

INSPECTION REPORT

ALDWYN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Audenshaw, Manchester

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106212

Headteacher: Tim Richards

**Acting Headteacher at the time of the inspection:
Beryl Pickford**

Lead inspector: Adrian Simm

Dates of inspection: 28th February – 3rd March 2005

Inspection number: 266285

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:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	303
School address:	Lumb Lane Audenshaw Manchester
Postcode:	M34 5SF
Telephone number:	0161 370 3626
Fax number:	0161 371 5714
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Graham Curtis
Date of previous inspection:	February 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Aldwyn Primary School educates 303 boys and girls between the ages of four and 11 years. This includes 38 children who attend full-time in the Reception class. Attainment of pupils on entry to the Reception Year is variable but as a whole is similar to other schools. The school is larger in number than other primary schools. The school serves its immediate surrounding area made up of mainly private housing. Around 11 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. Eighty-six per cent of pupils come from white British backgrounds. Those who do not are mostly of Pakistani heritage and speak fluent English. Around 10 per cent of pupils have special educational needs (SEN) because of learning difficulties or social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. This is lower than the national average. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Education Need is also below the national average. The school's motor impaired resource base saw its last pupil leave in July 2004. An acting headteacher is leading the school during the inspection year because the substantive headteacher is seconded to the local education authority until the end of August 2005. The school gained the Investors in People Award in 2004. The school is scheduled to co-locate with a local special school into new accommodation by Summer 2007.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21138	Adrian Simm	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
32661	Peter Hopkins	Lay inspector	
29263	Florence Clarke	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Foundation stage
32373	Danny Pentecost	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Aldwyn Primary School is a **good** school. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and learning. Pupils' achievement in personal development is very good because of the very effective way staff set out to inspire and motivate pupils to learn and relate to others. Effective leadership and management have ensured good improvement since the last inspection. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the last inspection and ensures that pupils achieve well in the majority of subjects and areas of learning that were the focus of the inspection. However, good achievement in mathematics is not yet consistent across all year groups from Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils' standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 have improved very well since the last inspection.
- Part of the school's very strong ethos is the very effective way staff enrich pupils' learning opportunities and the very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision. As a result, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with staff and each other are very good overall.
- Governors are very supportive and consistently challenge the school to improve. The headteacher, acting headteacher and key staff have risen well to that challenge.
- Analysis of data from the good systems put in place to help staff know what is working well and what could be improved needs extending further for self-evaluation to become fully effective.
- Children's attainment by the end of Reception in 2004 was well in advance of expected standards. Whilst attainment is on track to be maintained this year, co-ordination of the new staff team in the Foundation Stage is not as strong as elsewhere in school because the co-ordinator's role has not been clarified sufficiently by the school.

The school has improved provision and pupils' achievement well since the last inspection. This is most obvious in the support for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Also in standards overall by the end of Reception, in literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 2 and in English by the end of Year 6. Development issues from the last inspection have all been dealt with effectively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	B	D	D
Mathematics	C	B	D	D
Science	C	B	E	E

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is **good** throughout the school. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. Standards are well above expectations because most children attain the goals expected for the end of the Reception Year and many exceed them. In 2004, children's attainment by the end of Reception was third highest within the schools in the local education authority. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 in national assessments in core subjects between 2002 and 2004 are shown in the table above. Although data points to the trend in improvement being halted in 2004, this is explained to a large extent by the very high number of pupils in this year group with statements of special education needs (SEN) for learning difficulties. Overall, standards now are much higher than in 2004. They are above expected standards throughout school in English, information and communication technology (ICT) and personal, social, health and citizenship

(PSHCE) and in mathematics by the end of Year 2. They are as expected in mathematics by Year 6, and in science and religious education throughout the school. The **very effective** provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are **very good**. Attendance is **good** and improving although a small but significant number of parents continue to take their children out of school on holiday and for extended family visits abroad.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **good**. Staff know that for pupils to learn well, high standards of behaviour are needed in lessons. This happens also during off-site visits where pupils are very good ambassadors for the school. Teaching and learning are now paying off well in increased standards across the school. Some good teaching was seen in every class although overall, it was strongest in the Reception and Years 1 and 2. Pupils learn well. The majority of pupils want to work hard and enjoy school. Provision for literacy and ICT is built well into lessons in other subjects. It is satisfactory in numeracy. Staff know their pupils' individual social needs very well. Overall, teachers have a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing in their work, although in the two lessons that were unsatisfactory during the inspection, checking on this was the main weakness. The curriculum offers very good opportunities for enriching pupils' learning. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils take part in a very good range of activities during lunchtimes and at the end of the school day. Year 6 pupils are offered the opportunity of a residential experience, which contributes effectively to the personal development of those able to take it up. Pupils play an integral part in the development of the school. The school council has a positive influence on improvements. The school's new 'learning ladders' system helps pupils to know how well they are doing and, importantly, how they can improve.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The school strikes the right balance between improving pupils' achievement and focussing on their personal development. A curriculum has been achieved that is challenging, creative and fun. Key leaders in the school are effective and focussed on constant improvement. Support for pupils with SEN, including those with behaviour difficulties, is strong. Governors are effective. They support and challenge the school very well. Information the school collects about the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and achievement is used effectively to look at the school's success as a whole and to plan for improvement. However, use of the information in improving the achievement of particular groups of pupils, such as those in Years 3 to 6, those from different ethnic backgrounds or those who are gifted and talented, is not as precise as it could be. Whilst the new team in the Reception plans together, the overall role of the co-ordinator is unclear in maintaining and improving provision. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

A high majority of parents are satisfied with the school's good provision, particularly the good quality of teaching and learning and the broad range of interesting learning experiences offered. Pupils enjoy what the school provides. The school appreciates that it needs to investigate why a very small but significant number of parents feel short of information about their children's achievement.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In relation to the school's strengths, the most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Extend the work already started in ensuring pupils' achievement is good in mathematics and builds consistently between Years 3 and 6.
- Use all data about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning more precisely to further improve the quality of provision.
- Ensure effective leadership and management of the Reception classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils' standards are **above expectations** by the end of Years 2 and 6. By the end of the Reception Year, standards are well above expectations. From attainment on entry that is around what would be expected nationally, all pupils achieve **well**. Signs are that the good standards by the end of Year 2 in 2004 national assessments have been maintained. By the end of Year 6, standards that dipped in 2004 are improving again well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Reception are well above expectations and children's achievement is good.
- Pupils' attainment in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 has improved very well since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school in language and literacy skills, in ICT and in PSHCE.
- Whilst pupils achieve well in mathematics by the end of Year 2, they do not achieve consistently well throughout Years 3 to 6.
- There is no significant trend in difference in achievement between boys and girls, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, those pupils with special educational needs or the pupils who are gifted and talented.

