

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PAUL'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Astley Bridge, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105206

Headteacher: Mrs K Bramwell

Lead inspector: Mr J Heap

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 December 2003

Inspection number: 257922

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	219
School address:	Newnham Street Astley Bridge Bolton
Postcode:	BL1 8QA
Telephone number:	01204 333741
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev A Lindop
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Paul's is a Church of England primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. It is situated on the outskirts of Bolton. This is an average-sized primary school in England with 219 pupils on the roll: 116 boys and 103 girls. The roll has decreased in recent years because of the decision by the governing body to reduce class sizes. Children arrive at school reflecting the full range of attainment levels but, overall, the attainment on entry is below average. Pupils are organised into seven classes. The pupils come from a large, inner-city catchment area which has few significant signs of deprivation. Housing ranges from local authority estates to private dwellings. It is an area of low mobility. The majority of pupils are white, and a large minority (34 per cent) come from mainly Indian and mixed-race backgrounds. Eighty-two pupils (37 per cent) are learning English as an additional language and around a third of them are at an early stage of acquiring English. These figures are much higher than most schools. There are 22 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, which is around the average. Forty-four pupils (20 per cent) are on the list of special educational needs and there are a wide range of learning difficulties. This percentage is also near to the national average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is in line with the national average. The school has received the following awards:

- Achievement award in 2001;
- Teaching award in 2001.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18824	J Heap	Lead inspector	English Physical education Religious education English as an additional language
19740	A Smith	Lay inspector	
17685	L Spooner	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
23647	G Cooper	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school that benefits from very good leadership and management and the very strong support of parents and pupils. Overall, standards are above average in Years 1 to 6 and pupils' achievement is high because of the very good teaching. Pupils' personal development is very strong because provision is very good. Consequently, the school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In the 2003 national tests for 11 year olds, standards were well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English.
- In the 2003 national tests for 7 year olds, standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Overall, pupils' achievement is very good, including pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.
- The school is highly successful at identifying and minimising any barriers to learning, particularly for those pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Very effective provision for pupils' personal development leads to very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The school has a very effective curriculum that is very strongly enhanced by activities that enrich the provision.
- Links with parents and other establishments are very good.
- The head teacher and senior colleagues provide very good leadership and management.
- Pupils are very well cared for and this is much appreciated by pupils and their parents.

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The school has maintained the strengths identified in the last report and improved the areas identified as weaknesses:

- higher attaining pupils receive appropriate work, particularly in English and mathematics;
- basic writing skills and presentation are good and there is far less use of prepared worksheets;
- behaviour is generally very good throughout the school;
- the timetable has been effectively adjusted to ensure a more equal share of time across subjects and lessons are no longer unnecessarily long;
- provision and standards in information and communication technology is now good;
- procedures for child protection are good.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Overall, pupils' **achievement is very good**. Children enter reception with levels of ability that reflect the full range, but are below average overall. Children achieve well and by the time they enter Year 1 most will meet the goals they are expected to achieve by this age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. By the end of Year 2, standards seen are above

average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement for most pupils starting from a low base. However, the results of the national tests in 2003 were well above average, but there are more pupils with special educational needs in the present class. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. This is not quite as high as the results shown in the table above, mainly due to higher proportions of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make very good progress towards the targets set for them. Standards in basic English skills are high and good enough in Year 6. There is little difference in the performance of girls and boys. The targets set by the school are challenging and high enough. Standards in information and communication technology are above average. Attainment in religious education is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Overall, pupils' personal development is **very good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is high quality. The particular strengths are the very strong attitudes, behaviour and relationships that are fostered. Pupils like school and attendance is good.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

Overall, the quality of education is **very good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **very good**. A half of the lessons were very good or better, a further third were good and the remainder satisfactory. The satisfactory teaching was mainly due to the inexperience of the two newly qualified teachers. Teachers know their subjects and plan lessons very well. They judge pupils' levels of attainment very accurately and meet the diverse needs in the classes. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language is very effective and this means that they make very good progress towards meeting the targets set for them.

Overall, the curriculum is very good and is enriched by a very wide range of activities. All pupils benefit equally from what the school has to offer. Provision for reception children is very strong. The steps taken to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very effective and a particular strength is the development of very good and trusting relationships with adults. Links with parents and other schools and colleges are very good. The school has good links with the community.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, leadership and management are **very good**. The head teacher provides very good leadership and a clearly articulated vision for the school that embraces strong academic and caring values. She has very strong support from key staff who successfully manage subjects and show initiative. The work of the governing body is good. They are supportive, inquisitive and check closely on the work of the school. However, they depend too heavily on the information and guidance of the head teacher, instead of instigating evaluations of their own.

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

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents are particularly happy about their children's progress, growing maturity and fair treatment and the expectations of staff. Pupils enjoy the school and are proud of its achievements. They find lessons to be well prepared, challenging and interesting.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school does not have significant areas to improve upon. Any matters that are to receive attention are identified in the school improvement plan.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, achievement is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the 2003 national tests were well above average.
- Standards of work seen are above average.
- Achievement in reception and by the ages of seven and 11 is good.
- Overall, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make very good progress towards their targets

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.1 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.9 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. In relation to the average points scores shown in the table above, results are well above the national average in reading writing and mathematics. The figures also indicate a significant improvement in writing results and more modest progress in reading and mathematics. The school recognised that writing results were not keeping pace with the others and this rightly became a focus for improvement. Proportions of pupils attaining the higher Level 3, were above average in reading and well above average in mathematics and writing. Teacher assessments show that attainment in science is very high. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics were above average. When comparing the results of boys and girls, there is no significant difference in mathematics, but girls do a little better in reading and writing. The school's trend has been improving since its low in 2000 and is above the national one.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (28.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.5 (27.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.6 (30.7)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The table shows results that are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Over three years, results are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The trend is inconsistent particularly in English and mathematics but, overall, is similar to the national trend. In comparing results, boys do better than girls, particularly in mathematics. The school

is aware of this and keeping a watchful check on it. Evidence from the inspection is that there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

### **Work seen during the inspection**

3. Standards and achievement are better than at the time of the last inspection. Improvements in standards from entry to the school to leaving at the age of 11 are due to:
  - very good teaching and learning, which is guided by very helpful assessments of pupils levels of attainment;
  - pupils' very good attitudes to learning;
  - the very good climate for learning that has been fostered by the management and staff of the school.

