

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ACCRINGTON HYNDBURN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Accrington

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119183

Headteacher: Mr J Boden

Lead inspector: Mr F Carruthers

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004

Inspection number: 266273

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:	506
School address:	Park Road Accrington
Postcode:	BB5 1ST
Telephone number:	01254 233171
Fax number:	01254 301631
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr L Dickinson
Date of previous inspection:	17 <sup>th</sup> May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is much larger than the average of primary schools nationally. All but 66 of the 506 pupils on roll are from minority ethnic groups and have additional support through the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant. Nearly all have British Pakistani heritage and 218 are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The main mother tongue of most pupils is Panjabi, and a few speak Urdu or Gujarati. The remaining pupils are White-British. The school is resourced for a variety of different special educational needs, including pupils with speech and language difficulties and those with emotional or behavioural difficulties. Over one third of pupils have special educational needs and this is well above average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is also high (4 per cent). The attainment of the majority of the children on entry to the nursery is low, because most can speak very little or no English and their personal and social development is also low. Levels of social disadvantage locally are well above average, though many pupils of Asian heritage benefit from living in an extended family. Pupil mobility<sup>1</sup> is well above average, especially in the older age groups. The school has funding for a Nurture Group, provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and accommodates a speech and language facility in the building. The school has a School Achievement Award (2000) and the Healthy School Award (2004).

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<sup>1</sup> The proportion of pupils who start or leave the school at times other than starting in the nursery or reception classes and leaving at the end of Year 6.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21285	Mr F Carruthers	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Religious education The Foundation Stage
13459	Mrs E Mills	Lay inspector	
19041	Mr R Linstead	Team inspector	Science Physical education English as an additional language
21243	Mrs L Moore	Team inspector	Mathematics Personal, social and health education Music Special educational needs
32180	Mr D Sleightholme	Team inspector	English Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school.** Pupils overcome significant barriers to learning and achieve well. The quality of education, leadership and management is good. The school gives **good** value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils learning English as an additional language have acquired the language very well by the time they are in Year 6 because of the good support they receive. The school-wide focus on developing pupils' speaking skills is vital for raising standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Children get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup> because of very good teaching and provision.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good provision for them.
- The headteacher and senior staff have led the drive to raise standards well, but the system for monitoring teaching is not rigorous enough to contribute significantly to improvements in its quality.
- The staff effectively support pupils' personal development and encourage them to become responsible and caring individuals. There is a very strong emphasis on doing the best for pupils and the school has a number of successful initiatives to support pupils' individual needs very well.
- Although the school works hard to encourage and reward good attendance, rates remain below those achieved nationally. Some parents do not do enough to ensure their children attend regularly.
- Teaching assistants, nursery nurses and bi-lingual staff make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning and achievement.
- Systems to track pupils' progress over time are inconsistent across age groups and do not pick up sufficiently well how the different groups of pupils, such as girls or White-British pupils, are performing.
- The amount of time allocated to lessons in Years 3 to 6 is insufficient.
- Links with the community and with other schools are very good.

School improvement has been good since the last inspection. Standards are rising and the quality of education has been enhanced by addressing the key issues arising from the last inspection, establishing further initiatives to support pupils, and making significant improvements to the accommodation and resources. However, levels of attendance remain too low despite the school's good efforts.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E*	E	E	D
mathematics	E	E*	E	D
science	E	E*	E	D

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils achieve well.** The vast majority of pupils are learning English as an additional language. Thanks to the very good provision, the children in the nursery and reception classes make good

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage in this school consists of the nursery and reception classes  
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progress and this good achievement continues in Years 1 and 2. Though standards are well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, pupils are beyond the early stages of learning the language and have a good grounding to take them on. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6 almost two thirds of them have reached the nationally expected Level 4, in English. Standards in mathematics and science are well below the national average and below average compared with similar schools. Standards in national tests have risen well in recent years, most noticeably in Year 2. Most pupils are fluent in two languages, their mother tongue and English, by the time they are in Year 6. Boys catch up with girls in Years 3 to 6 and begin to perform better than them. However, the school has not analysed data about the different groups of pupils in school, for example White-British boys or British Pakistani girls, to confirm that none are being left behind.

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well. **Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** Rates of attendance are too low and have an adverse impact on standards of attainment.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good.**

Strengths of the teaching include the contribution that support staff make to the pupils' achievement and the commitment of all to do the best for the pupils. The satisfactory curriculum is enhanced by initiatives, such as the Nurture Group, which promote the individual needs of pupils. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. However, teaching time in Years 3 to 6 is below the recommended minimum and some subjects, such as physical education, have a small share. Provision for the care, health and safety of pupils is good. Links with parents are effective and those with other schools and the community are very strong.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher and senior staff lead the school's development well, but the monitoring of the school's performance and of the quality of teaching is not rigorous enough. Governance of the school is satisfactory. The chairman leads the governing body well and is very committed to the success of the school. Governors are supportive of the school but do not question and challenge the senior managers enough.

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

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents believe the school does its best for pupils and say it has a strong standing in the local community. Few have concerns. Pupils confirm that they enjoy school and have good relations with staff.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Analyse better the trends in performance and attendance of the different groups of pupils in school in order to identify any under-achievement and to improve attendance.
- Pursue the focus on developing pupils' speaking skills to continue the drive to raise standards.
- Give more responsibility to senior staff and subject leaders to develop and monitor teachers' performance and the quality of teaching in subjects across the curriculum.
- Review and increase the amount of teaching time in Years 3 to 6 to ensure all subjects are covered well.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Pupils achieve well over time from low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good gains in acquiring the language. Standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6 and below average compared to similar schools. They have risen well, however, since the time of the last inspection.

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

- Children get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language have acquired the language very well by the time they are in Year 6 but they have difficulty inferring meaning from texts they read and reading and understanding problems and concepts in mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good provision for them.
- In Years 3 to 6, British Pakistani girls make satisfactory progress but do not match the good progress made by boys.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children start in nursery with very low levels of attainment. They make good progress and achieve well in both the nursery and reception classes in all areas of learning because of the very good provision, which includes a very good ratio of adults to children, highly skilled staff and very good levels of bi-lingual support. The school is committed to providing maximum levels of staffing in the younger age groups and this policy pays dividends. It means the children settle in well and begin to make real strides in their personal development so that they play imaginatively by the time they are in the reception classes and co-operate well with one another. Children soon understand much of what is happening in the nursery thanks to the bi-lingual support and, though speaking comes more slowly, they achieve well in communication, language and literacy. Speaking, reading, mark making and writing are well below average by the time the children start in Year 1. In all areas of learning, except personal and physical development, most children are still working towards the nationally expected goals for learning by the end of the reception year. In their personal and physical development, most have achieved the goals for learning.
2. The overall achievement of pupils with English as an additional language, who are the great majority of the pupil roll, is good in most subjects of the National Curriculum. This is because all pupils benefit from the very wide range of support strategies the school has developed. Girls achieve higher standards in literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 2, but boys do better in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. This is the reverse of the national pattern for boys and girls but more in line with findings about the performance of British Pakistani girls in schools nationally. The reason appears to be because boys make slower progress in learning English up to the age of seven but catch up in the next four years. They receive greater support for their education from home than girls receive, for a significant number of whom school begins to take a lower priority. The achievement of both boys and girls in their bi-lingual command of English by the time they leave school is very good. By the time they are in Years 5 and 6, the pupils' main needs are understanding the nuances of what they read in English, mathematics and science so that they can tackle the difficult problems they are set in national tests. The school's current focus on improving the pupils' speaking skills and allowing them time to practise reading aloud is very important in this respect.



3. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across all classes because of the high quality of the support provided by the school, which also ensures smaller numbers in most classes and teaching groups. Teaching these pupils in sets grouped according to their prior attainment contributes to their good progress in junior classes, especially as lower attaining sets have more adult support and fewer pupils in lessons. The school provides for a number of pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. As far as possible, these pupils receive full or part-time support so that they can be taught in classes with their peer group. The pupils make good progress in their academic learning because of the one-to-one support they receive. Pupils in groups with specific provision, such as the Nurture Group and Better Reading Group, or who receive support for speech and language difficulties, also achieve well as a result of the clearly defined aims that staff have for these pupils and the high quality support provided by the well-qualified teachers and assistants.
4. Standards by the end of Year 2 are well below the national average but this masks the good achievement of pupils in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. What is clear is that thanks to the good provision in Years 1 and 2, standards are rising at a rate above the national trend upward in recent years. This is evident, for example, in the table below.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.1 (11.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	12.9 (12.7)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.3 (13.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 71 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well below average and below the average of schools with similar prior attainment at the end of Year 2. Nevertheless, they have risen in line with the national trend upward in recent years. Pupils do very well to overcome the significant barriers to learning they experience, especially in relation to acquiring an additional language, English, and for some, having to do without good support from home. The mobility of pupils, especially during the junior years, also has an adverse impact on standards and the poor attendance of a minority of pupils affects the progress that these pupils make. The school has not compiled a list of gifted and talented pupils so it is not possible to judge their achievement accurately. Pupils with talent in sports such as cricket are given every encouragement to take part in after-school clubs and to join local clubs outside school.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.4 (24.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	24.3 (23.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	25.8 (25.1)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are very good. Attendance rates are unsatisfactory. Punctuality is satisfactory. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their very good attitudes to their learning help them to achieve well.
- Efforts to promote and reward good behaviour are very effective.
- The staff effectively support pupils' personal development and encourage them to become responsible and caring individuals.
- Although the school works hard to encourage and reward good attendance, rates remain below those achieved nationally.

## Commentary

6. Parents agree that their children like coming to school and their views are endorsed by the pupils themselves who try very hard in all that they do. In lessons they listen very well to their teachers and do their best in their work. Pupils are keen to please their teachers and carry out their tasks diligently. They take part very enthusiastically in all aspects of school life, including extra-curricular activities. Pupils are pleasant, well mannered and polite to adults and to each other.
7. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, with much emphasis on the praising and rewarding of good behaviour. Children in the nursery quickly learn the routines and soon know what is expected of them. Throughout the school, teachers and other members of staff insist on high standards of conduct and are skilful in managing the potentially disruptive behaviour of the pupils with recognised behavioural difficulties. The reward system is well understood and appreciated by pupils who work hard to gain the certificates presented in assemblies. Incidents of bullying or racist language are rare and are dealt with swiftly when they do occur. The very good behaviour of pupils in lessons, around school and in the playground represents a clear improvement since the previous inspection. Exclusion is used sparingly and as a final resort. The rate of exclusion is above the average of primary schools and reflects the high proportion of pupils attending the school's facility for pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Asian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
66	9	0
9	1	0
419	3	0

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

8. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' self-esteem and to instil in them self-respect and confidence as well as respect for others. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves. They raise funds for charities and are currently helping a school in South Africa by sending books and other resources. As pupils move through the school, they are given increasing opportunities to take responsibility and older pupils respond very well to these. They have jobs to do, helping teachers, acting as monitors and looking after younger children. The school promotes racial harmony very well and the pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural nature of society is good, thanks to provision in subjects such as personal, social and health education and religious education.

## Attendance

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003 - 2004(%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.9	School data	2.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

9. Attendance rates at the school are below the national average rates. There have been problems with the collection of accurate information, which led to incorrect data being submitted to the Department for Education and Skills for the last school year. The correct figures are given in the table above. These problems with data handling have not yet been fully addressed by the school. Overall, the actions that the school takes to ensure attendance are good. Although the attendance of individual pupils is tracked well and absence followed up, the school does not look closely enough at whole-school attendance problems or monitor the attendance of groups of pupils with sufficient rigour. One problem which seriously affects attendance rates is that of pupils taking extended holidays during term time. The school is tackling this by providing strict guidelines and removing pupils from the roll if leave exceeds the requested length. Taking time out of school has a serious impact on the learning of those pupils.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is good with several strengths in initiatives to help pupils to achieve well and links with the community. There are weaknesses in the curriculum and procedures to assess pupils' progress.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Procedures to assess the progress that pupils make are satisfactory overall and there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching assistants, nursery nurses and bi-lingual staff make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning and achievement.
- Teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Procedures to assess the progress made by children in the Foundation Stage are very good. In Years 1 to 6, they are good in English but overall, systems to track pupils' progress over time are inconsistent across age groups and do not pick up sufficiently well how the different groups of pupils, such as girls or White-British pupils, are performing.
- The staff's commitment to giving everyone the best opportunities is very good.
- Pupils work hard in lessons and become more and more confident and independent but they are not always made aware of what they must do to improve their work.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 67 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	14 (21%)	41 (61%)	12 (18%)	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.*

10. Teaching and learning are good. The majority of the very good teaching is in the Foundation Stage and there are examples of very good teaching in most other year groups. The proportion of good or better teaching is just above the average found in most primary schools. Most aspects of the teaching, such as teachers' expertise, expectations and pupil management, are good or better. However, there are occasions in some satisfactory lessons when the pace of learning dips, for example in the plenary sessions at the end of lessons. These minor shortcomings have not been picked up by monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, which is not rigorous enough.
11. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and this is largely because of the very effective teamwork among staff. Bi-lingual staff and learning support assistants contribute very well to the work of the teachers and nursery nurses. There is a high level of expertise among them and nursery nurses in particular teach small groups of children well. They intervene positively in their learning, especially in role-play areas, in order to promote the children's learning of English.
12. Teaching and learning for pupils for whom English is an additional language are good. Pupils receiving additional support when they are at the earliest stages of learning English make very rapid progress because of the expertise and experience of the large number of support staff and their skill in working bi-lingually in community languages. The effective work of the teachers employed to promote the achievement of minority ethnic pupils has improved the provision in school. There is joint planning with teachers, parent and community links have been improved, and resources have been developed well. The senior management of the school is fully committed to very good levels of staffing in order to promote the achievement of all and help them to overcome barriers to learning.
13. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Within full class lessons, teachers plan carefully to make sure that challenging work is provided for all groups of pupils. This helps the pupils to achieve success and builds their confidence, so that they try hard and learn well. When pupils are taught as individuals or in small groups, teaching is usually good and well targeted towards the pupils' needs. This results in good achievement.
14. Pupils learn well and are attentive in whole-class sessions. They settle down to activities quickly and soon learn to work well both independently and when in groups. They overcome barriers to learning such as acquiring English very well over time. Their very good attitudes to learning contribute well to their good learning. They know that staff are keen for them to overcome whatever hurdles they have, whether they be special educational needs, physical disabilities or learning English as an additional language. Pupils who display emotional or behavioural difficulties are given good support in lessons, so that their behaviour is often good and they take part in activities. Support staff contribute very well to their learning and help them when they find it difficult to cope in the classroom.
15. Procedures to assess the pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall, with several strengths and some areas for improvement. The quality of assessment of the achievement of children learning English as an additional language is very good in the Foundation Stage,

