

INSPECTION REPORT

ROUNDTHORN JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105634

Headteacher: Mrs Joyce Ambrose

Lead inspector: Ms Margot D'Arcy

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th November 2003

Inspection number: 259839

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 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	246
School address:	Roundthorn Road Oldham
Postcode:	OL4 5LN
Telephone number:	0161 9113246
Fax number:	0161 9113247
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr N Bennett
Date of previous inspection:	12 th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized multicultural school catering for 246 boys and girls between the ages of three and eleven. Most attend full time, including the 34 nursery children. There are fairly equal numbers of boys and girls, but significantly more girls in year 3. The majority of pupils are of Asian Kashmiri and Pakistani heritage. Minority ethnic groups include pupils of Asian Bangladeshi heritage, Chinese and white British. Most pupils speak English as an additional language, with 20 per cent at an early stage of learning English. A high proportion of pupils joins and leaves the school other than at the usual admission and transfer times (termed 'mobility'). The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties (25 per cent) is above average. The range of these pupils' needs includes moderate learning difficulties; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; speech and communication; visual and multi-sensory impairments.

Thirty-seven per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above the national average. The area in which the school is situated is socially and economically disadvantaged and was at the centre of 2001 race riots. The school is part of an Educational Action Zone¹ (EAZ) and is involved in the government's Excellence in Cities (EiC) projects. Children's attainment when they begin school is very low compared to what is expected for their age, especially in the areas of communication, language and literacy. The school has gained a number of awards. These are the Basic Skills Quality Mark; FA Charter Standard; the Active Mark; and a School Achievement Award.

¹ An area identified as suffering from significant social deprivation in which some schools are targeted to receive additional funding to improve aspects of their work. Inclusion in EiC projects is on a similar basis.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23158	Ms Margot D'Arcy	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music
9928	Mr Alan Dobson	Lay inspector	
11528	Mr Mike Wainwright	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs
23276	Mrs Margaret Mann	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education The Foundation Stage
28071	Mr Andrew Williams	Team inspector	Geography History English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

Wessex Education Limited

3 Greenacres
Puddletown
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 8GF

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. Pupils achieve very well, particularly given that so many are learning English as an additional language. This is because of very good teaching, a good curriculum and effective leadership. This is resulting in rising standards. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Mostly high quality teaching, including the contribution of bilingual and other support staff
- A good curriculum and very good assessment systems
- The school is well led and managed
- Most pupils make good or very good progress
- Pupils' personal qualities are very effectively promoted. They enjoy school and behave well.
- Pupils are well looked after and valued as individuals
- The school has good links with parents and the community
- Pupils underachieve in physical education (PE) because teaching and the curriculum are unsatisfactory

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in 1998. All of the key areas for improvement have been successfully addressed. A focus on promoting speaking skills and understanding of vocabulary has ensured that pupils with English as an additional language understand key mathematical and scientific terms. This has helped to raise standards. There are now very good strategies to deal with any inappropriate behaviour. Good improvements have been made to the way the school plans how it will improve. In addition, there have been improvements in many other areas, including standards in and provision for information and communication technology (ICT); provision for pupils with learning difficulties; attendance and punctuality; and the way pupils' personal qualities are promoted. However, there has been a decline in provision for PE.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Most pupils achieve very well. This can be seen in the table below showing that, whilst year 6 test results in 2003 were well below or below national averages they were considerably better when compared with similar schools.

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals*

The inspection found that junior pupils achieve very well in English. By year 6, skills in reading, speaking and listening are broadly average. Writing skills are below, but are showing improvement. Particularly good improvements have been made to standards and achievement in mathematics and science, where results have risen at a faster rate than nationally.

Standards in years 1 and 2 are mostly well below average in all aspects of English and mathematics and below in science. However, most pupils make good progress in response to effective teaching and a good curriculum. Overall, pupils at an early stage of learning English achieve similarly to others when bilingual support is available.

Throughout years 1 to 6, there are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls in English and science. However, boys do better than girls in mathematics. Most pupils make at least good progress in ICT and religious education (RE) and attain the expected standards in these subjects. Standards and achievement in PE are not as good as they could be.

In all areas of learning, nursery and reception children make progress that is at least good and usually very good. By the end of the reception year, most look set to achieve the goals expected in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, creative, and physical development. While most children will not attain the expected goals in the other three areas of learning², they achieve very well in relation to their starting points.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils like school, behave well and are eager to learn. Most attend regularly and are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides pupils with a very good education. The overall quality of teaching is very good. In years 1 to 6, there is a good curriculum, enriched by practical experiences, visits and visitors. Nursery and reception children receive very good quality learning experiences. The high level of care, guidance and support for all pupils, together with the school's strong links with parents and the community enhance learning experiences. The only weakness is in relation to PE.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher, senior managers and most other co-ordinators have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and are committed to raising standards. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and fulfil most of their legal obligations. They are good friends to the school and a number are significantly involved in its work.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the education provided and have no significant concerns. Pupils are also positive about the school and like that their views are sought and acted upon.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- address the weaknesses in achievement, teaching and the curriculum for PE

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to take part in daily collective worship.

² Communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and knowledge and understanding of the world.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards in the core subjects³ are below, and sometimes well below, average. However, in relation to their prior attainment, most pupils in years 1 and 2 achieve well in these subjects and in years 3 to 6 they achieve very well. Overall, boys and girls do equally well, but boys are doing better in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nursery and reception children achieve very well
- Overall, progress in years 1 and 2 is good and in years 3 to 6 it is very good
- Pupils at an early stage of learning English generally achieve well
- Achievement in ICT is very good
- Pupils underachieve in PE
- Pupils with learning difficulties make very good progress

Commentary

1. When children begin nursery their standards are very low in relation to what is generally seen at this age. In particular, many have very little English and limited competence in mathematics; personal and social skills are also underdeveloped. Although high quality teaching and a very good curriculum ensures that children make very good progress in virtually all areas of learning, by the end of the reception year, most do not reach the expected goals in communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and knowledge and understanding of the world. In the areas of personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development, however, most children look set to achieve the expected goals. Speaking and listening skills, in particular, are promoted very effectively in both nursery and reception, with bilingual and other support staff having an especially good impact on children's progress in this area and others.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.8 (12.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	10.9 (10.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.7 (13.6)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. Year 2 national test results in 2003 were well below the national average in reading and mathematics and very low in writing. Compared to similar schools, these results were more favourable being below average in reading, well below in writing and above in mathematics. Results in reading and mathematics improved this year with more pupils achieving the expected level in reading and considerably more achieving the higher level in mathematics. Writing results have not shown any significant improvement for a number of years and, accordingly, the school has identified this as a priority area for development. Teachers assessed pupils' standards in science and their skills in speaking and listening as well below

³ English, mathematics and science.

average. Over time, there are no significant differences between boys' and girls' attainment in reading or writing, but in mathematics, girls have generally not performed as well as boys.

