

INSPECTION REPORT

BROOMWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Timperley, Altrincham

LEA area: Trafford.

Unique reference number: 106290

Headteacher: Mrs A Wood

Lead inspector: Mr J P Sudworth.

Dates of inspection: October 6th-8th, 2003

Inspection number: 261139

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	188
School address:	Mainwood Road Timperley Altrincham Cheshire
Postcode:	WA15 7JU
Telephone number:	0161 980 4968
Fax number:	0161 912 5608
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Ray Bowker MBE
Date of previous inspection:	October 29 th , 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Broomwood Primary School serves an urban local authority housing estate with significant social disadvantage. The entitlement to free school meals is well above average. Many pupils enter the nursery with limited skills, especially in language and social development, and one in three pupils has been identified as having special educational needs.

There are 189 pupils on roll, including 22 children in the Nursery. The vast majority of pupils are white or of British mixed race and there are just six children from individual Pakistani, Chinese and black Caribbean families. Two pupils have a home language other than English but both are competent English-speakers. There is above average mobility and 26 pupils joined and 25 left at other than the usual time last year. Half the pupils in the current Year 6 joined the school since Year 2 and many of these have special educational needs or challenging behaviour.

The school's special educational needs resource base provides support for 12 pupils with specific learning difficulties, some of whom travel from outside the locality. These pupils are regarded as a full part of their age group and join in all social activities. They are taught separately for some lessons but with their age group for other subjects.

Four years ago the school was at a low ebb. Significant improvements had been achieved in standards, behaviour and morale by the time of the last inspection in 2001 and continued progress resulted in a Schools Achievement Award in 2003. Other awards and recognition include Investors in People, Healthy Schools and Healthy Futures, and a Regional Leadership Award.

A feature of the school is its role at the heart of the community. It serves the community through courses, facilities for a wide range of age groups, care arrangements and involvement in local community projects.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2461	Mr J P Sudworth	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Geography
			History
9511	Mrs A Longfield	Lay inspector	
30439	Mr M Heyes	Team inspector	Science
			Information and communication technology
			Physical education
24031	Mrs I Idle	Team inspector	Foundation Stage
			Special educational needs
			Art and design
			Design and technology
12631	Mrs M McLean	Team inspector	English as an additional language
			English
			Citizenship
			Music
			Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse Education (UK) Limited
 14 Enterprise House
 Kingsway
 Team Valley
 Gateshead
 Tyne & Wear
 NE11 0SR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	6
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
THE SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCE BASE	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	16
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Broomwood Primary School is an effective school which serves its community well in the good quality of education it provides and in its very strong support for its families and its neighbourhood. The highly effective leadership creates a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere within which all pupils are challenged to aim high. Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well in all parts of the school, although their writing skills are weaker than other aspects of their work. Although many make good progress from the low attainment on entry, standards in Year 6 are well below average. This reflects the high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and of those joining the school in later years. Pupils make very good progress in their personal development. The provision in the special educational needs Resource Base is very good. The school is very well managed and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The inspirational leadership and very effective management.
- The good quality of teaching and the very good teamwork among staff.
- The very effective provision in the special educational needs Resource Base.
- The good start that children make in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils' good achievement in reading, mathematics, science and information and communication technology [ICT].
- Low standards in writing, particularly in handwriting, spelling and punctuation.
- The very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- The excellent links with the community.
- Inconsistent use of targets in marking to help pupils to improve their work.

The school has made good progress in the two years since the last inspection and very significant improvements over the last four years. The increased amount of good teaching has helped to raise standards well in mathematics, science and ICT and maintained good achievement in reading but it has been less successful in improving the quality of pupils' writing. Detailed assessment procedures now identify accurately the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils but some inconsistencies remain in how well teachers use individual targets to help pupils to improve. The senior management team is now very strong and subject leadership is good overall.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - in the lowest 5%. Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals. In the comparison with similar schools the results of pupils in the special needs Resource Base have been discounted.*

Pupils achieve well. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress in all areas of learning from the low standards on entry but despite this good achievement they are still below the expected goals by the end of the Reception year.

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in reading, science, mathematics and ICT and are on track to reach the expected standards by the end of Year 2. Progress in writing is satisfactory but standards remain well below average. Achievement is good in geography and physical education.

Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well overall but good progress in reading, mathematics, science and ICT is not matched in writing where weaknesses remain. Achievement is good in physical education. Inspection evidence and the school's careful tracking of individual attainment shows that standards are rising through the school, as pupils make better than average progress. This is not reflected in the standards in the current Year 6 class, which contains a well above average percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and half of whose pupils have joined since Year 2. Here standards are well below average in English, where boys are particularly weak, and in mathematics, though at the expected level in science, where boys do better than girls. Standards are below average in ICT and geography. Pupils in the Resource base make good progress in their individual skills.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** are **very good**. Attendance is satisfactory but a few pupils have problems with punctuality. Behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to work are satisfactory. Although many pupils work well, some pupils find it difficult to concentrate for long and need support to keep on task. Pupils' personal development is promoted very well. There are particular strengths in their moral and social education and in their awareness of healthy living.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning is good in all sections of the school. Very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants allows support to be targeted well and this contributes strongly to pupils' good learning. Assessment is good, but teachers' thorough knowledge of the progress made is not always shared well enough with pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory. There has been an emphasis on raising standards in basic skills but writing and mathematics are not developed well enough in other subjects. Pupils' experiences are enriched very well through extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Care, guidance and support for pupils are very good. The school has a very effective partnership with parents and excellent links with the community, giving strong support to local initiatives, drawing very well on community resources to enrich provision, and providing good educational support for parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are very good. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has been the main driving force in raising standards. She is supported by a very strong senior management team and by good subject leadership. The governors are very involved in the work of the school and provide very good direction and support. The management of the school is very good. A particular strength is staff development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the quality of care and with the progress their children make. Most pupils are very happy with the school as it is, but some feel that behaviour could be better.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

To continue the improvement the school should:

- raise standards in writing, particularly in spelling, punctuation and handwriting;
- use individual targets more consistently in marking to help pupils to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children achieve well from a low base in Nursery and Reception but standards of attainment by the end of reception are still below average in all areas of learning. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 to 6 and are on track to reach satisfactory standards by the end of Year 2, but due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs are well below average by the end of Year 6.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- Good progress made during Nursery and Reception.
- Good achievement in reading, mathematics, science and ICT.
- The good achievements of pupils in the Resource Base and of others who need extra support.
- Low standards in writing.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Nursery at age three with well below average attainment for this age, particularly in their language skills, in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress in all the areas of learning but by the start of Year 1, many have not reached the expected goals for children of this age.

2. There are wide fluctuations in Year 2 test results between years because of the variations between small cohorts. Overall reading has remained steady, writing has weakened and mathematics has risen. In 2003, while the results in writing remained low, there was a very marked improvement in the reading and the mathematics results. Results in mathematics were in the top 5 per cent when compared with similar schools and above the national average, results in reading were better than those in similar schools but below the national average. Boys did better than girls, particularly at the higher levels.