where close analysis is kept of the steps that the children make in the early stages of learning an additional language. Procedures are satisfactory when pupils are beyond the early stages. However, staff do not check carefully the more advanced skills necessary for pupils to infer the meaning of text in a subject such as English, or to understand technical terms and concepts, for instance in mathematics or science. They have not fully explored how well different groups of pupils achieve in school. For instance, no analysis has been made of the reasons why boys catch up with the achievement of girls through Years 3 to 6.

16. In English, a number of good assessment procedures have been introduced, and these enable staff to monitor individual pupil progress. Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory overall. They are used well to group pupils into teaching sets but do not focus sufficiently on providing pupils with individual targets for improvement. Pupils do not always know what they must do to improve their work.
17. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is monitored well by class teachers and support assistants, with results of assessments being passed to the special educational needs co-ordinator for recording purposes. The current system for recording assessment results and other data is relatively new, however, and it is not yet used sufficiently well to track pupils' progress. For example, the computer program in use does not show how pupils move through different stages of special need on the school's list. Good use is made of a variety of assessments to measure the progress of pupils with special educational needs who work in small groups. Because many children and older pupils enter school with very little understanding of English, staff have translated one diagnostic test into the pupils' home language, which has been very helpful for deciding the type of support needed. This is good practice. However, the school has further to go in analysing and comparing the progress of pupils of Asian heritage, White-British pupils, boys and girls, and gifted and talented pupils.

## **The curriculum**

There is a satisfactory curriculum overall in the school. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in the nursery and reception classes. The amount of time allocated to lessons in Years 3 to 6 is in need of review, in order to ensure adequate depth of coverage in the foundation subjects<sup>3</sup>. There are good opportunities for enrichment, for example in extra-curricular activities in sport and through visits, visitors and overseas links. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good overall.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The amount of time allocated to lessons in Years 3 to 6 is insufficient.
- The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language is good. There are several valuable initiatives designed to help pupils to achieve well.
- The number of teachers and support staff is high, and they are well used so that they make a good contribution to the pupils' achievements.
- There have been a number of recent, significant improvements made to the accommodation, although overall provision remains satisfactory, because some other parts of the building and grounds have shortcomings.
- Resources to support teaching and learning are good in all subjects except physical education, where some apparatus is in need of repair.

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<sup>3</sup> These are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education  
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## Commentary

18. In the nursery and reception classes, the curriculum is very well planned and resourced in terms of staffing, accommodation and learning resources. It covers all areas of learning well. Provision is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in the remainder of the school. The teaching time in Years 3 to 6 is below the nationally recommended minimum and there has been no recent review to ensure adequate time for the teaching of the foundation subjects. For example, the time allocated for physical education does not provide sufficient opportunity for the practice of skills and contributes to the below average standards in elements such as gymnastics.
19. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of visits, visitors and overseas links. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 benefit from a good variety of extra-curricular activities, and links promoting sports are particularly good.
20. Across the school, there is a higher than average number of teachers, and the number of teaching assistants is very high, which is a well-planned use of funds. It is effective because support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement, and additional teaching staff make it possible to divide older year groups into smaller teaching sets, arranged according to pupils' prior attainment, for some subjects. Pupils receive more adult attention and support this way, which helps them to make good progress.
21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language is good. The school identifies their needs early and provides them with good support, for example in individual or small group work, or within a larger group of pupils with similar needs. There are several effective initiatives that the school has introduced to help pupils, such as the Nurture Group, which is specially designed to help infant-aged pupils in vulnerable circumstances, the facilities for specialist speech and language development, and the Better Reading Group. These are clear indications of the school's commitment to doing the very best for pupils.
22. Teachers and support staff take notice of the contents of pupils' individual education plans when planning work, so that their particular learning targets are catered for. The use of setting for literacy, numeracy and science is a good method for providing different levels of work to match the needs of pupils with different levels of attainment, and helps these pupils to achieve well. The school benefits from having a large number of teaching and support staff, many of whom have specialist qualifications in an element of special educational needs, providing high quality support for pupils. They help pupils who have statements of need for emotional and behavioural difficulties particularly well.
23. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have good access to the curriculum because of the very effective deployment of support staff, including speech therapists and special educational needs staff, good teamwork with class teachers and the fact that a high proportion of support staff are bi-lingual.
24. The school has benefited from a number of recent, significant improvements to the accommodation, which have enhanced learning provision. The addition of mezzanine floors has added quality accommodation for an ICT suite and additional classroom, and the school library is now an attractive and enclosed working area. These improvements are having a good impact on raising standards. Governors have planned a rolling programme of additional improvements, including refurbishments to pupils' toilets and the lowering of classroom ceilings, which help the old Victorian building to accommodate modern teaching strategies. All of the above, including the addition of disabled access to the ICT suite, are improvements since the previous inspection. The sloping playgrounds remain problematic, as they are unsuitable for many playground games or physical education, although the imminent

completion of the adjacent multiple-use games area is intended to alleviate much of this problem and to help to provide full coverage of the different elements of the subject.

25. The base room for provision for special educational needs is situated up a flight of steep stone stairs and is inaccessible to pupils with physical disabilities. The group teaching area consists of a narrow strip along the end of a classroom, separated by a low partition. This results in both the special needs teacher and the class teacher being constantly aware of any noise they or their pupils make, and also of noise from each other's lesson, restricting discussions, movement and more practical activities. This situation is unsatisfactory. Accommodation for larger groups of pupils with special educational needs is much more appropriate. The Nurture Group is situated in a classroom and the Speech and Language Group and Better Reading Group work in a smaller room which is adequate for their needs.
26. The building is clean and well maintained; classrooms and corridors are attractively decorated with appropriate displays and resources available for the pupils. This supports the school's caring and welcoming ethos. Resources to support teaching and learning are good, except in physical education, where outdoor areas are currently unsuitable and some equipment is in urgent need of repair.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides good support and guidance and has good measures in place to involve pupils in the school's work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very strong emphasis on the welfare and care of pupils and the school has a number of successful initiatives to support pupils' individual needs very well.
- Staff make sure that parents are very well informed and advised prior to their children starting nursery.
- The tracking of pupils' progress is not sufficiently well developed in all subjects to identify clearly what they need to do to improve.
- The school council is effective in providing opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and make decisions.

