

INSPECTION REPORT

THORP PRIMARY SCHOOL

Royton

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105674

Headteacher: Mr P Royle

Lead inspector: Mr G Yates

Dates of inspection: 4 – 6 May 2004

Inspection number: 258194

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	241
School address:	Westerdale Drive Royton Oldham Lancashire
Postcode:	OL2 5TY
Telephone number:	0161 620 8961
Fax number:	0161 620 8902
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Baker
Date of previous inspection:	30 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Thorp Primary School is about the same size as most other primary schools with 241 boys and girls aged 3 to 11 years. Currently about three per cent of pupils receive free school meals and this is lower than most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about the same as what is usually found. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is broadly in line with national figures. The school has no pupils for whom English is not the mother tongue and the proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is very low. Mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission is not significant. Most parents live in owner occupied houses. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is broadly average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2465	Mr G Yates	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education English as an additional language
9952	Mrs L Brock	Lay inspector	
7979	Mr A Calderbank	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs
29261	Mrs P Ward	Team inspector	Geography History Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Thorp Primary School is a **good** school with a significant number of very good features. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Standards of attainment are above average in English, mathematics and science and in most other subjects. Pupils' achievement is good. The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher. Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are very good. **The school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in most subjects. Both teachers and pupils benefit greatly from the very good support they receive from classroom assistants.
- The headteacher, supported by senior staff, leads and manages the school very well.
- Spiritual, social, moral and cultural provision is very good overall. As a result pupils have very good attitudes, get on very well with each other and behave very well.
- There have been good improvements in the quality of pupils' writing. However, spelling skills are a weakness.
- Assessment systems and the use made of the information gathered are very good in English, mathematics and science. However, there is no whole school approach to assessment and its use in other subjects.
- The high quality of choral music provision and the many and varied opportunities provided for pupils to develop an understanding of ecological issues enhance greatly the quality of education.
- Good use is made of existing resources in information and communication technology (ICT). However, there are not enough computers to enable pupils to have frequent access.

Good improvements have been since the previous inspection. The school's management team now includes a teacher from Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching has improved. The school has done all it can to improve the internal accommodation.

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	C	C	C
Mathematics	A*	A*	C	C
Science	A	A*	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average;

A - in the top 5% in the country*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Inspection evidence shows that **most pupils' achievement is good**. The inspection judged that standards in Years 2 and 6 are above average in English, mathematics, science, art and design, geography, history and religious education. In the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception), standards are in line with the goals children are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1, with a significant number of pupils already working at a higher level. There are particular strengths in pupils' personal and social development and physical development with most pupils exceeding what is required by the time they enter Year 1 in these areas.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and are very sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils have a good understanding of racial and ethnic diversity for their age. Their attitudes to work are very good and they behave very well in and around school. Attendance is well above the national average and most pupils arrive at school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are good. The school provides a very good curriculum which meets national requirements. The enrichment provided by music and the ecological awareness initiative adds much to the quality of education. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Teachers use a good range of teaching styles, including effective use of ICT and practical activities to improve the quality of learning. They interest and motivate pupils, making them work hard and concentrate for long periods. However, the small number of computers means that pupils do not get as much 'hands on' practice as in other schools. Throughout the school the teaching of reading, writing and number is thorough but pupils do not use and develop their spelling skills well enough. Assessment procedures and the use made of the information are very good in English, mathematics and science but less so in other subjects. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning through the effective support they give to groups and individuals.

The school's partnership with parents is good and strong links have been established with the local community and good links with the schools to which the pupils transfer. The school provides a very good level of care for its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The headteacher, with the support of senior staff, provides very good leadership and management. The governance of the school is good. The governing body fulfils its legal responsibilities conscientiously and makes a good contribution to management and decision making. Financial management is very effective.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents hold positive views of the school. The majority of children like being at the school and feel they receive the help and support they need.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- provide more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their spelling skills;
- build on the school's successes in English, mathematics and science to establish a whole-school approach to the assessment of pupils' work in other subjects;
- provide more resources for ICT.

The school is already aware that the issues identified above need developing.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall achievement is **good** for pupils of all attainment levels. Standards in English, mathematics, science, religious education, art and design, geography and history are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in the choir demonstrate a very high standard of choral music making. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 have improved since the previous inspection in English and mathematics. There has been an improvement in the achievements of pupils with special educational needs who now make good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and many other subjects.
- Higher attainers are being suitably challenged in Years 3 to 6.
- Writing standards have improved but pupils' spelling skills are below average.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of ecological issues.
- Pupils make good use of the school's limited ICT resources in other subjects.

Commentary

1. When children start in the reception class their skills and knowledge in most areas of learning are typical for their age. During their time in the nursery and reception classes children achieve well. By the end of their year in reception, most children meet the standards set out in the Early Learning Goals. A significant number of pupils are already working at a higher level. Most children exceed expectations in personal and social development and in physical development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.1 (17.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.3 (16.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.1 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests and assessments taken at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment was well above the national average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools (those with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals) standards in reading were well above average, above average in writing and average in mathematics. The trend in the school's results over the previous five years has been above the national trend. Teacher assessments in science indicated that standards are above average overall.
3. Pupils' achievement, which is based on their capabilities, is good. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment against national standards in speaking and listening and reading are well above average. Standards in writing and reading mirror the school's 2003 results. In mathematics and science standards are above average. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are in line with those found in most schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (30.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.2 (31.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The school has evidence that demonstrates that the 2003 Year 6 cohort did not have many pupils who were capable of achieving higher levels in subjects. As a result the 2003 test results were not as high as in previous years, especially in mathematics. In the 2003 national tests, pupils in Year 6 achieved well above average standards in science and average standards in English and mathematics. When the results are compared with those achieved by the same pupils at the end of Year 2, they show that the progress made by the pupils was average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The school did not achieve the target it set for the percentage of pupils to attain Level 4 in English and mathematics. The trend in the school's results over the past five years has been below the national trend. However, the trend discounting the 2003 results is in line with the national trend.
5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. A scrutiny of work and information from lesson observations and from discussions held with pupils demonstrates that pupils are achieving well but their spelling skills are below average. Standards in art and design, geography, history and religious education are above those found in most schools. No gender differences in standards were found in the current Year 6 age group.
6. Standards in ICT are average and pupils are provided with good opportunities to use their skills in most other subjects. However, the small number of computers available limits pupils' actual opportunities to have regular access. It was not possible to make an overall judgment about standards in physical education, design and technology and music in Years 1 and 2. because of insufficient evidence. The school's very active involvement in ecological initiatives means that pupils have a well above average understanding of the issues involved.
7. Girls and boys have the same access to all aspects of the curriculum with no noticeable differences in the standards achieved during the inspection. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including the very few from ethnic minority groups, participate fully in all activities and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and are suitably challenged. The school is aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses through its assessment and testing procedures in English and mathematics. Teachers make very good use of this information to plan challenging work for the pupils and ensure that they receive the necessary support to successfully complete the tasks.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and they behave **very well**. Their spiritual, moral and social development is **very good** and their cultural development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does very good work in helping pupils to become caring, mature and responsible members of the school community.
- Pupils respond very well to the teachers' high expectations of good behaviour.
- Pupils develop a desire to learn, they are interested in their work and find lessons stimulating and challenging.

