

INSPECTION REPORT

BARLOW HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105484

Headteacher: Mr J A Scally

Lead inspector: Mr R A Robinson

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 266367

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:	255
School address:	Darley Avenue Chorlton-cum-Hardy Manchester Lancashire
Postcode:	M21 7JG
Telephone number:	0161 881 2158
Fax number:	0161 861 8367
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Maria Noble
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. A high proportion of pupils (12 per cent) are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Pupils come from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds. Eleven pupils are refugees. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 56 per cent, which is well above average. The school serves a socially and economically disadvantaged area. Children's attainment on entry is well below average. Fifty-three pupils (21 per cent) are on the list of special educational needs, which is above average. Four pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is above average. Most of the pupils receiving additional help have specific or severe learning difficulties, autism, speech or communication difficulties, or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school incorporates an Assessment Provision Unit which assesses the often complex educational needs of children drawn from a wide area within the local education authority. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is very high. The school gained an Investor in People Award and a School Achievement Award in 2003. It is involved in Excellence in Cities. The headteacher has been absent because of ill health since May 2004. The deputy headteacher commenced her appointment at the beginning of the spring term 2004. The local education authority seconded in July 2004 an experienced headteacher to assist in the running of the school during the absence of the headteacher.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21024	Robert Robinson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology
9928	Alan Dobson	Lay inspector	
29686	Stefan Lord	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language Religious education
16173	Linda Murphy	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History
2759	Derek Sleightholme	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
28197	Hilary Ward	Team inspector	Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)

3 Harrowby Road
West Park
Leeds
LS16 5HN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** education for its pupils. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well below the national average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is sound; however, it ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership team has led the school soundly despite significant unavoidable staff absences of senior members of staff during the last academic year. In addition, the very high proportion of pupils joining the school, many of whom have learning difficulties or are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, is a barrier to raising standards further. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good and is moving the school forward positively, together with staff and governors. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are as follows:

- Standards in Year 6 are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science, information and communication technology and religious education.
- Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and in the Assessment Provision Unit because the quality of teaching is very good.
- Pupils relate well towards each other and the school promotes racial harmony effectively.
- Attendance rates and punctuality are unsatisfactory.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is too variable.
- The monitoring of pupils' progress, the marking of their work and the setting of targets for the future improvements of individuals and of groups of pupils are unsatisfactory.
- The school improvement plan provides good guidance to move the school forward.
- The school provides a good range of opportunities for the enrichment of the curriculum.
- The number of teaching assistants is insufficient to move pupils' learning on at a faster pace.
- The application of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology in other subjects is unsatisfactory.

The school's improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. After the last inspection, standards rose significantly until 2002 when the changing nature of groups of pupils attending the school resulted in pupils' performance dipping to similar standards as those seen at the last inspection. In response to the areas for development identified at the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology are still below average and standards in English remain well below average. Better use is made of the computer suite and the library. Pupils' personal development is now satisfactory. The partnership with parents has improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Achievement is satisfactory, overall. Achievement is very good in the Foundation Stage classes, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, boys' standards were significantly lower than those of girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, although pupils with learning difficulties in the Assessment Provision Unit make very good progress relative to their prior attainment. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make sound progress.

By the end of the reception year, children are unlikely to reach the expected national targets for the beginning of Year 1 in communication, language and literacy although they are on course to meet expected standards in personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical development. Following very high movement of lower attaining pupils into the school, standards in Year 2 are now well below average in reading, writing and science and below average in mathematics. Similarly, because of very high changes of cohorts, standards in Year 6 are now well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Standards in information and communication technology and in religious education are below average. No judgements were made for other subjects. The school met its target in English and exceeded its target in mathematics for the proportion of pupils to achieve the level expected by the end of Year 6 in 2004.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Their attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are well below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The **teaching** is **satisfactory** on balance, and there is a sound curriculum which is enriched well by visits and visitors to the school. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the nursery and reception classes and also in the Assessment Provision Unit. In Years 1 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall. The use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Relationships between pupils and teachers, and between pupils of all ethnic backgrounds, are good. The planning of pupils' work is inconsistent in Years 1 to 6 resulting in a wide variation in the quality of teaching. The provision for pupils learning English as an additional language and those pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are sound. The school provides satisfactory support, advice and guidance and encourages satisfactory involvement of pupils in its work and development. The partnership with parents is sound and there are satisfactory links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management** of the school are **satisfactory**. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good and is supported soundly by other senior managers. The school improvement plan sets a clear agenda for improvement. The management of the school is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinators are developing their roles of monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning; however, subject co-ordinators have not had opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching, except in English and mathematics. Data about pupils' performance is not used well enough to set challenging targets for future improvements in standards. Governance is satisfactory. The school complies with statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are satisfied with the education provided for their children. Most pupils are happy at school and form trusting relationships with members of staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education.
- Improve the consistency of the teaching and lesson planning and the quality of marking.
- Ensure that subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of learning in each subject and improve further the collection and the use of information about pupils' attainment to set challenging targets for future improvements in standards.
- Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.

- Seek ways to increase the number of teaching assistants to help pupils at all levels of attainment.
- Improve pupils' literacy, mathematical and information technology and communication skills by providing more opportunities in other subjects to use and apply what they learn.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory, overall. Achievement is very good in the Foundation Stage and in the Assessment Provision Unit and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Standards of the current groups of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are well below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science.
- Children's achievement in the nursery and reception classes is very good; however, most children are unlikely to reach the goals set for them in communication, language and literacy.
- Children in the Assessment Provision Unit make very good progress relative to their previous attainment.
- The very high movement of pupils to the school in each year group is having an adverse impact on standards because many of the pupils who are new to the school are lower attainers or are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The lower than normally seen number of teaching assistants to assist teachers, and the well below average attendance of pupils, adversely affect pupils' progress.
- Boys' standards were not as high as girls in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004.
- Pupils' achievement in science is good in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils who attend the school throughout a key stage make good progress.