3. The significant proportion of pupils in years 1 and 2 in the early stages of learning English are achieving well. This is the result of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, both of which promote speaking skills and understanding of vocabulary very well. Learning is particularly good when bilingual assistants are present, helping pupils to understand better what is being taught. Currently, year 1 pupils are benefiting more from this because a bilingual teacher is temporarily teaching them for four days each week.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.2 (26.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.9 (25.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.6 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Year 6 pupils' national test results in 2003 were well below the national average in English and mathematics and below in science. However, in relation to similar schools, these results were above average in English and mathematics and well above in science. Over time (1999 to 2003) year 6 test results have risen at a faster rate than those nationally, with particularly good rises since 2001 in mathematics and science. English results fluctuate considerably. School data shows that this is in response to factors such as the varying proportions of pupils at an early stage of learning English or with learning difficulties. The rate of pupil mobility in each year group and the level of extended absences are other factors that affect standards in this subject more adversely than in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that, while standards in all three subjects are below average, most pupils make very good progress.
5. Over time, test results in English and science show no significant difference between boys' and girls' attainment but, as with year 2 test results, girls do not generally perform as well as boys in mathematics. The school has analysed its results and identified some reasons for the differences. They note, for example, that attainment varies partly as a result of changes in the gender balance caused by pupil mobility and the varying proportions of boys and girls with learning difficulties. Inspection evidence did not identify any significant differences between boys' and girls' progress, either in mathematics lessons or in their work over time.
6. Throughout the school, pupils achieve very well in ICT and attain broadly average standards. Good achievement is also evident in RE where standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. It was not possible to make secure judgements about standards and achievement in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music. However, the sampling of work in these subjects, along with discussions with pupils and some subject co-ordinators, strongly indicates that standards are at least in line with what is expected for pupils' ages and achievement is at least satisfactory. Standards are not as high as they could be in PE. Pupils underachieve in this subject due to weaknesses in teaching and curriculum planning.

The achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups

7. Over time, the school's analysis of the test results of pupils from different ethnic groups shows no significant attainment differences. The school is vigilant in monitoring this factor and takes account of other factors that affect standards, such as mobility. However, it does not compare, as a separate group, the attainment and progress of those pupils at an early stage of learning English, although with the data the school has, it would not be difficult to do so.

Inspection evidence shows that this group of pupils generally achieve well. In lessons where bilingual support was provided, they made similar progress to their classmates.

The achievement of pupils with special educational needs

8. Pupils with learning difficulties make very good progress. Their needs are identified early and work is modified well to help them learn. In lessons, they are often given good quality, additional help from teachers and support staff. A variety of initiatives also promotes their progress well. These include, short, small group and individual, sessions outside of class lessons, and participation in individualised ICT programs that boost standards and achievement in literacy and numeracy.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is below the national average, but punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond well to the school’s high expectations of their behaviour
- The school works hard to promote racial harmony and very good relationships between pupils and adults
- There are very good procedures to promote attendance and punctuality

Commentary

9. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school’s caring ethos and focus on valuing the efforts and achievements of all results in pupils who enjoy school and are eager to learn. The high expectations of behaviour are well met; most pupils are well behaved, friendly and courteous. Whilst there is no evidence of bullying, the school has appropriate systems to deal with this type of behaviour should it occur.

Exclusions

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	22	2	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	67	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	86	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0

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

10. There have been no exclusions in this school year; three previous cases were dealt with positively and effectively. The school only uses this sanction as a last resort.

11. Pupils' personal development is good. Even the youngest children are encouraged to be independent and take responsibility, for example, by organising their snack and learning routines for tidying away resources. Older pupils have formed a 'Friends of Roundthorn' group and meet weekly to discuss how they can help to make their school a better place for everyone. Pupils of all ages mix happily together, with older ones showing friendliness to and care of younger ones in the playground. Racial harmony is promoted well. Pupils are taught to respect others' differences and know that harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. The learning links that have been established with two neighbouring schools, where pupils are predominantly white, are proving very beneficial in furthering this aspect of pupils' personal development.
12. Overall, spiritual development is promoted very well. Lessons in RE and personal, social and health education (PSHE) promote this aspect particularly effectively. There were also numerous examples of pupils showing delight and wonder in learning in other subjects. For instance, in science, when year 1 pupils investigated electricity and year 3 explored magnets. Year 6 pupils were also clearly astonished when their ICT presentations about minibeasts 'came to life' and the worms on the screen began to wriggle! Whilst assemblies are very successful in providing pupils with an appreciation of social, moral and cultural issues, an ethos of spirituality is often lacking. There is no act of collective worship and a stimulating visual focus or change of lighting to create atmosphere and aid reflection is rarely provided.
13. The very good role models provided by adults make a strong contribution to pupils' moral development. School and classroom rules foster moral values such as honesty, tolerance, fairness and respect. The difference between right and wrong and understanding how every individual's behaviour has an impact on others are continuously promoted.
14. Standards in social development are very good. Pupils work well together in different sized groups. Their confidence and self-esteem grows in response to teachers' skilful questioning and sensitivity to individuals' needs. This is true of all pupils, but is especially pertinent to those with learning difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English. Pupils show empathy and support for each other. A lovely example was seen in a year 4 music lesson where a group gave very good support and encouragement to a pupil who had recently joined the school and had very little understanding of English.
15. Pupils' appreciation of their own and other cultures is promoted well in lessons and other situations. Subjects such as art and design, geography, history, music and RE, help pupils to learn about how people live in other parts of the world, their customs, ways of worship and creative traditions. The good range of books, some in dual languages, resources and computer programs reflect cultural diversity well.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.9	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