Commentary

8. A very strong spiritual ethos permeates all aspects of school life. The values and philosophy which the school promotes underpin the ethos and the way all members of the school community work together on behalf of the children. Pupils engage in a wide range of activities and experiences because the school recognises that learning involves feelings and emotions as well as academic achievement. The school's ecological project is a very good vehicle for this as seen when Year 4 pupils engaged in a dance routine where pupils used bodily movements to typify for example, a large newspaper blowing down a street. As a result, their social skills were enhanced because they shared ideas and made decisions in a mutually supportive learning environment. The school shows its pride in pupils' achievements through celebration assemblies.
9. The school is a very orderly community. The very good moral development of pupils can be seen in their very good behaviour and in the care and consideration they show to others. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils respond very well in lessons and around the school. Year 2 "Happy Helpers" were observed engaging younger children in play activities during break times and helping them to understand the importance of sharing and caring.
10. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning because they enjoy school and appreciate the stimulating and varied experiences provided for them. As a result, attendance is well above the national average because pupils like school and want to attend regularly and on time.
11. The personal development of pupils is very good. The school council and the ECO committee give pupils a "voice" in the school and they confirm that some of their ideas are taken on board by the school. For example, the ECO committee members gave a presentation of the findings of their research to visitors from the business and local community. All pupils know that the progress they make is in their own hands and they set to work with a will during lessons. Personal and social education is helping pupils to become good citizens. The cultural development of pupils is good including multi-cultural awareness. The school achieves its aim of establishing learning which is an exciting and enjoyable experience.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **very good** quality of education overall. Teaching is effective and leads to a good quality of learning. Curricular provision is **very** good and the care and support given to pupils are very good. Links with the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment procedures are **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach.
- Teachers do not insist on pupils applying correct spelling skills.
- Teaching is good overall for pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants provide very good support.
- The marking of work makes it clear to pupils how to improve. However, pupils are not actively involved in setting their own targets.
- The school has very good assessment systems in place in English, mathematics and science with the information used very well to inform future work. However, there is no whole-school approach to assessment in other subjects.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well.
- The supportive relationships between pupils and staff give pupils confidence and increases their self-esteem.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (8 %)	11 (30 %)	21 (55 %)	3 (7 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)

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

12. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection when 50 per cent of the lessons seen were good and the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Teaching is of a good quality in all parts of the school and is particularly strong in Years 2 and 6. The weaknesses identified in the teaching of higher attaining pupils in Year 2 have been rectified. The combination of good teaching and care for pupils provides a positive environment for learning to which pupils respond well. Lessons are prepared to a good standard and are interesting, with good use made of ICT. Consequently, learning is good and often very good. The means of assessing pupils' achievements are good overall and very good in English, mathematics and science with the information used very well in these subjects to plan future work. However, in other subjects there is no whole-school approach to assessment and the use made of the information.
13. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English. Reading skills are taught thoroughly. Writing skills are taught soundly and in Years 2 and 6, for example, good quality writing can be found. However, pupils do not always apply their spelling skills well and this aspect of teaching needs to be strengthened. A very good feature of the teaching of mathematics is the attention given to developing pupils' speed of mental recall of number facts. Very good use is made of the specialist music skills of the Year 5 teacher. Pupils of all attainment levels benefit greatly from her knowledge. The written comments teachers' make when marking work helps pupils to identify their individual strengths and weaknesses, and move their learning forward. However, pupils are not involved fully in setting their own targets.

14. Pupils are able to work well, both independently and collaboratively, because very good behaviour management ensures a good climate for learning. Teachers encourage, and pupils benefit from, working collaboratively in lessons.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into classes and teachers' planning takes full account of their needs. Support from teachers and other adults is very effective. All staff are very sympathetic to pupils' needs and the atmosphere in class is very supportive.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. The school provides a **very good** range of worthwhile curricular opportunities that cater **well** for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils and ensure **good** progression in their learning. The school provides **good** opportunities for enrichment, including **good** extra-curricular provision. The quality and quantity of the accommodation and resources are **sound** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop an awareness of ecological issues across all areas of the curriculum.
- There is high quality provision for music.
- Provision for personal social and health education is very good.
- There are insufficient computers to enable pupils to have regular access and the library facilities are restricted.