Commentary

1. Children, including those learning English as an additional language and those children with special educational needs, achieve very well during the time they are in the nursery and reception classes. They start in the nursery with a well below average level of attainment, overall, and their skills in speaking and listening are low. Children are on course to reach standards below those typically expected for their ages in communication, language and literacy by the end of the reception year. They are likely to reach expected standards by the end of the reception year in personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical development. The very good achievement of the children is the result of very good teaching based on an effective curriculum and strong systems of monitoring children's progress.
2. The pupils in the Assessment Provision Unit achieve very well because of the intensity of skilled support they receive. Staffing levels are high and often one member of staff works with two children. Members of staff in the Assessment Provision Unit make very good provision for the diverse range of special educational needs. They have developed a range of skills and specialist knowledge which benefits the children and assists the children to make fast progress in their learning
3. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' performance was below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science; however, standards are similar to those seen in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and 6 shortly after the previous inspection. The trend in the school's average points from 1999 to 2003 was above the national upward trend by the end of Year 2 and kept pace with the national trend by the end of Year 6. Year 6 results in 2003 dipped, particularly in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.9 (13.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.0 (12.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.5 (14.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. In 2004 the average points scores dipped at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing to levels similar to those in 2002; however, in mathematics the average points scores reached in 2003 were maintained. A strong feature in the mathematics national tests in 2004 was that almost all pupils reached the level expected for their age (Level 2) but few pupils achieved the higher levels. Pupils in the present Year 2 are well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics because of the high proportion of lower attainers.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (25.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.9 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.2 (28.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. The average points scores in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 show significant improvements in mathematics and science but lower results in English. Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 6 are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science.
6. The reason for the recent, overall, lower standards at the ends of both Year 2 and Year 6 can be attributed to the effect of a significant movement of pupils to the school; for example, in 2003 a third of the pupils in Year 6 moved to the school during Year 6 and a quarter of pupils in Year 2 were admitted in that year. Analysis of results of the national tests shows that the performance of the group of pupils who moved through to Year 2 from the reception class and those who were at the school from Years 3 to 6 was significantly higher than that of those who came to the school partway through the key stages. Contributory factors to the well below standards are the insufficient number of teaching assistant to help teachers in classes with pupils of a wide range of attainment and also the well below average attendance rates of pupils; these impact on pupils making faster progress.
7. Boys' performance by the end of Year 6 has over time been similar to that of girls; however, in the 2004 national tests Year 6 boys' results were significantly lower than those of girls in English and mathematics. The acting headteacher and deputy headteacher identified reasons for the differences, these being significant disaffection and severe behaviour problems of a minority of boys which affected adversely the achievement of boys generally. Action was taken by the leadership to strengthen the teaching in Year 6 at the beginning of this academic year and to put in place strategies to improve boys' achievements. Inspection evidence indicates that the action taken has been effective. The quality of teaching seen in Year 6 was never less than satisfactory and often better. Behaviour management was good or better and the achievement of boys and girls was similar, except for that of the small number of boys who have been identified as having special educational needs related to concentration and behavioural difficulties.

8. Pupils achieve well in science in Years 3 to 6 because the teaching is good and the organisation of lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6, is effective. Overall, pupils' achievement in Year 1 to 6 is satisfactory, including of pupils learning English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs; however, pupils who have attended the school since the start of each key stage make good progress relative to their prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are satisfactory. This is not as good as at the previous inspection. The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Attendance is unsatisfactory, as is the pupils' punctuality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are happy at school.
- The personal, social and emotional development of children in the nursery and reception classes is very good.
- Pupils get on well with each other and with the adults in school.
- Pupils understand the rules for good behaviour, which are applied consistently.
- Clear plans to foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are in place though not yet implemented fully.
- Levels of attendance and pupils' punctuality are not good enough.

Commentary

9. The vast majority of pupils are happy at school and understand that they are there to learn; however, many do not have an enthusiasm for learning and require skilled teaching in order to be motivated. When the teaching is good, pupils are keen to join in and work hard, often enjoying the lessons; however, the wide variation in the quality of teaching has an inevitable impact on pupils' attitudes. Any lack of involvement tends to be reflected by a passive rather than a disaffected attitude. Pupils in the Assessment Provision Unit are happy and well settled and the high quality of the teaching and support they receive enables them to participate in and experience success in activities at their own level.
10. Many children start the nursery with social skills, confidence and self-esteem that are under-developed. As a result of very good teaching the children achieve very well in their personal development. Racial harmony is a strong feature of their learning and friendships.
11. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils get on well both with each other and the many adults in the school. Pupils collaborate well in lessons when given the opportunity and play well together in the playground. Boys get on well with girls, and the many ethnic groups in the school mix very well together. Parents do not think there are any racial tensions in school and this was confirmed by the school's own records. There is a strong feeling of harmony throughout the school.
12. Bullying has been a problem in the school, particularly amongst some Year 6 pupils in the previous school year. This was brought to the inspectors' attention by parents and pupils before the inspection. The pupils causing the problems have now left the school and bullying is not an issue at the school at present. Behaviour throughout the school is overall satisfactory but often good. Clearer guidelines have been introduced for the management of behaviour, and members of staff are applying the procedures consistently. Pupils understand the rules and think they are fair. The atmosphere in the school is conducive to learning. Playgrounds are very well supervised, with plenty of activities existing to engage the pupils. No boisterous and oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. Arrangements in the dining room are good. Noise levels are low and behaviour is good making dinnertime a civilised and social occasion. In the previous school year there were 11 temporary exclusions.

13. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Plans exist, though are not yet fully implemented, to develop pupils' personal development, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, which will build on the very good provision for personal, social and emotional development in the nursery and reception classes. Many pupils suffer from low self-esteem brought on in part by family circumstances or moving from one school to another. The school is well aware of these pupils' problems. Recent developments, such as the regular timetabling of 'Circle time' (a structured form of class discussion) and clear roles for the new learning mentors to support pupils, are positive improvements and are benefiting pupils. The recent introduction of an agreed behavioural policy, which is applied generally consistently, is helping pupils to consider their actions and the effect on others. Members of staff relate well with one another and with the pupils and this is encouraging pupils to work soundly with other pupils in whole-class situations as well as when working with partners. The school council is beginning to help pupils to contribute to the running of the school. Some displays of pupils' work show a pride in the cultural diversity of the school and there are satisfactory opportunities to extend pupils' cultural awareness though this is mainly through assemblies and religious education lessons. At present, the provision, although improving, relies too heavily on the expertise of the staff who show a strong level of care for the pupils rather than fully implemented guidelines for teachers and the planning of opportunities to enhance further spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout all aspects of the school's work.
14. Attendance levels are well below those normally found in primary schools and targets have been set but not achieved; figures have consistently dropped over the last three years. This is unsatisfactory. The school's procedures for promoting good attendance through regular reminders to parents and the award of certificates to pupils are satisfactory; however, too many parents do not value education. This attitude to education is reflected in the high level of unauthorised absences resulting from parents not seeing the need to send their children to school every day and not considering this absence as truancy. Punctuality for a significant minority of pupils is unsatisfactory. Since the appointment of the learning mentors, punctuality is monitored rigorously and pupils and parents are spoken to by the staff when pupils arrive late.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003-04 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	5.8
National data (2002-3 data)	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	125	7	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	5	1	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	13	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	14	0	0
Black or Black British – African	20	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	5	3	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	16	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The curriculum is sound. Standards of care, welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. Partnership with parents is sound and links with the community and other schools are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes and in the Assessment Provision Unit is very good. The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory though variable, although the proportion of very good teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the nursery and reception classes as well as in the Assessment Provision Unit.
- In Years 1 to 6 the best teaching was in Year 1/2 and Year 5/6 but a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Years 2, 3 and 4.
- The planning of pupils' work is inconsistent in Years 1 to 6, including the planning for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils learning English as an additional language, resulting in a wide variation in the quality of teaching.
- The planning of the development and improvement of pupils' skills of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology in other subjects is insufficient.