As a consequence of all of these factors over time, all pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve very well.
4. Given their low starting points, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their identified targets for the acquisition of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. This is because their targets are clearly defined, tasks are modified to take into account their prior learning and they receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants during lessons.
5. All pupils for whom English is an additional language are competent users of English and most pupils are fully fluent. However, many pupils are not fluent users of English when they enter the school and need additional support to access the curriculum. The attainment of these pupils is measurably improved as they become fluent in English and this has an impact on their progress in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers, learning support assistants, bilingual assistants and the specialist teacher who works for the local authority are well deployed and make an important contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. By the time the pupils leave the school all pupils have made very good progress overall.
6. Early judgements of children's levels of attainment on entry to reception, show that they come to school with the full range of attainment, but are below average, overall. Standards in literacy and social skills are particularly weak. By the time the children leave the reception class, standards are average in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. This represents good achievement in all of these aspects.
7. In English, standards this year are lower than the results in the 2003 national tests because of higher proportions of pupils with special educational needs. Throughout the school pupils show confidence and competence in listening, talking, reading and writing and there is a clear progression in their work and achievements. Pupils' literacy skills benefit from the work they do in other subjects, this is particularly true of the work done by higher attaining pupils.
8. In mathematics, pupils throughout the school are competent in mental arithmetic and skilled in the quick recall of multiplication facts. Seven year olds use their number knowledge to solve money problems accurately. They confidently investigate length, time and shape. By the age of 11, pupils competently apply mathematical knowledge to everyday problems. However, a minority have greater difficulties when the problems are written and this is due to understandable weaknesses with technical language. Pupils are confident in their knowledge and understanding of number patterns, multiples and fractions and work effectively in data handling activities.
9. In science, achievement is very good by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11. This is mainly because most pupils are very skilled at predicting, recording, carrying out investigations independently and drawing accurate conclusions. Most lower attaining pupils

will reach average standards by the end of the year. Standards by the age of seven are average. Higher attaining pupils are good at classification and recording. They have a satisfactory understanding of forces.

10. The above average standards in information and communication technology are a big improvement on the findings from the last inspection. The wide use of computers in other subjects is a significant reason for the very good achievement of pupils. Particularly notable are the examples of multimedia presentations in Year 6 and the modelling and simulation work in Year 1.
11. In religious education, standards at seven and 11 are above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and achievement is good. Seven year olds have a firm grasp of the work on Christianity and their understanding is deepened by the practical work they do on aspects such as baptism and church festivals. By the age of 11, knowledge and understanding is broadened to issues relating to other religions such as Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Importantly, there is an emphasis on their learning of the similarities and differences between these faiths.
12. In other subjects, standards in music are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is good. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards and achievement.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is above national rates. This reflects the views of parents and pupils and is an overall improvement on the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are eager to be included in learning activities.
- A very high standard of behaviour is consistently promoted.
- The quality of relationships is very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Attendance is above the national average.

### **Commentary**

13. Pupils' very good attitudes make a considerable contribution to their attainment and levels of achievement. Across the school pupils settle quickly in class and are very keen to be included in the learning activities. They confidently share ideas because their responses are valued and self-esteem is consistently promoted. This is equally so for pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils relish the challenging tasks put before them, for example:
  - in Year 6 pupils amended a computer presentation to make it suitable for Year 2 pupils;
  - Year 2 pupils worked collaboratively to develop a dance sequence to illustrate magic and mischief.
14. Throughout the school, pupils know clearly the differences between right and wrong and show a proper regard for the property of others and the school environment. Pupils respond well to school rules and are undoubtedly aware of the consequences of their behaviour. Their understanding of what constitutes appropriate behaviour is established at a young age and makes a major contribution to this very orderly community and good quality of learning environment. The school places a high priority on moral development. A whole school policy

ensures staff members have a consistent approach to promoting this aspect and equally high expectations.

### **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	120	2	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	50	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0

15. Relationships within the school are very good and enable all pupils to learn and achieve effectively. They are characterised by the mutual respect evident between pupils and the adults who work with them. Members of staff provide very good role models in demonstrating how relationships are initiated and sustained. In response pupils work and play constructively and show sensitivity and concern for feelings and values of others when, for instance, sharing their work in plenary sessions. Pupils relate well to unfamiliar visitors too, offering natural courtesy and genuine politeness. Pupils of all ages enjoy responsibilities when asked to help with school routines such as older pupils befriending younger pupils and accepting responsibility as prefects, playground friends and school council members.
16. Attendance rates have been maintained significantly in recent years and are still above the national rates in comparison with other schools. The school rigorously monitors attendance and punctuality and attempts in many ways to make parents and pupils fully aware of the importance of full attendance and punctuality. The strong family ethos of the school gives rise to children being very happy to come to school.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.8	School data	0.0
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.*

17. The opportunities for pupils to gather insight into beliefs and develop their spiritual awareness are very good. The weekly assemblies, celebrating pupils' successes, are very beneficial in raising their self-esteem. The provision for moral and social development is very good. Moral issues are raised and discussed in circle time (class discussions).
18. Pupils throughout the school show a considerable pride in being members of the school community and clearly enjoy being in school. They are interested and involved in the wide range of activities that the school provides, both in lessons and out of school hours. Parents are supportive of the school, and very happy with the values the school promotes. No racist or bullying incidents were seen during the inspection.

19. Pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language are positive and well motivated towards their work. This strongly promotes and maintaining their very good rate of progress. On rare occasions, pupils whose barriers to learning are emotional and behavioural find great difficulty in concentrating on their tasks and this affects the rate at which they make progress.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, provision is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **very good**. The curriculum is **very strong**. Links with parents and the community are **very good**. This is a **very** caring school.

### Teaching and learning

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Teaching and learning are very good and better in a half of the lessons observed.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are taught very well.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	19 (45%)	14 (33%)	7 (17%)	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.*

20. Across the school the standard of teaching has generally been raised from good to very good. The main reasons for this improvement are:
- better understanding of subjects by teachers because of well focussed training opportunities;
  - a well designed curriculum that enables teachers to make important links between subjects, for instance literacy, information and communication technology and history;
  - very good checking and support by senior management has led to increased confidence and competence;
  - very good procedures and practices in judging pupils' levels of attainment. This has led to more informed teaching that caters for all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language..
- As a result, standards have been raised and pupils are achieving more.
21. Across the school, most teachers are very strong in terms of:
- their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach;
  - the planning for lessons, groups of lessons and for the overall programme;
  - their enthusiasm and keenness to engage pupils in worthwhile, challenging and well matched activities;
  - expecting a lot of the pupils.
- In return, pupils are highly motivated learners, who enjoy their lessons and seek to meet the individual targets that are identified, often with their help. Pupils produce a lot of good work and the picture in their books is one of constant improvement. Both parents and pupils consider that the school stretches the youngsters and they are pleased about this.
22. On occasions, the two newly qualified teachers are understandably unable to match the high qualities of their more experienced colleagues. However, their practice is never less than

satisfactory and there are examples of good teaching. An area for development is the management and control of pupils, particularly the younger ones in Year 1. This leads to pupils not making the best use of their time and producing less work than expected. Inspectors saw enough of pupils in a variety of situations to recognise that they are challenging. Furthermore, it is highly commendable that the experienced teachers have very effective strategies for managing lessons and this further enables learning to flourish.