### **Commentary**

27. Pupils quickly develop good and trusting relationships with staff, know where to find help if they need it and are confident to ask for such help. Parents appreciate the care and concern shown by staff. Teachers and other members of staff know pupils very well and are aware of their personal circumstances. The very good relationships evident throughout the school, along with the large amount and high quality of adult support in school, ensure that pupils' needs are met. For those at an early stage in learning English, bi-lingual support staff provide very good help and make sure that these pupils can take part in lessons and learn well.
28. The school quickly identifies pupils who may require additional support and has introduced several initiatives to address the needs of these pupils. Some of the school's most vulnerable infant pupils spend their time in the Nurture Group, where staff help them to learn to cope with school routines and to overcome any difficulties they have whether they are academic, social or personal. Specialist members of staff in the Speech and Language Unit on site provide very useful support and contribute very well to pupils' achievements. Throughout the school staff are very sensitive to the needs of pupils.
29. Children new to the nursery are helped to settle very well. Nursery staff carry out a programme of very useful home visits prior to the start of the school year. Bi-lingual staff

accompany the nursery teacher and information is exchanged and used very well. Very good induction arrangements for pupils for whom English is an additional language integrate them very quickly and securely into school life and enable teachers to target support promptly and accurately. This is particularly important in the context of the school's high rates of pupil mobility. Procedures for transfer to secondary school are also effective in helping to ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of education.

30. Although teachers have good personal knowledge of their pupils, which helps them to monitor the progress of pupils in lessons, systems are not fully in place to track pupils' progress over time. Pupils do not always know what they must do to improve their work.
31. The school has improved its arrangements to allow pupils to become more involved in aspects of school life. School councillors help to organise fund-raising events and help in the day-to-day running of the school. Jobs include the supervision of younger children, helping teachers with resources and ensuring that movement around the school is safe and orderly. Pupils' views are canvassed and the school takes these views seriously. This has a positive effect on pupils' personal development.
32. Health and safety issues reported at the time of the last inspection have been addressed and the school takes the health, welfare and safety of its pupils very seriously. Safe practices are observed in and around school. The school is involved in the Healthy School programme and has achieved a Healthy Eating Award.

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

The school has good links with parents. Links with the community and with other schools are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has good relationships with parents who in turn have very positive views of the school and have a great deal of confidence in staff.
- The school is committed to partnerships and is very much part of the local community.
- The school has established very good links with other schools, both locally and abroad.
- There are a small number of parents who do not support the school well by failing to ensure that their children attend well.

### **Commentary**

33. Parents expressed very strong support for the school in the questionnaire for parents and in the meeting with inspectors. They feel that the school caters very well for their children's needs. They hold staff in high regard and few have any concerns. The school ensures that parents are provided with sufficient information about the school and about pupils' progress. The school provides adequate opportunities for formal consultations and in addition information is often exchanged by informal contact between parents and bi-lingual staff who are always on hand to deal with any queries. Staff both in the nursery and in the main school make home visits to talk to parents and to deal with any issues which may have arisen in school. Again, bi-lingual support staff have a pivotal role in ensuring that parents are well informed. Annual written reports to parents have been improved since the last inspection and are now good. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their child's progress and are invited into school to attend review meetings and other events. Although the majority of parents ensure that their children attend well, there are some who fail to adhere to local authority recommendations and take extended holidays to visit family members in Pakistan.



34. Links with the local community are very strong. Members of staff are represented on the Community Forum, which has successfully improved the partnerships with local community groups and with the local mosque. Courses for parents and for other members of the community are available in school both to learn English and to learn how to use a computer. The school has been instrumental in introducing computers into the local mosque. Sporting facilities for the use of the school and the community are currently under construction. The school's high profile in the community and its close links with local religious leaders represent an improvement since the last inspection and have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning.
35. The school has fostered very good links with other schools, both in this country and abroad. These links not only help to widen the experiences of pupils but also promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Local secondary schools provide expertise in technology and French. Partnership with a nearby special school enables both pupil exchanges and staff training. The headteacher has established links with schools in France and Italy through the Comenius Project, which have resulted in visits from staff and pen-pal links for pupils. A significant venture which has caught the imagination of pupils and has made a good contribution to their personal development is the link with a school in a rural area of South Africa. Pupils raise funds to provide books and other resources for disadvantaged pupils in the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The school has continued to improve since the last inspection, owing to the good leadership and management of the headteacher. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and members of the senior management team, whose significant areas of responsibility make a good contribution to the school. Governance is satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements, and governors support the school well, but they do not ask sufficiently challenging questions about curriculum and school improvement matters.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has ensured that standards and provision have improved well since the last inspection.
- The school's senior members of staff make an important contribution to school improvement.
- The school's system for monitoring teaching and learning is not rigorous enough to contribute to significant improvements in its quality, and subject leaders are not able to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.
- Governors have a clear view of the school's strengths, and support the school well, but they do not provide sufficient challenge.

### **Commentary**

36. The leadership of the school is good. The headteacher successfully leads and manages a very hard-working staff who provide quality opportunities in the classroom, and outside normal school hours. This includes a broad range of extra-curricular activities that pupils enjoy. The headteacher's drive and commitment have enabled the school to succeed with bids for grants that continue to improve provision for the school and the community. At the time of the inspection a multi-use games area and an outside classroom area were being developed with a grant from the New Opportunities Fund. The headteacher and governors have also successfully engaged the support of the local education authority to fund improvements to the building by creating extra classrooms in mezzanine floors, which include a purpose-built suite for ICT, which is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection in raising standards, in establishing targeted groups in English and mathematics and in improving the safety of play areas. There has been insufficient improvement in raising attendance levels, but the school has worked very hard to make parents aware of their responsibilities.

37. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, leads a united senior management team whose priority is school improvement. Management of the school is good. Each member of the senior management team has a key responsibility in areas where the school is seeking improvement. For example, they have roles in improving assessment procedures, raising standards in literacy, overseeing the provision in the Foundation Stage, improving levels of attendance and maintaining effective provision for the many pupils who have special educational needs. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and of English are very good, and in mathematics, science, ICT and religious education, they are good. Under the good leadership of the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs, provision has improved since the last inspection. In addition, the governor with responsibility for special educational needs makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of provision in her various roles as governor, parent and member of staff.
38. The senior management team is effective in developing key priorities in the school improvement plan but there are some areas for improvement. Self-evaluation and the use of performance indicators are satisfactory but there has been insufficient done to analyse trends over time. The headteacher manages the whole of the school's procedures for checking the performance of teachers, including all lesson observations. Inspection evidence suggests this satisfactory system is not effective delegation of responsibilities and does not enable senior staff to develop their leadership skills. Similarly, the headteacher completes most of the lesson observations intended to identify strengths in teaching and learning and areas for development in specific subjects. Whilst the quality of teaching is good, overall, these lesson observations do not improve it further because the judgements are not rigorous enough, and they do not identify any areas for improvement, such as effective use of plenary sessions at the end of lessons. The professional development and role of subject leaders are good overall but they do not have the opportunity to fulfil all the parts of their function, such as monitoring teaching.
39. The governing body fulfils its role satisfactorily. The chairman of governors has been associated with the school for a very long time and leads the team well. With fellow governors, he is keen to see it continue to improve. There is a regular cycle of meetings and the governing body, through its committees, gives support to school priorities, within the school improvement plan. It does not hold the school sufficiently to account, however. For example, in approving an appropriate curriculum there are some areas, such as physical education, that have been allocated insufficient time and this has an impact on the breadth of curricular opportunities. Similarly, the governors are not sufficiently involved in self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses, as they have supported practices, such as performance management arrangements and subject leader development, that restrict the staff's professional development.
40. The school financial management is secure. There are good procedures to ensure funds, such as those for provision for pupils with special educational needs, are used wisely, and are allocated to the most important educational priorities. Funding from the Ethnic Minorities' Achievement Grant, which is supplemented by the school, is very well used almost entirely to provide additional specialist staffing. However, some foundation subjects are allocated small amounts of money for learning resources each year and are not clearly timetabled for priority in the school's long-term improvement plan. The small deficit evident in end-of-year figures below has been turned into a small surplus of about 1 per cent of the budget by the late payment from the Children's Fund of salaries for some staff. Although unit costs are above the average of primary schools nationally, the school gives good value for money, helping pupils to overcome significant barriers to learning and to achieve well.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,401,222
Total expenditure	1,544,536
Expenditure per pupil	3019