- Children with special educational needs are provided with very good help in the nursery and reception classes and in the Assessment Provision Unit.
- The checking of pupils' progress and using the information to assist pupils' future learning is very good in the Assessment Provision Unit and in the nursery and reception classes but is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	9 (19%)	17 (36%)	17 (36%)	4 (9%)	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.

- As can be seen from the above table the quality of teaching varies considerably; however, on balance, the teaching is satisfactory resulting in pupils making satisfactory progress in their learning. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the planning of the lessons was not good enough as the intended learning of pupils at different levels of attainment was neither clearly identified nor linked to previous learning. The pace of learning was slow and pupils had insufficient time to practise new learning. In some lessons, too much time was spent dealing with behavioural issues and some teachers found dealing with the wide range of pupils' attainment without additional adult help difficult. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Years 2, 3 and 4. The leadership of the school has already identified some of the weaknesses in teaching and has provided support for individual teachers. Where teaching was very good in Years 1 to 6 – for example, in a Year 1/2 class and a Year 5/6 class – there were strengths in the planning of the lesson with a very good understanding of how pupils at different levels of attainment learn, with plenty of challenge existing for all pupils including those with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language. A strength in most lessons throughout the school was the harmonious relationship between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds and the good relationships between teachers and pupils. The teaching grades are similar to those seen at the last inspection although the proportion of very good teaching has improved significantly.
- The teachers' lesson plans do not show sufficient opportunities to extend learning in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology within other subjects. As a result, opportunities are missed to enhance pupils' learning and to practise skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology, as well as to assist learning in other subjects. This weakness has been identified by the senior managers and incorporated into the school improvement plan.
- Overall, the teachers match learning to the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language satisfactorily. The ethnic minority achievement teacher provides satisfactory support to pupils. There can be help in class for specific groups of pupils in literacy and numeracy and sometimes help is given on a withdrawal basis for targeted individual needs. The link between the work of the class and the ethnic minority achievement teacher's target group is not always thought through and this leads occasionally to a lack of continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Occasionally, the support provided by the bilingual assistant is unsatisfactory as there is no specific planning for her intervention, for example the identification of teaching strategies to support all pupils learning English as an additional language. An electronic data base has been established recently to facilitate tracking the progress of pupils learning English as an additional language in recognition that data needs to be used more effectively to track pupil progress by ethnicity and first language and to use this to inform planning and target setting.

18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, but is variable, being dependent on the skills of individual teachers. This is because the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs reflects the variable quality of teaching seen generally for all pupils. Where there is good or better teaching, adaptation and modification of the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs are also good but are not good enough where teaching is unsatisfactory. In some lessons there is little evidence of adaptation to teachers' planning to allow for the differing needs of pupils with special educational needs.
19. In the nursery and reception classes, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Members of staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn, relate very well to them and make the learning enjoyable. Lessons are very well organised and learning resources used generally very effectively. Children with special educational needs are helped very well and very good attention is given to children learning English as an additional language. On the whole, teaching assistants are very well deployed, although, in the nursery, at times when the whole class is taught together, this is not the case; as a result the children miss opportunities for developing their speaking and listening because the group is so large.
20. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs in the Assessment Provision Unit is very good. Members of staff in the Assessment Provision Unit are very experienced; they know their pupils well and assess and understand their individual needs, being able consequently to support their development through appropriate individual planning. Individual education plans are reviewed and new objectives are set half-termly and shared with parents and carers. Pupils are assisted by regular visits from the educational psychologist and from speech and language therapists. Members of staff have developed a very good range of resources to support pupils' learning. Each pupil has a Record of Achievement with examples of his or her work and ongoing assessment using small steps of learning where it is necessary to break down assessment further. All pupils currently leave the Assessment Provision Unit with a Statement of Special Educational Need and their Record of Achievement.
21. In the nursery and reception classes, the checking of children's progress is very good and follows the local education authority's guidance. Ongoing notes are kept by all staff of children's attainments and these are recorded and used well to assist the planning of future learning. In Years 1 to 6 the marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory and overall does not show pupils how well they have done or how they can improve. Teachers set individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics, and end of year assessments are made using commercial tests; however, this information is not used sufficiently to plan future lessons. In other subjects, there are no systems of assessment in place apart from statutory assessments at the end of each year.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced and is enriched through a good range of extra opportunities for learning. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The match of teachers to the curriculum is satisfactory though there are insufficient teaching assistants. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities exist for enrichment to broaden the pupils' knowledge.
- The ratio of teaching assistants to pupils is too low.
- Curricular provision is good in the nursery and reception classes.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good in the Assessment Provision Unit but more help would be beneficial for pupils with special educational needs in Years 1 to 6.

- There is limited formal guidance for personal, social and health education, although statutory requirements are met for pupils' sex and relationships education and drugs awareness.

Commentary

22. The pupils have a sound basic curriculum which meets statutory requirements and includes religious education. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are implemented satisfactorily and support the pupils' sound achievement. There are too few teaching assistants in Years 1 to 6 to assist teachers to help to push on their learning of pupils at all levels of attainment at a faster pace. The small number of additional staff has not enabled teachers to take full advantage of additional nationally recommended ways to improve pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy.
23. Guidance to help teachers plan lessons is being revised and a good start has been made in Year 1 and Year 2 where much thought has been given to how subjects can be linked to provide the pupils with a dovetailed curriculum rather than one with isolated subject teaching. A strength of this work is that the use of visits and visitors has been planned as an integral part of the curriculum. This innovation reflects the importance placed across the school on making sure that the pupils acquire a good knowledge of their local area and what it affords in way of museums, exhibitions and galleries. Visiting theatre groups and musicians and support through the Excellence in Cities initiative add much diversity to the curriculum. The consequent learning is enriched and the pupils come to a better understanding of the world around them.
24. The school has put in place part of a satisfactory personal, social and health education programme. Senior managers have audited the present provision and mapped out a long-term plan to guide teachers. An effective school council has been established. Training for staff has been held. Sex education and relationships education are taught appropriately by the school nurse as well as through the science curriculum.
25. A start has been made in matching the curriculum to the pupils' heritages; this is the case, for example, in religious education where visits to a good range of religious buildings help pupils to discuss their religion and find out more about a range of faiths. Pupils who have English as an additional language have appropriate opportunities to take a full part in the curriculum and their achievement is satisfactory. The school's resources, to reflect cultural diversity, are satisfactory.
26. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception class is effective. It matches their requirements and development well. It is well organised and, through the use of assessment, finely tuned to the pupils' needs. This strength has come about through good use of materials from the local education authority and through close partnerships between the teaching staff. Relative weaknesses are that the accommodation limits the access of the children in the reception class to outdoor play though the school takes sensible steps to address this.
27. To enhance transition from the reception class to Year 1 a start has been made in providing more practical resources and opportunities for role-play and investigations. This provision is under-used, in part because it is often situated on corridors rather than being an integral part of the Year 1 classroom provision. The lack of teaching assistants discourages further the use of these supporting resources. In addition, there is insufficient support for pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties in some classes, particularly in Years 3 to 5 where there is a higher incidence of pupils with special needs. Some teachers require support to develop their skills in assessing and managing the needs of different groups in the classroom, and more classes would benefit from additional teaching assistants.
28. A very good range of strategies is used in the Assessment Provision Unit to develop the communication skills of pupils with complex special educational needs to prepare them to access the National Curriculum when they move into Year 3. The curriculum is well suited to