16. The attendance rate is below the national average. However, when absences for religious observance are extracted, attendance is broadly in line with national figures. The school views good attendance and punctuality as important aspects of pupils' personal development and has very good procedures to promote these. For example, certificates are awarded and displays show attendance rates and improvement. Any absence without reason is speedily followed up, usually within the first hour of the school day, ensuring that parents know the

importance the school gives to good attendance. Parents are regularly reminded that children's learning is affected by extended holidays to Pakistan. The incidence and duration of extended holidays have decreased in recent years. Procedures for ensuring pupils are punctual are effective; any who are late without good reason have a playtime detention.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is very good. Throughout the school, there are strengths in teaching, the curriculum, the provision for pupils' welfare and in the school's partnership with parents and the community. The only weakness is the provision for PE, which is unsatisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is very good and has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching is promoting better standards and achievement
- Pupils at an early stage of acquiring English learn as well as others when bilingual support is provided
- Assessment is very good
- Teaching and learning in PE are unsatisfactory

Commentary

17. The table below shows the quality of teaching seen throughout the school during the inspection. Almost three-quarters was good or better, with a high proportion being very good. The impact of improved teaching since the last inspection is seen in pupils' achievement by the end of year 6. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen only in PE. Weaknesses in this subject were due to a lack of clarity in relation to what pupils were expected to learn; slow pace and limited challenge.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	19 (39%)	16 (33%)	12 (24%)	2 (4%)	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.

18. Teaching for nursery and reception children is very good. In interesting and relevant contexts, speaking skills are promoted very well, as are basic literacy and numeracy skills and those of personal and social development. Teachers have very good knowledge of how young children learn and high expectations of what they can achieve. There are very effective assessment systems. From the outset, every aspect of each child's development is checked upon. Meticulous records of individuals and groups ensure that work is very well matched to children's attainment and stage of development. Support staff are a crucial part of the teaching team and make an extremely valuable contribution.
19. There is some variation in the quality of teaching and learning between different phases⁴. Teaching for children in nursery and reception and for those in years 3 to 6 is very good, while for pupils in years 1 and 2 it is good. The difference is linked to the rate of learning of pupils at an early stage of acquiring English. The high proportion of such pupils in years 1 and 2

⁴ Foundation Stage (nursery and reception); Key Stage 1 (years 1 and 2); Key Stage 2 (years 3 to 6).

sometimes prevents them from benefiting as well as they might from good teaching. Whilst, overall, these pupils learn well, receiving effective support from bilingual staff, the school is unable to provide this type of support in every lesson. Consequently, there are times when they do not learn as effectively as others.

20. Nursery children receive full-time bilingual support and reception children have two and a half days support. This, along with high quality teaching, has a very good impact on their learning. During years 3 to 6, less bilingual support is provided because fewer pupils need this. Consequently, when teachers explain and discuss things most are able to understand what is being taught. This, together with pupils' growing level of maturity, results in them sustaining interest and concentration, which supports effective learning. During years 1 and 2, learning is more acutely affected by the level of bilingual support. This was clearly seen in year 1 when pupils responded quite differently, in terms of attention and interest, when taught by a bilingual teacher. This said, there were also occasions when teaching in years 1 and 2 was too rigid in terms of adapting to pupils' needs. For instance, when pupils were losing interest, due to limited understanding, teachers often pressed on with the planned lesson rather than adapting it according to how pupils were responding. There is some reluctance and uncertainty, for example, about moving away from the normal structure of the 'literacy hour' lesson.
21. The last inspection's criticism that the learning of pupils with English as an additional language was impeded by their limited understanding of mathematical and scientific terms has been successfully addressed. Throughout the school, a strength in teaching is the way teachers continually emphasise speaking and listening skills and concentrate on fully explaining subject specific vocabulary. In this, good use is also made of interactive screens and displays so that pupils have very clear visual support for the spoken word. A high profile is placed on encouraging pupils to be independent learners. Learning skills are displayed in classrooms and referred to regularly by teachers. This helps pupils to understand effective strategies to use in different situations and is beginning to give them a useful insight into their particular learning styles.
22. The decision to set⁵ year 5 and 6 pupils for English and mathematics and use the two subject co-ordinators to teach most of the pupils in these two year groups is working well. Pupils are benefiting from being taught in smaller groups where planning and teaching is geared more specifically to their particular needs.
23. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good help in class from teachers and other support staff. When they are taught in small groups outside the classroom, sessions are usually short, so that pupils do not miss lessons, and carefully focused to address their individual targets.
24. Since the last inspection, there have been good improvements to strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Teachers show consistency in their approach to behaviour management, the quality of which is very good. Rewards and sanctions are fair, with a particularly good emphasis placed on noting when pupils' behaviour and application are good. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is so good that pupils really try hard to please their teachers, both in terms of behaviour and application to work. The learning mentors also play a particularly successful role in promoting pupils' personal and academic development. They work effectively alongside teachers and engender very good and supportive relationships with pupils and parents.
25. Assessment is very thorough, particularly in English and mathematics. This provides a clear picture of each pupil's progress and enables the school to identify areas of weakness and analyse any trends, for example, in relation to gender and the attainment of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. This information is then used to help plan improvements. All pupils have appropriate improvement targets; any who are not making sufficient progress in

⁵ Organise pupils into teaching groups based on their attainment.

achieving these are given additional attention. Day-to-day assessment by teachers is effective. They modify their questions and pupils' work well. The result is that pupils of different abilities are fully involved, challenged and achieve success. Marking is good, with guidance given to help pupils understand their strengths and weaknesses and how they can improve. Junior pupils' keen involvement in individualised literacy and numeracy-based ICT programs and the opportunities that they are given to assess some of their own work also gives them a very clear understanding of their learning and the progress that they are making. Homework is good and supports the work done in class.