3. The Year 6 results in 2002 were typical of similar schools in English and science, when account is taken of pupils in the special educational needs Resource Base, but below average in mathematics. They were well below national averages. The 2003 results were weaker in English and mathematics but slightly higher in science. These results are weakened by the high proportion of pupils arriving in the school during Years 3 to 6 and the large number of pupils with special educational needs. Higher attainers are challenged well and the proportions attaining the higher levels in English and science compare favourably with similar schools.

4. Teachers encourage pupils to express their ideas in a supportive atmosphere and as a result speaking skills improve significantly from the very limited levels on entry. However, pupils still have limited expression and vocabulary by the end of Year 2 and many older pupils are hesitant when asked to talk formally. The majority of pupils listen well. Reading standards have improved in recent years, and currently pupils in Year 2 are attaining the expected standards. Individuals continue to make good progress as they move through the school but overall reading standards in Year 6 reflect the high number with special educational needs and the high turnover of pupils.

5. Standards are improving more slowly in writing and remain low in Years 1 to 6. Although pupils are responding to encouragement and beginning to write with greater expression, handwriting, spelling and punctuation remain weak. Pupils' attention is not focused well enough on how to improve these aspects. Teachers do not provide a wide enough range of opportunities to practise writing skills in subjects such as geography, history and religious education.

6. Standards are rising in mathematics as identified weaknesses are tackled well. The good level of challenge in Years 1 and 2 is leading to good achievement. By Year 2 pupils are reaching

national standards and a good proportion are exceeding expectations. The continuing significant improvement in Years 3 to 6 is evident in the rising progress made by pupils as they move through the school. Standards in the current Year 6, however, are well below average and many of these pupils lack a feel for number and need special support in mathematics.

7. The recent improvements seen in the science results in national tests are reflected in the current good achievement throughout the school. Pupils are reaching the expected standards in all aspects of the subject at Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils are making good progress in ICT as they move through the school. Pupils are attaining expected standards by the end of Year 2, but those in Year 6 have below average skills, because they have not had a good enough grounding in key skills earlier in their school life.

8. In geography achievement is good in Years 1 to 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 but below average in Year 6, where a third of pupils have special educational needs. Standards in religious education match what is expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus for seven and eleven-year-olds, reflecting satisfactory achievement. Pupils achieve well in physical education where the provision is enhanced by extra-curricular sports activities and professional coaches. There was too little evidence to make judgements about attainment in art and design, design and technology or history.

9. Pupils with special educational needs and the few with English as an additional language make good progress. The pupils in the Resource Base benefit from very good provision and make good progress towards their individual targets. More capable pupils are challenged well and the few pupils with sporting talent are supported well by links to clubs. The many pupils who have arrived after the normal entry time are achieving well because of the good support, but their standards are often low.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (12.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.7 (10.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.3 (13.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 19 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 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.1 (25.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.6 (24.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

[The Year 6 results do not include the pupils in the special needs resource base.]

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral social and cultural development are very good overall. Their attendance is satisfactory. Attitudes and behaviour are both satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The impact of the strong spirit of co-operation and respect on pupils’ maturing social skills.
- Effective management of behaviour.
- Limited opportunities to develop pupils’ awareness of other cultures.

Commentary

10. Pupils' satisfactory but a few pupils have problems with punctuality. The education welfare officer confirms that the drop during last year was due to an unusual level of illness. The school has effective systems to monitor absences and promotes the importance of regular attendance well. However, a few pupils still arrive late.

11. The school's very good provision for personal development helps most make very good gains in maturity as they move through the school, from their poor social skills on entry. The school's 'I Can' philosophy helps pupils feel valued. They develop confidence, and their self-esteem is raised. They carry out responsibilities well and older pupils make sensible suggestions during School Council meetings. Aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are at the heart of the school's aims for every pupil. Carefully planned acts of collective worship allow pupils to reflect on moral values and topical issues. They often join in prayers, or sit in moments of quiet reflection with a lit candle as a focus. Discussions during the well delivered personal, social and health education programme foster pupils' social skills and their appreciation of how they can support each other. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and they are helped to understand the impact their behaviour may have on other people.

12. The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory overall. The school has an above average percentage of pupils with behavioural difficulties. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively to support these pupils but on occasions unacceptable behaviour has made exclusion necessary. In lessons that are prepared very well to provide a range of different activities, pupils' behaviour is often good. Pupils agree that there is seldom any bullying, and if there is, it is 'quickly sorted out'. Most pupils listen carefully in lessons, participate well in discussions and settle quickly to independent tasks but some need help in concentrating for any length of time. Most of the pupils like the school 'just as it is', though some would like to see behaviour improve.

13. The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of their cultural heritage well, particularly through visits and visitors into the school. Religious education and collective worship promote pupils' understanding of the beliefs and practices of the major faiths practised in this country well. In an assembly about the Jewish festival of Yom Kippur, for example, pupils learnt that this is a time when Jews say 'sorry' and make a fresh start. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about the work of artists and musicians from around the world.

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	172	9	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.4	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and pupils benefit from a very wide range of enrichment activities. The school provides a high quality of care and guidance. The opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas are good. The links with parents and other schools are very good and those with the community are excellent.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good in Nursery and Reception, in Years 1 to 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is very good in the special needs Resource Base. This is resulting in effective learning. Assessment is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very effective teamwork between teachers and learning support staff.
- The very positive management of pupils' behaviour.
- The careful lesson planning to take account of the range of pupils' attainment.
- The very good progress that most pupils make in co-operative working and in independence.
- The weak learning skills of some pupils who have joined the school in the older year groups.
- The very thorough assessment of pupils' progress.
- Inconsistency in sharing with pupils what they need to do next to improve.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2.3%)	6 (13.6%)	27 (61.4%)	10 (22.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The close co-operation between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that support for pupils' learning is targeted effectively. The teaching assistants have a clear understanding of the learning objectives from the weekly planning and, through effective questioning, help to focus pupils' thinking on these. They know pupils' individual targets and complete assessment records as they observe pupils in whole-class discussion or in group work.

15. This very good teamwork is also very effective in managing pupils' behaviour through shared strategies. The encouraging classroom atmosphere creates very good relationships. Praise for good attention and quick responses reinforces expected behaviour. Teachers establish clear routines, so that pupils know what to expect and how to respond. When behaviour is challenging, the teachers' calm approach models control and helps to defuse potential difficulties.

16. The careful planning of lessons ensures that there is a good balance between activities to capture and hold pupils' interest and the smooth transition between parts of the lesson helps to maintain the pace of learning. Explanations are well thought through and often supported by visual aids, models or demonstrations that enable the pupils to grasp the concepts. Planning of group or individual tasks takes very good account of pupils' capabilities and identifies where support is to be targeted. This ensures that all pupils are able to participate fully and contributes to the good progress made both by those with special educational needs and higher attainers. This effective planning also extends to the setting of appropriate homework tasks.

