

INSPECTION REPORT

NAVIGATION PRIMARY SCHOOL

Altrincham

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106283

Headteacher: Mr M E A McLuckie

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 29th September to 2nd October 2003

Inspection number: 261120

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	362
School address:	Hawarden Road Altrincham
Postcode:	WA14 1NG
Telephone number:	0161 912 5937
Fax number:	0161 929 6158
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Barker
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large primary school is situated close to the centre of Altrincham. Its pupils are largely from white, western European backgrounds from the local community and a below average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The socio-economic circumstances of the community are about average and children's attainment and learning skills when they enter the Nursery are similar to those normally found. The school has received a number of awards in the last three years including a School Achievement award in 2000, the Basic Skills Award 2001, the Investors in People 2001, the FA Charter award 2001, the Activemark award in 2002, the ActiveMark Gold 2003 and the Artsmark award in 2003. These reflect the quality of the education provided by the school.

There are 336 pupils on the school's roll from the Reception class to Year 6 and a further 52 children attend the Nursery part-time, giving a full-time equivalent roll of 362. A below average proportion of the school's pupils are identified as having special educational needs and the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is also below average. The nature of special educational needs includes dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, physical difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. An above average proportion of pupils joined or left the school during the course of the year, but this does not have an adverse effect on attainment. A pre- and post-school care club uses the school's facilities.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Lead inspector	Music, physical education, citizenship.
19374	Mrs W Sheehan	Lay inspector	
22452	Mrs M Farman	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, mathematics, art and design, religious education.
22805	Mrs J Greer	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language, science, information and communication technology, design and technology.
30834	Mrs A Lowson	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs, English, geography, history.

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Overall evaluation

This is an **effective** school with a good capacity for further improvement. It gives good value for money. Effective teaching by enthusiastic teachers and innovative and reflective leadership by the headteacher and his senior colleagues are the reasons why pupils in the school do well. The main barrier to achievement is the unsatisfactory accommodation.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good leadership and management by the headteacher and his senior colleagues mean that the school is continually improving.
- Pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education by Year 6.
- Good teaching overall and a substantial proportion of very good teaching, for example, in the Foundation Stage, mean that pupils have good attitudes to learning overall.
- A good curriculum and good extra-curricular activities motivate pupils well.
- The development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects is not planned systematically.
- Standards in information and communication technology are below average.
- The quality of the accommodation is a barrier to effective learning. Playground space is restricted for the number of pupils using it and overcrowding adversely affects health and safety.

The school has improved well in a number of areas since its previous inspection. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has improved steadily, then significantly between 2002 and 2003. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has generally been above or well above the national average. Pupils now achieve well throughout the school and generally work with interest and enthusiasm. The school responded well to the previous inspection report although information and communication technology is still not used sufficiently to support learning in other subjects.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	B	A
mathematics	A	B	B	B
science	A*	B	A	A

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

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

Achievement is good throughout the school. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and are likely to reach the goals that they are expected to reach the end of the Reception Year and to exceed them in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical and creative development. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average in mathematics and science and in aspects of English. However, handwriting and spelling are not as good as is usually found, because the development of these skills is not planned systematically. Standards in information and communication technology are below average throughout the school because skills are not sufficiently developed in other subjects, the computer suite is not used efficiently, and there are not enough resources to teach the full curriculum in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well as do higher attaining pupils.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall, particularly when teaching is effective. Pupils enjoy learning and attendance is above the national average. Pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good** and all pupils are fully included in all that the school does. As a result, their **personal qualities are good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning are good overall. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good so that children achieve well and make good progress in their learning. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 6 and all pupils continue to achieve well. Setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 are effective in raising attainment in English, mathematics and science. The school is developing good systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress, but these are not being used effectively to set targets for improvement for individual pupils, for example, in reading. Pupils work with concentration and often with enthusiasm because of the interesting activities which motivate them well. This enhances their learning.

The quality of the curriculum is good throughout the school. Pupils are involved very well in decision making in the school, and arrangements for their care, welfare and safety are satisfactory. Links with parents and the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good.

The headteacher and his senior colleagues are providing very good leadership. However, a number of subject leaders are new to their roles and so have not had sufficient time to be effective.

Management is good. Management rightly emphasises the professional development of staff to underpin further improvements. However, the computer suite is not being fully used to support learning.

The governing body is effective. The experienced chair of the governing body is working well to increase the effectiveness of governors. Governors' committees, such as the one dealing with curriculum matters, are having an increasingly positive impact.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school and are happy that their children are pupils here. These positive views are supported by the inspection team. Pupils enjoy school, but a number have concerns about the inadequate play facilities and inspectors support these concerns.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

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

- Plan for the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to be systematically practised and developed in other subjects.
- Raise standards in information and communication technology throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of the accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Attainment is at and sometimes above the level normally found at the end of the Reception Year and Year 6 and has improved well at the end of Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make rapid progress and achieve well in the Foundation Stage.
- Attainment in mathematics, science and religious education is above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, while standards in English are above average at the end of Year 6.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well.
- Attainment in information and communication technology is below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and there is insufficient use of information and communication technology to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of handwriting and spelling is below average.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.1(16.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.5 (14.5)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	16.4 (17.3)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (28.7)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.7 (27.5)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	30.0 (29.1)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In 2003, at the end of Year 2, the proportion of the school's pupils attaining at least the national expectation of Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics improved well on the previous year. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 improved markedly. National figures are not yet available for comparison, but the school is likely to compare very well with both the national averages and the averages attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. There is no clear pattern to differences in the attainment of boys and girls. In 2003, pupils in Year 2 were unusually able and their high attainment levels resulted from challenging and well-focused teaching. Attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 has improved steadily since the school was inspected previously.
2. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment has been above or well above the national average in the National Curriculum tests since the school was previously inspected. In 2002, attainment

was well above that found in similar schools. In 2003, the proportion of the school's pupils attaining the national expectation of Level 4 in English, mathematics and science was similar to 2002. However, the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 fell in English and mathematics. This was because that year group contained fewer pupils with higher than average attainment. In 2002 and 2003, the school exceeded its agreed targets for the proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 at least in English and mathematics, although these targets were not particularly challenging. There is no clear pattern in the difference between the attainment of boys and girls over time.