The curriculum

The curriculum for pupils in years 1 to 6 is good and for nursery and reception children it is very good. An interesting range of visits, visitors and sports opportunities enhances learning experiences and pupils' personal development. The overall quality of resources, including staffing levels, and the accommodation is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning, with relevant links between subjects
- Increasingly good use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum
- Very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties
- Unsatisfactory planning for PE
- Very good accommodation and plentiful resources

Commentary

26. The school is presently reviewing its curriculum to strengthen the already good links between subjects and ensure that learning becomes more meaningful. This is, rightly, seen as especially important for the high proportion of pupils whose first language is not English. Nevertheless, the current curriculum takes good account of pupils' diversity, is mostly well planned and has improved since the last inspection.
27. Teachers show originality in their planning, looking for the best ways to help pupils learn by exploiting links between subjects. For example, in an art and design lesson, year 3 pupils' learning of how mosaics are constructed was effectively linked to their study of Roman history. Good planning also ensures that basic skills of language, literacy, numeracy and ICT are constantly promoted. For example, subject-specific vocabulary is noted on lesson plans, displayed on walls for pupils to see and constantly reinforced by teachers.
28. The school takes full advantage of extra funding to enhance learning. Through various initiatives, opportunities become available for additional creative activities, including pupils working with music specialists, sculptors, designers and writers. The residential visits for junior pupils also help to promote pupils' social skills. All junior pupils are able to boost their learning in mathematics, reading and spelling very effectively by regular use of a computer-based program. Effective use of the accommodation and ICT resources provides very good support for this initiative, which is geared to each pupil's individual needs. As such, those with learning difficulties are able to progress at the same rate as others.
29. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well provided for. After assessing their needs, very good quality individual education plans are constructed and used well by staff in planning work for them. Targets are well thought through and specific, allowing pupils to constantly build on their achievements.
30. Pupils are offered a good range of sporting opportunities after school, which are well supported by staff and other adults. However, the organisation of the general PE curriculum is

unsatisfactory. Planning is weak; for example, it does not show how skills will be developed and built upon as pupils get older.

31. Overall, pupils with English as an additional language have the same good opportunities as others to take a full part in the curriculum. The school's good quality resources reflect ethnic diversity well. The accommodation is very effectively enhanced by colourful and thought-provoking displays that celebrate pupils' work and stimulate their learning and personal development. There is a favourable number of teaching and support staff with a particularly good gender balance compared to many primary schools. The school has actively sought to provide good male role models for pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are very well cared for. They are given very good support and guidance to help them develop personally and academically. The school is good at seeking pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Great importance is placed on pupils' care and welfare
- Staff know pupils well and give them a very good level of support
- The year 6 class council is very effective and a good model to develop across the school

Commentary

32. The school is a happy friendly community where pupils of different cultures are all treated very well and with equal respect. The level of care is of a very high standard. Relationships are very good and supervision is fair. The presence of many bilingual staff ensures that all pupils always have someone they can turn to if they have a concern or worry. Pupils who arrive from overseas with little or no English are well targeted to receive as much support as possible to help them settle into school.
33. Child protection is taken very seriously; procedures for this aspect and health and safety, including first-aid cover, are very good. Extremely good thought has been given to providing caring and sympathetic arrangements for helping the youngest children settle into school life and to ease the transition of those transferring to high school. Liaison with outside agencies to support pupils with specific learning needs is good.
34. Pupils' personal development is particularly well monitored. The staff maintain close and regular contact with parents and know pupils very well. This is shown by detailed comments in the personal development sections of annual progress reports and the clear improvement targets that are set for pupils.
35. The school has used pupil surveys effectively to ascertain their views. However, the most impressive example of seeking and acting on their views is through the year 6 class council. This is very well run by a group of five elected councillors overseen by a learning mentor⁶. Minutes of meetings with the whole class show wide-ranging and sensible discussions, for instance, about the wearing of ear studs and how to ensure that arguments about football in the playground before school are settled amicably. Giving pupils opportunities to make such democratic decisions is providing them with a very good grounding in basic citizenship. The school's plan to extend this model to a wider based school council is sensible.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

⁶ An individual who helps to support pupils' learning and personal development

The school has an effective partnership with parents. There is a very good level of support for parents who want to extend their learning. Pupils benefit from the very good links that exist with local schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think very highly of the school
- There is a very welcoming atmosphere, with a high level of personal contact between parents and staff
- Parents have very good opportunities to be involved in their children's learning through appropriate courses
- Links with other schools encourage pupils to have a greater understanding of racial harmony

Commentary

36. Parents have a very high opinion of the school and the headteacher. They particularly like the way the school encourages their children to settle in when they first start; the quality of the teaching; and the progress their children make both academically and personally.
37. Most parents do not have English as a mother tongue and many are not confident readers in English. The school therefore bases much of its communication on personal contact and the extensive use of bilingual staff. This is very effective. Relations between staff and parents are very good and show an astute understanding of the range of cultures within the local community.
38. Parents feel very welcome in the school and many spend time in the classroom before and at the end of the school day. This allows the school to keep parents well informed. Parents of pupils with learning difficulties are invited to any reviews of their children's progress.
39. The school is very serious about giving parents and other members of the community, opportunities to extend their learning. The range of courses provided is entirely appropriate and aimed primarily at helping parents to understand and be confident in English. These courses are arranged by the school or outside agencies and are frequently linked to the work children are covering in class. Some are based on family learning. For instance, year 1 parents learned some aspects of numeracy alongside their own children and were given homework to do together. Whilst only a minority of parents attend the courses, these are appreciated and are making a good contribution to pupils' learning and parents' ability to support their children at home. The very good provision of bilingual support and welcoming atmosphere is increasing parents' willingness to become involved and their confidence to help their children.
40. In their drive to promote good race relations, the school has made links with two other local primary schools whose pupils are mainly white. Sessions are arranged where pupils from each school learn together and get to know one another. Currently, year 4 pupils in each school spend a day together at the local high school, involved in various activities. Pupils enjoy these experiences and the high school has noticed significant improvements in the quality of relationships between pupils when they begin year 7.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good and management very good. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has high aspirations for pupils and is committed to raising standards

- The headteacher, deputy and assistant headteacher collectively lead and manage the school very well
- Systems to monitor the quality of provision and standards are good overall
- There is a strong commitment to inclusion from all staff and governors