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	131,623
Balance carried forward to the next	-11,691

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

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

41. Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. Sixty children enter the nursery in the September of the year they are three and attend part-time before transferring to one of the three reception classes. All but five of the children currently in the nursery are of Asian heritage and speak and understand their mother language, Panjabi, but have little or no English. The attainment of the majority on entry to the nursery is very low in most of the other aspects of their development, for example their personal development, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. The physical development of most children is well below average.
42. Both the nursery and reception classes have very good levels of staffing with several bi-lingual assistants who help both children and parents who have English as an additional language. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed, and teamwork is a noticeable strength. Two classes have more than one teacher, who job share very efficiently. The curriculum is very well planned and the children's progress is assessed very closely, especially in relation to the development of the children's language needs. Support for the children who have special educational needs in their personal development, communication language and literacy is very good. There is an imbalance of time between the morning and afternoon sessions, the morning session being a quarter of an hour longer. However, this does not make a significant difference to the overall quality of children's experiences, as the extra time is spent only on a short period of free play, in addition to the continuous access to outdoor play planned for all children.

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

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

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

- Children get off to a very good start thanks to the very good arrangements for induction into the nursery.
- They make very good progress because of the help they receive from staff in all classes.

#### **Commentary**

43. Some children start in the nursery with very limited experience of playing with other children. At this early stage of their time in school, it is evident that they play in isolation a lot, communicating with other children only occasionally. One or two communicate their needs by shouting "Teacher!" at any passing adult and pointing or showing something, or by shouting "Oy!" when another child gets in their way or they want something. Staff have established very good procedures to help prepare the children for starting in the nursery and make them feel welcome and secure. Teaching is very good, because of the very warm relationships between children and staff. All adults are very good role models and encourage the children to share and play more co-operatively so that by the time they are in the reception classes they are far better at playing imaginatively, for example in the 'doctor's surgery'. Though their use of English is still very limited, the children behave well and the atmosphere in classrooms is harmonious and busy. Close observation of the children helps the staff to assess their personal needs very well and identify those who might give cause for concern. Staff are committed to including everyone in the provision. For example, children in a nearby special school join reception classes on some afternoons. By the end of the reception year, the great

majority have achieved the nationally expected goals for learning in this aspect of their development.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers receive excellent support from nursery nurses and bi-lingual staff so that children make good progress in communicating and language development.
- The provision is very well planned to promote opportunities for speaking, listening, reading and early attempts at writing.

### **Commentary**

44. Almost all the children are learning English as an additional language. They achieve well over time because of very effective teaching. They gradually understand much of what is happening in the nursery through the excellent help provided by bi-lingual staff, who explain things in the mother tongue to the children with the least confidence in English. Most of these children are very quiet and do not volunteer to speak in English in front of the class. By the time they have spent a few terms in the nursery, their confidence has grown and conversations become more frequent between the children. This is where the very good provision for role-play makes a great contribution. In both the nursery and the reception classes, all children get very good opportunities to make conversation in the role-play areas, such as a house, shop, post office and doctor's surgery. Adults intervene positively to promote talk among the children. The ample resources for imaginative play in the hall are timetabled so that all reception-aged children share it and have regular sessions with adults. This is a significant improvement in provision since the time of the last inspection.
45. Children are introduced to stories and begin to understand the meaning of writing and the sounds that letters make. In the reception classes, the children have short sessions of the National Literacy Strategy and begin to identify common words in beginner reading books. They have opportunities to write, for example when they make lists for shopping. This is the slowest aspect to develop for children at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Most children in the current reception classes are at the stage of drawing lines and squiggles with little attention to the shape of the marks or the sound at the start of the words they might wish to write. By the end of the reception year, the children have made good progress but standards are well below average. Most children still have some way to go to reach the nationally expected goals for learning in communication, language and literacy.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision is very well planned to promote the children's mathematical understanding.
- Role-play areas allow children to use their early skills of counting.

### **Commentary**

46. Children in the nursery have frequent opportunities to learn about numbers and how to count. For instance, short sessions focusing on mathematics are led by the teacher and other adults to teach new concepts and to consolidate earlier learning. The children are grouped for these sessions according to their understanding of English, so that those with the greatest facility in

English can be challenged, while those with little spoken English are assisted effectively by bi-lingual staff. In one session, children were learning to identify different regular shapes correctly. Children with little English made good progress because the assistant who taught the group switched between English and Panjabi to help their understanding. Staff make good use of glove puppets to keep the attention and interest of the children in these sessions. The focus for learning, about mathematical shapes on this occasion, is carried over into other activities in the nursery, for instance sorting flat shapes in the water tray, so that learning is consolidated.

47. In the reception classes, short sessions of the National Numeracy Strategy promote the children's understanding well. Teachers make effective use of support staff to help children with special educational needs or those with low levels of English in these sessions. Teaching and learning are very good. At the time of the inspection, teaching focused on money and the value of coins. Children learned to sort the coins by colour, to count pennies up to the value of 10p and began to distinguish the different values of the coins. There was very good teaching in small groups by bi-lingual staff to help the children, and good opportunities to use cash tills in the role-play areas in the shared hall. Here adults intervened regularly in the play in order to direct the activities and consolidate learning about coins. In the nursery and reception classes, children have the chance to explore capacity in water play and to sing and chant simple number songs and rhymes. Children make good progress towards the national goals for learning but standards are well below average in skills of calculation by the end of the reception year.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good range of activities for the children to experience indoors.
- The outdoor area is not planned to promote this area of learning fully.