3. Evidence from this inspection is that children in the Foundation Stage are on course to exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical and creative development. They are likely to achieve these goals in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development. This good achievement results from very good teaching in each of the classes and very effective leadership and management by the newly appointed manager.
4. There are several reasons why all pupils achieve well. Apart from the consistent impact of good teaching, for instance, the setting of pupils by ability in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6 is having a positive effect on attainment and progress. During the inspection, there were very good examples of work in these subjects challenging both higher attaining and lower attaining pupils so that they achieved well. Pupils also benefit from well-planned investigative work in mathematics and in science, they learn well from practical investigations. In religious education, pupils are helped to develop their knowledge and understanding well as they move through the school.
5. Pupils do not do so well in information and communication technology because the computer suite is relatively new and its use has been limited until recently. Older pupils are not covering modelling and control technology. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is not well developed, and this is also inhibiting achievement in other subjects. While there are good examples of the skills of literacy and numeracy being developed in other subjects, these opportunities are not planned systematically and so some are missed. Partly as a result of this, the quality of pupils' handwriting and spelling skills is not as good as it should be.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding and, by the end of their time in the school, their achievement is good in relation to their age and ability. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given very good support and so achieve well. These two groups of pupils are fully included in all that the school does and this helps them to make good progress in their learning.
7. The recently appointed headteacher has focused on achievement and how it can be improved. The school is becoming increasingly reflective as it considers how standards can be raised so that all pupils achieve their potential. This whole-school approach to analysis of achievement and the way that pupils make progress is putting the school in a good position to raise attainment further because evidence is more secure.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall pupils have positive attitudes to school and to learning and there is good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is above average and behaviour is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good and often very good in lessons, but behaviour at playtimes is sometimes unsatisfactory.
- The school council plays a significant role in developing pupils' roles as young citizens.

- Children in the Foundation Stage have settled in well and their self-confidence and enjoyment of school are developing.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Commentary

8. The majority of pupils are attentive in lessons and listen well to teachers and each other. They are generally eager to learn. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils settled down quickly and enthusiastically to their independent work on fractions. In lessons, especially when teaching is very good, most pupils behave very well and are capable of very good levels of sustained interest and concentration. This is illustrated effectively in the Foundation Stage, where, because of the positive attitudes that children quickly develop and the encouragement that they receive, most are on target to exceed the levels expected in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception Year. However, when teaching is only satisfactory, a few pupils have short concentration spans and this means that learning for other pupils is sometimes slowed. There have been no exclusions of pupils in recent years. Behaviour at playtimes is boisterous. The playground is small for the number of pupils and some are unaware of the needs of others whilst playing. This behaviour is intimidating to less confident pupils. When instances of bullying do occur, however, pupils and parents all feel that these are dealt with effectively.
9. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are good. Most pupils co-operate well, are supportive to others, and respect each other's ideas and contributions. Staff are very approachable and have a secure understanding of the pupils in their class. As a result, children settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception classes and achieve well from an early stage. However, there are occasions when relationships are less positive in classes for older pupils.
10. Good relationships mean that pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have good attitudes to school and to learning. They are effectively included in all that the school does, which increases their self-confidence and feeling of being valued. As a result, their achievement matches that of all pupils.
11. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development provision for pupils is good overall. There are particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils develop good social skills due to the wide variety of activities offered, both in and out of lessons. They enjoy the many opportunities to compete against other schools. In discussion, they talk politely and have a clear pride in their school and their achievements. Pupils who become 'Navigators' or 'Councillors' are very diligent, and provide good support and care for others. Pupils have developed a good understanding of the plight of others, for example, in South Africa, and have raised money to help the less fortunate. These opportunities help pupils to become friendly and caring young people. Pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong. The behaviour policy and class rules are applied consistently to raise pupils' awareness of how they should behave. Assemblies and lessons provide some opportunities for pupils to develop a feeling of wonder at the world around them. However, as at the time of the previous inspection, these are not yet planned systematically. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of other cultures. A particular strong feature is the school's links with a South African school and the recent opportunity to work with the 'Mighty Zulu Nation' Music and Dance Group. Because of these good experiences, pupils achieve well in their attitudes, behaviour and personal development, and become mature and responsible young citizens.
12. Attendance in 2002/03 improved on the previous year and there were no unauthorised absences. Good class attendance is rewarded weekly in assemblies to promote pupils' understanding further. The majority of pupils arrive on time, and lessons start punctually so that time for learning is maximised.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean

No of pupils on roll
346
1
4
1
5
4
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The curriculum is good but there is scope for planning to identify opportunities to develop the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology more systematically. There is a very good level of out-of-school activities. The care, welfare and health provision for pupils is satisfactory and there is very good involvement of pupils in the running of the school. There are good links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 6 with many examples of very good practice. The use of assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.
- Carefully planned work ensures that pupils are challenged and engaged well in most lessons.
- The management of behaviour is good in most classes: where it is less successful, the quality of teaching and learning is adversely affected.
- Medium-term planning does not systematically identify opportunities to develop the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language, but separate work is not planned for pupils of different levels of attainment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23 (42%)	20 (36%)	11 (20%)	1 (2%)	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.