23. The more consistently high quality teaching is found in reception and Years 3 to 6 because there are more experienced teachers. Nevertheless, one of the two outstanding lessons was taught in a Year 2 literacy session.

### **Example of outstanding teaching**

**In line with the school's aim to achieve the highest standards, the Year 2 teacher sought to teach and reinforce basic literacy skills relating to instructional writing.**

The very good relationships between teacher and pupil meant that she could take a risk by writing on the board sentences with errors. The pupils enjoyed spotting the errors and helping the teacher eradicate them. The teacher went on to model an exemplar 'Instructions checklist' by using pupils' work from the previous day that she had copied onto an overhead transparency. Verbal responses showed clearly that the pupils understood the requirements of the checklist, which included:

- A clear GOAL;
- A text box;
- Capital letters and full stops to demarcate sentences;
- Diagrams to help the reader.

Pupils successfully provided the list of instructions in the required format. The large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language were fully involved in this exciting lesson because the support they received was first rate in all parts of the lesson.

24. Pupils with special educational needs learn very well across the stages in the school and their achievement is very good by the age of 11. Three factors have a particular impact on their learning:
- targets on individual plans for their learning are usually very precise;
  - tasks are planned that cover the same type of work as the rest of the class but which are tailored to their special needs and specific targets;
  - teachers and learning support assistants give very good support during lessons. This helps pupils with significant barriers to learning continue with what they need to do, supports their motivation and concentration and ensures that they achieve well. Teachers assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs effectively, through marking their work and through very well targeted questioning during lessons.
25. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve very well and take their rightful place in the groups and classes. This comes about because of:
- teachers being aware of the needs of individual pupils through training, accurate and helpful assessments of pupils' levels of attainment and making plans for lessons that are tailored to individual needs;
  - very good support in lessons from assistants and the officer of the local authority ethnic minority achievement service.

## The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **very good**. The school has fully addressed the curriculum weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of planning is detailed and thorough, and very strong in English, mathematics, and science and in the reception class.
- Enrichment activities make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The curriculum is rigorously and regularly evaluated to assure quality.
- Teachers and support staff are very well qualified and offer a high level of expertise.
- The much improved provision in information and communication technology has made a very good contribution to the above average standards in this subject.
- The outside play area for reception children is used very effectively to promote learning.

### Commentary

26. The curriculum meets statutory requirements in all of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. It ensures high levels of equality of access and opportunity and all pupils achieve very well. A particular strength lies in the way in which the school has tackled the way that time is used. Five lessons are taught each day. This arrangement ensures that pupils receive their full literacy and numeracy entitlement and are provided with a varied range of other lessons. Regular checking of provision evaluates effectively the quality of the curriculum. For example, when the school decided there was a need to increase the opportunities for investigational work in science, more time was allocated to teaching the subject across the school.
27. Overall, the provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good. These pupils benefit from all the learning opportunities the school provides. Good individual plans for their learning support their acquisition of basic skills and identified strategies to help them concentrate and behave well where this is a problem. A strong feature of the school's curriculum provision is the way the school ensures equal access for pupils with special educational needs. There are good procedures for the regular review of learning plans and progress towards targets.
28. The curriculum for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. Teaching pupils to be confident and fluent users of English is given the highest priority. The major focus is the development of pupils' communication skills and acquisition of appropriate language to help them learn all subjects of the curriculum. This is reflected in the emphasis placed upon pupils' individual needs in literacy. There are good opportunities throughout the curriculum for pupils to develop specialist vocabulary and to use it in discussion and writing.
29. The school offers very high quality enrichment activities, through educational visits, school clubs and opportunities for older pupils to take part in residential trips. The expertise and experience of the teachers and support staff ensure that the learning needs of pupils throughout the school are fully met. Administrative, lunchtime and maintenance staff make a very valuable contribution to the provision made for the children. The personal development programme, taught throughout the school is promoted through a wide range of opportunities and is very effective in helping pupils to develop very positive relationships and attitudes to learning.
30. The subject expertise of the staff is used imaginatively. For example, the science and information and communication technology coordinators teach these subjects across Years 5 and 6. In addition, the school also has curriculum focus weeks where teachers use their individual subject skills to provide pupils with a wide range of learning experiences. The school's decision to buy into the local education authority's music service to support music in Years 3 to 6 provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills.

31. The building provides an attractive and stimulating learning environment. The outdoor learning area for children in the reception class is used very effectively to develop a wide range of skills. The library is just adequate as a resource facility. The school is aware of this and already has plans in place to re-site it when a new administrative area is built.
32. Resource provision ensures that pupils have all they need to support learning in all subjects. The addition of a bank of new computers in the main computer suite and the setting up of two further 'mini-suites' has significantly increased flexibility in teaching and pupils' access to information and communication technology. The new interactive whiteboard in the Year 4 classroom provides a very effective, additional teaching resource.

### Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support for pupils are **very good**. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is **excellent**. Health and safety procedures are very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The involvement of pupils in the school is of an extremely high order.
- There are very good relationships between pupils and staff.
- The induction arrangements for pupils are very good.
- The school is very safe and secure for all pupils.
- Child protection procedures have been much improved and are now strong.

### Commentary

33. The very strong approach to care and guidance contributes very well to the welfare and security of all pupils and thus plays a very significant part in promoting their confidence and very good attitudes to learning. This is an improvement from the previous inspection with some aspects being improved significantly such as child protection. The confidence and happiness of the pupils is very well fostered by the school as part of their personal development.
34. The school has a very strong family atmosphere that is beneficial to all pupils' feelings of self-worth. All school staff care very much for their pupils. Staff provide well-informed support, advice and guidance, because of:
  - their good knowledge of pupils as individuals;
  - the quality of their checking of pupils' personal and academic development.These relationships generate a very secure place to learn that positively embraces all pupils.
35. Arrangements for children to enter school life are well planned and carried out and this helps them to settle quickly. These arrangements are crucial in developing the quality and depth of the trusting relationships between pupils and staff. A very efficient and effective pupils' school council is in operation. This, in conjunction with other systems such as circle time, playground friends and school prefects has encouraged in pupils an active participation in all aspects of the school. For example, by:
  - providing very helpful support for younger pupils at break times and in the dining hall;
  - participating in developments and innovations across the school.

