachers set targets for each pupil. The systems have not been in place long enough to show clearly the progress each pupil has made since joining the school, or where more support is needed. The school makes good use of and has benefited from the support of the local education authority's specialist support team. This team also helps liaison between families and school, sometimes providing translators.

Community provision

Community provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities contribute to the work of the school by helping parents support their children's learning.
- Good quality courses enable the development of useful skills.
- The community provision is open to all members of the parent community.
- The service is well led and there is a good level of staffing.
- The number of participants could be greater.

Commentary

38. Community provision makes an effective contribution to the learning partnership between parents, their children and the school. Good quality activities and courses for adults are provided through the Partnership Education Scheme and the Workers Education Association, and are open to all parents and members of the local community. Well-chosen courses include English for speakers of other languages, family literacy, first aid and computer skills. Some courses are accredited as part of a longer programme of learning. In one group, pupils work well with their parents. They learn how to help their child with reading, and to enjoy books. Well-informed staff teach them how to select and use suitable books and make games. A useful crèche is provided for younger children whilst their parents learn.
39. The community staff welcome the diversity of cultures represented locally and create a harmonious environment which is fully supportive of the inclusive ethos of the school. The community provision is well led and managed with clear vision to provide learning activities that meet the needs of the adults and support the children in school.
40. All potential funds and grants are accessed, and used well. Parents and pupils in the school may borrow bilingual books and book bags that include books and related activities. Pictures to make it easier for those who do not speak English to select items catalogue the toy library. The service has contributed to the information technology suite in the school, and the facilities are shared. This brings the community and families into the school, and adds to the shared process of learning.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

41. Children enter the nursery with very low skills. Standards attained by the end of the Foundation Stage are still well below national expectations in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding, and creative development. The children are below the standards expected in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development.
42. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection because the quality of teaching has improved. The children get a good start to school in the nursery where teaching is consistently good. Teaching in the reception class ranges from satisfactory to good. The majority is good. By the time children leave the reception class, they have made good progress in all areas of learning because the good teaching ensures the children achieve well from a very low point. Children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and well cared for. A child in the nursery who is identified as talented in reading is catered for very well. Teaching ensures good integration between the areas of learning. There is a good balance between whole-class activities and group and independent activities. Staff intervene and interact very effectively when children are working independently or in group situations. The provision for outdoor play, however, is not well used to support teaching and learning in all the areas of learning.
43. Management of the Foundation Stage is good but there are some areas for development. The indoor accommodation is good because it is a good size and gives scope for the two classes to work as a defined unit and key stage and facilitates easy communication between staff. There is a lack of cohesion in a few aspects of the work of the Foundation Stage. Assessment systems are good. They are different in the two classes but both good in their own way. In the nursery, there is a particularly good strategy for tracking children's knowledge and understanding. In the reception, there is a record of samples of work, which is effective. In the same way the planning of the curriculum and teaching does not fully encompass the unit as a whole. This lack of unification in planning and assessment weakens the development of the unit and the momentum of progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in this aspect of their development.
- Children attain a lower level than is expected for children of the same age.
- Expectations of what children are able to achieve are high.
- Children are well behaved, show curiosity and try hard in all their activities.
- Children do not work collaboratively.

Commentary

44. The development of personal skills is given due priority and thus children make particularly good progress in this area of learning. Children, in both classes, achieve well because staff have high expectations of what they want children to achieve. The very experienced teacher in the nursery and the new teacher in the reception class work with other adults to ensure children receive a good standard of teaching underpinned by high expectations of work and behaviour and good levels of encouragement. Many children start in the nursery with very low level social

skills. They learn to take turns and at snack time learn to take responsibility for giving out milk. By the time they leave reception, they have made good progress. Children successfully learn right from wrong. Many, but not all, share equipment amicably. They behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. Most try to do their best in the activities that staff give them. Their self-esteem and self-confidence is increased and so they select activities and resources independently. They do not yet, however, work together on projects using skills such as planning and negotiating with each other. The good progress in this area of learning has a very positive impact on the children's learning in other areas.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress and achieve well, particularly in spoken language.
- Communication, language and literacy skills are taught effectively.
- Their literacy skills are lower than expected for their age.