Commentary

16. The curriculum is matched well to pupils' needs, meets the statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. There are schemes of work for all areas of the National Curriculum. A sufficient proportion of the curriculum is devoted to religious education. There has been a high focus on increasing pupils' ecological awareness. This work, which is included in many areas across the curriculum is very commendable and enhances the curriculum on offer. As a result pupils' have a very good understanding of ecological issues.
17. In the nursery and reception classes the Foundation Stage curriculum is good. All the relevant areas of learning are covered. The work is well planned in small steps to enable children to make systematic progress as they work towards the recommended learning goals.
18. The school makes good use of a range of good quality schemes to provide an effective curriculum overall. In Years 1 to 6, particular emphasis is given to English and mathematics. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been used well as a basis for planning. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed and practised well in other subjects across the curriculum. However, the curriculum provision for improving pupils' spelling skills is not yet sufficiently effective. The school is very aware that this aspect of English needs to improve. The very good range of opportunities for musical appreciation and development of knowledge and skills, particularly in choral performance, has resulted in high motivation and enthusiasm for the subject.
19. Planning for the curriculum is done very carefully and meets the needs of pupils of different ages and attainment. All pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. Very good attention is given to providing interesting challenges for boys and girls. Provision for pupils with special

educational needs is very good. Pupils follow the same curriculum as other pupils through tasks, which are very well adapted to suit their learning needs. Individual education plans are clear and well focused, with small steps in learning leading to relevant targets.

20. Links between subjects ensure effective use of curriculum time. There are numerous examples of ICT being used well to support work in other subject areas. However, the lack of equipment hinders the opportunities pupils are given to practice new skills. The particularly well planned links between history and geography bring an added meaning and purpose to pupils' work.
21. Very good use is made of the strengths of the school's teachers, visiting specialists and after school clubs to develop the curriculum further. A notable example is the specialist teaching by the subject leader for music. This enables high standards to be achieved, an example being the choir's participation in national and local festivals. Musical talents are also well developed through peripatetic instrumental tuition for a small number of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to join in a variety of competitive sport. Countryside rangers, a football coach, local historians and a visiting author are just a few examples of the range of visitors who have contributed significantly to curriculum enrichment.
22. The very good provision for personal and social education is provided through discrete lessons, as well as through the subjects of the national curriculum and class discussions.
23. The school enjoys a pleasant setting. Its grounds are greatly enhanced by the development of attractive planted areas, hanging baskets and seating where pupils can sit and enjoy the improved surroundings.
24. The school's accommodation has been improved since the previous inspection. It is adequate for the needs of the curriculum, is maintained very well and provides a pleasant and welcoming environment for pupils. Plans have been approved for the covered area in the nursery to be upgraded. Overall, the range and quality of resources are satisfactory. Library facilities are located in two of the school's classrooms. The areas are too small and this limits the number of books that can be accommodated and the ease of access for usage. In the Foundation Stage too, the reading areas need updating and making more inviting, in order to encourage children to share and enjoy a wider range of books. Good use is made of existing resources for the teaching of ICT. However, there are not sufficient computers to enable pupils to have regular access. The interesting and informative displays support the curriculum well and celebrate pupils' good achievements.
25. The number of staff for the size of the school is satisfactory and there is a match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. An adequate amount of support staff, are deployed well in class. They make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is **very good**. The guidance and support pupils receive is **good**. The school achieves its aim of providing a happy, secure and caring environment where all children are valued equally.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of care and support for pupils is very good.
- There is a high level of awareness of pupils' needs and support is very sensitive and well directed.
- The involvement of pupils through seeking and valuing their views is very good.

Commentary

26. Everyone in the school community is united in making children feel valued, cared for and loved and this gives them confidence and a firm bedrock for learning. Pupils from ethnic backgrounds are welcomed in the school and enrich the lives of others through sharing aspects of their own unique cultural heritage. Children with special educational needs are well supported and helped to reach their full potential. The good links between the school and parents and carers make a significant contribution to the quality of care provided. Relationships between teachers and pupils are caring, constructive and mutually trusting and respectful. Pupils confirm that they feel valued, safe and supported in the way they are treated.
27. The procedures for checking safety and carrying out risk assessments are sound and effectively undertaken. There is a fully qualified member of staff to carry out first aid duties ably supported by others. Child protection procedures are well-established and the designated teacher ensures that the training of all staff is kept up to date. Through the very good provision for personal and social education, pupils learn to be responsible citizens and be aware of healthy eating. The arrangements to ensure that children settle into school are good. Parents attend meetings about school routines and expectations and as a result, children are well-prepared for entry to nursery and school. Pupils who find it difficult to settle into classroom routines are treated with unending kindness and understanding.
28. There is a very good climate for learning. Pupils' personal as well as academic development is monitored well. During a discussion with Year 6 pupils, they confirmed that teachers welcome their contributions in lessons or responsibilities around the school. Pupils know that their views matter and these older pupils feel confident and well prepared for transfer to secondary education. Pupils grow and flourish within the "family" of Thorp Primary School.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **good**. There are **very good** links with the community and **good** links with other schools and colleges. The school sees parents as partners in their children's learning, trusting each other in their efforts to support children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good partnership with parents who support the school well.
- Parents receive good general information from the school.
- The school has very good links with the local and wider community.
- There is a good partnership with other schools and colleges.

Commentary

29. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is good. Parents say that this is a happy school where children are provided with a good range of learning experiences. There was almost unanimous support through the parental questionnaires that teaching is good, that children like school and are making good progress. Parents confirm that if they have a problem or concern, they feel able to approach the school. A few parents help regularly in school and more can be called upon to support special occasions. Although there is no formal parent, teacher association, there is a group of dedicated parents which organises social and fund-raising activities. The school has recently sought the views of parents by sending out a questionnaire to them because it recognises the vital nature of maintaining a true working partnership with parents.

30. The range and quality of the general information that parents receive are good but parents would like more regular information on the progress their children are making. The inspection team support their view that the long gap between the autumn and summer meetings does not allow them to offer maximum support to their children for example in preparation for tests in the summer. There is a friendly prospectus and concise annual report from the governing body. The newsletters are informative and give parents an insight into events in the school. The reports to parents on their children's progress are satisfactory and most tell parents what children need to do to improve. The personal and social comments show that teachers know pupils well. The school holds meetings on aspects of the curriculum as well as information meetings about preparing pupils for the summer tests.
31. Links with the community are very strong and the ecological project (ECO) has been a prime mover in this regard. The co-ordinator has gained committed support from a number of organisations one of which donated money for benches in the school grounds. The vicar from the local Methodist Church leads assemblies and is a school governor. Senior citizens come into school to talk about their experiences of holidays in the past and growing up in World War Two. Links with schools are good. For example, pupils gave a presentation to pupils from a special school on the initiatives in place through the ECO project. There are good links with the high school to which most pupils transfer and Year 6 confirm that they feel well prepared for this. Visits out of school and visitors into school broaden the curriculum and enrich the lives of pupils. All these very good links raise pupils' awareness of the school's role in the community and helps them to be good citizens.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good overall**.