their needs. The accommodation and resources for pupils in the Unit are very good. All pupils in the Assessment Provision Unit leave at the end of Year 2 and transition arrangements are very good.

29. Resources are adequate overall, but there are insufficient resources for geography and religious education in terms of artefacts. This means that the pupils have little personal experience in school in these subjects. Excessive use of worksheets in history and geography means that often work is not sufficiently well matched to the pupils' individual needs. Some computer equipment is in need of replacement and learning resources to assist learning in the control and monitoring aspects of information and communication technology are limited.

Care, guidance and support

The level of care, support and guidance the pupils receive is satisfactory overall. This is not as good as at the previous inspection. The school has satisfactory procedures for considering the views of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well looked after in a caring environment by a dedicated staff.
- In the Assessment Provision Unit and the nursery and reception classes, children are supported very well.
- Pupils' annual reports show clearly how children can improve in terms of personal development and academically but marking of pupils' work in some classes does not help them to appreciate how they can improve.
- Induction procedures for pupils are good.
- Child protection is taken seriously and procedures are rigorous and likely to be effective.

Commentary

30. Members of staff show genuine care for the pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils who arrive from overseas with little or no English are targeted to receive as much support as possible to help them settle into school. When pupils have concerns they are listened to with respect and sympathy. Pastoral support is good and based on a secure knowledge of an individual pupil's particular circumstances. The pupils' annual reports are written well and show a good understanding of the pupils. They contain clear and sometimes blunt guidance on what a pupils needs to do to improve in terms of personal development as well as academically; however, in Years 1 to 6 the lack of consistent marking means that some teachers are not giving pupils enough specific advice on what they have to do to improve. The school provides a high level of support for pupils with special educational needs in the Assessment Provision Unit and for children in the nursery and reception classes.
31. Induction procedures to the nursery are good. There are plenty of opportunities for parents and children to visit the nursery prior to joining the school. Time is set aside by staff to speak individually with parents. The transitions between nursery and reception and between reception and Year 1 are equally well planned with information meetings and discussion of expectations regarding literacy, numeracy, reading and homework.
32. The school has effective procedures for issues of child protection. There is a high level of expertise amongst the senior management, and all members of staff are well aware of current good practice.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Links with the community and other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are informed well on what their children are going to be taught.
- Pupils' reports are written well.
- The Assessment Provision Unit makes good efforts to involve parents in their children's learning.
- A few parents consider the school does not listen to their views sufficiently.

Commentary

33. Parents are generally satisfied with the school. They approve, particularly, of the teaching, the way their children work hard and the fact that their children like going to school. A few parents have concerns about communication between school and home and about homework. The inspection team judge that the amount of information provided for parents and the amount of homework provided are appropriate.
34. Information for parents is satisfactory overall. The regular class newsletters give both a good overview of what is going to be taught during the next half term and a timetable for homework. This allows parents to be more involved in their children's learning. Pupils' reports are written well and are easy to understand. Most reports give a clear outline of what the child can do in the main subjects together with targets for development. Arrangements for parents to talk to teachers are satisfactory with two formal meetings taking place each year. The 'open door' policy means that parents can talk informally to teachers and the headteacher before or after school each day. Celebration assemblies are held regularly which parents are invited to attend. Parents find this useful and appear to have easy relationships with the staff.
35. Contact with parents/carers of pupils in the Assessment Provision Unit is sometimes difficult because of the distance some families live from the school; however, good use is made of home/school books, and home visits are made before reviews and on request. Usually the teacher will visit homes with a speech and language therapist.
36. Most parents are satisfied with the partnership with the school; however, a few parents do not feel that the school listens sufficiently to their views. The acting headteacher is aware of this concern and has instituted weekly coffee mornings open to all parents to develop closer links with parents and to provide a forum for all parents to express their views. Parent governors take their responsibilities seriously and are available for consultation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management at the school are satisfactory. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good. The governance of the school and work of key staff are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher provides the school with a clear direction.
- The school improvement plan sets a clear agenda for improvement and has identified already weaknesses seen during the inspection.
- The English and mathematics co-ordinators have monitored the quality of the curriculum and teaching and learning but there has been insufficient monitoring in other subjects.
- Performance data is not used effectively.
- The governors are well informed.