Commentary

45. The quality of teaching is good. Children's speaking skills are underdeveloped so there is good emphasis on developing their vocabulary through imaginative activities. In both classes, staff model language well and expect children to use it as they absorb it. In the nursery, the role-play area is set up imaginatively as a baby unit to develop children's vocabulary and to link with learning in knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff intervene and interact purposefully to increase children's spoken language. In the reception class, children were invited to dramatise the story of the *Three Little Pigs*, which they did with great enthusiasm. The 'actors' were encouraged to use book language as well as encouraging the more able to use their own language. Children enjoy looking at books and some confidently talk about what they have 'read'. In both classes, they follow and share a story. Staff promote literacy skills in the reception class, for example, when they encourage children to recognise letters of the alphabet and initial letter sounds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress through well-chosen practical activities.
- Standards are lower than expected for their age.

Commentary

46. The quality of teaching and learning is good. High teacher expectations and challenges for children mean that their understanding of how mathematics work develops well. Staff model the correct mathematical vocabulary in all mathematical activities. In the nursery, there are good opportunities that draw out mathematical learning in practical and realistic activities such as measuring a real baby or when taking part in making pancakes. Other opportunities such as observing numbers and patterns in the environment or in daily routines are seized upon. More able children are taught to recognise and count to five. In the reception class, this previous learning is built upon when children learn to understand simple addition and subtraction. A few of the more able children can count and write numbers in the low teens. The learning of children of lower attainment is reinforced in small groups. Children's learning about simple shapes is linked to work in knowledge and understanding when they go for a walk in the local environment.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress.
- Children acquire first-hand experience of unfamiliar aspects of the world around them.
- Children's achievement by the time they enter Year 1 is below that expected for their age.

Commentary

47. Children make good progress during their time in nursery and reception classes. They make good gains in knowledge and understanding when learning through practical activities, such as seeing the change in ingredients when making pancakes, learning the importance of family routines when watching a baby being bathed and dressed, or playing with building and construction materials. Resources and equipment, including those for information and communication technology, are readily accessible in both classes, which supports spontaneous learning experiences. In the reception class, children keenly learn about the importance of fire engines and the fire station. They make good progress in acquiring the foundations for later work in science, history and geography. Children learn about religious education through the syllabus that the school follows.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are lower than expected when children enter Year 1.
- Children use pencils and tools with increasing control.
- The outside resources are not well used.

Commentary

48. The teaching of physical development is good. In indoor activities, children make good progress as they carefully move around each other in a number of ways. They jump, run and skip but their co-ordination is not as well developed as expected for this age. Outside they control tricycles and other toys so as not to have accidents. The quality and range of outdoor resources are satisfactory but the area is not well used. All the children go out together daily to play on the equipment at the same time each day when it is playtime. There are, however, many missed opportunities to develop the outdoor provision so that teaching and learning in all the six areas of learning can be carried out. The children achieve well in ability to handle small tools such as scissors and brushes. They handle resources such as play dough and jigsaws appropriately. Many of the children still have difficulties in manipulating their fingers when, for example, using them to count on.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities to make music and to engage in spontaneous imaginative role-play.
- Children's knowledge, understanding and skills in this area are below average.

Commentary

49. The teaching of children's creative development is good and children make steady progress. Many activities tend to be adult led but children do have the opportunity to generate some learning experiences and activities themselves. Children in the nursery thoroughly enjoy making

music and exploring the sounds that percussion instruments make. They learn the names of the different instruments rapidly. Children in the reception class equally enjoy using them but the level of challenge is not quite high enough to really ensure their full concentration and take on their learning sufficiently to give them a sense of achievement. The planned opportunities for role-play to benefit children's developing imagination are valued greatly in both classes.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Standards are well below both national averages and those of similar schools.
- There has been an improvement in the teaching of word- and sound-building.
- The planning of the literacy curriculum and teaching are not well supported in other subjects.
- Teaching assistants provide good support in lessons.
- Assessment strategies are not effective enough.