17. Many pupils find it difficult to work and play with other children when they arrive in the Nursery and their concentration span is poor. Teachers emphasis rules and routines on how to treat others and build up pupils' perseverance with tasks. The nursery nurses and teaching assistants are adept at helping pupils to work together in small groups and to learn the benefits of co-operation. By Year 2 pupils listen carefully in discussions, wait their turn to comment, and work happily in pairs or small groups. For example, they co-operated very well in a mathematics lesson, as they measured each other with tape measures and recorded their findings together. As pupils move into Years 3 to 6 many are beginning to develop a capacity for sustained independent working. Year 4 pupils talked with pride about their personal projects which they had completed on other countries in the previous year. However, half the pupils in the current Year 6 have joined the school during Years 3 to 6. Some of these pupils still have weak social skills and short concentration spans and need a lot of support and attention. This slows their progress, despite the good teaching and support that they receive.

18. Teachers assess pupils' work very thoroughly and keep careful records of progress. They set individual targets for pupils in key aspects of work. In the best examples, teachers' marking of work indicates clearly to pupils how they can improve. However, this effective use of individual short-term targets is inconsistent. As a result, many pupils do not know how the work they are doing relates to their targets and what they have to work on in order to improve their work.

The curriculum

The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Pupils benefit from a very wide range of enrichment activities. The accommodation and resources support the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high quality of the personal, social and health education programme.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The very wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and special events.
- The high quality and number of teaching assistants.

Commentary

19. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. It includes both a formal teaching programme and the development of personal skills and relationships through circle time. This results in an ethos within the school of total inclusion where all pupils are valued and supported, both academically and personally, within a secure and very caring school environment. The school promotes pupils' understanding of healthy living particularly well. It has held the *Healthy Schools* award for some years and recently became the first school in the local authority to gain the *Healthy Futures* award.

20. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils are very well supported by a specialist teacher and by very capable teaching assistants, both in the Resource Base and in all classes. Their needs are clearly understood and their learning is very well structured

to meet their particular needs. In consequence, they are making good progress towards their individual targets.

21. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils and all are encouraged to commit themselves to regular participation in at least one activity. These include choir, art club, chess and sport. The popularity of these activities was clearly seen when 52 children arrived in the school hall for a choir practice. The very good range of educational visits enriches the curriculum. These visits form a clear part of the curriculum planning and offer such varied experiences as visits to a synagogue or mosque, a Tudor Christmas experience and a residential visit. Visitors to school also enhance the curriculum provision. These include a storyteller, the local vicar and coaches from professional sports clubs.

22. The school has an effective team of well qualified teachers whose skills and experience match the demands of the curriculum and the learning needs of all pupils well. The number of teaching assistants is above average. These members of staff have benefited from a good level of training and, in consequence, they work very effectively alongside teachers and provide good support to pupils. There is ample accommodation for the needs of the curriculum and imaginative improvements have created a pleasant learning environment. However, there is no disabled access to the upper floor which houses the computer suite. The quality of learning resources is good. These are well managed and used effectively in lessons.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of the pupils. They are provided with very good support, advice and guidance. Their involvement in the work of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good support and care for individual pupils in need.
- The good procedures for child protection and for pupils' well-being, health and safety.
- The very good support for pupils new to the school.
- The very thorough procedures for monitoring pupils' progress.
- The effective School Council.

Commentary

23. The school succeeds in its vision to create a caring atmosphere of trust where pupils can flourish. Within this disadvantaged community, the school provides a haven where pupils know that they are safe and cared for and where they can rely on the security of ordered routines. As one pupil expressed it, 'the school is a place where you feel cared for and teachers and pupils make you feel happy.' The care shown by the school extends beyond the school day into breakfast and after-school clubs and also reaches out to the families. Several parents spoke very highly of the help provided by the school, and health and welfare professionals confirmed the importance of school's support for families.

24. The school has a suitable policy for child protection and all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities. There are good health and safety procedures in place. Teachers are conscientious in their supervision of pupils in their class. There are good arrangements for administering first aid and dealing with accidents or sickness.

25. The school provides very good support to pupils when they first come into the school. There is a carefully structured induction programme for younger children to ensure that they settle into school quickly. The many pupils who arrive during a school year or late in their primary school lives also have an induction programme, including a 'buddy' and extra support.

26. Pupils' personal development is largely monitored informally through the class teacher's knowledge of their class. Where there are concerns, teaching assistants contribute to the observation and recording of individual responses. The recognition and reward of good achievement, good attitudes and good behaviour throughout the school helps to promote the school's values.

27. The very thorough monitoring of pupils' progress includes termly assessments in each subject. Senior members of staff use this data to identify individuals or groups who might be underachieving and to target them for extra help. The assessments are also used to set targets for individual pupils, though pupils are not as involved as they might be in determining the targets. This careful tracking follows pupils through the school, so that any changes in progress can be readily seen.

28. Pupils feel that their opinions are valued. The School Council has representatives from each year group apart from the Foundation Stage children, and their recommendations have already made an impact on the life of the school. Teachers use circle time effectively to enable pupils to talk through issues. Pupils are confident that any adult in the school will listen to them if they have a problem.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established very good links with parents and with other schools and colleges. The links with the local community are excellent. There is an effective educational and support programme for parents.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong encouragement for parents to support their children's education.
- The good social and educational support for parents.
- The very good links with the other schools in the area.
- The school's role at the heart of its local community.

Commentary

29. Parents are strongly supportive of the work of the school and proud of the improvements achieved over recent years. They are comfortable in approaching the school with problems and feel school takes account of their views and concerns. Parents are kept well informed of all school affairs through newsletters and curriculum briefings let parents know how they can help their children with the topics for the term. Three consultation evenings and annual progress reports provide parents with clear information about what their children know, understand and can do. Several parents spoke warmly of the personal support given by the school to their families. The headteacher defuses potential conflicts very effectively. For example, she uses a circle approach as a vehicle to resolve difficult issues such as bullying, inviting all parents and pupils concerned to join her and take turns to talk about these issues, in a calm way, until they are resolved.

30. Imaginative alterations in accommodation have allowed the creation of a community room, which is used as a base for social and educational activities for parents. The Basic Skills agency organizes family literacy and numeracy courses for parents and their children, and parents find these helpful in supporting their children's learning. There is also a *Ready, Steady* programme for families that involves healthy cooking, computers, making things together, and playing together. During the inspection six mothers and their children attended a *Ready, Steady, Make* session when they made good progress in their appreciation of how children develop skills, as they made 'Pet in a pocket' cards together. Parents' achievements through family learning have been recognized with presentation of certificates at the Friday celebration assembly.