Commentary

1. The following table shows how the school compared in July 2004 with schools nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.0(16.9)	15.8(15.7)
writing	16.2(15.0)	14.6(14.6)
mathematics	17.3(17.8)	16.2(16.3)

There were 41pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8(28.0)	26.9(26.8)
mathematics	26.3(27.5)	27.0(26.8)
science	27.4(29.7)	28.6(28.6)

There were 57pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Attainment on entry to the Reception classes, whilst variable, is overall what would be expected nationally. By the end of Reception in 2004, the number of children who met or exceeded the goals expected of them nationally was high. It placed the school third highest in comparison with other schools in the local education authority. Children's standards currently give every sign of being maintained around this high level. Individual children achieve well whilst in the Reception classes.

3. Standards by the end of Year 2 in 2004 maintained an upward trend. Pupils' standards in writing and mathematics were well above average and similar to expectations in reading. Pupils continue to achieve well overall in Years 1 and 2, particularly in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics, ICT and PSHCE. Improvements in reading and writing since the last inspection are particularly noteworthy because standards are now above expectations whereas previously they were below. Pupils attain as expected in science and religious education. Pupils' current standards give every sign of maintaining the strong upward trend in improvement since the last inspection. This is because the quality of teaching is consistently good in Years 1 and 2, and on occasions, very good. One very good example was with a small group of pupils who needed extra support for their reading and writing. As the result of effective explanation, these Year 1 pupils knew the meaning and use of a range of simple punctuation, could spell words such as 'friend', 'going' and 'his', and had developed a range of strategies for remembering spellings they found difficult. For example, using mnemonics, one pupil recalled how to spell the word 'come' by remembering 'come on Mrs Evans'.
4. Pupils' standards in national tests in 2004 in comparison with all schools and similar schools nationally were below expectations in English and mathematics by Year 6 and well below average in science. The increasing trend in standards seen in 2002 and 2003 slowed significantly in 2004. The statutory targets set in English and mathematics were not met. However, nine per cent of these pupils had statements of SEN for learning difficulties, which is high. Their performance lowered standards in spite of other Year 6 pupils attaining the expected level or above. Pupils are currently achieving well. They work very hard and are on line to attain the statutory targets set for 2005. However, the school recognises there is more to do in mathematics because the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is not consistently strong. Pupils' achievement is good overall because their skills, knowledge and understanding develop well and are above those expected in literacy and language skills, ICT and PSHCE. Standards are around national expectations in mathematics, science and religious education.
5. Although overall judgements could not be made in any creative subjects because they were not timetabled sufficiently during the inspection, individual examples of lessons in art and design, and music and drama were outstanding in provision and in pupils' learning. These strengths were well known by the school and are good examples of their accurate self-evaluation. Also, self-evaluation has accurately recognised the current position in mathematics. The school has started to target strategies for improved teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 to ensure increased standards and more consistently high achievement in mathematics across Years 3 to 6. Overall, all pupils build successfully on their starting points. Whilst standards differ from time to time between boys and girls and those from different ethnic backgrounds, this is often as a result of the particular abilities in specific groups of pupils. Over time, there are no obvious differences in achievement that are significant. This is the case also for those who are recognised as gifted and talented or who have SEN. They all achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is **good**. Punctuality is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attitudes of pupils to learning are very good.
- There are good levels of attendance but the school does not have an attendance policy to guide the recording of unauthorised absence and to highlight that very good attendance should be of importance to all parents.
- Pupils benefit very well from the wide range of opportunities offered to them in and out of lessons.

- Standards of behaviour are very good and stem from the consistent high expectations of staff.
- There is very effective provision for all pupils' personal development in support of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth.

Commentary

5. Overall, the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils are a direct result of the firm and positive strategies put in place by the school. All staff expect pupils to behave and work hard. This approach is supported very well by lunchtime staff who receive specific training for their important role. Pupils know they can opt to buy fruit from the school shop at break times and have a broad range of lunchtime and after-school clubs to choose from. They take these opportunities willingly and, as a result, most pupils enjoy their time at school and have very good relationships with each other and staff.
6. Pupils know the boundaries of acceptable behaviour during lessons and receive prompt checks and challenges from their teachers. As a result, lessons are generally delivered without disruption and pupils work purposefully at their tasks. When, on occasions, pupils have upsets with each other, including rare instances of bullying, procedures are effective and parents are involved. During the inspection, pupils talked openly about this type of issue and how well the school deals with it.
7. Pupils are recognised in the local area for their very good behaviour, maturity and willingness to work hard. For example, at the local swimming pool, pupils' very good attitudes make them outstanding ambassadors for the school. Self-esteem, confidence and individual wellbeing are high on the school's agenda. Valuing pupils' efforts makes a significant contribution to the development of positive relationships between pupils and their appetite for learning in the classroom. Overall, pupils are well satisfied with what is provided for them.
8. Pupils' attendance so far has improved from last year when it was satisfactory. It is now good. Pupils' punctuality in getting to lessons following break times is very good. However, first thing in a morning, a small number of pupils are frequently late, which means that overall, punctuality is satisfactory. A small but sufficient number of parents take their children out of school on family holidays, including extended trips abroad to visit family members. This affects attendance significantly, which could be very good otherwise. The school discusses this issue with parents informally but reducing this type of absence is not as high a profile as it should be. Furthermore, when it is unclear why a pupil is absent, the school does not follow what is good practice and make first-day absence telephone calls to parents. This would also ensure that, for pupils travelling independently, parents are clear if their child has not reached school for any reason.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2003/2004

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.2	School data :	0.3
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.

Exclusions

9. There were no pupils excluded in the school year prior to the inspection. The school does not have a history of exclusions.

10. A very good ethos for learning permeates every aspect of school life. School assemblies are very strong on the aspect of caring for others and in celebrating each other's successes. Pupils experience cultures and religions different to their own, through visitors into school. This takes into account well, the range of backgrounds of those pupils shown in the table below.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll
White – British	255
White – any other White background	6
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9
Mixed – White and Black African	1
Mixed – White and Asian	2
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	19
No ethnic group recorded	10

Pupils are proud of their own faiths and well informed and involved in aspects of local and national culture and issues. Experiences in art, history and music feature significantly in this provision. Moral values are implicit in the whole life of the school. These values underpin the social fabric of day-to-day life where pupils relate very well to each other and are happy to take responsibility for others and themselves. Where a pupil has specific high level skills, these are encouraged, for example, in organising and running their own table tennis club for other pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the quality of education provided for pupils is **good**. The standard of care pupils receive is **good** as is the partnership with parents and the impact of links with the community and other schools. Curricular opportunities and the quality of teaching and learning are **good**. Pupils' learning opportunities are enhanced very well. Staff are good in the way they support, advise and guide pupils and the way in which pupils' views are taken into account and acted upon.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** throughout the school. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with all groups of pupils and has improved well since the last inspection. This is in part because systems of assessment now in place allow staff to pitch lessons that suit the pupils' different levels of understanding.
- The leadership team is clear from checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, that, whilst there are many examples of effective lessons, greater consistency is needed in Years 3 to 6.
- Weaknesses are few but on rare occasions teaching does not focus sharply enough on ensuring lower attaining pupils are learning effectively.
- Relationships and behaviour management are very good. This encourages a good working environment in which pupils learn well. Pupils enjoy their lessons.