Commentary

50. Standards at the last inspection and in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were very low compared with all schools nationally and similar schools. Inspection evidence and teacher assessment indicate that standards are likely to be well below those expected at the end of the present academic year in all aspects of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Pupils enter Year 1, or join the school part way through their school lives, with very few basic skills. Half of the pupils speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of acquiring English. Against this context pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
51. Pupils' skills in reading fluently and in identifying unknown words are in the main slightly below what would be expected for their age. Pupils' learning and their achievement in using sounding out strategies and word building in order to work out unknown words when reading have improved since the last inspection. They retell the basic plots of stories competently and repeat information gained from simple non-fiction books. Their comprehension of more complex language and their ability to explain detailed plots and characters used in fiction is missing. Only a few pupils read with expression. Most pupils have very few library skills. They do not think the use of libraries is significant to them and do not fully realise the importance of books.
52. Pupils' writing is basic and lacks the complexities of grammar and creativity found in good writing. Learning and achievements in spelling are better than other aspects of their writing. This is due to short, concentrated, specific times of teaching on the weekly timetable that are supported by teaching assistants. This is particularly so in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of punctuation is weak throughout the school.
53. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to very good and is satisfactory overall. Teaching assistants are mostly deployed well to support pupils with difficulties in learning and those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress overall in acquiring spoken language, but there is scope for a better rate of progress through more opportunities for purposeful, guided talking and discussion in some lessons. The more effective lessons are rigorous. Teachers continuously use technical language that is appropriate to the subject. The better teaching is relevant to the way the pupils learn. Effective teachers involve the pupils in the lessons actively before they do any written work. For example, in a very good lesson on compound words, the pupils were given a word each on a card and they found it fun and interesting to find another pupil with a suitable word which they could join up to their own word. They were then able to remember and apply their learning to their group activities. The good momentum of the lesson was kept up by

occasional reminders to pupils of how much time was left to do their work and to keep up their pace of working. In another active lesson which was effective, pupils tasted fruit and discussed it before doing their writing.

54. Less effective lessons, though satisfactory, do not actively involve pupils. Teachers make valiant attempts to model spoken language. Pupils, however, are not always asked to articulate this good language back to the teacher or the class. Teachers tend to do too much talking and group activities centre on the use of photocopied sheets. Consequently, a good number of lessons lack creativity in their approach and do not hold the pupils' attention sufficiently.
55. There is a satisfactory system in place for tracking pupils' attainment at certain points in their school lives and groups of pupils are given common targets to achieve. The targets are often too many or too wide or aimed at too long an interval of time for pupils to achieve them. This is because the analysis of what pupils can or cannot do at the end of one lesson or at the end of a series of lessons is unsatisfactory. The lack of sharp analysis on a daily or weekly basis means that staff cannot plan and adjust their teaching sufficiently well to address the progression of skills pupils need. It also means that teachers cannot set small individual targets for pupils.
56. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. Systems to direct, challenge and support the co-ordinator's development as a subject leader are not in place. There are many more pupils with English as a second language or with difficulties due to special educational needs or from deprived backgrounds since the previous inspection. This, combined with the many staff changes, has affected the planning of the curriculum and therefore the planning of lessons. The school gives much more time throughout Years 1 to 6 to the teaching of literacy than is normal. This reflects the important and necessary emphasis placed on the teaching of the subject. The National Literacy Strategy is satisfactorily in place. However, the very large number of hours given over to teaching English is not reflected in the resulting standards and in some cases has a negative impact on their attitudes. Pupils are usually well behaved in lessons but they lose some of their interest in learning because of the over-emphasis on teaching purely literacy. The school does not give enough time and attention to the teaching of subjects such as history and geography to be used as interesting vehicles for the teaching of literacy.
57. Resources are satisfactory but the library in its present circumstances is not used well enough by pupils and is not significant in their learning. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in literacy.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Language and literacy are not well used across the curriculum. There are many missed opportunities to incorporate their use in other subjects or to use other subjects to support the development of all aspects of English. There is very little use of the library as a resource when teaching subjects such as history and geography so pupils do not develop library skills or reinforce their reading and research skills.

Mathematics

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards remain well below average.
- Progress in Years 1 and 2 has improved and pupils' achievement is now satisfactory throughout the school.
- Effective use is made of the high number of support staff.
- Assessment procedures to help teachers with their planning are unsatisfactory.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics.