### **Commentary**

48. Children in both age groups have lots of opportunities to widen their understanding of the world. Many start in the nursery with very limited knowledge and through water and sand play, small world play and building activities, they begin to experience different materials and what happens when they mix liquids and solids such as flour and water. They learn through play to distinguish between colours. The outdoor area, however, is not planned as well as it could be to promote this area of learning and this is an aspect for improvement now that the area has been extended to improve access for children in the reception classes.
49. Because teaching is very good, the children achieve well and by the time they enter the reception classes, they have a real curiosity about their surroundings though their ability to express themselves is limited. They are able to use new technology independently, such as listening centres, and control the mouse to play simple games and do artwork on the computer. In a very good lesson, reception-aged children tasted fruit and described the reasons for their preferences. Children with limited English received very valuable support from the bi-lingual staff so that they took a full part and were led to observe differences of shape, texture and taste. The children learned how to cut up the fruit to make a fruit salad. Here again, the key to the success of the lesson was the very good relationship between staff and children. Overall, children's achievement is good though few reach all the national goals for learning in this area of development by the end of the reception year.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area is planned well to develop the skills of children in the nursery.
- Reception-aged children have very good lessons of physical activity in the main school hall.

### Commentary

50. Children achieve very well as a result of the very good provision for both age groups. Children in the nursery run, skip and jump, and push, pedal and pull large wheeled toys in the outdoor area. They throw and bounce balls and begin to learn to catch. They learn how to play co-operatively with a parachute. Manipulative skills, such as cutting with scissors, develop more slowly. By the time the children are in the reception classes, they are able to control various parts of their body well. They listen to instructions and follow the teacher's directions in the school hall well. In a very good lesson, the children's learning focused on their feet. Through good demonstrations by the staff, the children learned good techniques of lifting their feet high and landing with knees bent. The lesson was fun for the children as they pretended their feet were stuck to the floor and had to peel them off, heels first. This helped their control and balance. By the end of the reception year, most children have achieved the national goals for learning in this area of their development.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good variety of activities for the children to enjoy.
- Music is very well taught to children in the reception classes.

### Commentary

51. On entry to the nursery, most children have had very little experience of painting and drawing. They enjoy many opportunities to paint with brushes, fingers, hands and tools but their pictures consist mainly of dabs and daubs with very little form. The children make good progress, however, so that the paintings of the children in the reception classes, though still immature, show recognisable images. There are good opportunities for the children in both age groups to make simple models using waste material and to decorate them with all kinds of finishes using glue. Children in the nursery learn simple rhymes and songs. Music is taught very well to children in the reception classes. In a very good lesson, the Foundation Stage co-ordinator built up sounds reflecting a gathering storm. The children clapped and banged parts of their body and then used a very good range of instruments, including rain sticks, cymbals and triangles, to create a picture in sound. The children learned how to follow simple orchestration as the teacher held up pictures denoting when to alter the dynamics of the sounds. Overall, children achieve well but standards are well below average by the end of the reception year in this area of development. In the element of music, children achieve the national goals for learning.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well below average speaking and listening skills are contributing to pupils' well below average attainment in literacy skills, overall.
- Very good leadership and management are contributing very well to subject developments.
- Good quality teaching is enabling pupils to achieve well.
- Literacy skills are used and developed well across the curriculum.
- Very good quality support staff make a big impact on pupils' learning.
- The use of assessment continues to improve as the school seeks to involve pupils more directly in their learning.

#### Commentary

52. English is an additional language for the majority of pupils, and therefore they start school with poorly developed English language skills. As a result of the good progress they make in the Foundation Stage, and the good quality teaching in Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well, and begin to develop basic skills in reading and writing. In the most recent national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, standards were well below national averages in reading and writing, partly because of pupils' limited experiences to develop English language skills outside school, and because they have a lot of catching up to do. Inspection findings reflect the results of the national tests. However, standards have risen above the national trend upward since the time of the last inspection. When standards are compared to those achieved by pupils in similar schools, writing matches their performance, but reading standards are well below average. Pupils' weaker performance in reading is largely due to difficulties they have understanding the meaning of text, rather than a lack of ability to read the words themselves. Consequently, pupils find it difficult to make inferences and deductions from the text, and this has an impact on progress in subjects across the curriculum. The school is aware of these difficulties, and works hard to improve pupils' skills through good, focused reading and comprehension sessions where the aim is to match pupils' level of understanding to their level of fluency in reading.
53. As they move through Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to achieve well because teachers plan activities that focus on developing literacy skills across the curriculum, and they make very good use of the skills of additional adults in the direct teaching of groups and individuals. Some classroom support staff are bi-lingual, and this enables them to give very good support to pupils who are at very early stages of developing English language skills. In the most recent national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, standards were still well below national averages, and below those of similar schools, but rising gradually. For example, almost one third more pupils achieved nationally expected levels in the 2004 tests, compared to five years earlier. This represents a good achievement, set against a background of well below average attendance owing to pupils' extended holidays, and a significant turnover of pupils, resulting in the make-up of classes changing frequently as new pupils arrive and others leave. Pupils who have English as an additional language, and those who have special educational needs, achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Boys' attainment has been higher than girls over the last few years, particularly at the end of Year 6. The school is still developing its systems for monitoring the performance of different groups, therefore it has not sought in-depth explanations for differences in the performance of girls and boys.
54. Through appropriate training and support from the local education authority, the school has worked hard to ensure teachers develop effective strategies in following national guidance on



the teaching of literacy, including an increased emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. These skills are well below average across the school, and are limiting pupils' progress in all aspects of English language development. In a good Year 5 history lesson, on differences between the Celts and Romans, pupils' speaking and listening skills were developed well when two teachers assumed the roles of people from the times, speaking about their life and experiences, and, in so doing, stimulating pupils to ask a lot of interesting questions. This reflects the school's commitment to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills across the curriculum.

55. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, with pockets of very good teaching in some year groups. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1 the teacher ensured there were opportunities to develop pupils' reading, writing and speaking and listening skills as they focused on instructions. She encouraged those who were reluctant to take part in discussion through very clear questions, rephrasing these when necessary. When the teacher introduced a puppet called 'Boris the Bat', pupils listened very carefully because the puppet, and the tie he wore, fascinated them. As they discussed how to write, "I like my tie", she ensured pupils concentrated on the sounds letters make, as well as checking pupils' understanding of how the letter 'e' makes a difference when it is added as the last letter of a word. In this very effective lesson, pupils had very good opportunities to listen and say the sounds, which helped them to write the sentence accurately on small whiteboards.
56. Leadership and management of the subject are very good because there is a strong focus on raising standards through checking on pupils' performance, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and providing appropriate training opportunities for staff. These very effective aspects of leadership and management are contributing to improvements that have seen standards rise gradually since the previous inspection. A number of good assessment procedures have been introduced, and these enable staff to monitor individual pupil progress so they can identify those who need to be included in the school's effective intervention strategies, or those who are exceeding nationally expected levels and need additional challenge. Assessment is satisfactory overall, because it does not focus sufficiently on setting pupils individual targets for improvement. The school is gradually introducing Assessment for Learning, which helps pupils understand what they need to do to be successful in their learning, and this is contributing to further improvements in the school's assessment systems. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. For example, the library has been upgraded, and this is contributing to pupils' good library skills, which they use to search for information in subjects across the curriculum, and standards have continued to rise. The school is well resourced to support literacy teaching, and funds have been used well to support the subject's priorities. There is satisfactory use of ICT to support pupils' learning when pupils work on spelling programs and word process stories, but computers are not used extensively in literacy lessons.