13. Teaching and learning are very effective in the Foundation Stage. Teachers have a very clear understanding of how young children learn and plan exciting and stimulating activities. They then track the achievement of individual children over time so that they can plan their future learning. As a result of this carefully planned provision, children achieve well.
14. In Years 1 and 2, very good teaching is characterised by carefully planned work which builds specifically on previous learning. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 1, planning for the lesson was amended to take account of how successful learning had been in the previous lesson. Very high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour were supported by challenging questioning so that pupils worked with sustained interest and concentration. In these lessons, very effective teaching resulted in very secure learning.
15. In very good lessons in Years 3 to 6, behaviour is very good because pupils are fully engaged in learning. For example, in a very good science lesson in Year 5, pupils had designed and carried out their own investigations and were fully committed to recording their results clearly and accurately. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 3/4, very good teaching resulted in effective independent work so that attainment was good and pupils made very good progress. Similarly, in a very good English lesson in Year 6, there was a very good level of challenge, but pupils with special educational needs or those who speak English as an additional language were given very effective support to enable them to play a full part in learning. As a result, pupils made very good progress and achieved very well. In contrast, in the one unsatisfactory lesson, the management of behaviour was inadequate so that the pace of learning was slow and insufficient progress was made.
16. Weaknesses in teaching and learning are that opportunities to develop pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not identified and planned for systematically in teachers' planning. As a result, some opportunities are missed. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
17. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good overall. In English, mathematics and science, activities are planned carefully to match the learning needs of different pupils. As a result, they make good progress and achieve well. Teachers and class support assistants work together effectively to support learning. Qualified support teachers provide good support for pupils with complex difficulties so that they make good progress in lessons. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also receive good specialist support and achieve at the same rate as other pupils.
18. The school is developing good systems to assess pupils' achievement. However, these are only partially in place and so their impact is satisfactory at this stage. National test results in English and mathematics are analysed carefully and information from this analysis is used to address any weaknesses. However, similar information for science is not yet analysed in this way. Information from assessments is used to write targets for groups of pupils, but these are not refined into targets specific to individual pupils. For example, pupils do not have individual targets to improve their reading. Work is marked regularly but suggestions as to how work

might be improved are not consistently made and there are many examples of mis-spellings not being corrected.

19. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the school's previous inspection. A major aid to learning is the commitment and enthusiasm of teachers and class support assistants. Given the unity of purpose that the headteacher and his senior colleagues are developing, the school has the capacity to improve teaching and achievement further.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall. Activities outside class enrich learning well. Resources for learning are satisfactory but the quality of the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The curriculum for information and communication technology in Years 3-6 does not currently provide pupils with appropriate opportunities in control technology and modelling.
- The quality of the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

20. The school provides pupils of all ages with a broad curriculum. The National Curriculum is covered with the exception of one element of information and communication technology. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, and the school meets its obligation to provide collective acts of worship. The curriculum for all subjects, apart from information and communication technology, is good and pupils develop good skills in subjects such as history, geography and science. The headteacher is aware that weaknesses remain in information and communication technology in spite of improvements in provision, and plans to address them. The school offers all pupils a good range of learning opportunities and has been successful in achieving awards for its work in promoting quality in sports and the arts. In discussions held with pupils, they feel that the school gives them a good curriculum and they appreciate the many activities outside class offered to them as well as the breakfast club and the after-school club.
21. The school is an inclusive one and all pupils have equal access to what it offers, but it does not yet have clear procedures to identify those pupils who are particularly gifted and talented. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils have full access to what the school has to offer. Individual education plans have clear, short-term targets, which are regularly reviewed to take into account the progress they have made. No pupils have major physical difficulties, but the school's accommodation has satisfactory access should this be required. There are good arrangements for the learning of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
22. The quality of aspects of the accommodation is a barrier to learning. Most classrooms are uncarpeted and are noisy so that pupils find it difficult to hear the teacher clearly enough. This particularly affects those pupils with a hearing disability or those who are learning English as an additional language, and especially when they are extending their speaking and listening skills. The hall is long and narrow and has an echo which reduces its value as a venue for assemblies and indoor physical education. External facilities are inadequate for the numbers of pupils in the school. The headteacher is aware of these inadequacies.

Care, guidance and support

The school has succeeded well in creating a happy and friendly learning environment. Pupils develop and flourish well in an atmosphere that supports and values each individual. Pupils' views are sought and acted upon very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between the headteacher, staff and pupils ensure all pupils feel confident that they can approach adults and be treated fairly.
- Pupils are very actively involved in the school's development.
- There are very good procedures for helping pupils who join the school part way through the year to settle in.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language receive good support.
- The playground space is small for the number of pupils using it.

Commentary

23. Staff know pupils well and friendly relationships exist in classes. For example, pupils returning from a three-day absence were given very good support to help them 'catch up' with work in a literacy lesson. Pupils are comfortable when approaching staff if they have any concerns. During the inspection, there was a very clear example of a pupil with personal difficulties having the confidence to approach the headteacher and his deputy to seek guidance and support. In discussion, pupils who have joined the school during the school term said that they had been made to feel very welcome.
24. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs focus on developing and extending literacy and numeracy skills. In some instances, targets focus on aspects of behaviour. All staff have very clear files containing relevant, up-to-date information about pupils with special educational needs and these are used well to support and guide these pupils.
25. There are very good relations with the local advisory service to support pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils who have other learning needs. Although there are few such pupils in the school, the languages that they speak at home are diverse and include some from Africa, Asia and other European countries. Pupils are assessed on their understanding of English soon after arrival. An individual language programme is created for each of them. They have individual support from the visiting service for as long as is considered necessary. This support is conscientious and effective. The support teacher liaises with the class teacher so that work can be tailored to what the rest of the class is doing. In one class, for example, when a lesson was planned about Jonah and the whale, the teacher made puppets to help a pupil to understand not only the language but also the point of the story.
26. Innovative ways of involving pupils in improving the school's environment are continually being developed. A particularly notable feature is that members of the school council have devised their own 'Welcome Booklet' for new pupils joining the school. The booklet includes a map, a list of school rules and even a questionnaire to help the council to evaluate whether it could improve the induction procedures for new pupils further. The school council holds weekly meetings to present pupils' ideas to the headteacher. The council has also been included in developing school documents such as the home-school agreement and the behaviour policy. Pupils' involvement in their own learning, for example, through individual setting of targets, is still at an early stage of development and pupils currently work with group targets. The school is aware that overcrowding at playtimes and lunchtimes has implications for pupils' health and safety. The large number of pupils using a relatively small area and some boisterousness results in minor knocks and injuries.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Relationships with parents are good. The use of the community to promote learning is good, particularly in sports. Links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overwhelming majority of parents have very positive views about the school.
- Links with specialist status secondary schools and sports clubs are good.
- Information for parents is good.