Leadership of the school is **good**, with the leadership of the headteacher being **very good**.

Management of the school is **good**.

The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has got staff working well together as a team.
- Key staff and governors provide the headteacher with strong and effective support.
- Staff are committed to providing a good quality of education which meets the needs of all the pupils.
- The school does not have in place effective systems for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- The school's ethos for learning is exceptionally high.

Commentary

32. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides very good and supportive leadership which encourages all staff to give of their best for the sake of the pupils. There is a shared sense of purpose and high expectations for the work of the school. The school is fully inclusive and effective policies ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met. The success of this approach can be seen in the effective teaching and the good achievements of its pupils. All staff show a strong commitment to the school and provide pupils with very good examples of how to conduct themselves. As a result, the school has a strong and effective ethos for learning. All the issues in the previous report have been addressed.
33. Procedures for self-evaluation and the taking action are very good overall. The school's performance against schools nationally and against similar schools is checked carefully, and challenging but realistic targets are set. The headteacher has introduced good systems to

monitor and improve teachers' performance. Teaching is monitored regularly and staff receive constructive feedback which includes targets for improvement. Whole school priorities for improvement are addressed in detail and all subject leaders have a good understanding of what needs to be done to ensure further success within their areas. This can be seen in the improvements which have been made to the quality and range of pupils' writing throughout the school. Teachers have worked hard recently on this aspect and standards are now above those found in most schools but spelling remains a relative weakness.

34. Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are very good. Systematic and sharply focused analysis of pupil performance data in these subjects has enabled teachers to identify where progress is being made by individuals and groups of pupils and where it could be better. The school recognises that there is a need to develop more formal assessment procedures in other subjects.
35. The governing body is strongly committed to the school's success. Governors share a common vision and support the headteacher and staff well as they work to improve the learning opportunities for the pupils. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and act as a critical friend. Governors are fully involved in planning, prioritising and costing targets in the school improvement plan. They have a good understanding of the recent work of the school through regular reports from the headteacher. Governors also receive further information from members of the senior management team and subject leaders.
36. The management of special educational needs is undertaken very conscientiously. The special educational needs co-ordinator is highly effective in ensuring that pupils' learning difficulties are identified at an early stage. She provides valuable support to teachers and teaching assistants, making sure that they are kept up to date. She monitors the progress of pupils towards the objectives in their individual educational plans and liaises with parents to keep them fully informed of their children's progress. The contribution made by classroom support assistants is a particular strength of the provision.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	596,647	Balance from previous year	20,806
Total expenditure	566,266	Balance carried forward to the next	51,187
Expenditure per pupil	2,182		

37. The governors' finance committee has a good overview of financial affairs. The governing body is very clear about obtaining value for money and works pro-actively to ensure that any available funding is used well in support of the school's priorities. However, there is a shortage of computers. The school's two administrative officers ensure that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Financial planning and control are efficient. The carry forward budget is above average because funds have been set aside to be used to enhance accommodation in the Foundation Stage. The findings in the most recent audit report found the systems in operation to be sound. All the recommendations made have been attended to.
38. The cost of educating pupils at the school is close to the national average. Taking this into account alongside the pupils' good achievements and the good quality of educational provision, the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is **good**.

There are good arrangements to ensure that children settle into the nursery class with ease. Parents are invited into school to learn about how children are taught and this enables teachers and parents to share information in order to ensure that individual needs are well met. Good arrangements are also made when children move from nursery to reception and from reception into Year 1.

There has been considerable improvement in the provision for the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. The nursery and reception classes follow the recommended assessment procedures and keep detailed records of children's progress. These assessments show that standards on entry to the reception class are broadly average. Another improvement is that all aspects of the curriculum are now clearly focused on the recommended Early Learning Goals. As a result of the detailed planning and the good quality teaching children achieve well.

The provision is well managed and there is a satisfactory ratio of adults to children. The teachers and teaching assistants have improved their knowledge to ensure they are up to date with recent changes.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery have very good attitudes to learning.
- The quality of teaching in this area is of a very good standard and children achieve very well.
- Most children in the reception class have already achieved the early learning goals.

Commentary

39. Children in the nursery class are eager to learn. They have very good relationships with other children. Most share equipment and games and patiently await their turn. They show pleasure when given praise for successfully collecting and returning toys, tidying up and washing their hands. When greeted, they respond politely and they do as they are told. Reception children show increasing independence in selecting resources. When involved in imaginary play as dentists and as post office workers, they do so cooperatively. Children are very well behaved, show respect for each other and adults and demonstrate good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
40. The quality of teaching in this area is of a very good standard overall. Relationships between adults and children are friendly. There is clear expectation of children to grow in independence and to have good behaviour. There are very well planned times to encourage children to discuss a wide range of feelings. A particularly good example being in the nursery, when children were challenged to suggest ways they could help each other. In the two classes, staff act as positive role models. Children are taught how to tidy up after themselves and to look after their own belongings. All these activities promote self-esteem and encourage children to form good relationships.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children achieve well.
- Teachers, the nursery nurse and teaching assistants take every opportunity to develop children's listening and speaking skills.
- Reading areas need developing to encourage children to share and enjoy a wider range of books.