36. The governing body has properly adopted the local education authority's policy on health and safety and developed their own application for the school. They carry out effective risk assessments, both internal and external. Child protection is considered as a high priority and those responsible are suitably trained. There are rigorous systems in place aimed at improving pupils' attendance and punctuality. These include:
- making parents aware of the impact of prolonged absence;
  - awards for pupils' good attendance;
  - involving outside agencies if required.
37. Staff know pupils' individual qualities and backgrounds well. Pupils rightly feel very well supported and confidently discuss any concerns they might have. The school places a high priority on the support for pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The very good ethos that has been developed enables these pupils to be confidently involved in all aspects of school life. The school's strategies for identification of their needs are clear and well supported by consultation with other educational agencies and medical health services where necessary. The school has effective strategies for informing and consulting with parents. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties is well checked and this puts the school in a strong position to develop and use precise targets for the further progress of pupils.

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

The school's partnership with its parents and other schools and colleges are **very good**. The links with the local community are **good**. These aspects have been maintained very well since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have very positive views about the school.
- Information to parents is very good.
- The school seeks to involve parents in their children's learning.
- There is an active Parent Teacher Association that supports the school well.
- Links with the community and other schools enrich learning experiences for pupils and provide very good opportunities for their social development and awareness.

### **Commentary**

38. Parents hold the school in very high regard. They are particularly pleased with pupils' progress, expectations of pupils' work from staff, that pupils like school and with the school's leadership and management. Parents also describe the school as a very happy place in which good friendships exist between pupils, teachers and parents. They believe the school is open and very approachable about any concerns they might have. Inspectors agree with these judgements. There is nothing that significantly displeases parents. They believe school is very fair to all and their children are encouraged to be considerate and develop a mature viewpoint.
39. The school has improved the quality of the information it provides for parent. There are regular and informative newsletters that keep parents suitably aware of the day-to-day procedures, expectations and events of the school. Pupils' annual reports to parents are detailed and consistent across the classes. Parents are given good information about the progress their children are making. Where there is a concern, the school is quick to consult parents. At termly consultative meetings, there are opportunities for parents to discuss individual plans for learning and progress towards achieving their child's targets. Good information on what will be taught in each subject is provided for parents at the start of each term and supports well parents opportunities to help their children at home.

40. Parents support the school well. They know the school routines and expectations, including those for attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Small numbers of parents attend the events the school provides to assist them in their knowledge of the school's teaching methods and education systems. The school has a solid and well-trained core of dependable and regular volunteers who make a positive contribution to the quality of teaching in classrooms. The Parent Teacher Association raises funds, which are suitably targeted and used beneficially to support pupils' learning.
41. There are very good links with other schools in the area. Links with the community and a wide range of visits and visitors provide good enrichment for the curriculum and support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs of others. The school has strong links with the church through events as wide as Harvest Festivals and clergy holding weekly school assemblies. There are very good links with business and industry in the area. For example, providing bottles of spring water for pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The headteacher provides a **very strong** sense of direction. She is **very well** supported by staff who share her vision for the school. Governors manage their functions **well**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A strong commitment is evident in all the work of the school to raising achievement through the quality of teaching and the curriculum.
- There are very good opportunities for all staff to improve the provision of the school through the school improvement plan, performance management and continuous professional development.
- The school is very well managed in a focussed and purposeful way.
- There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils benefit equally from all the school has to offer.
- School finances are very well managed;
- Procedures and practices to ensure value for money in purchasing supplies and services are very effective.
- Governors become involved in the school improvement plan, their annual report to parents and writing the school prospectus only at its final drafting stage.

### **Particular aids or barriers to raising achievement, and their impact**

- The above average proportion of pupils at the early stage of learning English as an additional language is a barrier to learning but the very good provision enables those pupils from ethnic minorities to achieve very well.

### **Commentary**

42. Consistently improving standards testify to the school's commitment to raising achievement. The curriculum is very well managed and organised, providing full and rich learning opportunities for pupils. A positive atmosphere for learning opens up the school to raising the quality of lessons. As a result, teachers are successful in the classroom and motivate pupils well in their learning. A committed staff share the headteacher's strong sense of purpose and broad vision for the school. They talk of purposeful teamwork and a high degree of professional dialogue that strives for the continuous development of the good work of the school. All staff are included in the development of a well-structured school improvement plan. It also takes account of the views of pupils and parents. The school has a very strong commitment to the continuous professional development of its staff, including those teachers

who are newly qualified. Extensive use is made of the requirement for performance management. This has a strong impact on the development of teaching and strategies for improving learning.

43. The headteacher provides the drive and sense of purpose. She is ably supported by the senior management team, those who lead and manage subjects, the governing body and the school's administrative and ancillary staff. School policies and school management strategies are very effective in promoting a calm and purposeful working and learning environment. Everyone involved in the life and work of the school shows a high degree of commitment to the practice of ensuring that every pupil benefits equally from the opportunities provided. This ensures that all pupils make very good progress, irrespective of their prior achievement, cultural or ethnic background or their individual barriers to learning. This has been a successful strategy in effectively raising achievement for pupils.
44. The management of the needs of pupils with special learning needs is very good. The special educational needs coordinator is very experienced and knowledgeable. She understands the requirements of the code of practice for special educational needs and ensures that the school observes requirements in all respects. The school makes good provision for its pupils with identified needs through:
- the work of skilled and experienced learning support assistants;
  - the supportive grouping of pupils;
  - through learning resources specifically purchased for their needs.
- More money is appropriately spent on supporting pupils with special educational needs than is delegated to the school.
45. The school has very good strategies for deciding how to spend its delegated funds and funds are administered efficiently. This has resulted in a good level of skilled and experienced staff who are well deployed. Resources are at least adequate and occasionally very good, as in information and communication technology. Prudent management of finances has given the school the scope to set aside money year by year to improve the premises. This has eaten considerably into reserves in the previous financial year to ensure the refurbishment programme has continued. The school has a very clear statement of who is responsible for the different aspects of its financial management. There is also a very clear statement of the school's approach to ensuring value for money. Given its standards and provision and the quality of leadership and management, the school provides very good value for the money delegated to it.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	526 184
Total expenditure	559 014
Expenditure per pupil	2637

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	43 220
Balance carried forward to the next	10 390

46. Governors are very committed to the school and are very clear in establishing the direction it should take, their expectations of its provision and how they expect the school to include every pupil in all school life and work. Although they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, they only become involved in strategic planning and publishing their statutory information for parents at the final draft stage.