Commentary

58. At the time of the last inspection standards were well below average but slowly improving from a very low base. This is similar to the current picture. In the national tests in 2003, standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were very low compared to all schools and to similar schools. The inspection confirms that this is still the case. Just over half of the pupils are likely to reach the expected standard for their age by the end of Year 6. These pupils use a suitable range of mental and written methods of calculation in their number work but their knowledge of shape and measures is limited. Many have difficulty in using and applying their numeracy skills when solving everyday problems. The remaining pupils are working at levels below those expected for their age and about third are over a year behind in their mathematical development. Standards have not significantly improved since the last inspection. Staff changes and the continued changing context of the school, with very high mobility of pupils, have been significant barriers to improvement. Currently additional time is being given to numeracy and classes have two mathematics lessons most days. The impact of this additional teaching has yet to be monitored and evaluated.
59. The headteacher has ensured that there is a high level of adult support. As a result, teaching and learning across the school are satisfactory and this leads to satisfactory progress and achievement. The introduction of separate Year 1 and Year 2 classes has improved the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and pupils now make sound progress. Additional teaching support in Year 6 is helping teachers to plan more effectively for the broad range of attainment in that year group. Consequently, all groups are making at least satisfactory progress. Teaching assistants are well deployed in lessons and provide good support, particularly for those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language. Their reinforcement of teaching ensures all groups understand what is expected of them and that progress is at least sound. A few pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in mathematics because they have gained confidence in speaking and listening.
60. Teachers make satisfactory use of the National Numeracy Strategy when planning their activities. At times, they do not sufficiently adapt the strategy to suit the specific needs of all their pupils. Where teaching is good, there is a very clear focus on what pupils are to learn and step-by-step activities that make effective use of practical resources to help pupils develop their understanding. Clear use is made of mathematical vocabulary to help both those who speak English as an additional language as well as those whose general language development is slow. There are examples in some classes of good quality marking that not only encourages pupils but helps them to understand what they have learned and what they need to practise next. The good aspects of teaching are not sufficiently widespread to ensure pupils make good or better progress throughout the school. There is scope to share good ideas and raise the overall quality of teaching.
61. There are weaknesses in the leadership and management of the subject, though some aspects are satisfactory. The subject leader has ensured that there are adequate resources available in the classrooms. Annual test results are carefully analysed to identify areas for whole-school development, currently multiplication and division skills. However, regular assessment and recording of individual pupils' progress in order to help teachers to plan more effectively are not in place. Monitoring of teaching and learning across the school by the subject leader are at an early stage of development.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Pupils make insufficient use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. While some measurements are made in science, opportunities to use and develop mathematical skills including data handling are not planned for and are often missed. Computers are used in some lessons to reinforce pupils' learning in mathematics but overall insufficient use is made to consolidate and improve pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management have not been sufficiently focussed on improving pupils' learning and raising standards.
- In some classes the deployment of adults to work with groups is effective in supporting pupils' involvement, understanding and achievement.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve their skills in carrying out experiments nor what key knowledge they need to acquire and remember.
- In some classes the focus on pupils' developing key scientific vocabulary is systematic and helps all pupils, especially those with English as an additional language, achieve well in science.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils have sufficient experience in writing scientific reports to help their understanding.