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

57. The school is using and developing pupils' literacy skills well across the curriculum. For example, in a good history lesson in Year 2, pupils put together interesting and imaginative accounts of famous events, showing a good understanding of how to put things in time order, and demonstrating good levels of independence as they looked up spellings they were unsure of, before checking them with an adult. Similarly, in science work in Year 2, pupils have written up the findings of rolling cars down a track in work on forces, in the form of a scientific report. These good opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills in other subjects are helping them to become confident writers and to raise standards in writing.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils do well in number, but less well when they need to use their understanding of English to solve mathematical problems.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and as a result, pupils' achievement is also good.
- The curriculum has been appropriately modified to suit pupils' capabilities, and its use when teaching pupils grouped according to their prior attainment is effective.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Numeracy skills are not developed well in other subjects.

## **Commentary**

58. Pupils' attainment is well below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, when compared with all schools nationally and below average when compared with similar schools. Standards have risen steadily over the past few years, in line with the national trend. Overall, girls' progress is very low when compared with the national average for girls; boys do slightly better than girls. However, pupils' achievement throughout the school is good overall, because of the good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also achieve well, as a result of the high quality of support provided for them.
59. There is a good emphasis on teaching number skills and pupils do well in these lessons. However, they often struggle when faced with mathematical problems that rely on their reading skills and understanding of English, and need support to help them understand what they need to do. As the quality of this support, from both the teaching staff and support assistants, is very good, pupils achieve well. Very little work on data handling was evident, although this is planned to be taught later in the term. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show that they know how to collect data and show the results in a chart or graph, indicating that they remember what has been taught previously.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Teachers have a clear knowledge and understanding of the subject and of their pupils' needs, and plan lessons which are well matched to the pupils' capabilities. Staff provide high quality help and support for the pupils, their expectations are high and they encourage pupils to do their best, challenging the higher attaining pupils with well-targeted questions. Teachers' planning is based upon the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been modified so that appropriate work is provided for the needs of all groups of pupils, whilst still working towards the same learning objectives. This arrangement is a strength of the provision, as it ensures that work is appropriately matched to pupils' needs.
61. The subject is well led and managed by two very conscientious and hard-working subject leaders, who monitor teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. They also analyse test results and advise colleagues of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, so that they can adjust their planning appropriately. Unfortunately, much of their work is carried out in their own time as their allocated times for curriculum review do not coincide. Nor have they been given the opportunity to visit classrooms in order to observe mathematics teaching or to work alongside colleagues. This results in a disparity within their overall effectiveness.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. Numeracy skills are not well developed in other subjects. Although mathematics supports some ICT work and is occasionally used in science lessons, it is not systematically planned into other subjects to support and extend the curriculum.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well.
- Lessons and standards have improved a lot since the last inspection.
- Science makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Teachers do not use computers and assessment well enough to improve achievement.
- Leadership is good but does not have a big enough impact on standards.

### Commentary

63. Pupils enjoy lessons and work hard because teachers make learning interesting and exciting. As a result, pupils make good progress. For example, in the 2004 national tests, by the end of Year 2 nearly two thirds of pupils reached the standards expected for their ages and by the end of Year 6 three quarters did. This is a good achievement, as very few speak English when they start nursery, and many have to overcome a wide range of other language difficulties. In the national tests, girls do better than boys in Year 2, but not as well by Year 6. Inspection evidence confirms that overall, pupils achieve well each year and that standards are improving steadily, although they are well below national averages.
64. Teaching quality has improved since the last inspection and is nearly always good. Teachers' very good command of the topics and good quality resources stimulate enthusiastic learning. Booster classes taken by the subject leaders last year were highly successful in raising standards in Year 6. Many opportunities to discover science through investigations engage pupils strongly. Small class sizes, high levels of support and teaching in sets, grouped by the pupils' prior attainment, ensure pupils get very good one-to-one help. Faster learners and pupils with special educational needs therefore make good progress. However, teachers do not identify or provide for the very ablest pupils.
65. Rigorous questioning and careful planning and timing challenge pupils to think and work scientifically. Teachers also encourage learning through discussion. As a result, pupils write up their work in thoughtful detail, using their own words and illustrations. Investigations encourage teamwork. Lessons therefore make strong contributions to developing pupils' English language and social skills. High quality classroom display and access to a good collection of science books in the library improve reading and thinking skills, helping pupils to master key scientific language.
66. Teachers do not use assessment enough to check the rates of pupils' progress. The school is piloting new methods, but these are not improving progress. Similarly, lessons do not make enough use of computers for handling data from pupils' observations, nor of new software and the Internet to improve the quality and pace of learning.
67. The good improvements since the last inspection are down to the subject leader's conscientious and sustained hard work, supported by another member of staff. Good leadership and management underpin good achievement in the classroom and national tests. As subject leaders do not observe lessons or demonstrate teaching they do not have enough opportunities to evaluate initiatives, support colleagues or share good practice.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Among the staff there is a good level of expertise to teach the subject.
- The subject is well led and managed but there are few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
- There have been good improvements to resources since the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject.
- The use of ICT in some subjects is under-developed.

## Commentary

68. Pupils achieve well, including those of Asian heritage, who are among the highest attaining pupils in school, British white pupils and pupils with special educational needs. They build on previous learning well so that standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are just below average overall, though in some elements of the work, for example creating multi-media presentations, they are in line by the end of Year 6. On the other hand, pupils in the current Year 6 have not learnt all there is to know about sending emails, though younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 do have the opportunity to do so, thanks to improvements to resourcing. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make pictures using *clipart* from graphics programs. They can click and drag pictures and know how to infill. They have written sentences and can save and print their work. They can make a programmable toy move in a given direction. Pupils in Year 5 use data-handling programs well and have learnt how to ask questions of a record, for example about Tudor kings and queens. They use the Internet confidently to research topics and can construct geometric shapes on the screen using *logo* and their mathematical knowledge of degrees of turn.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to learning. Their knowledge and skills have kept pace with developments in the curriculum because teachers' expertise and the school's resources have improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. For example, learning assistants as well as teachers contribute well to pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs. There is a well-equipped suite of networked computers, a set of laptops timetabled for use with Years 1 and 2, and individual computers in every classroom. Teachers' planning is good and provides full coverage of the National Curriculum, and there is an effective system of assessing pupils' progress, though it does not involve making the pupils themselves aware of what skills they need to achieve next.
70. Leadership and management of the subject are good but there are very few opportunities for the subject leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to suggest improvements. The school has made good progress since the time of the last inspection.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The use of ICT in other subjects is satisfactory overall, good in some subjects and an aspect for improvement in others. Examples where computers are used well include art and design, and history. The Internet is generally used well to research topics, though this is less evident in geography. Pupils have the opportunity to make polished versions of their work in English and to make floor plans for topics in design and technology. Very good use is made of a microscope linked to a computer in science but there are fewer examples of pupils recording the results of investigations, using graphics programs. There has been no review of its use in other subjects and there are no guidelines in place.

## HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in **geography** and three lessons were seen in **history**. These subjects were sampled and no judgements can be made about the overall provision in either one.