Commentary

41. The headteacher provides clear direction for improvement. She has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has been instrumental in making many improvements since the last inspection. Good systems for monitoring the quality of provision have been set up. Senior managers and subject co-ordinators are particularly well involved in this. Consequently, all key personnel have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and standards, especially in the core subjects. However, following a decision last year to change the arrangements for teaching PE, the school has not checked upon the effectiveness of this provision. Consequently weaknesses were unknown and teaching, in fact, thought to be a strength.
42. The deputy and assistant headteacher provide very good support for the headteacher. They are knowledgeable, committed to and enthusiastic about their roles and have made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning since their appointment a year ago. Subject and other co-ordinators are also well informed and effective in leading and supporting improvements to standards and provision in their areas of responsibility.
43. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is led and managed well by the deputy. The governors and headteacher have invested wisely in providing as much well qualified bilingual support as they can. The targeting of what is available has been well thought through and generally results in good learning. The deployment of current staff is constantly under review to ensure the best possible provision. However, the school realises that the amount is not sufficient to meet all pupils' needs and is actively seeking more support of this type. The indications are that provision will increase next year.
44. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is led and managed well by the assistant headteacher who is the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). All the financial resources available to the school for this aspect are used effectively to meet pupils' needs. The SENCO carries out his management duties very effectively, for example, in overseeing and arranging annual reviews, managing additional teaching for pupils and liaising with staff and outside agencies. Learning mentors and other assistants are well trained and effectively deployed to support pupils' needs.
45. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are dedicated and have a good range of expertise; a number are highly involved in the school's work. Governors receive good information from the headteacher and deputy and a minority have a good view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what it is doing to raise standards. Others, however, are less aware of the school's priorities or how well pupils are achieving. Governors fulfil most of their statutory duties, but do not ensure that there is a daily act of collective worship.
46. A significant strength in the way the school is led and managed is the strong commitment from governors and all staff to ensuring all pupils are included in everything that is on offer. This promotes an extremely positive ethos for achievement, which is clearly felt in lessons and many other situations.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	722,618
Total expenditure	695,425
Expenditure per pupil	2,685

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	30,076
Balance carried forward to the next	57,269

47. Financial management is good. The school is vigilant in monitoring its finances and using them to best effect for pupils' benefit. Governors make good efforts to ensure that they get the best value for the spending decisions made. Financial implications are linked well to priorities in the school's development plan, which has improved since the last inspection. This is now a useful document to support change and improvement.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. High quality teaching and learning experiences promote children's overall very good achievement. The foundation stage is very well managed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships between adults and children
- Very good opportunities for the children to develop initiative and independence
- Very good behaviour; children are eager to learn and participate in all activities

Commentary

48. Children achieve very well. Indications are that, from starting nursery with very under-developed skills, the majority are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Children's behaviour is very good. They are effectively learning the difference between right and wrong and rapidly developing appropriate social skills. For example, they take turns, share resources and hold cutlery properly. Staff set clear, but realistic, boundaries, rules, and routines that help children to feel safe and work happily. They create a calm, secure, environment for learning, interact with children continually and treat them with courtesy and respect. Skills of independence are constantly promoted. Even at this early stage of the year, nursery children make a mark to show when they have collected their snack from the milk bar and reception children register their own names each day.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good
- All staff constantly promote speaking, listening and literacy skills

Commentary

49. Most children begin school with very poor communication skills. Although most will not achieve the expected goals by the end of the reception year, they make very good progress. Very good learning opportunities and high quality teaching, including particularly effective input from bilingual and other support staff, ensure that children are given a high level of individual support. This is particularly so in the nursery where bilingual support staff are always present, enabling children to make very good progress in understanding and speaking English. All children listen attentively to stories and handle books carefully. Staff encourage them to read notices and captions, which are often in dual languages. Through practical activities and games, most reception children are learning the shapes and sounds of many letters. Other activities help them recognise some common words, including their names, which, with support, many attempt to write. Reception children have just received their own reading books and a few are attempting to blend sounds to read unknown words. Imaginative book areas,

good use of resources, such as puppets to capture children's interest, and ample opportunities for pretend play are all instrumental in promoting children's very good progress in this area.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Highly effective teaching promotes very good achievement
- Key mathematical ideas are promoted very well in many situations

Commentary

50. Although many children will not reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year, they achieve very well in relation to their starting points. Mathematical development is promoted daily in specific sessions and incidental occurrences. Counting, sorting and matching activities are ongoing, such as when children play in the home corner, outdoors or make soup! Number rhymes and songs are frequently sung to reinforce key mathematical ideas. Children play games that promote secure counting to five and help them understand the idea of one more or one less. Teachers use a range of effective strategies to sustain children's concentration, with support staff working effectively alongside to ensure that children understand what is being taught. Children show good recognition of two-dimensional shapes, even naming them in more than one language!

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Investigative skills are well promoted
- Children use computers confidently and competently

Commentary

51. Most children begin school with very little basic general knowledge. However, they make very good progress. The indications are that standards in most aspects of this area will be below those expected by the end of the reception year. However, children's progress in learning to use ICT is especially good and many look set to attain the expected goals.

52. Teachers devise many interesting activities that quickly stimulate children's curiosity. These include planting seeds and bulbs and watching them grow, and making bread and soup. Within these activities, good questioning helps children to understand early scientific ideas; for example, that vegetables are softened by cooking. Children are taught simple health and safety rules, such as the necessity to wash their hands before touching food and of the need to be careful when handling sharp tools.

53. There is a very good emphasis on developing children's language. They learn new words and phrases, for example, to describe utensils and processes when making soup, and are encouraged to volunteer related words from their home languages. Children quickly grasp early historical ideas relating to the passage of time, using words such as yesterday, today and tomorrow with increasing accuracy. As they trace their 'journey around school' they develop early geographical skills. Children have lots of opportunity to experiment with a wide range of construction toys, for example, fitting plastic bricks together to make recognisable

models of houses. Computer skills are developing rapidly. Children use the mouse purposefully and most have a good basic knowledge of the function of different parts of hardware.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well
- Very good opportunities for outdoor activities