Commentary

11. The quality of teaching during the inspection is set out in the table below. This is better than at the time of the last inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2(4%)	15(33%)	19(41%)	8(18%)	2(4%)		

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

12. Across the school the quality of teaching and learning is good. This is good improvement on the last inspection. Over three-quarters of the teaching seen was good or better. Weaknesses in a science and mathematics lesson with lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 arose when a small but significant number of pupils did not learn sufficiently in the time available. Pupils were unclear about what they had to do to succeed more effectively. The best teaching was seen in English where just over half of the lessons were very good. This is because teachers are very knowledgeable about the subject and structure lessons consistently well. One lesson involving drama and story with Years 3 and 4, and another in art and design with Years 5 and 6 were excellent. This is because all pupils, regardless of ability, had work very well matched to their needs. This shows that systems of assessment are working well overall. Relationships were outstanding and pupils were inspired to learn. In the art and design lesson, several pupils commented that it is their favourite lesson of the week.
13. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and increasingly the subject co-ordinators, check on the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. The school recognises correctly the overall strengths of teaching and learning in the Reception, Years 1 and 2 and to a large extent in Years 3 to 6. Strong teaching ensures that the work is matched to pupils' individual levels because they check on this during lessons. Teachers know which pupils are clear about learning points and those who need a little extra support. This is planned for and invariably involves teaching assistants working effectively as part of a class team. One very good example of this was in an ICT lesson with Years 5 and 6, which was designed as a lesson to assess pupils' ability to search the Internet. Whilst the strongest individual teaching was in one of the Year 3 and 4 classes with all lessons seen judged very good, overall, the quality of teaching and learning across Years 3 to 6 is not consistently at a strong level. For example, in mathematics, the school has identified rightly that more work needs to be done to ensure the achievement of all pupils builds even more consistently from Year 3 to Year 6.
14. Pupils enjoy their lessons and work very hard. Relationships between the staff and pupils are very strong and, as a consequence, pupils are very confident in their work. Teachers create an effective learning environment. For example, in an art and design lesson with Years 5 and 6, the teacher was very effective in creating a calm but very positive atmosphere and, consequently, the pupils reflected constantly on their own thoughts and ideas in developing examples of illuminated letters and Viking runes. As a result, pupils' individual learning was outstanding. Each pupil's design differed significantly from that of his or her neighbour. One pupil commented that in this class, 'history is brought alive because of the wonderful art work that we do'.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is **good** and fully meets statutory requirements. The school provides a **very good** range of opportunities for enrichment activities to make learning more interesting for the pupils so that they enjoy their work and achieve well. The accommodation and resources are **good** and are used effectively to support learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities for learning are provided for children in the Reception classes.
- Effective planning ensures that there is no repetition of work in the mixed age classes.
- There are good links between subjects to develop skills, knowledge and understanding further and bring meaning to all pupils' learning.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The curriculum is enriched significantly through visits and visitors.
- Provision for the personal development of all groups of pupils is very good.
- Early intervention with pupils who have SEN is effective.

Commentary

15. The school's curriculum is well planned and monitored to ensure appropriate coverage of all subject areas as well as enabling pupils to achieve well in acquiring the essential basic skills. A two-year rolling programme ensures that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat work and learn effectively. French lessons enliven the curriculum for older pupils who benefit from this early introduction to modern foreign languages. Children in the Reception classes experience a good range of activities. These are specifically planned to encourage independent learning so that children achieve well or better in all areas.
16. Teachers develop links between subjects, which provide good opportunities for pupils to consolidate what they learn. Examples include using mathematical skills to measure the capacity of jars to be used in a scientific investigation and using a computer program to produce attractive 'mother's day' letters. Very good quality artwork is a feature in most subject areas, leading to high standards in the subject. The school also engages in regular 'theme days' to give pupils the opportunity to combine learning in different subject areas. The work done on the theme of 'village settlers', for example, enabled pupils to apply literacy and historical skills developed in other areas of the curriculum whilst focussing particularly on geography.
17. The very positive ethos of the school with its emphasis on co-operation and respect provides very well for pupils' personal development and underpins their very good attitudes and behaviour. There is a well-structured programme, which incorporates sex and relationships education and raises pupils' awareness of the effects of the misuse of drugs. There are good opportunities for pupils to make informed decisions about healthy living. There is an emphasis on sporting activities and the school is involved in several initiatives aimed at gaining the Healthy Schools status. Pupils' awareness and understanding of the environment are developed well through the gardening club and their concept of citizenship is developed effectively through their involvement in fund raising activities for a variety of charities.
18. Pupils benefit from a very good range of opportunities to enrich their learning outside the classroom. There is a very good variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs that are well attended. Pupils are enthusiastic about the activities available, which include chess, drama and touch-typing as well as a wide range of sporting activities. Pupils also have opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument and sing in the school choir. Pupils' interest and enjoyment in learning is also stimulated by visits made to places such as Portland Basin and Quarry Bank Mill at Styal. Year 6 pupils enjoy a residential visit to Denbigh where they engage in outdoor pursuits and activities. These visits support many areas of the curriculum and make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development and self-confidence. Visitors to the school also add to the richness of the cultural and multicultural provision. These visitors include musicians and theatre groups, as well as a very talented potter.
19. There is a good match between teachers and support staff and the needs of the curriculum. Accommodation is good overall but the classrooms used by the Reception children are small for

their purpose, which on occasions restrict activities. There is space on the corridor outside the Reception classrooms available but at present this is not used effectively. There is no specifically enclosed designated outside area for the Reception children although they do make good use of the school playground for a variety of activities.

20. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. For pupils with a statement of SEN or those with individual education plans (IEPs), support and their progress are reviewed regularly and systematically. The school intervenes quickly in supporting pupils who need that 'little bit extra'. The good support provided by the team of learning support assistants enables pupils with SEN to make good progress and helps them to develop their personal and social skills very effectively. An impressive example of small group support is in the direct phonics club for Year 1 pupils. This helps pupils to gain in confidence and to develop their knowledge of letter sounds and use their skills very well to read more easily. The involvement of all pupils in self-monitoring their 'learning ladders' is at an early stage of development. This process gives every impression of being very useful to both staff and pupils in knowing what pupils know and what else they need to learn.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **good**. Pupils' involvement through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a very good relationship with each other and have a trusting relationship with staff.
- The school council provides opportunities for pupils to express their views and take responsibility.
- The school has good systems for health, safety and care of the pupils.
- The Healthy School Initiative supports the welfare of the pupils.

Commentary

21. Pupils are happy and like coming to school. They have many friends and play and work very well together. The school actively promotes the themes of 'care' and 'good relationships' throughout the school day. The curriculum and assemblies support this very well. Staff demonstrate these qualities in their relationship with the pupils. This results in very good behaviour. Pupils are willing to help others. They respond quickly to instructions. The school provides pupils with an opportunity to express any concerns or worries. Pupils have a trusting relationship with staff and are happy to take any concerns to them. The weekly Celebration Assembly provides a very good opportunity for praising achievement and developing a caring family atmosphere in the school.
22. The school council provides a good opportunity for pupils to express their views and take a part in decision-making. It also provides the opportunity for staff to test new ideas with the pupils. The council has elected representatives from each class. They meet regularly with staff and have met with the lunchtime assistants to discuss activities in the playground. The council members and its activities are well publicised in the school and pupils are encouraged to make comments and suggestions about school activities. The school council is helping to further develop the close relationship between pupils and staff, and helping its members to develop their personal skills and responsibility. Important improvements to lunchtime activities and playground furniture are just two examples of the impact achieved by the council.
23. The school has clear and thorough policies for health and safety and child protection, which are approved by the governing body. The site manager carries out routine checks of the building every day. Mandatory checks on fire equipment are carried out by specialist contractors and

recorded thoroughly. As an associate governor, the site manager keeps the governing body well informed about safety issues. The headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection. The lunchtime assistants are issued with a booklet that provides clear guidance of their responsibilities and how to deal with safety issues. However, training updates for all staff are not sufficiently set out on an agreed time schedule and activities undertaken in the school by outside providers are not fully monitored in the same way as they are for school staff.

24. The school is seeking to achieve the Healthy School Award. One impact of this is that pupils are becoming clearer about the benefits of fruit and other examples of healthy eating. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 receive fruit as part of the National Fruit Scheme. Older pupils buy fruit from the fruit stall. The school council has made suggestions as to what fruit the pupils prefer, which has been taken into account. Milk and water are also available. If necessary, pupils can opt to use the 'calm zone' provided within the school, if they feel in need of somewhere quiet to go. Also, pupils can use a 'help box' where they can post a note about any concerns they may have. These are strategies that work well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are supportive of the school and are pleased with the progress of their children.
- Parents receive extensive information about the ethos and the work of the school.
- The school has well-developed educational links with a range of local schools.
- Links with local churches and business could be further developed for the benefit of the pupils.

Commentary

25. A very high majority of parents are pleased with the progress their children make in the school. They feel that the school has improved noticeably since the last inspection. Their children like coming to school and are happy. The parents support school initiatives. For example, during a week focussed on Victorian life, many parents arranged for their children to come to school dressed in Victorian costume. There is an active Parent /Teacher Association that organises a range of social and fundraising events to raise money for the school. Parents of pupils with individual education plans generally attend the scheduled meetings. Others contribute to pupils' understanding of different cultural heritages of pupils in the school, for example, by leading sessions on Asian cooking.
26. Parents receive regular newsletters about activities, homework, initiatives and after school clubs in addition to pupils' annual progress report and the annual report from the governors. Parents also receive letters about any specific problems their child might have in school. The majority of parents considers they are kept well informed and that the staff are approachable and quickly resolve any problems. There are two open nights each year for parents to meet teachers and discuss their child's progress. These are well attended. This close link with parents is important to the very good relationships in school between staff and pupils.
27. The school has developed a range of partnerships with other schools that are beneficial to both staff and pupils. There is a network of schools in Audenshaw that are working together closely. Staff share information about good practice and develop strategies based upon shared good practice. Some pupils from the school go to 'success maker' classes at a neighbouring school to develop their ICT skills. There are productive links with the partner special school about the future co-location of the two schools. In addition, a teacher from the special school takes some classes at Aldwyn, which provides pupils with a very high quality of learning in drama, story and music. The school works closely with the local senior schools with teachers from these schools visiting Year 6 pupils. They help to provide pupils with work that leads well into the work they will start on when they arrive at the senior school.

28. The links with the local community are strong. However, they do not make use fully of links to local businesses that could provide the opportunity to tap into resources and provide pupils with experience of the business world in their community. Visits to the school from representatives of a range of faiths in the community in supporting the cultural and spiritual development of the pupils are not as strong as it could be.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The governing body provides **good** vision and direction. The acting headteacher currently provides **good** leadership for the school. Leadership shown by other key staff is **good**. Management of the school is **effective**. The school works **well** to ensure that barriers to learning are eliminated.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are very supportive and effective in challenging the school to improve.
- The acting headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths, weaknesses and priorities.
- Staff morale is high and this aids learning well.
- The evolving management teams are becoming effective, although currently, there is no clear leadership of the new staff team in the Foundation Stage.
- Checking on the quality of teaching and learning during lessons could be even more effective than it is. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to take a more strategic role in this.

Commentary

29. Governors have worked very hard to support improvement. They hold the school to account and plan well for the future. The governing body is well organised. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very good at supporting and challenging senior managers. Nominated governors liaise well with the school, for example, on literacy, numeracy, SEN and provision for able, gifted and talented pupils. This ensures that all groups of pupils are planned for well. The main priority for governors is the current planning for the building of a new school co-located with a special school. Governors ensure statutory requirements are met. They contribute fully to the very good financial systems in place and ensure that the school follows effectively the principles of best value.
30. At the time of the inspection, the school had an acting headteacher who has ensured a clear sense of direction for the school. She has contributed more than simply continuing with systems and structures that were already in place. Effective contributions include developing the priorities in the school development plan, making provision to meet the requirements of the national Remodelling the Workforce agreement and leading the school to gain the award of Investors in People. This has moved the school on well. The acting headteacher has high expectations of staff. She inspires and motivates them very well. She is a very good teacher in her own right. Good staff teams have been developed, which has contributed well to the school's strengths in identifying and eliminating barriers to the improvement of standards in the school. Staff morale is high. There is a clear 'can do' ethos in the school that is very effective. Overall, the principles of leadership and management are translated well into good opportunities in pupils' learning.
31. The school is effective in evolving its management teams. The teams contribute well to the school's self-evaluation. They have prioritised effectively the focal points to address in the school improvement plan. One such area has been the introduction of systems to provide a wealth of information about pupils' achievement in a broad range of subjects. The subject leaders, too, are becoming involved more and more in checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. The system, effectively operated by senior staff, is now being extended to the subject co-ordinators. The school uses data well to place pupils in ability sets for teaching in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. However, the next step in more detailed analysis