72. Discussions with the subject leader in geography indicate an appropriate curriculum is in place, largely following national guidance. The subject policy has recently been updated and discussions with a local authority adviser have supported the school in introducing a useful system of assessment. Pupils in Year 2 have made good links with work in literacy when they have used the stories of Katie Morag to take them to the imaginary Isle of Struay. They have produced a map of the island, looking at land use, written postcards to friends and relatives back home and made good comparisons between life in Accrington and Struay. This work is of good quality, and supports the development of literacy and geography skills well. Pupils in Year 6 have studied the Orinoco River and become familiar with some important features of rivers, such as meanders and deltas. They know about the effects of erosion and deposition. Some pupils have searched the Internet for information about rivers, and others have used the recently upgraded library to search for information.
73. No judgement can be made about provision in history. Discussions with the subject leader indicate that an appropriate curriculum is in place that largely follows national guidance. The subject leader collects samples of pupils' work to help her to make judgements about standards and to check what has been covered. Pupils in Year 2 have enjoyed work on the Great Fire of London, finding out about how the fire started and spread and writing their own diaries in the style of Samuel Pepys. In a good lesson, the teacher developed the pupils' skills of writing well as they put events in sequence. In a good lesson with pupils in Year 5, the two teachers adopted different roles, one as a Roman soldier and the other as a Celtic woman. They held the pupils spellbound as they talked of their life and experiences in Roman and Celtic times. This led to the pupils asking a number of interesting questions that extended their learning well. This was an effective method and developed the pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Pupils in Year 6 find out about Victorian times and have used the Internet for research.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and those learning English as an additional language overcome the significant barriers to learning that they experience.
- Teachers handle religious and moral issues sensitively with pupils.
- The subject is well led and managed but there are few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
- Though the quality and quantity of resources are generally good, the budget allocated to the subject is low.

### Commentary

74. Pupils achieve well and standards are broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' responses evident in both the few lessons observed and the scrutiny of work are sensitive and show considerable maturity by the time the pupils are in Year 6. This is because the teachers cover the curriculum in good detail, and units of work, such as 'The Journey of Life', give pupils the opportunity to reflect on events in their own lives as well as those of religious leaders. Pupils learn from religion as much as they learn about different faiths. Many pupils of Asian heritage bring to discussions insights from their religious training outside school and this contributes well to the learning of all, including those with special educational needs. Pupils show an increasing interest in the beliefs and values of other faiths. They practise skills of writing in this subject well and all are encouraged to present their written work carefully and neatly.

75. Three lessons were seen, two of which were satisfactory and one which was good. However, from a scrutiny of the pupils' work across year groups, it is clear most of their learning is good. Strengths in the teaching are the teachers' expectations of pupils' maturity, behaviour and the presentation of their work. The teaching is enhanced by regular visits to places of worship and visitors to school. The locally agreed syllabus also provides a checklist on pupils' progress, thus helping teachers to pitch the work at a good level of challenge and to amend the planning to cater for pupils who have greater difficulty with writing.
76. The subject leader provides good leadership and management and has helped to maintain the quality of provision since the time of the last inspection. She has overseen several changes to the syllabus but not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are generally good, especially for the study of Christianity and Islam. However, the annual allocation of funding is low and bids are made to the headteacher for specific purchases as the need arises. The subject has not been a priority for development in recent years and is not highlighted for attention in the next few years. These weaknesses hinder planning for the development of the subject.

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

These subjects were only sampled during the inspection. No overall judgement on provision in each subject is possible.

77. In **art and design**, displays around the school indicate that pupils experience the work of a good range of famous artists and have good opportunities to use a variety of media, such as paint, charcoal, chalk and collage. Sketchbooks are used well to give pupils the chance to experiment and draft pieces of work. Pupils create pictures of high quality using computers, for example in the style of Mondrian and Matisse. Opportunities to visit a local gallery enhance pupils' experiences, for instance when pupils in Year 5 study Tiffany glass. The subject leader is new to the role and is beginning to build on the well-established provision. Teachers' planning is good and follows national guidelines, and there is a simple and effective system of assessing pupils' skills in place.
78. **Design and technology** contributes well to pupils' learning. Units of work alternate every half-term with those in art and design and in addition there is a Technology Week. This is often held in the summer term, when all the school get involved in a single topic, such as book making, and when the focus is on fun. In the one lesson observed during the inspection, teaching and learning were good. Pupils in a Year 2 class were busy on a carousel of activities that involved all parts of the process of designing, making, writing about and evaluating vehicles. Standards of skill, such as manipulating tools, nuts and bolts in construction kits and sawing balsa wood, were below average overall and pupils needed a lot of help. The subject is well led and managed, and a very popular after-school club gives pupils in Years 3 to 6 a chance to enjoy simple sculpture, paper craft, textiles and food technology.
79. In a Year 1 lesson in **music**, the teacher demonstrated high levels of knowledge and skills in the subject, resulting in very good achievement. Pupils thoughtfully selected percussion instruments to represent noises in a favourite story, held them with care and played them with good control, watching the teacher carefully as she conducted them. They were totally immersed in the activity and it was clear from their high levels of concentration and careful response that they were experiencing "something special". Where the use of music was observed during the inspection, it enhanced the activity. For example, singing practice for pupils in Years 1 and 2 was an enjoyable time for learning and revisiting favourite songs. However, music is under-used in other areas, for example to help staff and pupils prepare for an act of worship by providing a reverent atmosphere or as a quiet background for other activities. Such opportunities were mentioned in the previous inspection report, but are no longer evident in school. The knowledgeable subject leader uses her own musical skills to develop enthusiasm in both the pupils and her colleagues. She works hard to support colleagues and monitors planning, but is not in a position to support or develop teaching and

learning across the school at present. Unfortunately, extra-curricular peripatetic musical instrumental tuition is no longer offered to pupils in the school, although the co-ordinator runs weekly choir rehearsals which are well attended and lead to performances in school and the local community.

80. Conversations with pupils and a scrutiny of planning show that **physical education** just meets statutory requirements. However, the small amount of time given to lessons does not give pupils enough opportunities to practise and apply new skills. As a result, standards in gymnastics are below average. Achievement in swimming continues to be good with nearly all pupils able to swim at least ten metres by the time they leave. The school also maintains very good extra-curricular provision. Boys and girls take part in a wide range of after-school activities, with effective coaching producing successful school teams. However, given the size of the school, neither accommodation nor resources are good enough to support pupils' overall physical development. Developments to adjacent land as a multi-use sports facility are almost complete at the time of the inspection and are intended to alleviate all the shortcomings in relation to physical education evident in the accommodation currently.

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

81. Too few lessons were seen to make an overall judgement on provision. The subject is used well to reflect the school's overall ethos of care and support. Teachers and pupils have an open and trusting relationship which supports frank discussions and honest opinions. Pupils in Year 1 discussed the difference between what they need and what they want, linking the discussion to their knowledge of healthy living. Pupils in the Nurture Group learn to take turns in speaking and to listen to each other's news and opinions. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated a clear understanding of the dangers of drugs, including smoking. The teacher skilfully helped them to try and prepare themselves for any future situations in which they might be subjected to peer pressure, by leading a discussion on "What would you do if...?"
82. The subject leader works hard to raise the awareness of staff and pupils to appropriate issues. Her caring and approachable manner helps to support colleagues well in planning to teach this sensitive but important subject.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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