Commentary

41. In the nursery, the majority of children are able to express their needs well. Many are beginning to recognise letter sounds and a small number of higher attaining children, are able to read simple sentences and can write their first name. Children listen well to stories. They confidently answer questions about how 'Betsy Bear' helps her neighbours. When sharing the story of a train ride, some lower attaining children were more hesitant to express their thoughts but joined in the refrain. Higher attaining children followed the story from their own reading book. Reception children are more confident when speaking. They write simple captions and label the parts of a plant. When reading, they make suggestions as to what may happen next. Almost all describe the structure of a book and understand the role of an author and an illustrator. When sharing the story 'Mrs Honey's Hat' lower attaining children, took good notice of the pictures, using these to assist them in answering questions about the sequence of the story. Work in their English books shows they are still writing underneath the teacher's script. The higher attaining children write their name and simple sentences correctly and are beginning to use capital letters and full stops well. They are confident readers and demonstrate good understanding of the texts.
42. Teaching is good overall. In both classes, activities, which are well prepared, encourage children to communicate their thoughts and feelings. There is some very good teaching in the nursery class, where both the teacher and the nursery nurse effectively increase children's listening and speaking skills, through chatting with them and challenging them to explain what they are doing and what they will do next. There are good arrangements for visitors to take part in lessons. Children were enabled to devise their own questions to ask the postman. In both classes, care is taken by staff, when directing their questions, to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs are fully involved.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching methods are good overall and children achieve well.

Commentary

43. Nursery children show interest in numbers. When counting their cars and fire engines and making play dough cakes, they use number names accurately. They can sort correctly the fire engines according to size. The higher attaining children understand simple mathematical

vocabulary such as in front, behind, more and less and are able to predict how many altogether. Most children can count from 1 to 10 and the higher attaining children to 20. In the reception class, children recognise coins and when supported can do simple addition and subtraction sums.

44. This area is taught well. The opportunities for children to count, sort, match and sequence, enable very good increases in their mathematical language and good development of their mathematical skills. Mathematical understanding is further developed through very well chosen stories, songs, games and imaginative play. In all these activities staff intervene to develop children's thinking through appropriate questions such as how many? and how did you work out that missing number? Good use is also made of computers in order to reinforce children's counting and number recognition skills. However, because there are only a small number of computers available for use, children have to await their turn. Singing songs such as '10 fat sausages' make learning fun and also increase children's knowledge of simple subtraction.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good opportunities for children to explore and investigate for themselves and also to discuss what they have found out.
- The garden area stimulates interest in the growth of beautiful flowers and animal life.

Commentary

45. In the nursery children demonstrate good investigation skills in exploring pond life, for example, the life cycle of the frog. They examine closely the rings on a tree stump and make good use of their language skills in describing what they see, feel and smell. In reception, children plant sunflower seeds and show growing knowledge of what plants need for growth. In both classes, children are gaining in confidence in using computers. They demonstrate good control of the mouse and growing knowledge of how to open close and operate programmes.
46. Teaching is good overall. Interesting and attractive resources are provided to stimulate children's curiosity. Children's own customs are celebrated and their knowledge and understanding about other people's cultures increased through visitors and stories. Children learn about the significance of the Divali lamps and celebrate the Christmas story. All these activities help increase children's knowledge and understanding and support their spiritual, social and cultural development. Exciting and interesting visits to places such as the museum and the stream by Tandle Hills, visitors to the school including the postman, and the fantastic ecological day which enthused children to take care of the environment are all used well to extend children's knowledge even further.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nursery aged children are confident and achieve very well.
- Children make very good progress in their physical development. The great majority of the reception aged children have already achieved the early learning goals.
- Teachers pay good attention to safety during physical and practical activities.

Commentary

47. Nursery and reception children's balancing, throwing, catching and batting skills are developing well. Nursery children, danced around the maypole with remarkable agility and control, moving in and out at the given signal. They also quickly responded to instructions and worked cooperatively during the challenging parachute activities. The reception children move with good confidence. Most confidently ride their bikes. Only a few require assistance in knowing how to work the pedals and balance.
48. Teaching in this area is good. The teachers and teaching assistants, encourage children to try new experiences. Children are taught to move and play safely. Staff teach skills and how to use equipment safely for example how to hold scissors when cutting.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy experimenting with and investigating different materials.
- Teachers enable children to experiment but do not always intervene sufficiently to extend their creative skills.

Commentary

49. Nursery children enjoy joining in singing rhymes and songs from memory and experimenting with play dough and glitter. In the reception class, children investigate musical instruments. They use their imagination in their drawings and paintings, when exploring use of paint, pencils crayons and collage. Their singing is satisfactory demonstrating a growing sense of rhythm.
50. Teaching is satisfactory. A variety of interesting activities are provided for children to develop their imaginative skills including art, music, dance and imaginative play. Cheery songs provide a sense of happiness therefore children are eager to join in. However, there are missed opportunities for staff to intervene and teach skills, to enable children to develop their work. Teachers' praise children and make them aware that their efforts are valued, therefore children are eager to experiment show pride in their achievements and are eager to take their efforts home.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The actions taken to improve the quality and range of pupils' writing have been successful overall and achievement is now good but spelling still remains a relative weakness.
- Pupils are provided with very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- The monitoring and review of performance data are very good.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- The school lacks sufficient space to provide a separate library area and there is a shortage of reference books in some areas.