Commentary

37. There has been a period of instability in staffing at senior management level which has affected the educational direction of the school. The acting headteacher was appointed to the school close to end of the summer term; she has much expertise to bring to the school and has a clear vision and a good understanding of the school's current strengths and weaknesses. She has worked extremely hard, supported by other senior managers and the new deputy headteacher who has completed one term in the school, to provide the school with a new sense of direction. In only a short period of time they have identified areas for improvement, implemented many of these and are taking action to move the school forward; for example, a revised leadership and management structure has been put in place with roles, responsibilities and lines of communication being identified clearly. Already, there are indications the school is moving forward positively. The commitment of staff to improvement is apparent. The management of the Assessment Provision Unit is very good and the manager gives good support to the senior staff and the governors.
38. The school improvement plan has identified immediate priorities well. There is a determination to raise standards in pupils' attainment through improving the overall quality of teaching and learning. The plan sets out what the school needs to do in order to meet its improvement priorities and recognises the resources that are required. Individuals' responsibilities are outlined clearly and this is helping everyone to know what is expected of them. This can be seen in the common approach that teachers have to the management of behaviour which has improved pupils' attitudes and behaviour in classes and around the school. Weaknesses identified during the inspection are addressed well in the school improvement plan, such as the consistency of teaching, the planning of lessons, pupil assessment and tracking of pupils' progress including using the analysis of performance data, together with action plans, to raise standards.
39. The leadership of the curriculum by subject co-ordinators is satisfactory, overall. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have monitored the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects; however, this has not been the case in other subjects because, historically, they had insufficient time to carry out their quality assurance work. Recently their responsibilities have been reviewed and co-ordinators have developed their roles more effectively through 'spot checks' of teachers' planning and classroom organisation and of pupils' work in books and displays. Further initiatives, detailed in the school improvement plan, are in place for them to monitor teaching and learning more rigorously in order to share best practice and to bring about a consistency of approach in subjects.
40. The school analyses its performance, an example being how it has taken action to address the achievement of boys; however, the information gained is not contributing effectively to tracking the progress of individuals and different groups of pupils to allow targets to be set for improvement, but the school is aware of this and plans are in hand to improve the situation.
41. Currently the governors have a satisfactory understanding of their role and are well informed through very detailed minutes of meetings. They are fully supportive of the acting headteacher and have been involved in the school's development plan; they are in agreement with its aims and are involved actively in developing its priorities. The governors have decided wisely to allocate the financial surplus to increasing the number of classroom assistants to enhance the quality of educational provision in the school and to provide funding to enable the deputy headteacher to monitor and develop the quality and consistency of teaching in Years 1 to 6. The expenditure per pupil is high as it includes a significant amount of funding for pupils in the Assessment Provision Unit as well as finances to support pupils with English as additional language and pupils with learning difficulties.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,219,371
Total expenditure	1,219,811
Expenditure per pupil	4175

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	75,172
Balance carried forward to the next	74,732

42. Funding from the Excellence in Cities has made a significant impact on the quality of education the school has to offer through its enrichment of the curriculum. The recent appointment of two learning mentors is enabling the school to address issues related to pupil disaffection and behaviour which restrict achievement. The school has no control over either the high mobility rate of pupils in and out of the school or the growing number of pupils with English as an additional language, both of which present barriers to raising achievement which the school is beginning to address.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the reception and nursery classes is very good and represents a good improvement since the last inspection. Even though standards are lower in communication, language and literacy, this is a reflection of the lower level of attainment on entry to the nursery. Importantly the children achieve very well overall because of very good teaching and a good curriculum. The children's attainment when they start in the nursery is well below that typically expected, and in communication, language and literacy it is low. Though children achieve very well here they are most likely to reach standards that are below those typically expected for their age. They are on course to reach the early learning goals at the end of the reception year in personal development and mathematical development. No judgement was made on achievement and standards in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development as too few lessons were seen. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Much of the success of the Foundation Stage relies on the goodwill, professionalism and dynamism of the nursery and reception staff. The recent changes of staffing, organisation and curricular planning are impacting positively on children's achievements.

In **knowledge and understanding of the world** the very good organisation of both classes, the way in which the teaching assistants are deployed and the very effective use of the very good outdoor provision mean that the children experience a rich curriculum in this area of learning.

In **creative development** the children have a wealth of opportunity to draw, paint and make music. A relative weakness is that the concentration on the development of skills leaves less time to develop the children's imaginative responses.

In **physical development**, in the nursery, the activities set out for outdoor play reflected the curricular theme well. Children in the reception class use the outside play facilities regularly but because they lack direct access to the area the provision is used less spontaneously than by the nursery children. In the reception class the resources for outdoor play are identical to the nursery provision and lack a stepped approach to ensuring that the challenge for all children is matched to their needs. The children in the nursery are well behaved and are keen to participate in tasks, showing growing confidence because members of staff are supportive of their physical development and at the same time put much energy into developing the children's spoken language and personal development. A wealth of opportunities is provided in both classes to develop the children's skill of using small tools and implements.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good and as a result the children feel secure and behave well.
- The children's independence at snack time is not encouraged sufficiently well.

Commentary

43. Children achieve very well because the quality of teaching and learning is very good. The children settle quickly into the school's routines because they are supported very well by the staff. With much help, children concentrate for increasing lengths of time and develop significantly greater levels of independence and social skills in the reception classes from the well below average starting point in the nursery. Adults listen very carefully to the children and guide them patiently towards a much better understanding of what is expected. The children in

the reception class are on course to attain the early learning goal by the end of the reception year because adults promote the children's independence through clearly set routines and high expectations. A great sense of trust develops. Increasingly, the children share resources, take turns and consider the needs of others because adults set a very good example. A high degree of racial harmony is nurtured very well indeed. Good transition arrangements help the children to transfer from one class to another seamlessly. This, together with very good assessment, means that no time is lost and that the children achieve very well during their time in the Foundation Stage.

44. In contrast to the above, at snack time each day the balance between teacher-led and children-led activities is a comparative weakness. Adults organise snack time and expect too little of the children. As a result there are many lost opportunities for the children in the nursery and reception classes to exercise choice and to develop their independence at this time.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The adults use questioning very well to encourage speaking and listening.
- Provision for children who have emerging special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language is very good.
- Teaching assistants are used well; however, sometimes, insufficient use is made of the teaching assistants in the nursery to teach small groups when the class is gathered together.

Commentary

45. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. A significant number of children have poor language skills when they start in the nursery. As a result of very good assessment the adults in both classes use their expertise quickly and skilfully to elicit responses from the children and to extend discussions. The children gain in confidence in talking to others and make very good gains in developing their vocabulary. Adults help children to express their ideas and speak more clearly through a range of activities. The children achieve very well, although are on course to be below the typical level for their age because teachers' assessments show by the end of the reception class they lack a wide vocabulary and find some difficulty in conveying meaning and in giving accounts of their learning. Children learning English as an additional language are very well supported because the staff ensure that all children are included in activities and that all join in with rhymes and songs. They pay very great attention to children's developing vocabulary and build very well upon the contributions children make in their first language. This positive and inclusive approach in the teaching means that the children make good gains in their confidence to contribute to group discussion.
46. In the nursery the teaching assistants are deployed very well for most of the time and this, together with the well-chosen activities, makes a vibrant learning environment for the children. A weakness is at the times when the whole group of children gather together; for example for a story or singing when the teacher leads the whole class, meaning that there are fewer opportunities for the children to contribute than if they were in smaller groups. At the beginning of the year, when new children are being admitted, the role modelling by older children is diluted to such an extent that younger children, in the majority, find it very difficult to conform to the standards of participation and response required by the adult.
47. Children enjoy nursery rhymes, looking at books and listening to stories. Every opportunity is taken to share books and stories with the children. Records show by the end of the reception year in 2004 higher attainers have reached the early learning goal and the average attainers, making very good progress, reach a level below that typically expected. The range of key

words that most children can read is below that expected and not all of the children can apply letter sounds to help their reading.