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

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

Provision for the children in the reception class is **very good**.

47. The children's attainment on entry to the school is below expectations, particularly in the development of personal and communication skills, although the full range of ability is represented. Teaching is of a very high quality in all areas of learning and as a result, the children achieve well. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the previous inspection when it was good. Many are well placed to reach and some to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year in most areas of learning. The teacher and support adults work very effectively as a team ensuring consistent, high quality provision for all children. Planning is very carefully structured and fully meets the learning needs of all children, including those who have special learning needs, children for whom English is an additional language and higher attaining children. Assessment procedures are of a very high quality. The teacher closely monitors the children's achievements and the information gathered is used very effectively to set the next targets for learning. Relationships with parents are very good. High quality information provides parents with a wealth of information about their children and the curriculum. The co-ordinator is fully committed to high quality care and good achievement for each child. The Foundation Stage (reception class) governor has a clear overview of provision and developments in the reception class. The accommodation and resources are of a good quality and are carefully planned to meet the children's learning needs. Very effective use is made of the outdoor learning area.

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

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

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

- Attainment is in line with expectations.
- The teacher and support staff have a very good understanding of the needs and interests of young children and ensure that they feel safe and secure.
- Many opportunities are provided for the children to learn about themselves and others. Staff are very good role models through what they say and do.
- Routines are well established so that the children know what is expected of them. This results in very good relationships and behaviour.
- Staff listen carefully to what the children have to say and provide many opportunities for the children to develop speaking and listening skills.
- A carefully planned balance between adult support and self-choice activities, results in the children developing good independent learning skills.

#### **Commentary**

48. The children come into school happy and eager to learn. They settle happily to the wide range of activities provided. They are very well behaved and have good relationships and attitudes. They are developing in confidence and many are willing to talk about what they are doing and answer questions. Independence skills are promoted well, through, for example, being given time to work on an activity without constant adult support.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in communication, language and listening is **very good**.
- The quality of teaching is very good and the children achieve well.
- Attainment in listening and reading is in line with expectations.
- Activities are planned very effectively to capture the children's interest.
- Teachers and support adults provide good listening and speaking models and this helps the children to use language for a wide range of purposes.
- The development of reading skills is carefully planned and the children achieve very well in this area of learning.
- Children are provided with many opportunities to understand about writing as a method of communication and to develop their writing skills.

### Commentary

49. The teacher and support adults know each child very well. Lessons are very carefully planned to take full account of all of the children's learning needs. The teacher has high expectations that children learn to listen to adults and to each other. As a result, they are attentive in class discussions and during story time. During activities, adults ensure that the children have plenty of time to talk about what they are doing. Expert support is provided for children for whom English is an additional language. The teacher and support adults, some of whom are multilingual, are very sensitive to when to speak with the children in their mother tongue and when to use English.
50. The large majority of the children are reading at the expected level. Reading skills are promoted very well through many opportunities to respond to stories and other written text and regular reading sessions between an adult and individual child. Home/school reading diaries provide parents with good information on how they can help their child read.
51. Approximately one third of the children are already well on the way to achieving the early writing targets by the end of the reception year. They are beginning to write simple, recognisable words and use their knowledge of sounds to attempt to write more complex words. Attainment on entry in this aspect of learning was very low for a large majority of the children and many of this group, although achieving well, will not reach the expected targets by the end of the year.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good.
  - Attainment in this area of learning is in line with expectations
  - Mathematics is made purposeful through a wide range of activities, including play, and this helps the children to have fun as they learn.
  - Mathematical skills and language are taught systematically.
52. Mathematics is fun! The teacher plans a wide range of practical activities and exciting and stimulating games that capture the children's interest so that they want to learn. In the mathematics lesson, they hid their eyes and counted very carefully as Fred the puppet dropped pebbles into a container and a bouncy reindeer bobbed up and down as the children counted to 20. Most children are in line to attain or exceed the learning goals in this area

before the end of reception. A large majority recognise numbers to 5. Many children are already confident with numbers to 10 and some to 20.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is very good and attainment is broadly in line with expectations.
  - The children are provided with a wide range of carefully planned and stimulating activities. This builds well on their previous experiences and helps them achieve well.
  - The development of technical language and language for thinking is carefully planned into activities through discussions and skilful questioning
  - Computer skills are taught effectively and this enables the children to become more independent and confident as they use the mouse to work through a range of programs.
  - Very effective use is made of the outside learning area.
53. Computers are always available and programs are well prepared to support learning. As a result, the children's computer skills are developing as expected.
54. Good opportunities are provided for the children to explore and record their findings. For example, they draw maps of the 'Three Little Pigs' routes to their new homes and identify some of the main features they pass on their journey. They show concern for living things ~ for example, taking good care of the rabbits that had been brought in by two of the children and finding out what rabbits need to make their lives happy and healthy. The children are developing a growing religious and spiritual awareness. In the religious education lesson, they learned about the importance of the angels in the Christmas story.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is very good.
  - Most children will attain the learning goals by the end of the reception year. Some will exceed these, particularly in the development of skills that require finer, more precise movements such as using scissors and pencil control.
  - Children are given time to explore in activities in the classrooms and through the provision of regular opportunities to play and learn outside.
  - The indoor and outside learning environments are well resourced.
  - Skills are carefully built up and this helps the children to be confident.
55. In the physical development lesson, the children demonstrated good control skills as they moved about the hall and climbed over, under and through the apparatus in many different ways. Their awareness of the care and safety of others and their skills in carrying apparatus safely were quite impressive. In the outdoor play area, they pedal wheeled toys with good levels of direction and control. Fine motor skills, such as cutting out shapes and controlling pencils and crayons are not as well developed.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The children are provided with high quality time to experiment, communicate, be imaginative and discover things for themselves.
- Good quality resources and well thought out role-play areas encourage the children to relate well to others as they develop language, imagination and practical skills.

### Commentary

56. The children enjoy singing and joining in with the actions. Role-play opportunities are carefully planned to provide opportunities for the children to develop their imagination and to relate to the wider world, such as the 'Paws and Claws' veterinary surgery where the clients sat in the waiting room with their sick animals, the receptionist arranged appointments and the vet bandaged broken legs. Adults play an important role as they skilfully guide the children's language acquisition and awareness of 'being in character'.
57. Many valuable opportunities are provided for the children to develop drawing, painting and making skills with evidence in planning and on display. In one lesson, for example, they made careful observational drawings of the rabbits, making sure they had two long ears and a bobtail.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### English

Provision in English is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at ages seven and 11 are above average.
- Pupils' achievement is very good, overall.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very good.
- Leadership and management are very good.