31. There are very good links with the local schools. The school is part of a supportive primary school cluster. The school works closely with the local secondary schools. Year 5 pupils have had regular visits to one school for sport and other activities, the school has participated in sports tournaments at another high school and received support for its productions from a local college of arts. A teacher from one of the local secondary schools is a governor. Preparations for pupils' transfer to high schools are aided by the very effective cross-school liaison.

Example of outstanding practice

The excellent links which benefit both the school and its community.

The school is very successful in realising its vision of itself as 'at the heart of the community'. It is the focus of much community activity from the Toddlers' Club to the Bingo Club for the older residents, and many events, such as the Jubilee party are held at the school. The school is also the base for computer courses and *Keep fit and Think fit* sessions. Much of the initial improvement in the school's décor and environment was carried out by local people under community service orders. Disadvantaged teenagers, who under the *Dream Scheme* earn points towards various rewards from voluntary work, helped to create the school's Millennium Garden. Their pride in their work helps to keep the school free of vandalism. *G-Force*, a church organization, arranges popular after-school and holiday clubs in the school. The school draws in coaching skills from local sports clubs and specialist knowledge from members of the community to enrich the curriculum. In return the choir sings at the community centre. All the governors have some community role. The school is playing a major role in raising the community spirit and encouraging action towards self-improvement in the area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is highly effective. The Governing Body has made a major contribution to the very significant improvements in the school in recent years. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has been the main driving force in moving the school forward. She is very ably supported in this by the very strong senior management team and by other key staff. Skilled management ensures that staff members fulfil their potential and that resources are deployed very efficiently to achieve the school's aims.

Main strengths

- The governors' very good knowledge of the school from their active support.
- The leadership's success in raising the aspirations and self-belief in the school community.
- The excellent team spirit and a shared staff commitment to achieve.
- The care taken to meet the needs of all pupils.
- The school's very thorough use of self-evaluation to set targets and priorities.
- The imaginative use of resources.
- The impact of high mobility.

Commentary

32. The very high quality of the leadership and the considerable management strengths have transformed the school over a short time from a position of poor standards and low morale to one of good achievement, a very positive ethos and a shared sense of pride. This was recognized by a *Schools Achievement Award* in 2003 and a *Regional School Leadership Award*.

33. Many governors are heavily involved in the school's community links and all are very committed in the time they give to the school. They review school performance, contribute to strategic decisions and provide strong support for staff from a very good knowledge of the school's work. With the support of Local Education Authority finance staff the governors maintain a rolling strategic financial plan so that they direct spending efficiently to meet the school's priorities.

Example of outstanding practice

The leadership of the headteacher in transforming a school previously at a low ebb.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her passionate conviction that the pupils in this deprived area can succeed is infectious. It enthuses the staff, raises the aspirations of pupils and parents and inspires members of the community to share their expertise with the school. She ensures that everyone in the school knows that they are valued personally and part of the school family, and provides very good support to staff and pupils. Her determination that pupils will have the high quality of provision they deserve leads her to set high standards. This has led to major improvements in behaviour, personal development and achievement, and in the quality of teaching and learning. She knows very clearly the school's strengths and what action still needs to be taken. Her influence extends through the families to the whole community and contributes to the growing optimism and self-belief in the area.

34. The management of special educational needs provision is very good. The school's strong ethos of valuing all its members ensures that care is taken to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who have recently arrived, those with specific talents and the few from ethnic minorities. Pupils in the Special Needs Resource Base are well integrated into their year groups.

35. The management team's very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses comes from very thorough self-evaluation, including monitoring pupils' progress in close detail. Effective action plans are implemented promptly to tackle identified weaknesses. The detailed analyses of strengths and weaknesses in English and in mathematics and the clear planning for improvement that has led to rising standards are very good examples of this.

36. The school's *Investor in People* status is reflected in the way all the members of the staff team feel valued. Performance management is managed very effectively to recognize individual contributions, to identify training needs and to build confidence, expertise and team spirit. This highly effective support for staff development is exemplified in the strong induction and support procedures for new staff. The training provided for teaching assistants has made a strong contribution to their very effective support for pupils.

37. The school manages its resources well. It has been very successful in drawing in additional resources, particularly the expertise of members of the local community. The imaginative improvements to the accommodation and the effective use of space have helped to create an attractive learning environment.

38. The high degree of mobility and, in particular, the arrival late in their primary school career of several pupils with special educational needs or challenging behaviour is slowing improvement, despite the careful support these pupils receive. This lowers attainment in the upper part of the school and these pupils require much attention. A major asset for the school is the assistance it draws in through its excellent community links.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	449,958	Balance from previous year	38,890
Total expenditure	463,337	Balance carried forward to the next	25,511
Expenditure per pupil	2,464		

NB These figures include the resourcing of the special needs Resource Base. The costs for the mainstream pupils are average.

THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS RESOURCE BASE

The provision is **very good**.

39. During the inspection, the Resource base supported five statemented pupils, from Years 5 and 6, every morning and two afternoons. In the mornings they were joined by five other pupils from Years 3 and 4 for their literacy and numeracy sessions. Pupils join their own classes for three afternoons each week and are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum.

The strengths of the provision	The impact on pupils' learning
The analysis of pupils' achievements and the tracking of the rates of progress they make.	Pupils' needs are identified early and prompt action is taken.
Individual action plans reflect the needs of the pupils, including those with physical and social difficulties.	Teachers plan work that matches these plans so pupils achieve their targets.
The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants support the pupils very well.	Pupils are confident and their achievement is good.
There are good links with parents.	Parents know what their children need to learn and many support them well.
Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life.	Peers respect and support each other and everyone is valued.
The very good relationships between the special needs co-ordinator, teaching assistant and the pupils in the Resource Base.	Pupils respect the adults in the Resource Base and are keen to please them by doing their best.
The flexible use of the Resource Base enables pupils to receive both a very high level of small group specialist teaching plus opportunities to work within the whole class.	Pupils gain confidence and their self-esteem is raised to enable them to contribute fully in both a small group and the whole class.

40. The very good teaching and support they receive in the base, along with the very good support in class lessons, raises pupils' self-esteem, develops their confidence and ensures that they achieve well. The co-ordinator and teaching assistant in the Resource Base know the pupils very well. Their firm but fair and consistent approach to behaviour enables good learning to take place without distractions.

41. Very careful on-going assessment takes place. Pupils understand this and know that this records their achievement and directly influences the next work they do. Their work is very clearly linked to their targets on their Individual Education Plans and pupils are fully aware of these.

Example of outstanding practice

A mathematics lesson in the special needs resource base for pupils with specific learning difficulties, including some with challenging behaviour.