Commentary

51. Throughout the school all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in English and by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in all aspects of the subject are above average. This represents good progress from a broadly average starting point on entry to the school. There is no obvious difference between the achievements of boys and girls.
52. Standards in speaking and listening are well above those found in most schools by the end of Year 6 and are a particular strength of the provision in English. Throughout the school, pupils listen attentively to their teachers, other adults and each other. They achieve well because teachers provide them with good opportunities in lessons to talk through ideas in pairs and small groups. For example, in Year 2 pupils showed good speaking skills when discussing what information to include in their own non-fiction book about the seaside. Older pupils in Year 6 are confident speakers and not afraid to initiate a conversation by asking such questions as "Were you a good English teacher?" Other opportunities such as reading extracts from the Bible at assemblies give pupils the chance to speak in front of an audience which helps to develop their self-confidence.
53. Standards in reading are above average and pupils achieve well. Higher attainers in Year 2 read with fluency and meaning. They can discuss the story line and describe the characters that they like or dislike. Lower attainers sound out the letters to help them make sense of unfamiliar words and use picture clues effectively to get an understanding what is happening in the story. By Year 6, most pupils read confidently with very good expression and have good comprehension. They enjoy reading and can express a preference for the work of different authors, particularly J.K. Rowling and Roald Dahl. For example, one pupil said she liked Jacqueline Wilson because she wrote "girlie books which were humorous." Older pupils know how to use the contents' page and index to locate a specific topic in a reference book. However, the school does not have any spare space to house a separate library and most non-fiction books have to be kept in the Year 6 classroom. As a result, pupils in Years 3 to 5 do not have sufficient access to reference books. In addition there is a shortage of books in some areas.
54. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in writing. The school has recently focused on improving writing throughout the school and has been very successful. Teachers have high expectations and provide pupils with good opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences. For example, a more able pupil in Year 2 wrote this account of an accident, 'I wanted to get to the top of the settee so I climbed on top of the toy box and you can probably think of what happened. I fell off and landed on my arm.' Pupils enjoy poetry and there are examples of good work to be found around the school such as this piece of verse from a pupil in Year 6,

*'The snapping of squirrels gathering nuts,
Banging of fireworks which hover around,
Rustling of suede leaves underfoot,
It's all the sounds of autumn.'*

55. Teachers teach spelling regularly but pupils often do not apply what they have learnt to their writing. As a result pupils spelling is a weakness throughout the school.
56. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers plan the work well and ensure that it is matched to the needs of pupils. Pupils are managed very well, and as a result, classrooms are quiet places where they can learn in peace. Very good relationships exist between pupils and teachers. The effective deployment of classroom assistants to work with groups and individuals means all pupils are able to join in lessons well and make good progress. There are examples of some good marking especially in Years 2 and 6 with comments that are evaluative and give clear suggestions for improvement.

57. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Systems, such as for assessment and planning, are very well established throughout the school and work very effectively. She has monitored teaching and pupils' work and through detailed analysis of test results has a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. As a result, standards and achievement have improved significantly in Years 1 and 2 since the previous inspection when many pupils were found to be making unsatisfactory progress.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Teachers provide good opportunities in other subjects for pupils to develop their literacy skills. Pupils are confident speakers and this has a positive impact on their learning across the curriculum. Year 5 has given a talk at another school about the work they have undertaken for the ecological project. Such activities widen the opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills as well as their knowledge of other aspects of the curriculum. Writing is used extensively in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education which makes the work done in literacy more meaningful to the pupils. However, in one age group in science opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their writing skills. Pupils use ICT satisfactorily to word-process their stories.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good. As a result pupils' achieve well and attain above average standards.
- The leadership of the subject is very good.
- Very good procedures are in place to assess what pupils know, understand and can do with the results used well to set targets for pupils to improve further.

Commentary

59. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. Since the previous inspection, with exception of last year, above average standards in the subject has been one of the school's many strengths. In the 2003 cohort the number of potentially higher attaining pupils was low and this had an adverse affect on the school's overall results. Inspection evidence demonstrates that there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
60. In Year 2, pupils use their number knowledge with confidence. They can accurately use the correct notation to interpret and solve story problems using numbers to 20. A very good feature of one lesson was the way all pupils could add or subtract 11 from a two-digit number. In Year 6, pupils are able to conduct investigations associated with using numbers to two decimal places and apply their knowledge of inverse operations well. Almost all pupils demonstrate speed and accuracy in carrying out mental calculations. They can convert fractions into decimals and quickly work out the perimeter and area of given shapes.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers plan work well. Pupils working at a higher level are provided with challenging extension tasks. As a result of very good teaching, pupils achieve well and show very positive attitudes towards the subject. Discussions held with pupils provide clear evidence that they enjoy mathematics. Lesson plans show challenging tasks being set, according to the prior attainment levels of the pupils. Very good use of assessment information in one class during the inspection was seen when plans for the lesson were modified because the teacher having assessed the previous days

work recognised that pupils needed more time to assimilate the topic. Lessons have a brisk start. Plenary sessions are used effectively to reinforce learning, to extend thinking or to celebrate success. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into lessons through very effective use of teaching assistants.

62. Leadership of the subject is very good. The subject leader has a clear vision for the further development of the subject. She monitors effectively the overall standard of teaching. Assessment procedures are of a high quality and the information gathered is used well. As a result pupils of all attainment levels achieve well and overall provision is of a very good standard.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Good use is made by pupils of their mathematical skills in other subjects. In ICT, interactive programs that help pupils develop knowledge of the properties of shapes are used well. Older pupils use their findings about pulse measurements to create graphs and pie charts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ensure that there is a good balance in lessons between practical activities and developing factual knowledge.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils enjoy scientific investigations.
- Pupils make too many spelling mistakes when asked to write up their experiments.

Commentary

64. Standards achieved in science are above those found in most schools at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Since the previous inspection the accommodation has been improved and as a result pupils no longer have to work in cramped conditions.
65. Pupils cover a satisfactory range of scientific topics and undertake a good number of investigations. Discussions held with pupils from Year 6 show that they enjoy their work, especially when they are given the opportunity to engage in practical activities. For example, they spoke enthusiastically about an experiment they had done to discover the effects of rusting. Pupils know the importance of changing only one variable when carrying out a fair test. Younger pupils in Year 2 know that a test needs to be fair. In one lesson they responded very well to the challenge of being 'detectives' in finding out the absorbency properties of different materials. Pupils of all ages have no difficulty in expressing themselves clearly using correct scientific vocabulary. However, when writing up experiments, simple spelling mistakes are made. Sometimes pupils are asked to copy text rather than write up their work using their own words, as a result opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their writing skills.
66. Teaching is good. There is a strong practical element which helps pupils' understanding and enhances the quality of learning. For example, in a good lesson with Year 1, the teacher allowed the pupils to find out for themselves about the speed and direction of different objects. In Year 3 pupils were enthralled by the teacher's demonstration of how to clean teeth properly, in one of a series of lessons devoted to health education. All teachers place a strong

emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum. For example, pupils are encouraged to bring healthy snacks to school and all pupils had a very good awareness of healthy eating issues. Teachers give pupils constructive verbal feedback during lessons. As a result pupils are not frightened to try out their own ideas when carrying out experiments. For example, despite being given a good range of materials to test absorbency factors, one Year 2 pupil added a sample of one of the school's paper towels to the experiment. The school's ecological work makes a very good contribution to the subject.