### Commentary

58. Provision, standards and achievement are much improved from the judgements of the last inspection. By the age of seven, pupils listen, speak, read and write competently and confidently. There are no significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls or of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Given the below average standards on entry to the school, achievement for all pupils is very good including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. Pupils listen with growing attention and concentration and sustain increasingly lengthy conversations. These conversations involve explanations, enquiries, comparisons, the sharing of ideas and the justification of personal views. Pupils read accurately, fluently and with understanding. The majority of pupils are expressive when reading aloud and talk with interest about their favourite book. Writing skills are progressing well and this has much to do with the very good standard of teachers' marking and the use of individual targets. This has been a particularly successful initiative that has improved results in national tests. Lower attaining pupils are improving their basic skills of spelling and punctuation and are increasing the length of their work.

59. By the age of 11, pupils have continued to make good progress in all aspects of this subject. In lessons in all subjects, pupils are encouraged to talk, read and write about their learning, experiences and work. Consequently, achievement is good for all pupils and there are no significant variations across ethnic groups. Most pupils talk competently to a group or wider audience, and the majority are fluent and confident. Reading is accurate and fluent. Higher attaining pupils show very good understanding of their books. All pupils are expressive when reading aloud and have sound knowledge of how to use the library. Basic writing skills are being developed well. This is due to:
- the good range of writing experiences that are challenging to all levels of attainment;
  - the good guidance from staff on re-drafting of work;
  - the good self-evaluation by pupils of their work that leads to improvements in their planning of work and thoughtful responses to challenging tasks.
60. Overall, the very good quality of teaching and learning owes much to:
- the very effective matching of work to pupils' levels of prior attainment;
  - the high expectations of all pupils. This is particularly true of pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language who receive highly appropriate and competent support;
  - the very good management of challenging classes that ensures that there are no distractions. Furthermore, it fosters very good attitudes in the pupils to their work.
- Pupils are clear about what they know and have a very clear picture of future developments needed because of the very effective marking, target-setting and guidance provided. Where the teaching is satisfactory, the main reason is the inexperience of two newly qualified teachers with challenging classes. These teachers receive good support and have the potential to improve and do well.
61. Leadership and management are good. There is a significant amount of work done in the annual written review of the subject and the identified priorities are the right ones. For example, the coordinator has rightly identified the need to develop the library and pupils' library skills. Good levels of checking provision are present, including teachers' planning every half term, observing teaching and analysing pupils' work. Procedures and practices for the assessment of pupils' levels of attainment are very effective, particularly useful is the comprehensive tracking of pupils learning English as an additional language.

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

62. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed well in other subjects, For example:
- in history, research and writing about Egypt that helped Year 6 pupils produce multimedia presentations;
  - in science, writing about the making of sound from a range of activities;
  - in religious education, Year 4 pupils writing about Islam.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

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

- Learning is good, promoting standards that are better than average for pupils' ages.
- Teaching is consistently good and frequently very good.
- All pupils have equal access to the opportunities provided.
- Leadership and management is good.

## Commentary

63. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection and standards are rising. Standards are above average when pupils are seven and eleven and pupils achieve well. Standards in the work seen are similar to those in the most recent national tests. However, the work of the current groups in Year 2 and Year 6 suggest standards above average rather than well above average. This is because there are higher proportions of pupils with special educational needs in these classes. Pupils have good quick recall of basic facts. They compute efficiently. Older pupils become confident working with fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils measure accurately. Although pupils are frequently challenged to explain their thinking strategies when solving mental problems, a minority find the thinking process more difficult when faced with a written problem. They have the computational skills but are less adept at applying their thinking.
64. Learning and achievement are very well promoted by:
- their interest and very good behaviour;
  - the way they work well together, discussing their work as it progresses and talking to each other about the strategies they are using to solve the everyday mathematical problems they encounter;
  - the clarity of their thinking when they explain to the whole class the processes and methods they are using;
  - the quick pace that they settle to written work and get through a good volume of work.
65. Many of the strong features of learning stem from the good qualities found in the teaching. Teachers know the subject area well and use their own knowledge of mathematical processes to good effect in lessons. Teachers' planning is clear and crisp. As a result, lessons go briskly and confidently, giving pupils the confidence to 'have a go'. Teachers make very good use of their knowledge of how pupils learn and their knowledge of pupils' individual needs to plan tasks that match their prior achievement. Good use is made of a wide range of resources, including interactive white boards, digital data projectors and overhead projectors to keep pupils focused and engaged in the lesson. Some teachers insist that pupils use the interactive white board, a skill many pupils are developing rapidly. Owing to teachers' awareness of the different learning needs of different pupils, work is well matched to pupils' prior attainment. For example, extension tasks are prepared for those who learn and work more rapidly and need a further challenge.
66. There is good support for those who find learning more difficult. These pupils have well planned tasks that support their learning needs. They get good attention from the teacher or from learning support assistants. This is a good and effective method of making sure that they continue to make progress. Teachers have very good marking strategies that make sure pupils understand what they are learning and what they need to improve to achieve better standards. Also, they use very good questioning strategies, that check up on what pupils know and that are well structured to ensure that all pupils are kept motivated and challenged, including higher achieving pupils and those finding the work difficult. Additionally, there are good strategies for involving pupils learning English as an additional language.

## Example of outstanding teaching

### **An excellent mathematics lesson with Year 5 and 6 lower attaining pupils, a significant number of whom have emotional and behaviour difficulties and all of whom find learning in mathematics difficult.**

Very brisk and challenging teaching ensured that pupils were positively engaged at all times in the lessons. The introduction was lively and interesting. Relationships with challenging pupils were positive but firm. The teacher had very good command of what she needed pupils to learn. They understood what they needed to do because she had made both her high expectations of them clear and had been explicit about their learning objectives. Individual tasks were well matched to pupils' needs. Teaching support was deployed extremely well showing both an accurate understanding of pupils' needs and also an acute awareness of the delicacy of some relationships within the group. As a result, learning was smooth and continuous throughout the session. Pupils achieved well up to her expectations but also better than their own prior expectations.