In a lively start to the lesson, the teacher tested pupils' recall of doubling and halving numbers at a good pace. Very focused questions enabled all pupils to achieve early success and be fully involved from the start. The game '*Follow me*' held their keen interest as they watched their cards and listened very carefully to classmates' statements in order to offer their doubling and halving information quickly and accurately. The very flexible teaching style and skilled use of computer programs ensured that all sustained interest. The very clearly differentiated work and the very good support given by the teaching assistant supported learning well. Pupils were challenged when considering the link between a quad bike and a quadrilateral shape and took a full part in discussion. Older pupils considered the properties of a range of three-dimensional shapes, identifying the faces, shapes and base. They used mathematical language well in their explanations. Younger pupils created pentagons, hexagons and other flat shapes successfully using pegboards and rubber bands to demonstrate their understanding. The teacher took opportunities presented by pupils' questions and ideas to extend their learning. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed their work, and the quality of their learning was excellent.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

42. Children enter nursery with standards that are well below average in all the areas of learning. A significant number have very poorly developed speaking and listening skills and their personal, social and emotional skills are very weak. The inspection took place in the fifth week of the term and the children in the nursery had only been in school for three weeks. Until half-term they stay until they have had their lunch. After half term they stay for the whole day. Children settle very well because both the Foundation stage classes provide secure and exciting learning environments and children form very good relationships with all adults.

43. Teachers plan very thoroughly and match the activities very closely to the stepping stones for children of this age. This results in children achieving well. On-going assessment is fully in place and detailed records are kept of children's achievements. However, some of the successes during free-choice activities are not being recorded. Sometimes children have too much time for free-choice activities and they lose interest and wander. Teachers need to consider how time can be used more effectively to challenge the more able children by engaging them on more focused tasks. Good links are developed with parents through the initial home visit and involvement in the Family Literacy and Numeracy courses that take place in school. Good information for parents is available on the Foundation Stage notice board. Nursery nurses support children's learning very well. The Reception teacher has only joined the school this term. She is already part of the school team and has received very good support.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The sensitive, caring interactions between staff and children that quickly establish very good relationships and enable children to feel secure.
- All members of staff expect good behaviour and children respond very well.
- Many pupils are immature for their age.

Commentary

44. Children enter the Nursery with personal and social skills that are very weak. The majority of Nursery children are already settled early in the school year, they feel secure in the Nursery environment because they quickly build very good relationships with all adults and because both the Foundation Stage classes provide safe and exciting learning environments. They are beginning to select activities independently but need much adult support. They still need help with putting on aprons and peeling bananas and many are very immature. In the Reception class, many children work happily in small groups but some have real difficulties in sharing toys and materials and in taking turns. Teachers and support staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and the children respond very well. As a result, they achieve well but many do not achieve the Early Learning goals expected by the time they enter Year 1. Children with special educational needs are very sensitively supported as individuals to enable them to learn in a secure environment.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planned opportunities for children to improve their poor speaking and listening skills by working in smaller groups.
- Good opportunities planned to develop early reading skills, letter sounds and names.
- Children need to be challenged further to develop their writing skills.

Commentary

45. Many children have poor speaking skills when they come into Nursery. They often play together in silence and answer in single words and short phrases. Good opportunities are planned for children to develop their speaking skills by discussing events and stories in large and small groups. Members of staff use questioning effectively to assess and record children's learning.

46. The youngest children enjoy listening to stories. They identify their own names, when self-registering with parental help, but have limited opportunities to practise writing their name. Children in Reception enjoy listening to and talking about stories. They like being 'detectives' when learning their letter sounds and find many objects beginning with 'p'. They follow the text carefully as they recite nursery rhymes in small groups, and are very well supported by nursery nurses and volunteer helpers. Some children write their name unaided but too many are still overwriting and some of these need to be challenged to move towards greater independence. Children make good progress overall in their language skills but many do not reach the expected standard by the end of Reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Foundation Stage staff's good knowledge of how young children learn mathematical concepts.
- The planning of mathematical activities to meet the needs of all children.

Commentary

47. Teachers structure carefully a range of interesting activities that involve pupils in mathematical ideas. These practical activities promote children's learning effectively and help to maintain their interest. Children count to five well and enjoy number songs. They are beginning to recognise patterns and arrange elephants in a sequence with help. Some identify the primary colours correctly. Older children recognise and name circles, squares and triangles successfully. The more able show a sound understanding of bigger and smaller. All adults support children with special educational needs very well. They find a variety of different ways of explaining ideas and giving these pupils extra practice to help them grasp key concepts. More able pupils are challenged well to take their learning further.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planned opportunities for children to learn through first-hand experiences.
- Inconsistent recording of pupils' development during free-choice activities.

Commentary

48. Many children have much more limited experiences of the world around them than is usual for their age when they first come into school. Children achieve well because the teaching they receive is good and they are offered a good range of experiences. However, many will still not achieve the Early Learning goals expected by the time they enter Year 1. The youngest children enjoy experiencing a windy day when they fly the kites they have made and watch bubbles fly away. Reception children extend their understanding of autumn well by observing conkers, cones and collecting leaves during their autumn walk. They demonstrate an early understanding of the senses. Many show good mouse control when they make a monster's tongue go in and out on the computer screen. Children's progress is monitored closely during staff-directed activities but recording of their development when they are involved in free-choice activities is inconsistent. In consequence, there is not always a clear enough focus on skills development at these times.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good throwing and catching skills
- Children's poor personal and social skills which are affecting their achievement in their physical development

Commentary

49. On the limited evidence available, children enjoy using a good range of wheeled vehicles. They develop the skills of throwing and catching well. They demonstrate sound fine motor skills when painting, writing and constructing models. Many children find it difficult to play with others and this is affecting the progress they make. The outdoor play area provides a safe and stimulating environment within which children can develop their skills. When children play outdoors, teachers present a well-structured framework within which children could develop their personal physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good range of materials available, used well in adult focused activities
- Many children are not yet sufficiently mature to work independently.

Commentary

50. Children have plenty of opportunities to work with a wide range of materials. They make kites successfully with adult support and create leaf prints as part of their work about autumn. Many children are immature and gravitate towards adult-led activities as they find it difficult to work independently. This is limiting the progress they make. Older children enjoy making interesting autumn collages, using leaves collected during their walk. Good sticking skills are demonstrated as they achieve these. Children demonstrate good fine motor skills when working with construction materials but find it hard to stay on task for a sustained period of time.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good achievement for most pupils.
- Improved standards in reading.
- The supportive atmosphere in lessons which encourages pupils to share their ideas.
- Insufficient opportunities for drama and role-play
- The clear focus on raising standards in writing.
- Weaknesses in handwriting, punctuation and spelling
- Effective teaching which takes good account of pupils' differing needs.
- Inconsistency in the quality of marking.
- The very effective leadership and management in the subject.
- Too few opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and audiences in other subjects.

Commentary

51. In both Years 1 to 2 and in Years 3 to 6 pupils are achieving well and improving from previously low attainment, though their development is better in reading and in speaking and listening than in writing. A particular strength is the challenge for more able pupils. In the latest tests a third of seven-year-olds achieved a higher level in reading. A quarter of eleven-year-olds achieved the higher level in English in 2002, which was well above similar schools. Although pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress, a significant proportion of the oldest pupils are building up from a previous lack of confidence and weak language abilities. Several have joined the school in later year groups; others did not develop skills well enough when they were younger.