Commentary

63. In the national tests and assessments in 2003, standards at both key stages were very low compared to all schools and to similar schools. The inspection confirms this but judges achievement as being satisfactory given the pupils' very low starting point. Standards have not improved since the last inspection. Staff absence, followed by staff changes and added to the changing context of the school, with very high mobility of pupils, have been significant barriers to improvement.
64. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection varied from unsatisfactory to very good; overall it is satisfactory. There are strengths in the teaching and in individual lessons. In Years 4 to 6, one of the key strengths is the effective deployment of the adult support available. Each adult is allocated to a group of pupils, the teachers give short, focussed teaching input to all and then the groups have a defined amount of time to discuss issues and come up with answers or observations or their own writing. The quality of learning in these lessons is good. Pupils are motivated to be involved. Those who speak English as an additional language have the support of their peers and of the close adult so that the potential for any misunderstandings can be identified and remedied, and the pace is very good. The effectiveness of this way of working has not yet been shared among other staff with the result, in Years 2 and 3, that the extra staffing and their skills are not used as well.
65. The use of assessment to ensure that teachers know what pupils understand and therefore what they need to do next, and the development of rigorous planning so that teachers concentrate on what pupils need to learn, rather than what they are going to do in a lesson, are unsatisfactory. These are key areas for development. Marking very rarely indicates what pupils have achieved and what their next step needs to be. There is no guidance for pupils to refer to so that they know what they must do to demonstrate attainment at a particular level. For example, how they can become systematic investigators by always organising resources, predicting outcomes, fair testing, recording results and reaching conclusions. One lesson was very well organised so that pupils were directed through this sequence in a very structured way. This very successful teaching method ensures the rigorous development of pupils' scientific understanding but this approach to teaching science has not been pursued as a model for all staff to use.
66. In Years 3 to 5 the teachers ensure that key vocabulary is identified in their planning, is explained to the pupils and becomes a repeated refrain through the lesson. In Year 6 this is taken further and the subject vocabulary is incorporated into pupils' own writing. This is achieved through the use of a 'writing frame' and through the careful structure of the lesson so that the writing does not all take place at one time, at the end of the lesson, but is systematically carried out *through* the lesson as the scientific investigation unfolds. This is a powerful way of developing the pupils' emerging literacy skills and of maintaining their involvement in writing. This successful method is not consistently used in all classes. Consequently, work in books shows that pupils have little understanding of how to report on what they have done, explain

what happened and why, and reflect both on the outcomes of an investigation and on their own learning.

67. Subject leadership and management have been unsatisfactory. They have not been sufficiently focussed on improving the quality of learning by ensuring that teaching in science is systematic, well planned and focussed clearly on what the pupils can do and what they need to do next in order to learn. A new subject leader has recently been appointed and has already created an action plan, which is good. The school's use of available data, the monitoring of planning and pupils' work in order to see where colleagues are doing good work that could be shared and where they need support are unsatisfactory. Good, strategic leadership by the headteacher has ensured that all classes have a high level of adult support. As a result, teaching and learning across the school are satisfactory and this leads to satisfactory progress and achievement but, in the context of these low standards, the school correctly recognises that there is scope for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT lessons are good. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn with the computers.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve their skills and capability.
- Resources are now good and this has allowed greater access for pupils and helped raise their achievement and standards.
- In some classes the use of ICT in other subjects is good. It is planned well and allows pupils to practise and improve their ICT skills.

Commentary

68. Standards are below those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. This is the same as at the last inspection. However, the evidence indicates that, since that time, standards fell because of poor and unreliable equipment, and that only since new equipment was installed in the autumn term, together with the use of a group set of laptops in literacy lessons, have standards begun to rise back to previous levels. The school has sustained a high level of well-trained adult support in ICT lessons and this ensures that teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Weaknesses in teachers' planning and preparation, especially at the end of Key Stage 1, mean that progress is not as good as it could be in lessons. The impact of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. A new subject leader has been identified but is new to teaching and, appropriately, has not yet been asked to take on the full role. Teachers are using national guidelines for their planning but gaps in pupils' previous experiences mean that few pupils have sufficient knowledge about the control and modelling areas of ICT.
69. Pupils enjoy using the computers and look forward to ICT lessons and to using ICT in other subjects. Very many pupils do not have access to computers outside school and they love it when it is their turn. This good motivation and good attitudes means they often persevere, help each other and try different options ensuring that their achievement is satisfactory even when the teachers' preparation and planning are inadequate. Teachers' planning and preparation varies from good to unsatisfactory, which clearly demonstrates the impact of the unsatisfactory subject leadership and management. Where teachers plan well, pupils' learning is systematic, marking reflects clearly what pupils have learned, and the learning is good. For example, this results in pupils attaining average standards in Year 1. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The prospective subject leader has assembled useful materials for tracking and recording the development of pupils' skills and another set for recording their developing capability. Currently, teachers identify what the pupils will do in the lesson but not what the pupils already know and,