Commentary

54. Challenging learning experiences, particularly those organised for the well-equipped outdoor area, promote rapid development of physical skills. Children soon develop skills of climbing, jumping, balancing and manoeuvring wheeled toys. Most look set to attain the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Lessons in the hall provide good scope for children to learn how to move in a more confined space and take account of others. In one such dance lesson, good links were made with learning in other areas when children depicted 'growing like seeds', using the space to push, stretch and make shapes. These good links were also seen in the 'outdoor classroom' where, for example, children pretended to be fire fighters, following instructions for putting on breathing apparatus and racing along a track to put out the fire! Children are taught to hold pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors correctly so even the youngest work in a controlled way and develop dexterity.
55. Part of the provision for reception children includes a weekly lesson taken by the PE co-ordinator. Although, during the inspection, it was not possible to see this lesson in its entirety, it was clear that children were not making as much progress as they could. In part this was because the teacher's knowledge of how children in this phase learn was insecure, but limited bilingual support also hindered children from understanding much of what they were being asked to do. Consequently they were relying very much on visual clues about how they should move.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities for children to work with a wide range of materials and to develop imaginative skills
- Limited opportunities for children to spontaneously explore sounds and music making

Commentary

56. Children achieve very well and many are on target to reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year. There are many, ongoing, creative activities that give children very good opportunities to express themselves without being hindered by their early level of language development. Children's artwork is of a particularly good standard, reflecting developing understanding and skills in the use of colour and the inclusion of good detail in pictures. During the day, there are many opportunities for children to express themselves through painting, model making, music and pretend play. Teachers encourage children to sing songs and rhymes, many of which are chosen for their repetitive nature to help language development. They learn the words and tunes well and enjoy singing. A visiting music

specialist also helps to enrich children's learning and performance. Whilst children do have opportunities to play instruments, these are not on display or easily accessible to allow for spontaneous exploration of sounds.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in years 1 and 2 is good and in years 3 to 6 very good
- Teaching and learning are good
- Leadership and management are good
- Assessment is effective
- Pupils have limited opportunities to write for pleasure

Commentary

57. The school's clear policy to give the development of speaking and listening skills a high profile, with a view to supporting improvements in pupils' written work, has been implemented very well. This strength was noted in lessons in many subjects. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils hear and see the relevant vocabulary, receive good explanations of what it means, and have opportunities to use it. This is working well. For example, a year 2 pupil was able to use the word 'imperative' with understanding; year 1 pupils understood the term phonemes; and in science, year 6 pupils knowledgeably used the words 'gastropods' and 'nutrients'. Pupils also become increasingly familiar with the technical terms of writing, such as 'complex sentences', 'parentheses' and 'alliteration'.
58. The very good relationships engendered by teachers ensure that pupils are keen and confident to participate, for instance by answering questions. Teachers ensure that all are involved and promote good grammar and answering in full sentences. They value all contributions. This was seen in a year 6 lesson where a small group with learning difficulties tried very hard to put expression into reading a play script. The text was well selected for both interest and challenge, resulting in very good learning both of speaking and reading skills and understanding of how this type of text is organised.
59. In years 1 and 2, basic reading skills are taught well. Pupils learn to blend sounds and recognise common words and spelling patterns. For example, year 2 pupils suggested a range of words that they knew had 'ar' in the middle. They read simple texts confidently, although some lack fluency. By year 6 the majority read at the expected level. Many enjoy reading for information and pleasure. One explained, "It gives pictures in your mind". When reading aloud, pupils try hard to do so expressively, having learned that "It makes the characters come alive". Since the last inspection, there have been improvements to resources, which are good. There is now a much better range of fiction and non-fiction books. The library, though small, is attractive, well stocked and organised.
60. Improving standards in writing is a priority. Pupils write for a range of purposes, including play scripts, instructions, reports and retelling stories. However they have few opportunities to write creatively for pleasure. In discussion it was clear that not all pupils enjoy writing; although no survey has been conducted to discover why or particular likes and dislikes. Learning of punctuation and spelling is good, with most pupils having satisfactory awareness of these elements. Handwriting and presentation are generally neat.

61. Teaching is good. Teachers do not limit their teaching of English to literacy lessons, but show awareness of the need to promote skills at all times. Thorough assessments and effective use of the information gained ensures that pupils have clear and relevant targets for improvement and are aware of these. Marking is good, providing encouragement and good guidance to help pupils improve.
62. The subject is led and managed well. Particularly effective has been the focus on promoting spoken language and understanding of vocabulary.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. Skills are promoted well. For example, when recording in science and design and technology, pupils use bullet points, labelling and notes. Across the curriculum there is a strong emphasis on subject-specific vocabulary being understood and used correctly. Effective links are made with other subjects, such as writing poetry in response to the feelings evoked by music. ICT makes a particularly effective contribution.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well and in years 3 to 6 very well.
- Teaching and assessment are good
- There is a strong focus on developing mathematical vocabulary

Commentary

64. Although standards are below average, achievement is at least good in relation to pupils' prior attainment. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve as well as others because work is well matched to their needs and they receive additional, good quality, support from adults. Over the last few years, boys have generally outperformed girls in national tests, but the school has identified reasons for this.
65. Teaching is good, with particular strengths in years 5 and 6. By year 2, pupils are developing a good knowledge and understanding of hundreds, tens and units and have a firm grasp of addition and subtraction facts to 20; higher and middle attainers cope well with addition and subtraction to 100. Clear explanations that promote good understanding of mathematical ideas and vocabulary are a teaching strength in most lessons. These are particularly effective in year 1 where a bilingual teacher teaches pupils for much of the time. This gives pupils confidence and improves the pace of learning. Although there is a significant proportion of year 2 pupils who are still at an early stage of learning English, there is much less bilingual support so learning is not always as good.
66. As pupils get older they gain very good experiences in all aspects of mathematics. The school has recently identified a weakness in pupils' understanding of the properties of shape and has taken steps to address this. Thorough planning and very good teaching of this aspect is having a positive impact on standards.
67. The oral sessions at the start of lessons are another strong feature of teaching in all classes. Teachers involve all pupils in answering questions and explaining strategies. These sessions are lively and interesting and generally result in pupils listening attentively and concentrating well. When teachers make deliberate mistakes, pupils are quick to notice these and explain why the teacher is wrong! Occasionally, discussion sessions at the end of lessons are rushed, leaving insufficient time for pupils to share their work or for the teacher to reinforce

key ideas and rectify any misconceptions. Teachers value pupils' work and give them good feedback on how well they are doing. Marking in the juniors is of a high quality. Younger pupils, understandably, receive more oral feedback. Support staff make a very effective contribution to teaching and learning and are fully involved in lessons.

68. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Regular and thorough assessments, and analysis of pupils' progress, are strong features that have led to successful action to improve areas of weakness. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. In particular, the weakness identified in relation to the understanding of mathematical terms by pupils with English as an additional language has been successfully addressed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. Good use is made of pupils' mathematical skills across the curriculum. For example, in a year 6 design and technology lesson, pupils were required to identify horizontal and vertical structures in shelters; in music in year 4, pupils used shape as a stimulus to compose music. Skills are also well extended in art and design and through producing graphs and tables in science and RE. ICT is regularly used as an integral part of the mathematics curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Experimental and investigative work is planned for and taught well
- Scientific vocabulary is promoted well
- Leadership and management are effective

Commentary

70. Although standards are below average, pupils in years 1 and 2 achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and in years 3 to 6 they achieve very well. This is due to effective teaching and a good curriculum that focuses well on key skills of experimental and investigative work to underpin the development of knowledge and understanding.
71. The high profile that has been given to promoting experimental and investigative skills is seen in the good rise in test results over the last two years. Pupils' attitudes to science have also improved, with a survey conducted by the co-ordinator showing that practical work was their favourite part of lessons. This was clearly seen in many lessons and is supporting pupils' good achievement because they remain interested and apply themselves well to tasks. In year 2, for example, pupils investigating electricity disassembled torches and noted the features of batteries. The teacher gave good time for pupils to note their weight, size and shape and provided correct terminology (positive and negative) when pupils noticed, what they termed, the 'add' and 'take-away' signs. On re-assembling the torches, pupils discovered that the batteries had to be inserted in a specific way to make the torches work. Similarly effective teaching was seen in many other year groups.
72. Another particularly effective feature of teaching is the way teachers promote scientific vocabulary. This is introduced, explained and reinforced during lessons, with teachers expecting pupils to use it in their own explanations and recording. In year 1, for example, pupils' understanding of the word 'prediction' was promoted very well; in year 3, pupils learned the meaning of the words 'attract' and 'repel' when investigating magnets; and in year 6, they learned the meaning of 'variables' when investigating how fast sugar dissolves in different temperatures of water. This focus on vocabulary, along with the very good input of bilingual and other support staff, has addressed the weakness pointed out by the last inspection in

relation to the understanding of scientific terms by pupils with English as an additional language.

73. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge, provides a particularly good teaching role model and is well focussed on driving up standards. Test and assessment results are thoroughly analysed so that areas of weakness can receive additional attention. A detailed assessment system has been tried out by a number of teachers this year with a view to whole school implementation by the end of term.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well
- Good teaching includes high quality support from the technician
- The curriculum is good
- Very good resources are used effectively

Commentary

74. Very good improvement has taken place since the last inspection. There has been significant increase in resources, which are used very efficiently to support learning.
75. Most pupils work individually and productively on laptop computers, showing good interest and concentration. Some high quality teaching was seen in specific ICT lessons and in other contexts where teachers made particularly good use of the interactive screens in classrooms. Some particularly good learning was seen where pupils also used these to practise work and assess their learning before working at tasks individually. Lessons flow well because teachers are very well prepared. They know what they want pupils to learn and demonstrate and explain skills clearly so that they can achieve the lesson's objectives. In every lesson, good support is given by teaching assistants. In particular, the technician provides invaluable support, both before and during lessons, and makes a very positive contribution to teaching and learning. A strong feature of teaching is the way that teachers emphasise the understanding and use of key vocabulary. When assigning pupils to their tasks, good thought is given to individual needs so that all are able to make progress.
76. There is a good curriculum that covers all of the required aspects. In particular, pupils are learning the value of ICT in everyday life and using computers for a range of activities. The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of standards and provision and has produced a detailed action plan to promote further improvements. This includes the current development of a more detailed assessment system to highlight any weaknesses so that support and provision can be better targeted.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The use of ICT to support and reinforce learning across the curriculum is good, with many instances of ICT being planned into lessons in other subjects. For example, in music, year 3 pupils used computers to manipulate sounds, quickly controlling the volume and length of them, and then inserting the sound of one musical instrument into another. Year 2 pupils used the interactive screen with the teacher when they were investigating data handling in mathematics. Year 6 composed presentations about minibeast as part of their work in science.

HUMANITIES

Commentary

78. In **geography** and **history** work was sampled. Consequently, secure judgements about provision, standards and achievement are not made. However, analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator suggests that provision is at least as good as that found during the last inspection.
79. The school organises the teaching of these two subjects in blocks⁷. At the time of the inspection geography was not being taught. The school uses national guidance effectively to plan work in both subjects and is developing its current, satisfactory, system for assessing pupils' standards and progress. Good use is made of visits and visitors to encourage the development of historical and geographical skills. During the inspection one class went to Bolton museum to support their study of ancient Egypt. Here, key skills of enquiry and empathy were developed as they handled artefacts and dressed up and acted as ancient Egyptians. Pupils talked animatedly about the day's experience, which also made a good contribution to their social and cultural development.

Religious education (RE)

Provision in RE is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and curriculum
- Subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Good range of books to support learning

Commentary

80. A good curriculum and teaching ensures that by the end of years 2 and 6, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is a similar situation to the last inspection. Pupils in years 1 and 2 are helped to gain a good understanding of the stories, festivals and places of worship of Muslims and Christians. In years 3 to 6, the curriculum widens appropriately to promote understanding of the Jewish and Hindu faiths. Pupils are learning to value each other's ideas and appreciate the similarities and differences in the religions studied.
81. Good teaching promotes pupils' concentration and eagerness to learn. Teachers encourage good discussion of how different people worship, specific religious rituals, and linked moral themes. For example, after listening to the Bible story of Joseph, year 2 pupils were asked to think about his dilemma in deciding whether or not to forgive his brothers. The discussion was effectively extended to allow pupils to relate this to their own behaviour and how they would or should react in a similar situation. Good teaching in year 5 used pupils' knowledge of the Muslim ritual of preparing for prayer to help them to compare those used in other religions. Occasionally discussions are rather too long, resulting in pupils not having enough time to complete their written work. However, recording is well presented and carefully marked.
82. Visits and visitors contribute well to provision. Since most pupils are familiar with and attend mosque, the school arranges visits to other places of worship and to a Jewish museum. These enhance pupils' understanding of religions different to their own and contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A wide range of books and good displays of work, for instance about Divali or 'peace', support learning.