52. Pupils achieve well in reading because teachers give a considerable amount of time and attention to developing pupils' reading skills. Teaching assistants have received training and take a major part in supporting the achievements of groups of pupils in lessons. Pupils' progress in reading is regularly recorded, and this information is used well when planning future tasks for them. The school encourages pupils to read at home. Parents are responding well and pupils are rewarded with certificates if they read at home every night. The reading records support the home school co-operation on reading very well. Older pupils are given opportunities to work on personal projects and are able to retrieve information competently from non-fiction books.

53. Within the positive atmosphere in lessons teachers encourage pupils to share their ideas or the work they have been doing. Circle time and personal and social education are used effectively to develop speaking and listening skills. However, despite marked improvement from their poor skills on entry, speaking and listening skills are below average for the majority of pupils. Although they have gained the confidence to talk happily to visitors, their range of vocabulary and expression is often limited. While most respond eagerly in class discussion, they are more hesitant in formal situations. For example in front of the whole school in assemblies, they are often shy and self-conscious. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to take part in drama or role-play across the curriculum and or to extend the quality of their expression by practising different styles of speaking.

54. The school has a very clear focus on raising standards in writing. Teachers place a strong emphasis on pupils writing for different purposes and for a range of audiences. ICT skills are used well to redraft and edit writing for display purposes. This was evident in writing from Year 5 pupils about their experiences on the 'Bike Right' course. In Year 2, pupils are starting to order instructions for making pizza. Older pupils know how play-scripts are written. Some pupils' work in Year 6 shows they understand the difference between biographical and autobiographical writing.

55. The emphasis has been on developing pupils' confidence in writing and in encouraging them to express themselves in more imaginative language. A consequence of this is that insufficient stress has been placed on tackling the weaknesses in handwriting, punctuation and spelling, particularly amongst average and less able pupils. These impact on standards and need to be tackled more rigorously. Too many pupils persist in writing capital letters incorrectly in the middle of sentences, form some letters inaccurately and use capital letters and full stops inconsistently. Some of these pupils repeatedly spell some familiar words as they sound. These weaknesses are found particularly in boys' work.

56. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a very good understanding of the literacy strategy and their lesson plans are very thorough. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively, and play an important part in the good achievement of different groups of pupils. The specific needs of pupils with special educational needs are met well. As a result their progress is good. The very few pupils with English as an additional language speak English fluently and no longer need any specific support to enable them to achieve as well as their classmates.

57. There are some examples of particularly good marking of pupils' work. For example, one teacher challenged a pupil effectively by praising good work and commenting 'I see you have used the word "enormous" several times. Could you use a Thesaurus to find synonyms for "enormous" to help improve your writing?' However, this is not consistent in all classes. Teachers do not always share with pupils how well they are progressing towards their targets or indicate strategies for improving specific weaknesses in handwriting, punctuation and spelling.

58. Leadership and management are very good. Assessment procedures are very thorough. The results are analysed carefully and fed into thorough planning that ensures pupils build progressively on what they have learnt. The quality of teachers' planning and pupils' work has been monitored and the co-ordinator has prepared an action plan for improving writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Opportunities for discussion in personal, social and health education and in religious education contribute well to pupils' development in speaking and listening skills, while geography and history provide satisfactory practice in research skills. However, pupils' writing is not extended well enough across these subjects. Too often pupils' writing in these subjects is confined to answering questions and opportunities to write in different styles are missed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good challenge for higher attainers and support for those with difficulties.
- Effective lesson planning that incorporates a good balance of activities.
- Very strong subject leadership that is focused on raising standards.
- Limited investigational work.
- The restricted use of mathematics across the curriculum and of mathematical enrichment.

Commentary

60. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 know their pupils well and take good account of the range of attainment. As they present ideas and explain new work, they target questions well to different groups. While some pupils are helped to find the next number after 11, 12, 13, others are challenged to continue the sequence 74, 80, 86. Similarly, when pupils are working independently, the most able are encouraged to measure in centimetres and millimetres, while most are working in

centimetres and some are closely supported. The teaching assistants work very well in collaboration with the teachers. At times they provide very effective support for those who find a concept difficult and on other occasions they help more able pupils to tackle challenging extension tasks. As a result of this careful targeting of work and support, pupils of all abilities are achieving well. In the latest tests all seven-year-olds reached the expected level and two in every five attained a higher level, which compares very favourably with similar schools. Boys did particularly well. In the current work both boys and girls are achieving well.

61. The good achievement continues in Years 3 to 6 but there are more pupils with weak mathematical skills in the upper part of the school. When these pupils were younger they did not have the firm grounding in key skills, that pupils are now receiving in Years 1 to 2. Also there has been a large intake of pupils from other schools into the older age groups, many of whom have little feel for number. Teachers continue to challenge pupils at their own level. Higher ability pupils in Year 5 confidently transferred their knowledge of decimals and fractions to problems concerning percentages, while those with weak skills added simple percentages with adult support. While overall standards in Year 6 are well below average, the more able are progressing well towards higher level attainment.

62. Teaching is good. Detailed lesson planning builds successfully on the careful tracking of pupils' progress and teachers' awareness of the next steps that pupils need to make. This leads to effective learning. Teachers give careful thought to how they will explain ideas to pupils and use well prepared resources that help pupils to understand. Brisk starts to lessons, often with a lively mental session, capture pupils' interest. There is usually a good balance between explanation, discussion and practical activities to retain pupils' attention and to enable them to consolidate their understanding and to practise what they have learnt. Lessons are sequenced well so that effective use is made of time and pupils cover a good amount of work.

63. Pupils encounter a good range of work across the different aspects of mathematics but investigational work is not as well developed as other elements. Much of the work in this aspect is closely directed. Not enough attention is being given to applying mathematics to real life situations and to open-ended investigations in mathematics. ICT is used well to support learning in mathematics. Software programs are used in all age groups to reinforce number work, to explore shapes and to present data.

64. The rising standards in mathematics in the school have been given a strong impetus from the very effective leadership of the co-ordinator. The detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses has led to action to improve key aspects. Teachers have been supported well and careful monitoring of individual progress has led to the successful targeting of underachieving pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills across the curriculum, for example in measuring or in displaying the results from experiments in science and in analysing geographical data. However, there is little in the way of enrichment activities or on-going mathematical challenges. Mathematics is primarily seen as a subject rather than an integral part of everyday life in school.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school.
- Teachers' secure subject knowledge and effective use of time and resources in lessons.
- Strong and effective subject leadership and management.
- Effective procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' performance.

- Inconsistent use of ICT.
- Overuse of worksheets and prescriptive styles of teaching in some lessons.
- Inconsistent approaches to marking of pupils' work.