of the achievement of all groups of pupils, including those from different ethnic backgrounds and those who are gifted and talented is still in need of further development. Checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons taken by adults extra to the school staff is not as strong as it is with school staff, with the result that, on occasions, lessons do not go as well as they should. The Foundation Stage has a new team in place. Whilst the two teachers plan together and run parallel classes, there is no distinct leadership of the Foundation Stage to drive provision on to be even stronger. Despite these issues, there is, overall, a clear structure for improvement, a shared vision and a commitment to provide the very best opportunities for pupils and staff.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	976,614	Balance from previous year	54,173
Total expenditure	982,417	Balance carried forward to the next	48,370
Expenditure per pupil	2,950		

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

Throughout the following commentary, overall judgements about provision relate to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, curriculum leadership and any other significant aspects that reflect the standards achieved by pupils.

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

32. Provision in the Reception classes is good. Children start in the September before they are five. The majority of children has some pre-school experience. Their attainment on entry is broadly average. Each Reception class provides a structured, stable, pleasant and caring environment. Relationships are strong and very supportive. Children enjoy learning and taking part in a range of varied and interesting activities, which promote their social, academic, imaginative and creative skills very successfully. As a result, children achieve well and lay down very firm foundations for their future learning. By the time they leave the Reception year, most children are on course to reach the expected goals in all areas of learning with some above, particularly in their personal development and language work. Standards are high. The overall good provision reported in the previous inspection has been built on well. For example, teaching now is very interactive and there is no longer a reliance on worksheets to promote learning. There are good arrangements to ensure that children settle into school with ease and very good support as they move into formal education at Year 1. Assessment procedures are very good and staff have a very good knowledge of each child's' progress. Children with SEN are effectively supported and have full access to the curriculum.
33. There is a lack of space in the classrooms, which means that opportunities for physical or large-scale activities are not available as a continuous choice activity. There is space on the corridor outside the Reception classrooms available but at present this is not used effectively. There is no designated enclosed outdoor area for the children and neither is there immediate access to the school playground. Nevertheless, best use is made of the outdoor area and physical skills are promoted well overall. Good provision is made for children's personal health and they have milk and fresh fruit daily.
34. The school has not defined sufficiently arrangements for leading and managing the Reception classes. There is a new team in place. One teacher has taken on the responsibility of gathering data about standards reached by the previous cohort of children and has carried out an analysis of improvements since the previous inspection. Teachers from both classes, together with the nursery nurses, plan a common curriculum together but the classes are generally taught separately, which means that opportunities to share staff expertise are lost. It also means that the quality and consistency of provision across the classes are not monitored as closely as they could be. Whilst satisfactory, leadership and management are underdeveloped in comparison with the rest of the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good attitudes towards learning.
- Relationships between staff and children are very good.
- Children achieve well because of well-established routines and very good teaching.

Commentary

35. The quality of teaching is of a very good standard and most children exceed the learning goals by the time that they enter Year 1. Staff set clear and consistent procedures. As a result, children respond well and have very positive attitudes towards learning. Adults establish warm, friendly and open relationships with the children. They use praise and encouragement well to reward effort and promote confidence and self-esteem. Children develop responsibility and independence as they choose an activity, get themselves ready for a physical education lesson and help to tidy up at the end of a session. Their experience of other aspects of school life is enhanced when they join in assemblies and share playtime with older pupils. They play very well together, sharing resources amicably when, for example, playing with construction toys or engaging in role-play in the 'Victorian kitchens'.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of the Reception year most children listen attentively and are confident speakers.
- Teaching is very good and staff place a suitably strong emphasis on this area of learning.

Commentary

36. Teaching is very effective and most children are likely to achieve the expected learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Some children will exceed them. The role-play areas provide exciting settings that give children opportunities to develop spoken language by practising their oral skills and extending their vocabulary. Children were keen to describe features of Victorian houses such as kitchen ranges, washboards and outside toilets, assuring the listener that these were old fashioned and not likely to be found in houses today.
37. As the children engage in role-play and other activities, staff regularly intervene with relevant comments and questions, which successfully develop children's language, thinking and negotiating skills. Children initiate conversations and express themselves very effectively. They listen attentively and with great enjoyment to stories, responding and joining in enthusiastically with familiar refrains.
38. There is a good balance between lively, focussed, direct teaching in whole class sessions and rich opportunities for children to practise the skills taught whilst they play. Children have very good experience of purposeful reading and writing activities. Most write their names clearly and higher attaining children write sentences unaided. Children use their developing skills well to write a mother's day letter. In turns, children take home the class bear, and together with parents, help 'him' to write a diary of his experiences. Children recognise most letter sounds and the higher attaining children spell words plausibly using this skill. They handle books confidently and enjoy taking books home to read with their parents.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong emphasis on developing mathematical skills through practical activities.
- Children need to be made more aware of the fact that mathematics is all around them.

Commentary

39. Achievement is good and children participate in a wide range of well-structured practical activities, which develop their confidence in mathematics. Teaching is good and standards are above average. Staff place strong emphasis on mathematical language, which helps children in their understanding. They are developing an understanding of combining and taking away numbers using strategies such as adding on to solve problems. They are introduced to 'number sentences' using signs to represent plus and equals. Higher attaining children use these signs with increasing confidence and accuracy.
40. The relevance of mathematics is emphasised when, for example, children confidently count the number of children present in the class with higher attaining children, using this information to work out the number who are absent for the teacher to record in the register. They count out the seeds to be planted and during a walk in the local area they conduct a traffic survey, recording the number of cars on a tally chart. However, this aspect of relating mathematics to children's everyday experience could be developed further, especially when children are engaged in independent activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of interesting activities, based on first-hand experiences, enables children to explore, observe and discuss their findings.
- Staff support children's learning well through the use of effective questioning.