67. The subject manager plays a full role and gives a strong sense of direction for the subject. Particularly strong are the very effective self-evaluation measures that include annual reviews and careful checking on academic standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Skills, knowledge and understanding are used well in other subjects. For example:
- in science, Year 2 pupils draw graphs to show their findings and Year 4 pupils' measure temperature in degrees;
  - in music, pupils in Years 3 to 6 use their counting skills when developing rhythms and sequences of notes;
  - in information and communication technology, Year 4 pupils used their knowledge of angles to give instructions to logo.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Assessment information is used very effectively to guide planning.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

### Commentary

69. The school has fully addressed the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. Higher attaining pupils are now appropriately challenged and there is no over-use of prepared worksheets.
70. Standards in science are average at Year 2. In the 2003 teacher assessment of science for last year's Year 2 pupils, standards were judged as very high because all of the pupils attained the level expected and two-thirds attained above average levels. This year, the attainment profile of the year group indicates that fewer pupils are likely to attain above average standards and a small number are unlikely to meet the expected targets.
71. Standards are above average at Year 6. This is slightly down on the 2003 results when standards were well above average. Approximately half of the pupils are well placed to attain above the expected level, but the year group contains a larger than average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs.

72. Evidence in books indicates that pupils achieve well. By the time they leave the school, the current Year 6 pupils will have achieved very well. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers because they are consistently well supported and provided with the right amount of challenge. A major improvement has been in the school's determination to ensure that pupils' develop good scientific enquiry skills. This has been very successfully achieved with much evidence seen in pupils' workbooks and in the two lessons observed.
73. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall with some very good teaching seen in the junior class during the inspection. Planning ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered and that pupils have many opportunities to think scientifically and work independently to solve problems. In the Year 2 lesson seen, pupils were fully engrossed as they investigated the effects of friction on toy cars being rolled down a ramp. Good opportunities were also provided for the pupils to record their findings in graph form on the computers. In the very good Year 6 lesson, the pupils' responses to questions showed clearly that they are developing a good understanding of forces and the class worked very productively in small groups to investigate and explain their findings. Throughout the lesson, the teacher's very skilful use of explanation and questioning effectively built on what had been learned in the previous lesson and as a result, all of the pupils achieved very well.
74. The subject is very well led and managed. The standards pupils achieve in the national tests and the work they produce during the year are carefully assessed. Areas for development in the subject are identified through the regular monitoring of teaching and planning and through the analysis of pupils' work. This ensures that the coordinator has a very secure understanding of what is done well and a secure evidence base to set priorities for continuing improvement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is very good and standards are above average at ages seven and 11.
- The school makes very good use of the ample resources available.
- Standards benefit from pupils' interest and a high level of teacher skill.
- Leadership in the subject is well-established, promoting achievement effectively.
- The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection, fully resolving the key issue identified at that time.

### **Commentary**

75. Among the interesting work of pupils during the inspection, Year 5 pupils found the task of designing a swimming pool fascinating. They were allocated a design brief and were given a budget to work within. Although there were occasional frustrations when the software did not operate as expected, pupils were quick to add their imaginative perspective to the design of the pool and its facilities. A good feature of this lesson was that the teacher had prepared a more challenging task for higher attaining pupils and had modified the basic task to take account of those pupils who find learning more difficult. Among the work on display, Year 6 PowerPoint presentations using 'hyperlinking' (where the presentation designer can direct the viewer to additional information) was evident and Year 5 work using a sound sensor, mobile phone and data logging resources. Pupils presented the final product of this work graphically with written interpretations of data. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils enjoyed exploring 'Albert's House', an early modelling and computer simulation program. These pupils' mouse skills are well developed, although most search for Albert in random fashion rather than systematically.

76. The resources available for information and communication technology have been improved a great deal since the previous inspection when the use across the curriculum was an area of criticism. The resources are very well used, especially the computer suite and interactive whiteboards in some classrooms. Teachers have shown a great deal of interest in developing their own expertise and use this competently and confidently in lessons. As a result, teaching is usually good and often very good. This encourages pupils' level of interest and engagement in lessons.
77. The subject leader is knowledgeable and experienced. The school has high expectations of the role of subject leader. This puts leadership and management in a good position to evaluate and develop the work in the subject and to promote ever-improving standards. Computers are well used throughout the curriculum, an issue identified for improvement at the previous inspection. Resolving this issue, improved resources, greater use of teacher expertise and a well-led subject has led to very good improvement in the subject.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. Good use is made of information and communication technology across the curriculum and this completely resolves the key issue of the previous inspection. Pupils' competence is well used to support learning in other subjects. For example:
- in English, pupils have good keyboard skills and this enables them to write stories directly onto the computer and to use word processing facilities to edit their work;
  - in mathematics, pupils use computers for modelling with spreadsheets and presenting their work in graphs that they analyse and interpret;
  - in personal, social, health and citizenship education, good use is made of the Internet to research projects, such as how they can help those in need at Christmas, using the charity 'Shelter' web-site.
79. Older pupils make presentations using PowerPoint to show what they have learned in history and geography. Good examples in science are on display with good use of equipment for sensing data and presenting it in graphical fashion.

### HUMANITIES

80. In **religious education**, although no lessons were seen the subject was sampled through the analysis of pupils' work in books and on display. Discussions also took place with the coordinator and a small number of pupils. From this evidence, standards are above those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus and achievement is good.
81. By the age of seven, pupils know the important artefacts in Christian churches and write accurately about their use. They know about festivals, such as harvest, Christmas and Easter. Pupils understand that many aspects of baptism, bible stories and advent calendars have at their core important symbols, such as light and the cross. Their writing on these aspects is good from the religious point of view and in the use and development of literacy skills.
82. By the age of 11, the curriculum continues to include the study of several religions and builds successfully on earlier knowledge and understanding. The majority of pupils identify key religious symbols from a wide variety of faiths and name them competently. They recognise that symbols are important to believers and there is a mutual respect. For example, a Year 6 pupil writes:  
'Before entering the Shrine Room people must take off their shoes to show respect. You must bow, pray and make an offer of food or money, when entering the Shrine. Once you have done this you can join the congregation'

There are helpful visits to a range of places for worship and these are important in helping pupils compare and contrast the actions, activities and beliefs of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.