Commentary

66. Pupils are attaining the standards expected nationally both in scientific knowledge and in investigative skills by the end of Year 2. This represents good progress from the below average attainment at the beginning of Year 1. Pupils in the current Year 6 are also reaching the expected standards and this is a significant improvement from their attainment as seven-year-olds. The most recent results for eleven-year-olds compare favourably with similar schools. Standards are rising through the school, as pupils build on the secure understanding of the subject that they have acquired in recent years.

67. Teachers show secure subject knowledge, and engage the pupils effectively in discussions of the ideas being taught, so that they are fully aware of what they are learning. The effective use of resources and the good teamwork between class teachers and teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, in which the teacher used the computer suite to show pupils photographs of 'pushes' and 'pulls' in the local park. It was followed up by a class discussion on how the wind can either 'push' or 'pull' leaves, and how it can help people, for example a windmill. During this lesson the teacher was ably assisted by a support assistant, who helped both special educational needs pupils and those in the immediate vicinity during the whole lesson.

68. Teachers use questioning and intervention well in lessons to gauge the extent of pupils' understanding and knowledge. For example, when discussing the human life cycle in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher asked, 'Do we need something between these stages?' In lessons there is a good rapport between all staff and pupils, which helps with the management of pupils, and ensures that lessons proceed smoothly and pupils make good rates of progress.

69. Although ICT is used to support learning in some classes, for example in Year 2, it needs to be used more consistently across the school. In some lessons seen and in previously completed work there are instances of an over-prescriptive style of teaching, with an emphasis on completing photocopied sheets, which inhibits pupils' learning in independent group investigations.

70. Marking of pupils' work, though satisfactory overall, is of inconsistent quality. The better examples take pupils' learning forward, whilst others just contain a tick and a one-word comment. Leadership and management of science are good. Although the co-ordinator is new to the school this academic year, there are well established procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress in the subject as they move through the school. These include an analysis of previous statutory test papers, and an annual science report, which identifies strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and confident use of the computer suite and other resources.
- Effective lesson planning that includes differentiated tasks for pupils' with different abilities.
- Good management and support of pupils in the ICT suite.
- Strong and effective leadership of subject.
- Effective procedures for assessing pupils' performance and monitoring their progress.
- Inconsistent use of computers in classrooms to support pupils' learning across subjects.

Commentary

71. All pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. Year 2 pupils are attaining national standards and have made good gains in their confidence and skills with computers since the beginning of Year 1. Good achievement continues in Years 3 to 5 and pupils are acquiring confident skills across a broad range of ICT applications. Although attainment levels are rising as pupils build on the good ICT experiences they are now having, standards in Year 6 are below the level expected for that age group, because these pupils, including the high proportion moving late into this year group, did not develop a sufficient depth of skills earlier in their school life.

72. In all lessons seen in the ICT suite, teachers displayed secure subject knowledge and used the resources well. For instance, in a Year 4 lesson the teacher used the interactive whiteboard effectively to demonstrate how to use the 'replace function' when changing text in a letter. Lessons are well planned and include activities to meet the needs of different pupils. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, in which pupils were given appropriate texts to edit. The teacher also supported pupils with effective and purposeful questioning, which helped them make gains in their learning about word processing. When pupils are working in the suite they are well managed by teachers. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the teacher used praise for good behaviour to bring pupils back on task.

73. The leadership and management of the subject are strong and effective. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of how the subject is being developed. He has been instrumental in introducing effective procedures for monitoring and assessing the performance of pupils as they move through the school. Each child has an individual folder that, along with an annotation sheet, provides a record of how each child is progressing. These folders are kept on file on computer, and are regularly monitored by the co-ordinator. This tracking of progress enables the co-ordinator to identify strengths and weaknesses in the performance across elements of the subject.

74. The school is adequately resourced to deliver the full curriculum, and there is software for all the components of the subject. The school is shortly to have computers in each classroom linked to the Internet. It also has Internet safety procedures and parents are aware of its policy in this area.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. ICT is used well by some teachers to develop learning across the curriculum but the overall pattern is inconsistent. A Year 5 English lesson was taught in the computer suite so that the word processing facility could be used to practise note-making. Computers in classrooms are also used well to support pupils' learning in some lessons, for example in a Year 3 mathematics lesson. However, opportunities are missed in other lessons to use computers to practise or reinforce key skills.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in **history** and there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards or the quality of teaching and learning. Planning documents indicate appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum requirements in the subject. Visits to museums and other sites linked to the topics are a strength of the work. Pupils in discussion remember this part of the work best. Samples of current and previous written work show that history is not being used well enough to extend writing skills by giving practice in different forms of writing.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good development of early mapping skills.

- Effective use of fieldwork.
- Well considered use of visual aids.
- Inconsistency in the depth of treatment of topics.

Commentary

76. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 2. Pupils build up their mapping skills well at an early stage by exploring the immediate area of the school and identifying key features on local maps. This enables them to plot their own routes from home to school. By the end of Year 1 pupils are working with maps of the United Kingdom. In a challenging Year 2 lesson pupils explored a world map and identified the location of famous landmarks, such as the Kremlin, the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty. This provides a very good grounding for the further development of mapping skills in Years 3 to 6, where Ordnance Survey maps and world climate charts are studied.

77. The early fieldwork skills that are fostered in the local environment work are built on well, when pupils study contrasting localities, such as a village or a seaside town. These first-hand experiences contribute significantly to pupils' understanding of different landscapes and the impact on the lives of the people who live there. These visits are particularly important in this school where many of the pupils will have made only limited journeys outside their immediate home area.

78. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers use a good variety of visual materials, including pictures, charts, overhead projector slides and photographs, to illustrate their explanations. These help to stimulate pupils' interest and help them to envisage different geographical areas as well as supporting their learning.

79. The scrutiny of last year's work in geography revealed that there was some inconsistency in the quality and depth of work between year groups. While some pupils had considered their geography topics in detail, other classes had only a superficial coverage of the topic. This inconsistency was also found in the quality and range of writing. Some pupils had researched a country or area and prepared a talk but others had a limited writing experience and had been careless in their use of spellings, punctuation and handwriting.

80. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. There is a clear scheme for coverage of the National Curriculum and topic resource boxes have been developed but the co-ordinator has had little opportunity to work with teachers to raise standards.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The valuable contribution made by visitors and visits to pupils' learning.
- The good links between religious education teaching and the school's values.
- The interesting range of activities in some lessons.
- The lack of clear guidance on assessment.
- The limited opportunities for pupils to write.

Commentary

81. Pupils gain a sound understanding of Christianity, through exploring the meaning of the main Christian festivals, learning about the life of Jesus, following other stories from the Bible and learning about the significance of the Bible. Pupils are taught about some of the important festivals, beliefs and forms of worship of other faiths, including Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and Buddhism. Visits to churches, a synagogue and a mosque make a good contribution to pupils' understanding. The local vicar is a regular visitor to school and another governor talks to pupils about Judaism. There are plans to invite visitors from more faiths to talk to pupils. These opportunities enrich the subject well.