48. Writing is encouraged through a range of opportunities for children to write in many activities. Paper, pencils and pens are placed strategically throughout the classrooms and the children make very good use of them so that they make very good improvement from their first attempts at writing. By the end of the time in the reception class higher attainers can form their letters correctly and write a simple sentence unaided. Average attainers also form letters correctly but need some help in placing the letters and words into phrases. Slower-learning children get a very good degree of support from adults. This is matched to their needs very well and enables the children to succeed at their own level and achieve much satisfaction from their learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical activities are very well prepared to develop the children's mathematical concepts.
- Adults are good at intervening to extend the children's thinking.
- The resources for lower attainers are not always well matched to their needs.

Commentary

49. Children's achievement is very good because of very good teaching. The curriculum in the nursery is built upon very well in the reception class. A wide range of resources and practical tasks geared to sorting, matching and ordering is very well chosen. These together with very good intervention by the adults develop in the children a growing mathematical vocabulary and an inquisitiveness that whets their appetite for mathematics. Adults promote children's mathematical development in a range of other activities, such as in creative work when attention is drawn to the number, shape, colour and size of objects. In the reception class the early stages of the National Strategy for Numeracy are introduced very effectively. Because of the level of the children's personal development and because of the very well structured, often practical, tasks, the children make very good gains. Within the context of very good provision overall for the children who have special educational needs in mathematics, there are times when the resources provided are too wide ranging; for example, they are insufficiently structured to provide the incremental approach needed by children who have difficulty in making very simple patterns.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are well below national averages in reading, writing, and speaking and listening throughout the school.
- The subject co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall, but weaknesses in some classes have a negative impact on standards and achievement.
- Strategies to develop speaking and listening skills are inconsistent.
- The school is beginning to address successfully the issue of boys' achievement in writing.
- The marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets for improvement are inconsistent and unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are given unsatisfactory opportunities to practise their language and literacy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

50. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are well below average throughout the school; this is because many pupils begin Year 1 with a restricted vocabulary which slows down progress in both reading and writing. The very high mobility of pupils and the significant proportion of pupils who join the school at an early stage of learning English as an additional language impact on the standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are similar to those in the national tests just after the last inspection. Although standards are low in Year 2 and Year 6, achievement is satisfactory, including of those pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. The school has fewer teaching assistants than other primary schools. The lack of classroom assistants to help support pupils with reading and writing activities limits achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are also affected by the lack of opportunity to be taught in a small group. The school is aware of this and plans to increase the number of support assistants.
51. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of the areas for development and a good action plan is in place to assist in the raising of standards. The co-ordinator has monitored, recently, the curriculum and teaching and learning. The monitoring of teaching has been mainly the responsibility of the headteacher in the past.
52. The quality of teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory; because of inconsistencies it is satisfactory overall, having been good at the previous inspection. In the best lessons, activities are well matched to the pupils' different needs so that all are suitably challenged and achieve as well as they can. This was exemplified in a very good lesson for an 'average' attaining group of pupils in a Year 5/6 set in which the teacher had planned a well-structured lesson with activities matched to pupils' needs and clear expectations of the more able pupils. There was good use of information and communication technology and very good deployment of the teaching assistant. In one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 2 the pupils became confused as the teaching lacked clear structure; it was difficult for them to make clear links between each phase of the lesson, resulting in unsatisfactory achievement.
53. Teachers provide opportunities for speaking and listening but the quality of the teaching varies across the school. Better opportunities were provided; for example, in a Year 3 lesson there was good involvement of pupils, conversation was stimulated by the teacher's enthusiastic approach which gained pupils' interest, and careful questioning was addressed to specific

pupils who were encouraged to respond with a sentence, which resulted in good achievement. Not all teachers use such methods; too many only require answers from pupils who are willing to put their hands up and as a result several pupils contribute little to discussion. Similarly, not all teachers are pairing 'talking partners' appropriately which results in limited discussion. A whole-school approach to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills has been identified as a priority.

54. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 read very confidently and expressively at a level above that expected of their age. Most pupils are less fluent readers, though are able to use letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words and show an interest in the books they are reading. Lower attaining pupils, particularly those who have just joined the school, find difficulties in reading unfamiliar text because of their lack of understanding of the sounds letters make. All pupils are encouraged to read at home but some lack the parental support seen in other schools, hindering their progress in developing reading skills, especially for younger pupils. Teachers have very little adult support in class to develop pupils' reading skills and this limits pupils' achievement.
55. Teachers generally ensure that pupils learn to write for a range of purposes, although there is a tendency to concentrate on fictional writing at the expense of non-fiction. The school has made a start at tackling boys' achievement in writing. This works well when pupils use the writing of other authors as a springboard for their own writing; in a Year 5/6 lesson for example, the teacher made good use of *Just William* to study story settings and the use of non-standard English. This appealed to both boys and girls and motivated them to write. They relished the opportunity to add 'Mancunian' dialect words to their writing, which resulted in good achievement in the lesson. Improving pupils' writing skills across the school is now part of the school improvement plan.
56. The marking of pupils' written work is inconsistent across the school. It varies from a single-word comment to a more detailed indication of what the pupil is doing well; a common failing in the marking is not informing the pupil what to do to improve. A further weakness in marking, more commonly found with the older pupils, is the acceptance of poorly presented work and because of this the presentation of pupils' work is not what it should be. Pupils are set individual targets; however, many pupils are unsure of their improvement targets and there is little sign of these being followed up in future work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. The use of language and literacy in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Throughout the school too little thought has been given to developing pupils' writing skills in history and geography, for example. Limited examples were seen in science and religious education.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and well below average by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is too variable, although the teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good.
- Both the assessment of pupils' work and the use of information about pupils' attainment to push on pupils' learning at a faster pace are unsatisfactory.
- The leadership of the school and the subject co-ordinator have a clear vision for future development of the subject and the subject co-ordinator provides a good role model in the quality of her teaching; however, she has had little involvement in the tracking of pupils' progress.

- Numeracy skills are not practised sufficiently in other subjects.