Commentary

27. Overall parents have very positive views about the school. All those who replied to the questionnaire felt that the school was well led and managed. The majority felt that the school expected their children to work hard, that the induction arrangements for new pupils are good, and that the staff encourage maturity and independence in their children. Inspection findings confirm these positive views. Some parents expressed concerns about bullying and the inspection findings confirmed that playtimes could feel intimidating for less confident pupils. In discussion, pupils felt that teachers sorted out any problems effectively. Some parents also felt that they received insufficient information about their children's progress. The school provides both interim and final reports, and these, along with opportunities to meet with parents, are good.
28. Parents of pupils with statements for special educational needs are invited to review meetings and kept informed of what is being done in school to help their children. Parents with children who speak English as an additional language are involved well in supporting their children's learning.
29. The quality of general information is good and this helps to provide a close partnership between parents and the school. Newsletters are particularly well written and include a good combination of future dates, procedural information, details of events and celebration of pupils' successes. All class teachers send out detailed curriculum information which helps parents to support their children's learning. The quality of pupils' annual reports is good and they provide general targets for improvement. In addition many parents are involved in their children's learning, for example, through helping in school, attending the celebration assemblies, and through supporting reading practice at home. The headteacher is providing opportunities for parents to be involved in educating pupils about the nature of bullying.
30. Links with the community are good. Neighbouring secondary schools with specialist status provide good support, for example, a French club for Year 6. There are very good sporting links with local clubs who provide specialist coaching for pupils and many pupils attend these clubs. Links with a South African school provide opportunities for pupils to learn about the wider world. Other valuable links include those with Senior Citizens and the local community theatre.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and his senior colleagues are very effective and the governing body is effective. Leadership and management are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The clarity of vision and aspirations of the headteacher and senior management team are very good.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good.

- The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are good.
- Performance management systems and the professional development of staff are effective.
- Whilst management is good overall, a number of subject managers have only recently been appointed and are not yet fully effective.
- The governing body is becoming increasingly effective.

Commentary

31. The headteacher was appointed to the school in January 2003. In the two terms since his appointment, he has analysed the school's strengths and areas for development. This has enabled him to establish strategies for the school's development in the short, medium and long-term. As a result, the school has a sense of focus and unity of purpose which puts it into a strong position to improve further.
32. The headteacher and his senior colleagues are providing very effective leadership and management. The team meets regularly and divides its activities sensibly between strategic planning for the future and managing the school on a day-to-day basis.
33. The Foundation Stage is led very effectively. The recently appointed leader of this stage has a clear vision for the education of the children in the Nursery and Reception classes and has developed a very effective team of adults. As a result, children achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 are led by a member of the senior management team and the deputy headteacher respectively. Each has an action plan for his area of responsibility so that strategic development is carefully thought through. As a result of this focused leadership, learning is planned effectively so that pupils achieve well throughout the school.
34. The provision for both pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is managed well. The co-ordinator provides clear guidance to colleagues, and the learning of pupils with special educational needs is reviewed regularly. She monitors teachers' files and pupils' individual education plans, but has not yet monitored teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs in the school. The school meets the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice. Effective leadership means that pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are fully included in all the school's activities and achieve well.
35. The professional development of staff is given a strong emphasis and is linked to priorities identified in the school improvement plan and performance management programmes. As a result, an effective unity of purpose is being developed and the headteacher's ethos and vision are now accepted throughout the school.
36. The governing body is effective and its experienced and enthusiastic chair is keen to increase its effectiveness further. Governors have a secure view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are willing to raise questions, for example with regard to agreed targets. The committee structure is effective: for example, the curriculum committee has a good overview of the curriculum and has identified areas for development.
37. The school's day-to-day management is effective. Its routines are straightforward and readily understood. Subjects are managed well overall. Some subject managers are new to their roles, but some have already made a significant impact, for example in the case of religious education. Procedures for ordering goods and paying for them are clear and well managed by the school secretary. The school's accounts were last audited in March 1998. Financial procedures were considered to be very good and the few minor recommendations have been put into effect. The school's expenditure is monitored by the finance committee of the governing body. Financial pressures have resulted in a slight overspend in 2002-03, but this was only 1.4 per cent of the school's income. This expenditure was appropriate to maintain the quality of the

school's provision. The school's procedures for achieving best value from its expenditure are satisfactory overall, but, in two areas, best value is not being achieved. The computer suite is not fully used, which is a waste of a valuable resource. Outside play space is limited for the number of pupils and the school recognises that to stagger play and lunchtimes would reduce the difficulties that this creates.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	698,664
Total expenditure	706,527
Expenditure per pupil	1,990

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-2,009
Balance carried forward to the next	-9,872

38. A number of significant factors are aids to raising achievement. These include the purposeful leadership of the headteacher and his senior colleagues, the enthusiasm and commitment of the teaching staff and class support assistants and support from parents and the community. Barriers to raising achievement include the quality of the accommodation and the lack of a playing field and inadequate hard play surfaces which adversely affect achievement in physical education. However, the school has an impressive sense of purpose and is in a good position to improve further. Good use of the local community playing field is made.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good.