Commentary

41. Children achieve well and standards are above average. Staff provide a wide range of stimulating resources and activities. Work is planned to ensure that children enjoy a wealth of first-hand experiences. Staff are skilled at getting children to observe and communicate their findings. In one session, children took on the role of detectives. They used 'pretend' magnifying glasses to hunt for clues, which showed that the pictures they were examining were of house interiors from the past. The children were encouraged to think hard and explain their ideas and respond to questions such as, 'How do you know?' Children develop an increasing awareness of their environment, engaging in activities such as planting seeds and observing their growth. Children are becoming familiar with using the interactive white board to help them, for example, understand 'homes long ago'. They have access to well-chosen ICT programs to reinforce their basic skills in literacy and numeracy and use these well. They also use the mouse and keyboard to produce simple text and illustrations, which they print out independently.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's fine motor skills are developed well.
- Resources for outdoor play are good.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good and children achieve well and are on course to attain the early learning goals. There is a good selection of resources for outdoor play including large wheeled toys, which children handle with confidence. Staff ensure that children have regular access to this equipment. In the classrooms, the very good range of objects and construction toys available prompts the development of the children's manipulative skills and co-ordination. Through a very good range of activities they learn to use a selection of tools including pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors safely and accurately with increasing dexterity. Most children demonstrate good pencil control as they form numbers and letters.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interesting role-play activities provide very good opportunities for children to develop their imagination.
- Children have opportunities to work with a good range of tools and materials.

Commentary

43. Teaching is good and children are on course to reach the expected level for their age. Opportunities for children to use their imagination are very good. The old-fashioned kitchen equipment and other historical artefacts in the role-play areas particularly aroused children's interest. This interest gave rise to some very good imaginative play, which was actively supported and extended by staff involvement. A wide range of activities is carefully planned to develop children's skills in this area and plentiful resources give children good opportunities to experiment with different tools and materials, including paints and a range of musical instruments. However, on occasions, children working in groups are presented with a teacher-selected range of materials and ways of working, which limits children's individual choice and their creativity.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND FRENCH

Pupils experience French in Years 5 and 6, which prepares them well for moving on to secondary education. Insufficient lessons or evidence of achievement were available for a judgement to be made about overall provision.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a clear focus on all strands of literacy.
- Good teamwork exists between teachers and teaching assistants.
- Assessment information is not fully used to inform planning.
- Pupils are independent and have very good attitudes to learning.

Commentary

44. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national expectation in speaking and listening, reading and writing. By the end of Year 6, standards are above national expectations in speaking, listening and reading, and in line in writing. This shows that very good progress has been made in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection, with good progress in Years 3 to 6. Throughout the school, pupils are able to discuss clearly their reading books and activities. They read with expression and know their rate of progress well. They enjoy books. They concentrate very well and listen carefully to others. One group of pupils explained their work in ICT very well. All pupils discuss ideas with their 'talking partners' well. Overall, all groups of pupils achieve well throughout the school.
45. Overall, teaching and learning are good. The subject leader provides a very good teaching model. Examples of very good teaching result from teachers being very knowledgeable about the subject. They teach well-structured lessons. A teacher from a local school with very close links took one excellent lesson. The mix of music, drama and movement enhanced speaking and listening in an inspirational way. All pupils were fully engrossed in the lesson. The sense of excitement permeated all persons involved. This ensured that excellent learning took place. Learning objectives are shared effectively with pupils and revisited at various points in lessons. This is a good aid to pupils' progress. Marking of work is helping pupils to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Although some very good examples of this were seen in drafts for extended writing and sentence level work with Year 2, the practice remains variable elsewhere. However, the school is well placed to build upon the examples of good practice. Teaching assistants play an effective part in supporting pupils' development. Very good support was seen, for example, in the provision of 'additional literacy support' and in the 'direct phonics club'. Teaching assistants support learning with high levels of enthusiasm, good subject knowledge and good relationships with staff and pupils.
46. Pupils concentrate very well. This is at its best when teachers use learning styles that best suit the different pupil's needs. Pupils sequence instructions effectively and explore the language of books and text layout well. They write shared stories, traditional stories, non-chronological reports and autobiographies. There is a good balance of text, word and sentence level work in a variety of styles. Pupils are encouraged to work very well independently and in groups. Pupils take part in drama clubs and are very confident participants. A good number of pupils evaluate their own work and that of their peers effectively.

47. Subject leadership and management are good. Self-evaluation is effective. The school development plan is informed well by this. Provision of good resources is ensured. Training has included the introduction of a speaking and listening policy and literacy through extra curricular activities. The subject leader effectively checks on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. Whilst pupils' achievement is good, the vast array of data could still be used even more effectively for planning for all of the different groups of pupils in the school. The Literacy governor mans a very well stocked library. This has an effective computerised system of access and retrieval, which pupils use with increasing independence.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Pupils use reading and writing skills effectively to support their learning in other subjects. For example, younger pupils write letters to the Jolly Postman and Barnaby Bear in geography. Reports are written well in science alongside tables and labelling of diagrams. Researching Ellen McArthur as a current good role model used ICT skills well and subsequently informed the style of writing a biography. In design and technology, prototypes for a new hat were described and flow diagrams constructed. Speaking and listening skills are used across the curriculum, for instance, improving upon techniques and sequences in physical education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All groups of pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because of good teaching and learning.
- Pupils' achievement is not consistently good in Years 3 to 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good because the school is reasonably clear where its strengths are in the subject and are taking steps to overcome its weaknesses.
- The use of information now available about the quality of teaching and learning and how well pupils are achieving could be even more effective.

Commentary

49. By Year 2, all boys and girls are currently achieving well. They are achieving satisfactorily by Year 6. In the last four years in national assessments at the end of Year 2, pupils' standards were generally well above average. Current data points to standards being above average rather than well above. Pupils' attainment overall by the end of Year 2 tends to be stronger than by the end of Year 6. This is because the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good, whereas in Years 3 to 6, whilst it is good overall, this varies from class to class.
50. Standards in Year 6 in 2004 were below expectations. Around nine per cent of pupils in the year group had statements of SEN for learning difficulties, which lowered standards. This is a high number in comparison with schools nationally. This is not the case with the current Year 6 group, whose attainment is currently in line with expectations. Staff teaching pupils in Year 6 are focussing on weaker areas of pupils' learning identified by the school as having arisen in the past. This is due to teaching and learning that has not been consistently good. The school is currently targeting correctly greater consistency across Years 3 to 6.
51. By Year 2, many pupils are showing skills above that expected for their age. They are secure when adding and subtracting to 20, correctly recall their two, five and ten times tables, record accurately using simple block graphs and tally charts, and are clear about simple ways of telling the time. They know and describe fractions as an equal piece of a whole. Most higher attaining pupils recognise that one half is the same as two quarters and recall the three and four times tables. Some are clear that to find a quarter of a given amount, it has to be divided by four.

Higher attaining Year 6 pupils order accurately a broad range of fractions, which they first have to convert to the lowest common denominator. They have few problems with recognising reflective symmetry in shapes but take a little longer over how a complicated shape will look when rotated. However, they are mostly successful in this. Those pupils, whose attainment is in line with expectations, estimate and measure angles within the full 360 degrees. They are proficient in using ICT programs to help them with their work. The programs are interesting and challenging. They know, for example, that an angle of 27 degrees measured along a straight line will leave a larger angle of 153 degrees. They compute this accurately on paper as well as checking it using the computer program. Lower attaining pupils work mostly accurately on decimal notation to two decimal figures although at times, some get confused when, for example, they record 7.05 instead of 0.75.