Commentary

58. Standards of the present group of pupils in Years 6 are well below average and are below average by the end of Year 2. Standards by the end of Year 6 are similar to those in the national tests in 1999 shortly after the last inspection. The main reason for the well below average standards is the result of the very high proportion of pupils joining classes partway through a key stage, many of whom have learning difficulties or are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. In addition the lack of teaching assistants to help teachers in most classes limits the progress of pupils when working in small groups of similar attainment. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory. Some differences were seen in the attitudes to learning and the behaviour of boys who had been identified previously by the school and placed on the list of special educational needs; at times these pupils lose concentration which slows down their learning. In Year 6, higher attainers are able to tackle multiplication of two-digit numbers well using different methods of calculating, whereas lower attainers have difficulties understanding times tables above three times or four times. Average attainers understand that $350 + 650$ is the same as $650 + 350$ and are accurate in calculating equations such as these.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, though varies considerably; of the ten lessons seen, three lessons were very good, two were good, four were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory in a Year 2 class, the planning of the lesson was not linked to the level of attainment of different groups of pupils, particularly lower attainers, the checking of pupils' understanding was insufficient, the pace of learning was slow and pupils were given insufficient opportunities to practise new learning. In contrast, when teaching was very good there was a brisk start to the lesson to check pupils' understanding of multiplication and division by 10 and 100 through a well thought out activity which interested and challenged pupils at all levels of attainment. Pupils' understanding was checked effectively through careful questioning and the marking of their work. The questioning and response of boys and girls were similar. Pupils with identified behavioural difficulties were handled well by the teacher. Harmonious relationships were apparent between pupils of different backgrounds. Pupils learning English as an additional language were involved fully in the learning and achieved very well. Overall, the strengths in the quality of teaching are the way teachers relate to pupils and encourage them in their work, as well as achieving good standards of behaviour. An area for improvement, which the leadership of the school has identified already, is lack of detail in teachers' lesson planning.
60. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the school and, overall, is unsatisfactory. Generally, work is marked with ticks or crosses; however, the marking rarely shows clearly pupils how they can improve. The teachers' checking of pupils' understanding, through questioning and the planning of future work based on individual and groups of pupils' attainment, is limited.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is a good role model in the quality of her teaching and has had opportunities along with a local education authority adviser to monitor the quality of teaching in a few classes. The subject co-ordinator, until recently, has been responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the subject and the tracking of pupils' progress was monitored by the headteacher; however, recently the co-ordinator and the deputy headteacher have made a detailed analysis of standards. A very relevant action plan has been written with the objective of raising standards through improvements and consistency in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. The use of mathematics in other subjects is unsatisfactory. The development and use of numeracy skills are not planned sufficiently in most other subjects; however, some work is apparent in information technology and communication lessons, such as the use of spreadsheets. Examination of pupils' work shows too few examples of mathematical skills being practised or assisting learning in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good.
- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.
- Assessment in science is unsatisfactory.
- The management of the subject is unsatisfactory, although the improvement plan for the subject is good.

Commentary

63. Standards of the present group of pupils in Years 2 and 6 in all aspects of science are on course to be well below average by the end of Year 2 and below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' performance at the end of Year 2 in 2004 shows a decline in attainment compared with the previous year because far fewer pupils were judged to be above average. The picture by the end of Year 6 is improving showing, in the 2004 national tests, one quarter of pupils in the cohort attaining the higher level. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
64. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are similar to those in the previous year. Although standards by the end of Year 6 are not yet back to the much higher levels reported to parents in 2001 and 2002, inspection evidence shows that, for those pupils who have attended the school throughout Years 3 to 6, most have achieved well by Year 6. It also confirms that, in science, there is no clear evidence of variation between the standards attained by girls and boys or the rate of progress made.
65. Pupils' work sampled from across a year shows that pupils have been introduced to a satisfactory range of scientific knowledge; for example, in Year 2, most pupils have learned about the properties of a selection of materials, such as the waterproof nature of plastic. They have improved their understanding of plants and animals and are aware of the dangers of electricity. The rate of improvement in the level of work shows they achieve satisfactorily. More rapid gains are made in Years 3 to 6 where most pupils achieve well. This reflects higher priority given to the value of practical work through investigations, and by Year 6 most pupils can make predictions, classify animals by their features, know how to conduct a fair test and record their results.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The good organisation of teaching in Year 6 included some very good features. The lesson was very well planned, the pupils were well managed and the equipment was prepared carefully. The very effective two-part delivery by both teachers was backed up by very good demonstration. This impacted well on the pupils' ability to gain a good understanding of a new science skill; consequently, most achieved well. The teachers had planned the recording stage very carefully with work being set at different levels to ensure challenge for pupils of all levels of attainment. A bilingual assistant, who used transcripts in Arabic to help explain key

science concepts, satisfactorily supported pupils for whom English is an additional language. Although the scrutiny of work and a lesson observed confirmed teaching to be satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, there is less evidence of investigations being provided. It also showed that completing worksheets is often the main recording activity rather than independent writing about the activities undertaken.

67. With the exception of annual reporting to parents, which is satisfactory, there is limited evidence of regular assessment in science or of tracking of pupils' progress as they move through the school. This is unsatisfactory as there is no clear basis on which to plan the pupils' next stage of learning. There was little evidence of teachers using marking to help pupils know how well they had achieved and to guide them towards further improvement.
68. Subject leadership is satisfactory; however, the management of the subject is unsatisfactory. With difficulties in overall school leadership and management only recently resolved, some of the good practices in co-ordination, identified at the time of the previous inspection, are not currently being implemented. The recently appointed co-ordinator has drawn up a good action plan for the development of science based on a secure audit of current practice. The key tasks of the monitoring of planning, of standards, of the quality of teaching and of pupils' work are included appropriately as main priorities. At present there are no firm plans for the commencement of these tasks.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average by the end of Year 6.
- The computer suite is used well; however, problems with hardware and insufficient number of teaching assistants to assist teaching and learning limit the pace of pupils' progress.
- The action plan for the subject is well thought out.
- The checking and recording of pupils' attainments are unsatisfactory.
- The use of information and communication technology to assist learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

69. Standards in Year 2 are at an average level and pupils achieve satisfactorily as was the case at the last inspection; however, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now achieving satisfactorily, although standards remain below average by the end of Year 6. The computer suite is now used well which was an area for development at the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some computer equipment is unreliable and in need of updating and this hampers quicker progress in pupils' learning; for example, a well thought out lesson in Year 1 had to be abandoned because of difficulties accessing a program in the computer suite. In Year 2 much time was lost whilst the teacher sorted out technical problems. In most lessons teachers have insufficient help to assist them work alongside pupils in small groups or to provide adequate help to pupils with special educational needs. Younger pupils in Year 2 can use the mouse effectively though find difficulties opening and closing programs on the computer without adult guidance. Higher attaining older pupils can construct a spreadsheet and enter data independently, whereas lower attaining pupils find difficulty fulfilling tasks on the computer independently. Year 6 pupils gained skills in the control aspects of the subject by working at a local City Learning Centre. They also gained experience of monitoring sounds using equipment the school had borrowed from a secondary school.
70. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. Good improvements have been made in the provision for the subject since the last inspection. The subject co-

ordinator's action plan is well thought out and clearly shows initiatives to improve provision further. Consistent procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of units of work are not in place, although pupils' work is checked on the computers in their individual files by the co-ordinator and available to inform future planning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Examination of pupils' work indicates no consistent planning of opportunities to assist learning in other subjects through the use of information and communication technology. Some opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in other subjects are exploited; for example, Year 6 pupils produced a 'year book' using their desktop publishing skills, and Year 5 pupils created a presentation incorporating sound, pictures and text and produced transfers to iron onto fabric as part of an art project.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in detail and reported on in full below. Too few lessons were seen in geography and history so no judgements have been made on provision, standards, teaching or learning in these subjects.