39. Children achieve well throughout the Foundation Stage of learning because the quality of teaching is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The teachers and class support assistants work very well together. This gives the children high quality support in all areas of their learning. There are very good procedures to introduce children to the Nursery and Reception classes and the Reception staff prepare them effectively for work in Year 1. These steps ensure that children settle happily into school and that the transfer to Year 1 is smooth. The school involves parents in all these procedures. There is careful and thorough assessment of individual children's progress and the reports to parents are clear and helpful. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a very clear vision for future developments and has already made significant improvements to the provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning. While achievement is currently good there is clear potential for this to be improved so that children reach higher standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching provides children with very good opportunities to develop confidence because they feel secure and valued.
- There are very good opportunities for children to work in pairs and groups so that relationships are very friendly and supportive.

Commentary

40. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. All adults ensure that the children work and play well together. They promote very good relationships because of their close working partnership. All members of the Foundation Stage staff give children much encouragement to work independently and they quickly become secure and settled in their classrooms. They work and co-operate together very well in the Reception classes. This builds very effectively on the high quality support and care that they receive in the Nursery. For example, the teacher and support assistant encourage children to express their feelings when they give and receive presents. One child said 'It's nice and warm' and all showed pleasure at giving and receiving. The majority of children are on target to exceed the requirements of the early learning goals in this area by the time they leave the Reception class. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching by all adults is consistently very good and children are taught to listen carefully and to speak clearly in a range of situations.
- Stories are used effectively to develop children's literacy skills.
- Adults' planning is well matched to children's levels of attainment and their achievements are carefully recorded.

Commentary

41. Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes work very closely together to give the children rich and varied opportunities to increase their speaking skills. These include joining in with well-known rhymes and dramatising favourite stories. For example, children in the Nursery use the outside play house to act out the story of Goldilocks. This very effective use of stories continues through to the Reception classes. Here, adults use stories as a basis for developing children's writing skills; for example, they carefully wrote invitations to Kipper's birthday party. Some children do not speak clearly or listen carefully when they enter the Nursery. The high level of achievement by the end of the Reception Year is a result of the patient and very effective teaching and planning. By the time that they are ready to move into Year 1 most children write and read simple sentences accurately and identify favourite characters in books. They are likely to reach and some to exceed the required early learning goals by the time that they leave the Reception classes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching by all adults is consistently very good so that children achieve very well in this area of learning.
- Planning is carefully matched to children's assessed needs and to the early learning goals.
- By the end of their Reception Year most children reach standards that exceed those of the early learning goals.

Commentary

42. Very skilful teaching ensures that children develop a good awareness of number and enjoy solving problems. For example, Nursery and Reception teachers use registration time for children to work out the number of children present and, from this, the number who are absent. All adults use a suitably wide range of number rhymes and games to interest and motivate children. Many already have a good understanding of different shapes. For example, a child in one of the Reception classes described a rectangle like this. 'It's got four corners and four sides. One's short, one's long, one's short and one's long. That's why it's a rectangle'. Children have practical experiences of working out 'one more' and 'one less' and so develop a secure understanding. This provides a solid basis for future learning. Careful planning means that all staff use the good records of children's achievements well to base future learning on what they already know.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident in exploring and using materials.
- Children use classroom computers as a matter of course and develop good skills in using the keyboard and mouse.
- Adults use stories and photographs effectively to increase children's understanding of the passage of time.
- The outdoor learning area, while much improved, is not yet completed and does not give enough opportunities to develop children's learning in this area.

Commentary

43. All members of staff give children opportunities to increase their skills in using a wide range of tools and materials including computers. Children enjoy working outside but there are not enough opportunities for them to investigate and explore plants and creatures. They receive high quality support that enables them to develop their understanding of how they change as they grow, for example, by the skilful use of photographs. Most children are likely to reach the requirements of the early learning goals when they leave the Reception classes because of the consistently good quality of the teaching.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults make effective use of the indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Children achieve well in developing control over tools such as pencils and paintbrushes. Children in the Reception classes learn to use scissors safely.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well in developing their physical skills. For example, children are making good progress in using resources such as pencils, crayons and paintbrushes properly. The Nursery and Reception classes have ready access to the all-weather outdoor learning area. This makes a positive contribution to increasing their awareness of space and how to use it. All adults ensure that children understand the benefits of exercise and understand how it affects their bodies. They change for physical activities independently. Most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very effective use of specialist teaching in music.
- Children use paint confidently and with increasing skill.
- Adults plan carefully for this area of learning and assess children's achievements thoroughly.
- Children exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.

Commentary

45. Skilful teaching, based in careful planning and assessment of progress, ensures that children achieve very well by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. They hold and use paint brushes correctly and create interesting and lively pictures and collages. All adults give the children ample opportunities to increase their singing skills. This is evident when the Nursery children sing songs and rhymes from memory and maintain a steady beat. They enjoy this work and are very enthusiastic in their learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are above average throughout the school but pupils do not have individual targets to improve their reading further.
- The standards that pupils attain in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average in Year 6, and pupils achieve well.
- There are weaknesses in the quality of handwriting and spelling throughout the school.
- There is no library in school to support the teaching of library skills.
- Teaching is good overall. There are examples of very good teaching throughout the school.
- English is led and managed well.
- Acoustics in the classrooms and hall are poor and, as a result, learning is made more difficult for hearing impaired children or those who are learning English as an additional language.