52. Overall, teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan work carefully to ensure that objectives for lessons promote step-by-step learning. Pupils are clear what they are expected to learn by the end of lessons and how they are expected to respond and behave. Support for pupils' personal development is a strength of teaching throughout the school. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are grouped by ability for lessons. This is the case also in Years 5 and 6. In the main, this approach appears to be working well, although on occasions in Year 5 and 6, for example, the emphasis of the teacher's time leans on occasions towards those Year 6 pupils being prepared for national assessments. The most effective teaching and learning is characterised by lessons that are packed full of practical opportunities for pupils to realise what mathematics means in every day use. Teachers also use the time profitably to find out what the pupils know and find difficult, so that any misunderstandings can be immediately overcome. Where a lesson was unsatisfactory, the issue of assessment was the weakest element. The confusion of some pupils was not recognised and dealt with as effectively as it should have been.
53. The subject is well led and managed. The strengths of development are in the improved ways of checking on pupils' attainment and achievement, and targeting groups of pupils to achieve better, such as in Years 3 to 6. The school has analysed areas of the curriculum, and identified those that could be stronger. The co-ordinator has given demonstration lessons to staff in Years 3 and 4 to show how to plan and deliver good quality lessons. However, there has been insufficient time to take the next step in ensuring that advice and demonstrations impact positively in practice, and the rich data now available for tracking pupils' achievement is not fully utilised to ensure that all groups of pupils are doing as well as they can. The school has just started to do this. Improvement since the last inspection is good because of the accuracy and developing quality of self-evaluation. All signs are that the school knows where it is going with improvements and builds these issues well into its planning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. Pupils' mathematical skills are used as expected in other subjects. Pupils use mathematical concepts to collect and record results and to reach conclusions on the analysis of data. Science lessons and ICT feature most strongly in this context. Perhaps the most obvious use of mathematics across the curriculum was in a very good Year 3 and 4 science lesson where pupils planned a survey linked to 'how easy it is to break bones in the body'. Gathering and recording data was integral to the activity.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school very effectively develops pupils' skills of scientific investigation and an understanding of scientific method.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and helps pupils to achieve well.

- Pupils enjoy science and opportunities for collaborative work make a positive contribution to their personal development.

Commentary

55. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are as expected. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. More pupils are now reaching standards above those expected for their age. Current standards are much better than those achieved by Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2004, which were affected by the number of pupils with SEN. The key features leading to this improvement in standards are the good teaching and learning, with the emphasis placed on practical and investigative activities. Teachers now have high expectations of what pupils can do and boys and girls of all abilities are well supported and achieve well.
56. Teaching is based on teachers' very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are well organised and very well managed with the result that pupils learn well. Relationships are invariably strong and pupils are encouraged to do their best. Teachers engage pupils' enthusiasm by planning many interesting opportunities for learning through practical activities, which enable pupils to apply and consolidate their learning. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils watched intently as the teacher conducted an experiment to see what happened when a jar was placed over a lighted candle. The teacher interspersed clear explanations and demonstrations with thoughtful questioning. As a result, pupils thought carefully about what they were seeing and used their observations to draw conclusions. Scientific facts were presented very well to the pupils, turning this into a process of sharing knowledge with them. This approach encouraged a mature and reflective response. Pupils were able to discover the scientific ideas involved.
57. Pupils carry out their own investigations. They are taught to record their findings, to analyse them and draw conclusions. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils enjoyed the process of composing a questionnaire for a survey on broken bones. The teacher was very aware of exactly what she wanted the pupils to achieve and moved the lesson forward at a lively pace. She ensured at each stage that all pupils were involved and focussed on the requirements of the task. She captured their interest through the relevance of the subject material, her own motivating manner and strategies such as 'talking partners', where pupils discussed their work with another pupil. Teachers in Year 2 effectively developed pupils understanding of how sound is made and how it travels. Activities built on pupils' prior learning, supported by well-informed and lively teaching. Pupils were helped to realise that 'finding out' about sound involved a planned investigation to be preceded by predictions. Years 5 and 6 pupils were observed enthusiastically embarking on the task of setting up an investigation, effectively showing their grasp of fair testing and their ability to formulate a hypothesis.
58. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has a clear view of the aims and priorities for science in the school. Test results and teachers' own assessments are analysed to identify any weaknesses in pupils' learning and subsequent planning takes account of this. Plans are in hand to develop and extend monitoring procedures in all aspects of the subject. The subject makes a very good contribution to literacy in that pupils are always required to record their own ideas and findings. Numeracy skills are also well developed, especially in measurement. However, the use of ICT in science lessons is limited. For pupils in Key Stage 2, few opportunities are planned to extend ICT skills, for example, in gathering and sorting data or presenting findings using graphs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection because of the improved quality in teaching and learning.
- There is a good range of ICT hardware, which continues to expand.
- Good subject leadership is influential in developing the subject although checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons is not fully developed.

Commentary

59. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations. Improvement since the last inspection is good because of effective staff training and improved resources. Good teaching and learning ensure that all pupils learn and achieve well. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 effectively explored questions regarding living, growing and personal attributes. They began to enter these into questionnaires using appropriate ICT software. Overall, they behaved well in the computer suite and collaborated well. They showed good independent skills and very good enthusiasm. Teaching assistants made significant contributions. This ensured that all pupils made good progress. Work in books and on display showed that these pupils also compare text layout, use a 'search engine', computer disks and control devices. Year 5 and 6 pupils use multi-media packages to design posters, construct hyperlinks and compile databases. They apply mathematical formulae and make predictions.
60. The growing provision of interactive whiteboards is enhancing the range and quality of learning opportunities, although teachers' expertise in using these is still variable. Quantities of desktop and laptop computers are good, which means that pupils have good access to the equipment. Further provision is appropriately planned. Information and communication technology is used well by staff around the school to support teaching and learning. Effective use of ICT is made, for example, for certificates, notices, worksheets and spreadsheets. Digital cameras are used effectively by both staff and pupils to capture valuable examples of pupils' learning and to produce good quality resources. There are sufficient staff who have good subject knowledge and technical expertise to help other staff to improve. Extra curriculum activities have begun to enhance the ICT curriculum well. For example, Year 5 pupils are being taught the skills of touch-typing very well by a teaching assistant. Pupils are beginning to work towards completion of the local education authority's 'Passport' for the computer'. Year 6 pupils have begun to coach Year 2 pupils and this is working well.
61. Subject leadership is good overall. National guidance is followed and customised to the school. The school is now progressing towards becoming accredited as 'e-confident'. Training mostly takes place 'in-house' as well as accessing external sources. Monitoring of teaching and learning has begun but is not fully in place. The co-ordinator is becoming clearer as to what is working well and what could be improved further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. There is clear evidence that ICT is used well in many curriculum areas. Pupils use clip art and word processing to reinforce class and school rules, key words in literacy and number lines in mathematics. Variations of text are used well to produce drafts and extended writing, for example, in writing biographies based on the lives of famous people. Digital photographs support work well in English, geography and PSHCE.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in geography or history. It is, therefore, not possible to form an overall judgement in these subjects. Work seen on display indicates that standards are as expected. Displays of work were of good quality and clearly linked well to language and literacy. For example, adverts for selling a settlement linked well to work in geography. A mock Victorian kitchen acted as a good stimulus for role-play. The day that all pupils and staff in Reception and Year 1 dressed in Victorian costume was particularly exciting. Subject leaders have a clear view of the priorities for developing these subjects. Monitoring of teaching and learning is not fully developed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers interpret effectively the locally authority's guidance for teaching.
- Assemblies are used very well for pupils to experience at first hand strands of religious education, such as caring for others.
- Leadership and management of the subject are developing well. The school could be stronger in checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