82. Helpful links are drawn between the stories from religions and the pupils' own lives. In a discussion about the story of Jesus healing a leper pupils considered what it must feel like to be an

outcast and came to the conclusion that we should accept everyone regardless of their problems. Similarly, the story of the Lost Son brought out the importance of being able to offer and to accept forgiveness. Such lessons reinforce the school's inclusive and caring ethos and contribute well to pupils' moral development.

83. Teaching is satisfactory overall and occasionally very good. In one very good lesson, pupils were involved in a range of activities including simple role-play of the main characters in a parable. This teaching strategy engaged the interest and attention of the rest of the class. Effective questioning encouraged pupils to think about the meaning and to relate it to their own lives. As a result, they learnt well, listening to each other's explanations of when they had done something wrong. This motivated them to work well when they were given independent tasks on other parables.

84. There is no guidance for teachers on assessing how well pupils are learning. In consequence, pupils of differing abilities are not given work that is matched closely enough to their previous learning. From scrutiny of previous work it is evident that too often all the pupils in the class are given the same task, although pupils with special educational needs are usually given support to complete it. Teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' work is not always high enough. Marking is often simply ticks, and occasionally some work is left unmarked. Pupils seldom know what they need to do to improve.

85. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The present co-ordinator has only very recently taken on responsibility for the subject and already plans to undertake a work scrutiny. Planning for religious education matches what is expected in Trafford schools. The previous co-ordinator completed a monitoring report suggesting teachers should plan more opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes. However, there is little evidence of this guidance being put into practice and there is still a limited range of writing.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. There was too little evidence to make overall judgements about the provision for **art and design**. During the inspection, only two art and design lessons were seen. Scrutiny of wall displays and of pupils' sketchbooks gave limited evidence of progression of skills. Achievement was satisfactory in the two lessons seen. Pupils improved their skills as a result of good demonstrations and clear explanations from the teachers and well structured practical activities. However, standards were below those expected in these two lessons.

87. Only one **design and technology** lesson could be seen and there was insufficient evidence of finished work to enable overall judgements to be made about provision.

88. In the Year 6 lesson seen pupils achieved well in response to knowledgeable and confident teaching. Pupils demonstrated the expected skills for their age in stitching slippers. They showed an appropriate appreciation of the need to design their products. However, in discussion about their previous design and technology work, they could not remember evaluating their finished work or suggesting changes to improve their work.

Music

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extra-curricular choir is very well supported.
- Instrumental tuition has recently been introduced as an extra-curricular activity.
- Few teachers have personal expertise in music.

Commentary

89. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily as a result of sound teaching, and standards are those expected by Years 2 and 6. By Year 2, pupils recognise high and low sounds in music. Older pupils work collaboratively to make their own musical compositions, which they perform in front of classmates. Singing is practised regularly in weekly hymn practices, and broadly matches the expectations for pupils by the time they are seven and eleven. However, very few older pupils sing in assemblies with enthusiasm. Because there are few teachers with any music expertise, these singing sessions are not used to full advantage to improve the quality of pupils' singing.

90. A strong feature is the enrichment to the curriculum of the choir, coached by a very enthusiastic supply teacher. This enthusiasm is passed on to the pupils. Approximately 50 pupils regularly give up part of lunchtime to rehearse songs they are to perform at a local music festival.

91. Few teachers have confident personal music skills. In consequence, many teachers rely heavily on a commercial scheme. This ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to the curriculum, but some teachers lack confidence in adapting these plans to meet the particular needs of the pupils in their class. When pupils spent the whole lesson being taught as a whole class, several pupils lost interest. As a result, the teacher spent too much time managing the challenging behaviour of some pupils. In better lessons, pupils are given a variety of tasks and work together collaboratively in small groups.

92. The school is seeking to broaden the musical opportunities for pupils. For example, the school now offers instrumental tuition as an extra-curricular activity at the end of the school day. Already this is beginning to impact on pupils' achievement in music lessons. In a lesson in Year 4, one pupil, learning to play the violin, used his knowledge of musical notation to support a group of classmates well when they were recording their own compositions.

Physical Education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths

- Teachers' confident subject knowledge.
- Good targeting of intervention and guidance.
- Strong links with local professional sports clubs and with other schools in the area.

Commentary

93. The quality of teaching seen in the three lessons observed was good. Teachers' confident subject knowledge leads to well planned lessons, in which pupils move smoothly between activities and the good pace maintained keeps pupils actively involved. Good account is taken of health and safety factors and lessons include appropriate warm up and cool down activities. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils warmed up well in a 'catching tails' activity, listening carefully to the teachers' instructions during the activity. Teachers make good use of demonstrations to help pupils improve their skills. This was seen in a Year 4 gymnastics lesson, where the class teacher demonstrated a 'cat spring'. This resulted in the pupils working hard to improve their skill of undertaking a new jump technique.

94. Teachers monitor pupils' progress well during lessons. They quickly identify those needing support or extra instruction and those who are using the skills and techniques well. Where there are just a few pupils experiencing difficulties, they work alongside them. When there are common weaknesses, they intervene and refocus pupils' attention on the key points. They make effective use of pupil demonstrations to illustrate and reinforce good performances and this leads to other pupils improving their own techniques. Once pupils have grasped the basic techniques, teachers increase the degree of challenge to extend the skills. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils were moved on

well from basic chest passes to high and low passes. In consequence, pupils achieve well as they move through the school. They achieve the expected standards in Years 1 to 2 and in Years 3 to 6.

95. Pupils have benefited from specialised coaching from local professional clubs situated near to the school. For instance, four coaches from a soccer club coached Year 5 pupils in how to handle and control a ball using different parts of their bodies. The pupils responded well to a series of physically challenging activities, and worked well in pairs when passing the ball to their partner. Coaches from a local rugby union club have also worked with pupils on key skills, and a member of a local hockey club has introduced pupils to his sport. There are good sporting links with local high schools where pupils participate in tournaments or skills courses.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education, including citizenship, is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health education is very well taught.
- There is a thorough programme of topics that promote citizenship and pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

96. The school's personal, social and health education programme is very effective. It promotes pupils' understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle extremely well. Having been one of the first schools to receive a *Healthy School* award, the school has just become the first school in Trafford to achieve a *Healthy Futures* award.

97. Personal, social and health education makes a strong contribution to pupils' moral and social development, for example when pupils take turns, sitting in a circle, to share their concerns and their ideas about values such as friendship. Such activities also help to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, many pupils are hesitant about sharing their feelings, and too many 'pass' without making any contribution.

98. Pupils are encouraged to talk about important values, such as the importance of how we treat others, and the need for rules. By Year 6, pupils are becoming aware of their role as citizens. In a lesson they discussed very sensibly the role of the government in making decisions and choices that affect all the people in the country. Their list of spending priorities was well considered and they could support their ideas with sensible arguments. One suggestion was that the minimum wage should be at least £10 an hour, with more pay for teachers!

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
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).