Commentary

46. A strength of the teaching is the way that teachers use the initial part of the lesson to provide good opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary. Pupils are given many opportunities to extend their speaking and listening skills further. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils read a play-script of Macbeth aloud and were encouraged to speak expressively. In drama, pupils have re-enacted the story of 'Oliver!' and put on a production for parents. Assemblies enable pupils to use drama to present their favourite poems or current work. As a result, they become increasingly articulate and confident as they get older. Pupils with special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language sometimes find it difficult to hear the teacher or other pupils because classrooms are not fully carpeted, have high ceilings and chairs scrape noisily across wooden floors. This is a distraction and it is often difficult to hear what is being said clearly enough.
47. Pupils are taught reading skills well throughout the school, although the absence of a school library means that library skills cannot be taught well enough. What teachers do well is to give pupils many opportunities to read a wide range of literature, and teachers are enthusiastic when reading aloud to the class. There have been improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in the teaching of word-building knowledge to enable the youngest children to read unfamiliar words. Clear improvements can now be seen. Older pupils are given good opportunities to use non-fiction books and information from the Internet to research topics in history, religious education and geography. However, teachers do not give pupils individual targets to improve their reading, so when asked, even higher attaining pupils do not know how well they read, or what the next steps are if they are to improve their reading skills.
48. Older pupils still make many common spelling errors and whilst handwriting looks neat and well presented in books, on closer examination, many pupils do not write the size of their letters correctly and consistently. Standards in these aspects are below average. The school has recognised these weaknesses and bought new resources so as to introduce a whole-school approach to teaching these skills. However, the marking of handwriting is still not rigorous enough to correct the errors that pupils make during handwriting practice lessons. What teachers do well is to provide many good opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes. This is effective and, as a result, the quality of pupils' creative writing is good throughout the school so that older pupils reach standards above those typically found.
49. The subject is led and managed well by a new subject leader, who is currently being supported by the previous subject leader. They work well together to share expertise and, as a result, their

Careful analysis of test data and pupils' current work means that weaknesses are identified early. As a result, pupils do well, standards are above average overall, and are continuing to improve over time. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are placed in sets according to previous attainment. This is effective in improving attainment and achievement. The school uses the National Literacy Strategy successfully to raise attainment and is well placed to continue to improve standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. In history, geography, science and religious education, pupils write in a range of styles to present narrative accounts, write stories for a range of purposes, or to formally present the result of science investigations. However, this is not planned systematically so that some opportunities are missed. Pupils read a wide range of materials in all subjects and, because of this, standards in reading are good throughout the school, but the lack of a library does mean that pupils miss opportunities to engage in quiet, independent research or to refine their library skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6 because staff focus clearly on increasing pupils' investigative skills and emphasise the correct use of mathematical language.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school; just under half is very good.
- Not all pupils have a clear enough understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning, particularly in data-handling skills.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The co-ordinator is committed to raising standards; she leads and manages mathematics effectively.

Commentary

51. Since the previous inspection, the school has emphasised the investigative element of mathematics. This has resulted in good achievement and standards that exceed those expected for most pupils by throughout the school. The subject leader checks planning and pupils' books, and ensures that the quality of teaching is consistent. The assessment of pupils' achievement is thorough but there is not enough emphasis on ensuring that individual pupils know how they can improve their work. All teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and provide suitable work for different needs, interests and abilities. The school deals effectively with pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Class support assistants work hard to enable these pupils to achieve at a similar rate to their classmates. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
52. All teachers use correct mathematical language in lessons and this increases pupils' understanding of the meaning of the subject's specialist vocabulary. Teachers choose and use resources effectively to meet pupils' differing needs. This stimulates interest, motivates learning and promotes positive attitudes to work. Teachers evaluate the success of lessons carefully. They use the findings to plan work that meets different levels of attainment within their classes. Most pupils take much pride in their work and are eager to talk about their achievements. Teachers expect them to give reasons for their answers and to think about how they set out their work. The management of behaviour is very good in mathematics lessons and enables pupils to concentrate on their learning. The calm and reflective atmosphere in most classrooms

supports purposeful work. There is some distraction to this calmness because pupils' chairs create noise when they move on the uncarpeted floors.

53. Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils in Years 1 and 2 build well on their previous experiences. They develop and increase their skills in Year 1 and, by Year 2, have made good progress in learning and in using new concepts. For example, pupils make good progress in recording mathematics and have a good understanding of place value. Pupils' skills in number, problem solving and understanding of shape and measure are better than in the other elements of mathematics. The analysis of pupils' work confirms this.
54. Pupils continue this good rate of learning and achievement as they move into Year 3. By Year 6 the majority of pupils attain standards higher than those expected for their age. By Year 6, for example, many pupils already understand the concept of equivalence and use this confidently. The analysis of pupils' work shows that they have a good understanding of shape, space and measure; for example, they use formulae well to work out areas. There is not enough emphasis on the use of information and communication technology to support work in data handling.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. This is satisfactory overall. There is some good use of mathematics in history where pupils use census data and investigate mathematics teaching in Victorian times. However, teachers do not plan for this systematically. Pupils do not use computers enough in their learning in mathematics. This is evident from the lessons observed during the inspection, displays of work and past work in pupils' books.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn well through practical investigation, gaining good knowledge and understanding in all topics. As a result, standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- The use of information and communication technology as a support for learning is at an early stage of development.
- The newly appointed subject co-ordinator has made a good start in the role.
- Assessment outcomes, especially from the National Curriculum tests in Year 6, are not analysed to guide future learning.