Commentary

63. Standards at the end of Years 2 and Year 6 are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, which is implemented fully. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Whilst improvement from the last inspection cannot be judged because the subject was not reported on, the school's self-evaluation and developments in subject leadership point to improvement being satisfactory. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong. This aids all pupils' personal development very well. For example, whilst Year 1 pupils had a sound introduction to the special food associated with the Jewish festival of the Passover, the exploration of the feelings of the crowd on Palm Sunday was elicited well through drama in a very good lesson in Years 3 and 4.
64. Displays of work support the subject well. The Jewish Shabbat, signs and symbols of Christian worship and the purpose of Muslim mosques were expressed well through art, writing and attractive use of authentic artefacts. These included crosses, Seder plates and prayer mats. Assemblies support religious education very well. For example, celebration assemblies enable pupils to be praised for a vast range of personal achievements and qualities both within school and beyond. Pupils really enjoy this. The ethos of caring for others is very strong. Pupils are given opportunities for reflection and to respond to questions. This links effectively to citizenship. Prayers and tuneful singing supports themes well. This helps to develop spirituality for all. Statutory requirements for collective worship are met.
65. The subject is well led with clear direction for staff in improving the current satisfactory provision. This includes in planning the various mixed age classes as they progress through the school. The subject leader attends local training and passes this on effectively to staff at the school. Whilst time is allocated for the subject leader to check pupils' work in books and teachers' assessments for each unit of work, checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons is not fully developed in identifying strengths and those areas that could be better. The school is aware of this and has plans to involve subject co-ordinators progressively more in this aspect of evaluation.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No overall judgements were made in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education because insufficient lessons could be observed during the inspection.

66. In **art and design**, pupils are offered a vast range of experiences from Reception through to Year 6. Pupils are proud of their high standards and frequently display work in the community such as at the local council offices. Work is consistently linked to other subjects to make it even more meaningful. For example, in an outstanding lesson in Year 5 and 6, art was combined very effectively with history. All pupils were engrossed in producing their own illuminated letter and Viking rune. Deep discussion took place between pupils about the quality and style of their work, which led to an extensive range of different end results. All pupils produced their own very well thought out and individualised work. Many pupils spoke confidently about art and design being one of their favourite lessons because of how it brings alive other subjects. Throughout the school, examples of garden sculptures, wall murals, pottery portraits, hugely colourful coil pots and a plethora of high quality pupils' work on display contribute significantly to the very effective learning ethos in the school. Corridors are lively and exciting, and pupils are keen to point out their work to visitors. A lunchtime club is available to pupils in Years 5 and 6 although this has not been extended to talented pupils elsewhere in school who could benefit from the extra experience.
67. The school recognises the importance of **physical education** in the development of the pupils. Pupils understand the benefits to health of regular exercise. All elements of the curriculum are taught, with swimming occurring in Year 5. Only two lessons were observed. These lessons were planned with due regard to health and safety. Good levels of enthusiasm towards the subject are evident in pupils' attitudes. They are very keen to attend the very wide range of sports activities that are provided for them after school. These enhance the physical education curriculum in helping pupils to develop their skills further. The school makes good use of the expertise of its own staff and expertise within the community such as players from local football and rugby clubs. The local education authority's sports development team are regular visitors to the school. There are numerous very good links with other schools. A teacher from a local high school, together with some former pupils, regularly takes Year 6 girls for volleyball tuition in an after-school club. The school's involvement with local sports leagues provides pupils with good opportunities to take part in competitive sport. In the games lesson observed, teaching was good and pupils worked hard to improve their football skills, learning well and reaching standards that were above average. In the swimming lesson at the local public pool, the teaching was very good. It was enthusiastic and of very good quality, which enabled all pupils to learn from the well-focussed teaching points. The lesson was very effectively planned with provision for both group and individual tuition, enabling all pupils to improve their swimming skills. Throughout the lesson, pupils were very well motivated and their attitudes and behaviour were exemplary. Learning was very good and pupils' standards are well above average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in PSHCE is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The PSHCE lessons contribute positively to pupils' attitudes, personal responsibility and maturity.
- Good playground routines, lunchtime clubs, after school activities and residential experiences for Year 6 contribute to PSHCE. This ensures pupils learn well throughout the day and not just in lessons.

Commentary

68. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is strongly linked to the very good provision for learning outside the school day. Teaching and learning are good in lessons and as a result, pupils achieve well. Provision for sex and relationship education and for drug education is effective. The school uses the curriculum and break times well to focus on a healthy lifestyle and personal and social well-being. The very mature and responsible behaviour of pupils is a direct result of this provision. Care and well-being is very high on the school's agenda. They feature significantly in the school's overall ethos, in assemblies, in religious education, personal, social and health education and in citizenship. For example, in a good citizenship lesson with Year 2, pupils built on their understanding of the importance of rules to their everyday lives. They decided successfully, in small groups, how their own property could be kept safe in school. Year 5 and 6 pupils were involved in a far more mature topic on the importance of 'debate', which led to pupils researching Internet sites to extend their thinking. Good links were forthcoming with the work of their own school council, current debates at local and national levels such as the type of uniform that should be worn in schools and more historically based issues such as the Elgin marbles. Provision for PSHCE adds well to pupils' overall personal development, which is very strong. In contributing to pupils' overall strengths in personal development, the subject has developed well since the last inspection because of good leadership and management.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