67. The co-coordinator for science was absent from school during the inspection. However, it is clear that very good assessment procedures are in place in the subject and monitoring of standards has taken place. As a result, the school has good information with regards to what works well in the subject and what is in need of improvement. The outdoor area is increasingly being used to provide a stimulus for biological study.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects.
- Teachers make good use of all resources but there is lack of resources to enable pupils to be taught new skills as a class or in a large group.
- There is no whole school approach to the assessment and recording of pupils' progress.

Commentary

68. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in ICT are similar to those found in most schools and achievement is satisfactory overall. Most pupils are confident in their own ability and have a mature attitude towards learning. They work well in pairs and support each other. Pupils have good attitudes and enjoy their work very much. These judgments are similar to those made at the time of the previous inspection.
69. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinator has introduced a new scheme of work which ensures that pupils in every age group experience a wide range of well planned activities. For example, pupils in Year 2 can word process their stories and poems and know how to centre, underscore, highlight and use bullet points. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 see computers as natural tools to be used. They send messages to their friends in Japan and access the Internet confidently as a research tool. The school makes good use of particular programs for pupils with special educational needs and as a result they are able to take a full part in the lesson activities.
70. Staff make relevant and flexible use of all available computers. Good use is made of ICT in all other subjects as a means of developing pupils' skills. However, the school does not have a computer suite, or other facilities, to enable whole or group instruction and demonstration of specific computer skills to take place. These factors slow the pace of learning for pupils. This was very much in evidence when a group of Year 6 pupils were focusing on setting up a school website. Though they showed sound skills, two-thirds of them did not have access to a machine and had to wait their turn. The pupils were very keen to learn but the lack of equipment inhibited progress.
71. The subject is led and managed effectively. The curriculum is well planned, following local and national guidelines. However, there is no whole school approach to the monitoring and recording of pupils' progress as they move through the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Computers are used well to promote and consolidate learning in all subjects of the curriculum. In all classrooms, pupils practice their computer skills as they learn to manipulate a range of programs. For example, pupils regularly look for information in history, geography and religious education and create spreadsheets in mathematics.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**. It enables pupils to develop the skills to effectively use maps photographs, ICT and fieldwork in their geographical enquiries.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the ages of seven and eleven are above the national expectation.
- Links with other areas of the curriculum are very good.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall and pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils do not always apply their spelling skills well.
- There is no whole school approach to assessment in the subject.

Commentary

73. During a literacy lesson, Year 1 pupils investigated a contrasting locality to their own. They studied photographs and artefacts making accurate comparisons with life in India to their own lives. Their work clearly shows that they are growing in knowledge of where places are, what they are like and have an understanding of the life styles of people and the effects on peoples lives for example housing, schooling climate and clothing. Earlier work includes careful drawings of simple routes, for example how to travel from school to a shop. Pupils have good knowledge of where Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales and Royton are on the map of Great Britain as well as good knowledge of how to use a key. Year 2 pupils write in detail about what they have found out about Blackpool. They have identified cities on a map and recorded interesting information about Royton, Oldham and Manchester and how they compare to the features of the seaside environment.
74. Year 6 pupils show very good knowledge of the causes of pollution and are able to suggest solutions. They trace the route of a river and identify how areas have developed over time. During their discussions, they consider the cause and effect of historical changes and the effects of these factors on water quality. They use and demonstrate understanding of a wide range of geographical vocabulary. They also make good use of their mathematical skills and scientific knowledge for example during investigations of the amount of nitrates in a local stream and also in their graphs indicating the average rainfall in Mombassa and Manchester.
75. The quality of teaching is very good overall. A full range of skills and experiences are taught. Skills of observing, recording, use of maps and keys are developed very well. The very good opportunities for field work enable pupils to have first hand experience of the locality and further afield. In Year 6, geographical skills are taught in an inspiring and highly effective way. Excellent teaching in one lesson built on pupils' previous knowledge and practical first hand observations. Skilful questioning encouraged pupils to recall and use geographical vocabulary. The use of resources for example photographs taken with a digital camera motivated pupils to identify the sources of pollution. The pupils with special educational needs were extremely well supported by the classroom assistant who adapted the written exercise, to enable pupils to achieve as highly as their peers.

History

Provision for history is **very good overall**, enabling pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of people periods and events in history.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Standards of attainment by the ages of seven and eleven are above those found in most schools.
- Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities for first hand historical enquiry.
- Spelling in pupils' written work is weak.
- The subject leader provides very good leadership.

Commentary

76. Pupils in Year 2 find out about the past using a very good range of sources. They are becoming confident and effective enquirers. During an earlier literacy lesson, pupils responded well to the high challenge to devise questions to present to two visiting local historians. Pupils research information about visits to the seaside in the past, asking the visitors what had happened when and why? They predict the historical artifacts the teacher may have in her two suitcases and eagerly study photographs and a digital video presentation depicting life at the seaside fifty years ago. In all the group activities, the level of discussion was mature and pupils knowledge and understanding above what is usually expected for seven-year-old pupils for example, when discussing the interpretation of those times in the work of a range of artists. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement in this lesson was truly excellent. All the pupils including those with special educational needs, were engrossed in their work. The methods used inspired pupils to seek out information and discuss their findings. An added dimension was the high spiritual social and cultural development of pupils in this lesson.
77. In Year 3 pupils' enquiry skills are further developed. Pupils act as detectives to discover who lived in a Roman villa. They identify the villa is located south east of London and the higher attaining pupils quickly point this out on the map. Pupils in Year 5 show good knowledge of the events of 'The Second World War'. They discuss the many products that were not available because of the war and show good knowledge of rationing and its consequences. Analysis of the previous work in Years 3 to 6 demonstrates that pupils' spelling skills are in need of improvement. Their work is presented well and includes detailed study of Ancient Egypt. Work about Royton in Victorian times reflects very good research into life in the cotton mills, the history of Royton Hall and details of the population and fashion. The historical facts are very good. The spelling in the work of many pupils is weak.
78. The subject leader is extremely knowledgeable and is providing very good leadership. She has identified the areas for development including assessment and has recently attended a monitoring course to assist her improve the quality of teaching and learning even further.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
- Standards of attainment are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' writing.
- Pupils' attitudes are positive and this leads to an enthusiastic enjoyment of the subject.
- The subject is well led and co-ordinated.