Commentary

56. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school because teachers plan practical activities which motivate pupils. These are particularly good in Years 5 and 6. Older pupils are encouraged to discuss the best way to carry out investigations, drawing on their previous learning. Higher attaining pupils consider their results and draw conclusions from them. Setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 have a significant positive effect on standards. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language so that they make good progress in relation to their previous standards. Throughout the school, pupils show good interest in lessons and concentrate well. This is because most learning is through interesting, practical activities. Pupils take care when recording work in their books, but handwriting and spelling are not always at the expected standard for their age. Behaviour in the lessons observed was always good because teachers established clear expectations and managed pupils well.

57. A recently appointed subject co-ordinator has made a good start in the role. The current scheme of work does not identify opportunities for developing skills in writing, mathematics or information and communication technology and this is a weakness. There was no evidence of pupils using computers to record or analyse investigation results in their books. In one lesson observed, two pupils entered their results into a database on a laptop. This is good practice and there is scope to develop this throughout the school. Work in pupils' books shows that they do not record their findings in different graph forms sufficiently.
58. The school has developed a good assessment scheme based on end of unit tests to monitor pupils' understanding and progress. However, the National Curriculum test papers of Year 6 pupils are not currently analysed for common errors or gaps in knowledge. This information is needed to make any necessary modifications to future teaching plans so that teaching and learning are more effective.
59. Teachers make good use of resources. In Year 2, for example, mothers with babies and toddlers visited the class so that pupils could observe the similarities and differences between these children and themselves. This was particularly good in enabling all pupils to understand how humans develop as they get older and an effective use of the community.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory.
- Information and communication technology is not used effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- The subject co-ordinator and headteacher have very good skills and are effective in supporting other teachers.
- There has been good progress in developing the subject in recent months, apart from modelling and control technology in Year 6.
- The computer suite is underused and still has weaknesses as a resource for learning.

Commentary

60. There have been considerable improvements in recent months to develop teaching and learning and all teachers have been provided with a laptop computer for their own and pupils' use. Teachers are gaining in confidence and competence. The computer suite has been redeveloped and is much improved. The redevelopment meant that pupils' access to computers was very restricted for a whole term and this has partly contributed to the below average standards. However, there are still difficulties with the room. It is stuffy, and noise from the fan and server makes it difficult to hear the teacher. Further, there is too little space for older pupils to gather round the interactive whiteboard for whole-class instruction. There are too many sessions when the suite is not being used; this is inefficient use of an expensive resource, especially at a time when standards are below expectations.
61. The teaching observed in Years 1 and 2 was very good. Teachers plan clear learning objectives, which build on what pupils already know and can do. They explain new procedures clearly, using the interactive whiteboard effectively. The lessons observed skilfully linked computer skills with art and design. In one class, a paint program was used to teach how to use lines and colour fill to produce a pattern inspired by Jackson Pollock's 'Yellow Islands'. In a parallel class, pupils were mesmerised by the program's facilities: when colour fill was demonstrated, one boy exclaimed 'That is amazing!'. When he tried another technique for himself, he said to his neighbour 'I'm shading this, look!'. Classes are relatively small so that each pupil has his/her own computer on which to work. Motivation levels were high so that

pupils made very good progress in their learning and achieved very well. Good progress is being made in improving pupils' skills from a low base.

62. Classes in Years 3 to 6 are larger so that some pupils have to share computers. There is not enough space for them all to gather round the interactive whiteboard. This, together with the noise, makes it difficult for them to maintain concentration when new procedures are demonstrated. Although some pupils work together sensibly, sharing and taking turns using the keyboard and mouse, in too many cases, pupils argue or distract one another so that progress is slow and they do not achieve as well as they might. Teachers do not always establish clear expectations or maintain behaviour properly. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall.
63. The present curriculum is focused too narrowly on developing skills. Some teachers are beginning to plan to use information and communication technology in other subjects, such as the lesson above and in a Year 5 science lesson where two pupils used a laptop to enter the data from their experiment. Medium-term planning in other subjects does not routinely include specific reference to opportunities to use information and communication technology. The recently appointed headteacher has extensive experience in this field and the subject co-ordinator is very skilled and confident. Together they are beginning to have a very positive influence on how information and communication technology is used and being developed throughout the school. Most of the current work concentrates on the communication strands with too few opportunities for the control and modelling strands. A newly introduced assessment scheme will track effectively pupils' skills development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. There are one or two examples of information and communication technology being used well to support learning in other subjects, for example, in art and design. However, opportunities to use information and communication technology in other subjects are not routinely identified and planned for. In particular, too little use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in English and science.

HUMANITIES

Geography and religious education were inspected in full and are reported in full below. Standards in history are average and achievement is satisfactory. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so no overall judgement on teaching can be made. The scrutiny of work in books and on display throughout the school, however, shows that teachers give pupils good opportunities to use a range of resources to research topics. Good examples of this were seen in Years 3 and 4 as pupils used 1841 and 1891 Census data to compare the age and gender of people living in Navigation Lane. They then looked at maps of the local area in 1876 and 1898 and made of the list of the buildings they could see to compare with current maps of the area. Some effective use was made of literacy skills as pupils wrote about life as a child in Victorian times. For example, one pupil wrote; 'Children didn't lead better lives then. Many worked 16 hours a day in factories and down the mines'. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of history and they achieve well in their ability to use sources of information to find out about the past. A weaker aspect of teaching is that teachers do not consistently plan lessons to build upon and use information and communication technology skills.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Geographical skills are taught well.
- The subject makes a useful contribution to the knowledge of other cultures.

- The school does not consistently identify how to develop the key skills in information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy in subject planning.
- Teachers do not provide enough learning activities that are closely matched to the different levels of attainment of pupils.
- The subject enables older pupils to become aware of their own locality and of their responsibilities towards it.