72. In **geography**, the curriculum is enhanced through well-chosen visits but much of the pupils' recorded work is either on worksheets or copied. This means that there are many lost opportunities for the pupils to use their developing skills in writing and that the work is not well matched to the pupils' needs. The pupils have far too few opportunities to use the Internet for research. This subject has not had high priority recently and the subject leader has allowed some of its elements, such as the guidance to assist teachers to plan lessons, curricular evaluation and the subject policy, to become out of date. Minor issues identified at the last inspection, such as limited resources and the over-use of worksheets, have not been addressed sufficiently well.
73. In **history**, the curriculum has strong links with English and dance and is well enriched through visits to museums and local galleries. The use of information and communication technology is limited. In a lesson seen in Year 3, the teaching was structured carefully so that pupils gained a better understanding of timelines. All pupils were fully involved as questioning was directed appropriately to pupils of different levels of attainment. During an extended absence of the subject leader the subject was neglected.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average.
- The curriculum is relevant to the wide range of pupils' beliefs.
- There is a need to extend the range of resources and visits to cover all the religions studied.
- A good action plan has been written for the subject and monitored termly.
- The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has not had opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

74. Standards of attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 pupils start to learn about Christianity, Islam and

Hinduism. In Years 3 and 4 they begin to learn about Judaism and Buddhism in addition to continuing their studies of Christianity and Islam. In Years 5 and 6 Sikhism is added to the faiths that are studied. In Year 6 pupils understand some of the similarities and differences between Christian and Sikh weddings. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect in writing about their learning; however, the quality and presentation of written work are below average, overall. Through discussion and the breadth of study pupils learn the significance of religion in people's lives across the world.

75. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Where pupils achieved well, the teacher showed a selection of pictures of Jesus which stimulated sustained discussion around the words which could best describe what pupils saw which helped them to gain a deeper understanding of Christianity. The pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language were involved fully and made good gains in their language development. In a satisfactory lesson seen in Year 6 the teacher made good use of a religious artefact, the Torah, to further pupils' knowledge and understanding of symbolism in Judaism; however, the school needs to supplement the present limited collection of religious artefacts to support the teaching on all the relevant religions.
76. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, overall. The newly appointed subject co-ordinator has had no opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in order to have a clear picture of standards across the school; previously the monitoring of teaching was the headteacher's responsibility. A good action plan for the subject based on a staff audit guides the co-ordinator and it is monitored termly by the leadership.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was not enough evidence to judge provision, teaching or standards in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education in view of the very small number of lessons seen in these subjects

77. In **art and design** by the end of Year 6 most pupils can use a satisfactory range of art materials including paint, crayons, pastels, pencils, printing inks, clay and fabrics to produce creative work in two and three-dimensional form. In the lesson seen the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory and pupils' achievement was satisfactory.
78. The school's regular involvement in a local arts initiative has extended the range of art experiences provided. Pupils visited Manchester Cathedral to observe wooden and stone carvings before working with specialist artists who ran project workshops. From initial inspiration gained by looking at tree shapes, the pupils used sticks, fabrics and paper to make 'bendy arms and spindly legs'. Some worked on collage techniques; others enjoyed working in clay. Pupils made three-dimensional witches from fabrics that were displayed effectively in the natural setting of the school's inner garden. Pupils have also visited a city gallery to improve their knowledge of art and well-known artists. Pupils enjoy art both in lessons and as extra-curricular activities.
79. In **design and technology**, in the lesson seen the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory and pupils achieved satisfactorily. Younger pupils build models using components such as plastic bricks and cardboard boxes. In work linked to the science theme, 'Ourselves', pupils improved their understanding of the importance of healthy eating by comparing the appearance and taste of fruit. Older pupils were challenged to design and make a torch in response to the important questions "Who is it for?" and "What must it do?" The pupils recorded satisfactorily their ideas on a planning sheet, noting the materials they would use and some of the necessary construction techniques. Some pupils correctly labelled the parts they planned to use on their planning sheets. The activity provided a good opportunity for pupils to use their scientific understanding of electric circuits when they planned the wiring and the switch for their torches. Pupils' limited literacy skills restrict their ability to make detailed evaluations of finished products. Nevertheless, pupils attempt to record their views of finished

products. One pupil, commenting simply about the torch, noted, "It worked!" In a food technology activity pupils researched the design of sweet wrappers as a homework activity. They used this information to make the wrappers for sweets made by combining icing, marzipan and fudge. The extra-curricular programme provides good additional opportunities for pupils to learn to bake and sew.

80. In **music**, in the lesson seen the teaching and learning were good and pupils' achievement was good. Younger pupils enjoyed learning to sing and play together. They learnt how to sing high and low notes, loudly and softly, quickly and slowly. They clapped in time with their teacher and they listened to the sounds made with percussion instruments and on pre-recorded sequences. These experiences were taught well and the pupils co-operated well with each other.
81. Insufficient use is made of music in school assemblies. Pupils do have good opportunities to listen to music as they enter and depart from assemblies and they are sometimes not informed about the names of the composer and extract being played.
82. In **physical education** analysis of swimming data shows that approximately half of the pupils entered for the national standard distance of 25 metres achieved this by the end of Year 4.
83. In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall and pupils' achievement was satisfactory. Younger pupils learnt to control the movement of their bodies by improving the control of their arms, legs and feet. They learnt to avoid each other as they dodged in and out of each other's space. Regular opportunities to listen to their teacher's instructions helped pupils improve this aspect of literacy. Older pupils learnt how to transfer their weight from one part of their body to another. There are some opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy and literacy skills as they practise movement; for example, Year 1 pupils were asked to think about working in twos when moving equipment such as a bench in the hall. Pupils were encouraged to comment on the performance of other pupils selected to demonstrate their movements to the rest of the class. There are good outdoor facilities for physical education including fixed apparatus to challenge pupils' physical skills and well-marked hard-surfaced and grassed areas. The games provision has been enhanced through a sport funding initiative that has provided good facilities for netball and basketball.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

84. No lessons were seen in this area of the curriculum so it was not possible to make any judgement on standards, pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching and learning. The school has put in place part of a scheme of work to assist teachers to plan lessons. 'Circle time' (a time when a group of pupils discuss and reflect on matters of importance to them) is held each week to support the personal development of the pupils. A good feature of the school is the harmonious relationships between pupils of all ethnic backgrounds.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
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	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	0
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).