therefore, what they need to learn. Crucially, plans do not rigorously identify how the activity will help pupils make progress – either by identifying the skills that will be taught or the knowledge and understanding that pupils will learn through carrying out the activity.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. This is unsatisfactory overall. The school has been introducing the use of six laptops in other subject lessons this term. The pupils' very positive attitude to ICT means that they are enthusiastic about using them. In some classes the use of the laptops is planned well and pupils get a much-needed opportunity to practise their ICT skills, such as increasing their familiarity with the keyboard. In these classes, the teachers' careful preparation, and sometimes the pairing of pupils so that those who speak English as an additional language have peer support, mean that pupils work at literacy tasks with enthusiasm and sometimes achieve very well as a result. Most of this planning is for English and teachers, supported well by the activity leader, have identified useful resources from the Internet, such as a program to practise spelling. Few teachers use the potential of the digital projector as a teaching tool. When used it supports the pupils who speak English as an additional language particularly well because the learning is visual. Unfortunately, leaders in other subjects, particularly in mathematics, have not clearly identified when and how ICT can be used to support learning in their subject. This is unsatisfactory.

HUMANITIES

71. In humanities, work was sampled in **history** and **geography**. All the pupils' work available was analysed and pupils were interviewed but no lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. There is every indication from the pupils' work and from talking with them that too little time is given to these subjects in all classes and that standards are well below average.
72. Teachers do not plan sufficiently for pupils to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to each subject. This is unsatisfactory. Although the teachers sometimes take pupils out on a local visit, they do not direct the pupils sufficiently to help them develop their field study skills or to focus them on geographical aspects. The teaching of mapping is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 6 too many pupils do not know what an atlas is and have no memory of using local maps to help them understand the physical features of Rochdale. In history, the activities teachers plan do not ensure that pupils develop a sense of chronology. Although they are very enthusiastic about facts they have learned, pupils cannot put these into an historical context. Pupils are keen to use the Internet to find out information. They successfully locate useful sites and work hard to read and interpret the information available. This good attitude towards learning and finding out more is currently not evident in many other activities. The use of literacy in these two subjects is unsatisfactory. Teachers have not examined what they have to teach in literacy and then used texts from history and geography to support this. They rarely look at ways they could develop pupils' writing skills by using 'writing frames' and supporting pupils to write about history and geography topics.
73. The leadership and management of geography are unsatisfactory. A planned audit of the subject has not been carried out to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. The prospective subject leader for history has not yet taken up the role.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

These subjects were not a focus for the inspection and so it is not possible to make judgements about their provision across the school.

74. **Art and design:** The work pupils from all year groups produced with a visiting artist as part of a recent textile project makes attractive displays in the hall. Pupils' other work on display and in their art books indicates that their practical skills are not well developed. Displays show that a suitable range of materials are used but their drawings and paintings show that their

understanding of colour, tone, shape and form is below that normally seen in primary schools. Art books are used to record pupils' initial ideas but not frequently enough or with a sufficient focus on the development of artistic skills to ensure sound progress. During a brief visit to a Year 6 art lesson pupils were observed using a wide range of techniques, including observational drawing that focused on line and shape and creating contrasting images in black and white. The pupils benefited from the good subject knowledge of a support teacher.

75. In **design and technology**, very little work was available to show pupils' practical designing and making skills and their ability to evaluate their work. In Year 1, pupils use a construction kit to make models of playground equipment and use simple drawings to show their designs. Pupils in Year 2 develop their making skills by investigating simple ways of fastening materials together, including sewing, stapling, gluing and taping. They use these skills to make models of simple vehicles using recycled materials. Although the pupils take a pride in their models, the techniques they use to assemble and decorate them are at a lower level than normally found at this age.
76. In the one **music** lesson seen during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 made satisfactory progress in developing their understanding of high and low sounds.
77. One lesson in **physical education** was observed. Year 1 pupils made satisfactory progress in a dance lesson, though they are at a very early stage of developing their movements to show day-to-day actions, such as putting on wellingtons and digging in the garden. The lesson was well managed and behaviour in the hall was good. The class teacher and teaching assistants gave pupils with behavioural difficulties good support.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. Pupils are satisfactorily taught personal, social and health education through a suitable weekly timetable of lessons called circle time. There is no whole school programme or scheme of work. Teachers identify pertinent and relevant subjects to be discussed in these sessions. Pupils are taught sex education and a satisfactory awareness of drug abuse through the science curriculum. The school has identified the teaching and learning of personal, social and health education as an area for development.

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