83. Leadership and management are good. The coordinator ensures that she:
- keeps up-to-date with current knowledge in religious education;
  - checks on teaching and learning;
  - acquires a good range of artefacts that are easily accessible to staff;
  - links closely with local secondary schools to develop the curriculum;
  - promotes the good use of information and communication technology, for example through the 'virtual tour' of a synagogue.
84. The school's work in **geography and history** was sampled. Only one lesson was seen. Discussions were held with subject managers. School planning was analysed. Work on display and work in pupils' books was seen. On the limited evidence available no overall judgements are possible about provision, achievement and standards or about teaching and learning. However, the work seen was of good quality. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well to support learning in geography and history. They enjoy a broad and rich curriculum that demands the use of the skills of geographical and historical enquiry. The subjects make very good use of visits out of school: for local and contrasting area fieldwork in geography and for visits to sites of historical interest and museums in history. Well-informed visitors with information from their individual areas of expertise and experience come into school to support pupils' learning. Additionally the school promotes 'focus' weeks that concentrate on specific areas of learning in history and geography. Subjects are well led and managed. There are good whole school strategies for the assessment of progress and achievement in the subjects.

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

Provision for music is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is very well planned. Pupils enjoy music and achieve well.
- The school has bought into the Local Education Authority's music service. This makes a very effective contribution to teaching and learning.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to share music with parents and the wider community.
- The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the time of the previous inspection when it was judged as satisfactory.

### **Commentary**

85. Pupils achieve well in music and reach the standards expected for pupils at Year 2 and Year 6. They have a good sense of rhythm and sing tunefully.
86. Pupils enjoy music because it is interesting and available to all. An advanced skills music teacher comes to the school every alternate week to teach pupils in Years 3 to 6. The quality of the teaching seen in these lessons was consistently very high. Class teachers, for their part, reinforce and develop these lessons in the intervening weeks. Pupils understand and are learning to use musical vocabulary accurately. They have many opportunities in lessons to become active listeners, sing and explore a range of sounds on tuned and untuned instruments. This approach is a recent innovation and its impact is being closely monitored.
87. Music in Years 1 and 2 is taught wholly by the class teachers. In the lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher built carefully upon the pupils' listening and performing skills as they responded to different rhythms by tapping and clapping. By the end of the lesson, pupils had grown in

confidence and most were able to maintain a beat and respond to a range of musical patterns.

88. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has a good overview of developments within the subject through a range of monitoring strategies. For example, she collects taped samples of performances from each class, evaluates the quality and checks the content against lesson planning. The school is committed to ensuring that pupils are offered high quality music experiences. Older pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and to be a member of the choir. Music is actively shared with parents and the wider community through, for example, singing at the local hospice and musical performances in school.
89. In **design and technology**, there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards and provision in this subject. Subject planning is detailed and comprehensive. It follows the national guidelines and is adapted appropriately to meet the schools' needs. Additional enrichment opportunities are provided through the school's subject focus week where design technology is given a high profile. Teaching in the two lessons observed in Years 4 and 5 was very effective in helping pupils to develop their design, planning and making skills. Very good opportunities were provided in both lessons for pupils to make decisions about the tools and materials they wanted to use and to work out solutions to any problems they encountered. As a result of the teachers' expertise and the pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject, all achieved well and were proud of the progress they had made. The subject is well led and managed. Good opportunities are provided for the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision in design technology across the school.
90. In **art and design**, there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards and provision in this subject. Subject planning follows the national guidelines and is adapted effectively to suit the needs of the school. The school provides additional enrichment through visits by artists to work with the pupils and through visits to galleries such as the Lowry Museum at Salford Quay and Bolton Museum. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of provision in art through regular opportunities to evaluate planning, teaching and the quality of pupils' work. Pupils' work is attractively displayed in classrooms and around the school. The work of famous artists is also studied. A particularly good example was seen in the Year 2 class where pupils had painted very expressive versions of Van Gogh's 'Starry Night'. Art is also used effectively in other subjects, such as in history where pupils have created mosaic designs as part of their work on the Romans.
91. In **physical education**, although three lessons were observed, only a very small proportion the overall programme was inspected. Consequently, there is no overall judgement on standards, achievement, teaching and provision. Nevertheless, in addition to the lessons, discussions were held with the coordinator and pupils.
92. By the age of seven, standards in dance are good. Pupils make good use of space, they move confidently and do well to incorporate jumps and balances into their movements. They control these movements well. Pupils have very positive attitudes and behave very well. By the age of 11, games skills are at the expected level. When practising rugby skills, pupils pass, catch and run adequately and accurately. Performance improved as they watched the highest attaining pupils going through the drills. Arrangements for swimming are good and most pupils achieve the nationally recommended standard.

93. In the lessons seen, there was a very good Year 2 dance lesson and two satisfactory lessons in Years 3 and 6. In the best lesson, the strengths were:
- the high levels of energy and enthusiasm shown by the teacher led to very good attitudes and behaviour;
  - very good knowledge and understanding of the subject meant that that instructions were understood and followed;
  - good performance by some pupils led to effective exemplars for the rest that raised expectations;
  - very good planning led to a pacy lesson that retained the pupils' interest.
94. In the satisfactory lessons, the strengths included good relationships, effective management and strong use of pupils as exemplars of good practice. However, the lessons were not vigorous enough and the warm-ups were too narrowly focussed.
95. Leadership and management are good. The coordinator encourages pupils to take part in a wide range of activities inside and outside of school time. There are good links with local professional and amateur sports clubs that provide specific coaching. The curriculum is wide, with opportunities for outdoor and adventurous pursuits made available on residential visits.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a clearly planned programme of work.
- There is a strong emphasis on safety, care and understanding towards pupils.
- The introduction of a school's council to involve pupils more in the life of the school.
- This area of study is well led by a dedicated co-ordinator.

### **Commentary**

96. The school plans for this area of learning to be one of the major building blocks towards the positive outcomes in the life and work of the school. For example, there are lessons that deal with bullying, how to cope with difficulties and the broader issues of citizenship, such as caring for the needy. Great importance is placed on visiting places to broaden social experiences, for instance the annual residential trip. The school makes good use of visitors to school. The community police officer and school nurse have made or are planned to visit, for instance, to give safety and health talks and practical advice and guidance on safe cycling. Within the programme there are good and timely references to sex, drugs and relationships education.
97. The school has started pursuing the 'National Healthy Schools Award'. It has led to the introduction of water and fruit for pupils, including snacks at morning break. The very good conduct of pupils throughout the school day owes much to the impact and worth of personal, social and health education and citizenship on the work of the school. It plays a very beneficial part in the positive attitudes of pupils in lessons and in their developing understanding of the notion of right and wrong. This is a school where 'family care' succeeds, but only as a result of much hard work and effort.
98. All of this is handled with insight and determination by the coordinator. The primary belief is that personal, social and health education is an area that is and should be at the core of all that goes on in the school. This approach provides a shared and strong focus for all staff members, going beyond class lessons and across the whole school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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