⁷ When one subject is being taught the other is not.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Commentary

83. In **art and design**, **design and technology** and **music** work was sampled. Not enough lessons were seen to make secure judgements about teaching or the overall quality of provision in each of these subjects. However, from the lessons seen, analysis of pupils' work, including displays, and discussions with them, the indications are that provision in these subjects is at least as good as that found by the last inspection. The school's involvement in an initiative to promote learning experiences and standards in the arts enhances provision.

Art and design

84. Pupils are given ample opportunities to use a good range of media, such as paint, various drawing materials, clay, ceramics and textiles to produce quality work in two and three dimensions. They are taught about the work of known artists, craftspeople and designers, often using their works as a stimulus for their own. For example, in year 2, pupils used thick paint to produce colourful pictures of sunflowers inspired by the work of Van Gogh. In years 3 and 4 they used oil pastels and paint to produce a montage based on Rousseau's 'Tropical Storm with Tiger'. Sketching and drawing from observation are taught in different year groups and work on display shows progression in these skills. There was also some good use of ICT to add to the range of painted self-portraits produced by year 1 pupils. Year 3 pupils are taught the skills of making mosaics and use different sizes and colours of paper creatively to produce individualised works.
85. Lessons are often effectively linked to learning in other subjects and planned to promote cultural development. For instance, year 6 pupils produced patterned designs on cloth replicating Aztec art; in year 4, they produced intricate and colourful works depicting hieroglyphics and cartouches linked to their history study of ancient Egypt. Pupils have many opportunities to work with visiting art specialists. For instance, in a 'precious arts' day, they made a high quality ceramic mosaic, which adorns the main corridor. Pupils' work is displayed very well, showing how highly teachers value their efforts.

Design and technology (DT)

86. Pupils' work shows that they experience the complete design, make and evaluate process. During the inspection, year 4 pupils made money containers. In preparation the teacher ensured that they took good account of previous learning in which they had examined purses and discussed what features made a good container. Key vocabulary, such as 'compartments', 'fastenings', 'seam' and 'fray' was explained and promoted well. All of this ensured pupils' understanding and improved the end products. During practical work, adults gave pupils good support in developing sewing and other joining skills. All pupils achieved well and, rightly, showed great pride in their work.
87. Junior pupils have benefited from working with a visiting expert who helped them learn how to use pneumatics to make 'moving monsters'. In addition to supporting learning in science, this work made good links with art and design, as pupils painted and decorated the large structures that they had made with junk materials.

Music

88. Some good and very good teaching of music was seen that effectively promoted pupils' composing skills. Achievement in this aspect and in performing musical compositions is good. Inspection evidence strongly suggests that standards in singing are lower than usually seen. Where pupils were heard singing, for example, in assemblies and as a minor part of lessons, they showed enjoyment and generally tried hard to participate. However, skills in using their voices expressively, controlling elements such as pitch and breathing, are not well

developed. Pupils enjoy exploring sounds made by instruments and know the names of a good many of these. In a year 4 lesson taught by a visiting specialist, they worked very well in groups to compose, notate and perform musical sequences linked to a theme of shape. Year 3 pupils also made good progress learning musical terms such as 'refrain' and 'phrase' and linking this to musical notation. During the lesson they also improved skills in playing instruments in time to pre-recorded music to which they also sang along. Occasionally, infant pupils become restless and lose concentration when the teacher talks for too long, though they pick up again when practical work is introduced. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, with a good range of music and instruments from different times and cultures in evidence. There has been good improvement to resources since the last inspection.

Physical education (PE)

Provision in PE is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, the curriculum, leadership and management are unsatisfactory
- Pupils underachieve
- Good action has been taken to improve standards in swimming

Commentary

89. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection, indeed provision has declined. Changes made last year to the way provision is organised, led and managed have not been successful. As a result, pupils underachieve.
90. Throughout the school, standards are average at best. However, year 2 pupils' gymnastic standards are below. In lessons in various year groups it was clear that many pupils were not achieving as well as they could. This is because planning for progression in learning is weak. In one lesson, for example, there were no learning objectives known by either the teacher or pupils. In another, the entire time was spent on one simple activity. A visiting teacher from the high school showed just what pupils were capable of achieving when provided with good teaching. There was also some good teaching from a class teacher in year 1 who worked to clear learning objectives that pupils understood. Here, effective pupil management, stemming from very good relationships and pupils' eagerness to learn, resulted in good progress.
91. Whilst standards in swimming are below the national expectation good action has been taken to improve things. Outside of school, most pupils rarely get the chance to go swimming so all junior pupils now have swimming lessons. This has resulted in improvement to standards over the last two years.
92. The co-ordinator organises a range of additional activities for pupils, attends courses and makes contacts with sporting agencies and other schools. This results in a good range of extra curricular opportunities and competitive matches. However, whilst a range of visitors comes into school to support lessons, they are not always managed effectively. As such, any skills that they may have are wasted and their impact on learning is negligible.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skills of independence and responsibility are promoted well
- Pupils are given good information about how to lead a healthy lifestyle
- There are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on moral and social issues

Commentary

93. The high profile given to promoting learning skills and encouraging responsibility and independence is paying off in terms of pupils' good attitudes to work and other personal qualities. Education about sex and drug misuse is covered within the science curriculum, as is information about how to live a healthy lifestyle. This also pervades other aspects of school life. For instance, pupils are not allowed to eat sweets or crisps at break times and can choose from a variety of healthy meal options at lunchtime. A breakfast club gives some pupils a good start to the day and there is provision for others to take-up additional study opportunities in the morning before school begins.
94. Circle time makes a good contribution. Pupils are encouraged to share thoughts, think about issues, such as gender and racial harmony, and show respect for views that may be different to their own. A poignant example was seen in year 1; pupils talked individually about some of their fears and others suggested ways to help reassure them. When one said that she had no teddy to take to bed for comfort, another volunteered, "She can have my teddy".
95. Pupils are involved in devising class rules and, through the work of the pupil council, learn how to deliberate and influence decisions about school that affect their lives. Pupils look forward to the weekly visit from a local police officer whom they like and respect. The officer spends a full day at the school and is involved in many activities such as supporting reading groups and accompanying visits.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