Commentary

65. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average and achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. What teachers do well is to ensure that pupils are taught a good range of geographical skills to support their knowledge and understanding of different localities. Pupils learn to use maps, atlases and globes and this gives even the youngest pupils in Year 1 the ability to locate Scotland and Wales on a map of the British Isles. Older pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 begin to learn about environmental issues, which may effect the local and wider community. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils worked in groups to discuss the points for and against promoting tourism. They know that the recent Commonwealth Games held in Manchester had a big impact on the economy of the region, but that the building of large hotels disrupted the lives of many ordinary citizens. A weaker aspect of teaching is that lessons do not provide enough planned opportunities to extend the use of information and communication technology skills and there are few examples of lessons where teachers plan activities which meet the needs of all pupils.
66. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader is new to the post and has therefore had little time to get a clear enough grasp of how the subject is taught or how well pupils learn throughout the school. There have been satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in the way that the subject is planned to ensure all pupils make sound progress in their geographical knowledge, skills and understanding.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good.
- Pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6 and achievement is good.
- There is a wide range of interesting and relevant artefacts to support learning.
- The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable.
- There is not enough emphasis on pupils using neat handwriting and careful spelling in their written work.

Commentary

67. Improvements since the previous inspection include the quality of teaching and pupils' standards of attainment. The use of shadow puppets and exciting teaching in Year 2 helps pupils to understand Jonah's dilemma. They discussed his feelings and agreed that everyone should listen carefully to each other. This deepened pupils' understanding of moral issues well. Teachers build on pupils' earlier experiences as they move into the older classes. This ensures that, by Year 6, pupils have good skills in debating and discussing issues. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils talked sensibly about different dietary rules. This increased their understanding of a range of cultures, beliefs and practices. Consistently interesting and well-informed teaching gives pupils a strong sense of motivation and enthusiasm for religious education. Not all pupils use their literacy skills effectively in their written work and this does not

help them take pride in their achievements. Teachers expect high standards of behaviour and promote an air of calm, purposeful work. This provides a good reflective atmosphere for religious education lessons.

68. The subject manager makes sure that teachers are confident and have a secure knowledge of the subject. Pupils have experiences of a suitably wide range of world religions. This helps their understanding of different cultures and of the need to respect others' beliefs. There is an interesting programme of visits for the coming year and some pupils have already visited a synagogue. The visit helped them to understand how different faiths worship.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The provision for art and design was inspected in detail and is reported below. Lessons were sampled in design and technology, music and physical education. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed in music was satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities for a range of experiences in music and perform confidently. Standards in whole-school singing are average. In physical education, the quality of teaching is good overall, but attainment is adversely affected by the unsatisfactory nature of the school's accommodation. There are good opportunities for games and competitive sport. Standards in swimming were below average for the year group which left the school in July 2003. Extra-curricular activities were observed in physical education. However, there was insufficient evidence to judge overall standards and provision in any of these sampled subjects.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards are above average by Year 6.
- The school provides a rich and varied curriculum with effective links to other subjects including information and communication technology.
- High quality displays show good achievement and the value that adults place on pupils' work.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their work.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Not all planning includes different work for the less artistic pupils.

Commentary

69. Throughout the school pupils have a range of interesting and exciting lessons because the quality of teaching is consistently good. This, pupils' achievement, and their above average standards attained by Year 6 are improvements since the previous inspection. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn how to use pencils effectively as they sketch each other. They understand the meaning of full face and profile and use portraits from artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Picasso for inspiration. Teaching ensures that pupils have chances to talk about their work and suggest improvements. As they get older, pupils build on and develop their artistic skills and techniques. This is particularly noticeable in the development of the use of pattern and texture in Year 6. Pupils maintain and increase their interest and enthusiasm for art and design and enjoy learning new skills. Their cartoon 'pop art' work in the style of Warhol and Lichtenstein is of high quality. Pupils concentrate hard and work with a strong sense of urgency. They co-operate well and discuss with each other how to adapt and improve their work. The above average standards are a result of the systematic teaching of techniques and skills.
70. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has clear plans for further improvements. She checks progress through the use of sketchbooks across the school and work on display. Teachers' planning does not always provide suitable work for pupils who have less well developed skills. This does not increase their confidence in trying new ideas. The school is rightly proud of

gaining the Artsmark award. This reflects the good emphasis that the school places on the creative and expressive arts.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weakness

- There are examples of good provision in Year 6.
- The School Council functions very effectively and is pro-active in ensuring that the views of pupils are listened to and acted upon.

Commentary

71. The school has made good progress since it was inspected previously in the way that it provides learning opportunities in personal, social, health and citizenship education. Overall, teaching and learning at this stage are satisfactory. Achievement is also satisfactory. However, the school is still at an early stage of this provision and whilst there are effective links with healthy lifestyles in science, the planned curriculum has not yet had its full impact on learning. There has been some effective work in personal and social education in Year 6, with pupils having a good awareness of their responsibilities to each other, the school and the local and wider community. For example, pupils have discussed rules for the classroom, the school, for parents, teachers and lunchtime supervisors. Work is made more relevant to pupils by being linked to local issues and to their own lives. The link with a school in South Africa is giving pupils a valuable extra dimension in their understanding of the world.
72. A particular strength is the very effective way in which the School Council functions. A good example of the way they tackle real school issues is how they raised money to provide storage systems for the pupils' water, which had been a real issue of concern in classrooms. The Council gained the views of all pupils about this, consulted staff and came up with an effective, workable solution. Another good example of developing citizenship was when pupils in Year 6 looked at the local leisure facilities in Altrincham and discussed ways in which they could campaign, peacefully, to improve things and in doing so, learnt about how local democratic processes work.

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	3
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	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
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	4
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	3
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).