Commentary

79. Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and Year 6. Throughout the school pupils are achieving well and making good progress. These judgements are an improvement on those made at the time of the previous inspection when attainment in Years 1 and 2 was found to be in line with expectations and progress satisfactory. Pupils do better than expected in gaining knowledge about world religions such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism and in understanding the similarities and differences amongst them. They can explain, for example, how places of worship differ and appreciate the significance of symbols to be found there.
80. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning about different faiths and are confident in answering questions and offering ideas. Discussions held with pupils shows that they are encouraged to reflect upon what they are learning and to come to an understanding of how a person's beliefs can be applied to everyday life.
81. Teachers make good use of the subject to develop writing skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 have written about the parable of the wise man who built his house on rock. One pupil wrote, 'Jesus is like the wise man's rock. If you trust him, he will never let you down.'
82. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 so no overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning can be made. Teaching is of a good quality in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' good subject knowledge and effective use of artefacts and other visual aids promote better understanding of the concepts being taught. Pupils are taught to handle religious artefacts with great respect. In a Year 3 lesson, the use of role-play enhanced pupils' learning and gave them a deeper understanding of the significance of the Passover Meal in Judaism. Visits are organised by the teachers to a Jewish museum and a local Christian church.
83. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable and provides good leadership. The subject contributes greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It draws positively on pupils' own family and religious backgrounds and teaches them to respect differences. However, there is no whole-school approach to the assessment and recording of pupils' progress. Resources are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. No lessons were seen so no overall judgements can be made about teaching or provision in **art and design**. A scrutiny of work and discussions held with pupils show standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 to be above those found in most schools. Pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills and are provided with the opportunity to work with a wide variety of media. The subject makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' personal development and the quality of the learning environment. These judgements are an improvement on the ones made at the time of the previous inspection when attainment was found to be in line with national expectations and pupils were making satisfactory progress. A strength of the provision is in the good links made with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 looked carefully at Egyptian tomb paintings and selected a design for a lino tile print. They subsequently used a computer drawing program to make repeated patterns using their own original design. The finished products were of a very good quality.

85. Only one lesson was observed in **design and technology** so it is not possible to make a judgement about the overall quality of provision or teaching and learning in the subject. Good planning is in place and throughout the school pupils are introduced to the full design and make process. Evidence of pupils' work is to be found around the school in some attractive displays, particularly in work done to create a fairground ride. This shows that, as at the time of the previous inspection, by the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are meeting the nationally expected standards. In the very effective lesson seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 showed good skills as they evaluated a variety of commercially produced 'smoothies' before designing and making their own healthy drink using a variety of fruits. Teachers carefully control safety issues and classroom assistants make a good contribution as pupils undertake their practical work. The subject is well led and managed overall but there is no whole school approach to assessing pupils' work. The curriculum is suitably planned using national guidelines and there are sufficient resources.
86. In **music** no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 and as such no overall judgement can be made about music provision. In Years 3 to 6, the subject is taught by a highly competent teacher who uses her considerable music talents well in motivating pupils of all attainment levels to achieve their very best. The school is rightly proud of its choir that, for example, in performing songs such as 'The rhythm of life' demonstrates an extremely high level of musical expertise. Very good attention is given to pitch and rhythm with pupils maintaining parts very well, combining very good pitch control of a melody with very good rhythmic accuracy. These aspects of music provision along with the opportunities pupils are given to learn to play both brass and woodwind instruments, including the oboe, are one of the school's many strengths. In class lessons pupils respond very well to being asked to perform music in a rock and roll style. The quality of teaching is very high with a key strength being the teacher's insistence on pupils improving on previous best. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator.
87. Only one lesson was observed in dance and one in games. It is not possible, therefore, to make an overall judgement about standards or provision in **physical education**. Attainment in dance in the lesson observed was above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved well. The level of challenge was realistic with good links made with the school's ecological work. Pupils were able to extend movement sequences by effectively linking together a range of movements to replicate the crushing of a metal can. In a Year 1 lesson, good teaching stimulated pupils to develop confidence in improving their catching skills. Swimming lessons are available and school records show that most pupils can swim 25 metres by the time they leave. The management of pupils is good and care is given to ensuring safe working practices. The subject is well led and managed. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory and includes competitive matches with other schools. The hall is spacious and equipment is of a good quality.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. The school provides a broad curriculum for personal social and health education and citizenship, through separate specialist lessons as well as through the subjects of the National Curriculum, assemblies and class discussions. This ensures that pupils are developing confidence and responsibility. Pupils are also developing good relationships and respect for the differences between people. There is a high emphasis in the school to research discuss and debate ecological issues and the effects of these on the quality of life. For their work in this area, the school has received the highest possible award.
89. Pupils are given good opportunity to examine ways of dealing with different emotions. There are carefully planned times to provide good attention to sex education, preparing pupils for the body changes as they approach puberty. Good attention is also given to warning pupils about the dangers of drugs misuse and to raising pupils' knowledge of personal safety matters.

These areas are dealt with sensitively and with the assistance of specialists in those areas. The school is taking part in healthy eating initiatives which are very well supported by the school's catering staff. All these factors encourage pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle and prepare pupils well for the next stage of education and life in a changing world.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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